

NKANTOLO

4.12.1906

File 44, item 12, p. 6.

Also present: Socwatsha

6 <Causes of rebellion>. Nkantolo.

Cause. The poll tax (£1) being added to *rents on farms (imali ya mapulazi)*. At Mapumulo men say - long ago, before *the war* came; speak only at homes; do not send on to Pietermaritzburg - saying there is no one since Somsewu died to whom they can go and state their grievances, therefore they keep them to themselves.¹ How is it we, who are said to be government people, never get an opportunity of seeing and speaking to the government? *Our words come to nothing (ukukuluma kwetu ku buye ku tshabalale)*; we see no result. For here we suffer on account of the poll tax and hut tax.

Where is government land? - for all has been bought by Europeans. We pay government taxes, and yet on the other hand pay Europeans we know nothing of, men who are strangers to us.

We would be satisfied if we paid only the government tax - 14s.

I personally concur in these views

The trouble all started owing to there being no *leader (ingqwele)* who speaks for the whole people (*isizwe sonke*). It all began with Shepstone removed from his office.

Socwatsha: Ndube, Mbuzo, Luzindela and others objected.² *'We are not ruled properly for we see no man like Somsewu to whom we can report our complaints.'* C. Foxon, the magistrate, noted down all the men said. F. referred to Saunders, but men said, *'He has not told us that, he has taken over Shepstone's position and that our troubles must be reported to him.'*³

Nkantolo: The payment of rents is almost as great an evil as the poll tax; it comes almost up to it.

Magistrates are all right, but another man is necessary whom we can regard as our father to whom we can take our troubles.

Socwatsha: *The indinganiso basket is full.*⁴ *How shall we harvest a field as big as*

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this, in addition to all the other fields which we harvest? (I.e. hut tax, farms, dogs, bushes - we were cutting them when you came; they have never become finished.)

No sooner do we earn anything than it is pulled out of our mouths, just as we thought we would profit by it - tantalizing.

[Had poll tax been the first tax ever imposed in Natal, there would have been no rebellion - Socwatsha says this, in answer to me.]⁵

Notes

¹Maphumulo is a locality halfway between Kranskop and Stanger. Somsewu was Theophilus Shepstone, who was successively Diplomatic Agent to the Native Tribes and Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal from 1845 to 1876.

²Ndube was chief of the Magwaza, Mbuzo chief of a section of Ntuli, and Luzindela chief of a section of Dlomo, all in the Nkandla division.

³Charles Saunders held office first as Chief Magistrate and Civil Commissioner and then as Commissioner for Native Affairs in Zululand from 1897 to 1909.

⁴Bryant, Dictionary, p. 112, gives *indinganiso* as a kind of basket, 'about two feet or more in breadth...'

⁵The notes in parentheses occur in the original as a marginal insertion.