

FYNN, HENRY F.

8.12.1906

File 67, item 12, pp. 1-2.

i The cause of the rebellion¹ is the absence of parental guardianship over the native population of this colony, which existed to a certain extent during Sir T. Shepstone's tenure of the office of Secretary for Native Affairs. Sir T. Shepstone, from a native point of view, partially filled the place of uncle-guardian. [Note: every chief has, as it were, a family minister who is a guide, and is generally an uncle, called *ubaba*, and he becomes guardian.] Sir T. Shepstone became a kind of uncle-guardian to the Supreme Chief. The uncle-guardian is the adviser to the chief and he gets the position from his birth or blood relationship. Sir Theo Shepstone did not exercise the full powers of chieftainship; as a result of this the Supreme Chief was not linked to the hereditary chiefs as parental guardian over them, which insufficiency was substituted by the powers exercised by Sir T. Shepstone as S.N.A., so that, in reality, there never has been that proper link between the Supreme Chief and the hereditary chiefs. The office of Supreme Chief in its existence up to the present time has only been a misnomer or practically only a shadow of what it should be.

The real father (Supreme Chief) only showed himself occasionally and then they were always different persons with different opinions. Sir T. Shepstone knew this; so far as he could he kept the power in his own hands. He was jealous of the magistrates.

The shadow of the Supreme Chief, when it appeared, appeared each time as a different person. The officer known as Supreme Chief was accordingly an unreality, or 'spook' or 'ghost'. This whole matter can be likened to the present form of government, which is continually changing and upside down, with fresh people, unknown by the native, slipping into the control of the Government, tipping the others out, and (these) in their turn struggling to tipple out those who have just tipped them out, so that there was a continuous change and no-one known.

The foregoing is a cause of the rebellion because it is bad government. (The Supreme Chief should have) a distinct department linked to the Home Government, he being linked to the hereditary chiefs by a permanent deputy or commissioner of the Supreme Chief, whose duty it would be to constantly carry on visits to the hereditary chiefs as from the Supreme Chief. This could still be done, though a better man must be found than would have done before. This would be in no way connected with the permanent S.N.A. and his seat in Parliament.² He would be necessary to carry out the present

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duties of the S.N.A. in his duties between the Supreme Chief and Parliament, and with regard to all ordinary administrative routine
2 between himself and the magistrates as deputy parental guardians in their respective districts.

In all matters with regard to the native population, we should distinctly regard them as our children and dictate to them what we consider good for them, staving off all that is not good for them. It is absurd and inconsistent to endeavour to make white people out of black people - they will still be black. They must improve themselves; we must not cause them to overreach themselves. By spending a lot of money to improve an individual or two, the others fall back for want of parental guardianship. Why should a few individuals have large amounts spent on them, while the rest are going to the dogs? Any improvement in the native must be general, and the whole mass must be carried forward together. The system at present in vogue of civilizing too quickly, before they are fitted for it, is ruin to them, as can always be seen in a short conversation with such of the natives as have gone so far ahead as to be exempt from the operation of Native Law, who invariably become discontented on finding that they cannot attain the full qualities of the European who has had thousands of years to bring him to the condition that he is now in. The native has only been in contact with Europeans for practically 50 years.

The fault is not so much bad control of the natives as want of control.

13.12.1913

File 70, p. 176.

176 H.F. Fynn says the man who actually killed Mbulazi brought the assegai with which he did so to *Mbuyazi we tek* when at Walmesley's.³ This assegai Gwalagwala⁴ got later on, but it was looted or lost at Umsinga during the Boer War (1899-1901).

Notes

¹The 1906 disturbances in Natal.

²Under the system of responsible government established in Natal in 1893, the Secretary for Native Affairs was a Minister of the Crown appointed by the Governor, and did not have permanent tenure of office. The senior permanent official was the Under-Secretary.

³Mbulazi was a brother of Cetshwayo and his chief rival as claimant to the Zulu kingship. He was killed at the battle of Ndongakusuka in 1856. *Mbuyazi weTheku* ('Mbuyazi of the Bay') was the Zulu name for H.F. Fynn senior.

⁴The informant's Zulu name.