

CONFERENCE ON BANTU EDUCATION.GROUP DISCUSSION ON SCHOOL CURRICULA.

Chairman: Mr. M. T. Moerane.
Speaker: Mr. F. E. Auerbach.
Rapporteur: Dr. O. D. Wollheim.

Wollheim

Mr. Auerbach read an interesting paper in which he placed the subject under discussion in a wider context. He pointed to the ~~field~~ fields of tension in which curricula and syllabus building took place and the conflicting demands of the individual as against the community, the traditional as against the vocational.

The Group was very largely in sympathy with him in his insistence that African education had to be rooted in the African personality - but that this personality was more and more becoming an urban and not a rural and 'homelands' one.

The Group supported Mr. Auerbach's contention that the syllabuses were largely admirable. There was general agreement that too much was being crammed into too little time and the Group felt that certain subjects could possibly either be left out or pruned, alternatively that competition for timetable space might be avoided by teaching one group of subjects for a certain time - say 6 months or a year - and then another group tackled. In this way more time could be given to a subject resulting in more efficient teaching.

Both the speaker and the Group spent some time pressing the point that no matter how good the curriculum or the syllabus was, effective ~~teaching~~ ^{application} was impossible if certain other factors were not eliminated. These worked against a proper relation of pupil to school and made it impossible for any teacher to teach effectively.

Matters mentioned specifically were the urgent need for school feeding and infant nutrition, a request that the authorities should encourage ^{and not discourage} the establishment and running of nursery schools, improvement in the quality ^{and certification} of teachers, the elimination of double sessions, the reduction of the pupil load on teachers, the lack of libraries. The Group also supported the suggestion that non-Bantu teachers should offer to the ~~educational authorities~~ Bantu Education Department their services to help in Bantu schools.

There was considerable discussion on the ~~xxxxxxx~~ inclusion of Arts and Crafts, especially the forcing of boys to do certain craft work to which they objected. The Group was of opinion that such work should be encouraged and developed, but that other forms should be sought. One suggestion which found favour was that boys

might well be taught at such lessons the use of ~~tools such as~~ ordinary household tools (hammers, chisels, screwdrivers, etc.) and that the work might be directed towards helping them to improve their homes and do light general repairs.

Finally the Group endorsed a plea that the authorities should take a wider view of the African community. The African should not be regarded as a member of a rural group, but that the concept should be much wider to include the African as an industrialised urban man with developing and continually growing needs.

Collection Number: AD1715

SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS (SAIRR), 1892-1974

PUBLISHER:

Collection Funder:- Atlantic Philanthropies Foundation

Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive

Location:- Johannesburg

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