

SAUNDERS, C. R.

5.12.1906

File 67, item 12, pp. 3-5.

3 Sir C. R. Saunders, 5.12.1906.¹

There is no doubt the Holkrantz massacre of about 60 Boers by Zulus, during the recent Boer War, brought about an immediate change in the mind of the Zulus as regards the British, for though the British had scored victories, they had also suffered reverses at the hands of the Boers.² The rebellious spirit began then. The Zulus accordingly reasoned thus: If we can so easily defeat the Boers, who are almost equally matched with the English, the probabilities are that the latter are not as formidable as our fathers thought they were at the time of the Zulu War.

A commission was appointed to look into the matter (to clear or whitewash Shepstone), Major Mills being the only commissioner.³

From the beginning of the war the Zulus were told that they were in no way concerned in the war going on, as it was between the two white races, and that they should take no part unless actually attacked by the Boers.

Bottomley came down with the object of harassing the Boers by looting their stock, but instead of looting it himself got Zulus to do so whilst he merely supported them.⁴ The Zulus succeeded. The Boers came to the Zulus camped at Holkrantz, whereupon they were set onto, and almost every one of them was wiped out, all but one boy.

Papers in this matter are at Eshowe (there were many telegrams). Dinuzulu got only 11 or 12 guns, which he asked permission to keep. He was never called on to deliver up any guns, though such impression seems to have got abroad. At the same time D. said some of his people may have obtained guns, but he got no more than those mentioned. Dinuzulu's people might have 30 of these guns.

The question as to the Holkrantz guns has come up in regard to Stainbank's murder, there being some evidence to lead to the inference that the guns that were used were Holkrantz ones.⁵

It is the younger generation who have a lower estimation of English powers than before. The result of the Zulu war still impresses Zulus as to our undoubted superiority.

It would have been no use demanding the guns from Dinuzulu or sending to search unless such search would have been successful. Only act when sure of success

in finding what one wants.

- 4 The effect of the late Boer war was bad on Natives. The familiar way in which natives were treated by the soldiers (also immorality) engendered feelings of contempt. The Europeans were lessened in the eyes of the natives.

Levies. These did not want to turn out against Ngobizembe on the ground that they had paid their tax and did not see why they should be employed to compel others to pay.⁶ I recommended their not being employed at all, as half-hearted.

Poll tax widens the breach between the old man and the youth. It makes youths independent; they say, 'We have to pay our own taxes; you pay yours.'

It is a nuisance and annoyance to have to go and get a pass to ride a horse, especially if a man has (and is generally known to have) several.

Legislation is brought suddenly into force without Natives knowing anything about it. This arose at the time Responsible Government was brought in.⁷ Formerly magistrates were consulted, which shows that formerly there was a system.

The estimation of crops by the police is a suspicious innovation - causes a lot of irritation, information got is valueless. On taking the census, people were told that nothing else was intended but to let the King know the number of his *people (usapo)* etc.⁸ Natives said they thought something would follow such action but their fears were allayed. Now that the poll tax is imposed they regard us as having committed a distinct breach of faith as to what took place at the time of the census.

All Natives of Natal look to Dinuzulu as their head. He is however a creature of circumstances. He ought never to have been restored.⁹ The rebellion is the inevitable result.

Manzolwandhle is a good trump card against Dinuzulu.¹⁰ There should by rights be a civil war between Dinuzulu and Manzolwandhle, for succession is not guided by principle of law but by might.

Saunders, does not favour a general amnesty - all loyal people would feel distrustful.

What led to the breakdown of the rebellion as quickly as it did was because there was no proper organization.

- 5 There is bound to be a war later. The last rebellion is by no means an end to what we may expect.

There have been continuous breaches of faith since the Zulu War, because of change of policy - the Imperial Government is responsible.

It is iniquitous for the Government to take over the land of rebels. Lands might be vested in a trust; this would prevent a breach of faith with the Natives.

All the late rebels to be dispersed among different tribes.

The Prime Minister should control Native Affairs. Put the proposed commissioners under him.¹¹

SAUNDERS

Notes

¹Charles Saunders held office first as Chief Magistrate and Civil Commissioner and then as Commissioner for Native Affairs in Zululand from 1897 to 1909.

²At Holkrantz (Holkrans) or Mtatshana mountain near Vryheid, a force of abaQulusi heavily defeated a party of Boers in May 1902 during the final stages of the South African War.

³Arthur Shepstone was magistrate at Vryheid at the time of the fight at Holkrantz. Lieut.-Col. G.A. Mills was appointed by the British government to conduct an inquiry into the incident.

⁴Towards the end of the South African War of 1899-1902, a Col. Bottomley used African levies obtained from Dinuzulu to raid Boer farms on the borders of the South African Republic. On the ensuing controversy in official circles in Natal, see Stuart, Zulu Rebellion, pp. 484-5; Marks, Reluctant Rebellion, pp. 112-14.

⁵H.M. Stainbank, magistrate in the Mahlabatini district, was murdered near the White Mfolozi river in May 1906.

⁶Ngobizembe was chief of the Ntuli in the Mapumulo division.

⁷I.e. in 1893.

⁸The reference is to the Natal census of 1904.

⁹The British government's decision finally to allow Dinuzulu to return to Zululand from exile on St Helena was made in 1897. He arrived in Zululand in January 1898.

¹⁰Manzolwandle was Dinuzulu's brother and one of his main political rivals.

¹¹The Natal Native Affairs Commission of 1906-7 recommended the appointment of four district commissioners to supervise the colony's magistrates in their handling of 'native affairs'. The first appointments were made in 1909.