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Office of the Town Clerk
Kantoor van die Stadsklerk
JOHANNESBURG

My Ref./My Verw.

Your Ref./U Verw.245/6.....

6/6/1961

Sent to
Secy for Labour
" " Bantu Admin.
" " Bantu Educn.
b.e.
N.M.E. & D.
Comm. Staff Bd.

CONVERSION OF EUROPEAN POSTS TO
NON-EUROPEAN POSTS.

As you are aware correspondence has been in progress in connection with the above matter for the last two and a half years or so.

In spite of representations made by the Council including a request for a deputation to be received by the Ministers concerned, the Council has been advised that while "there is no objection to in-service training, where the trainee is at all times in direct contact with the people who are to benefit from his work, as in the case of a trainee employed on a building project on the site itself" workshop training undertaken in Municipal workshops cannot be allowed.

Another letter states that workshop training is not to be permitted unless the Bantu is in continuous direct contact with the Bantu public whilst working at his trade.

The Council has further been advised that under these circumstances the relevant Ministers feel that no good purpose would be served by their receiving a deputation.

The purpose of this letter is to suggest that there seems to be some confusion about this whole matter and to ask that a meeting should be arranged with the Secretaries for Labour, Bantu Administration and Development and Bantu Education and the Town Clerk, City Engineer, Manager, Non-European Affairs Department and the Chairman, Staff Board, in order to try and clarify the position.

This Council has always accepted that the Government's general policy is to employ non-Europeans in occupations in non-European areas. Wherever possible it has endeavoured to conform with this policy.

/ In ...

In February 1957, it approved of the employment of Bantu in Bantu areas as Road Constructors, Patrol Truck Drivers, Plant Operators, Drivers of Mechanical Night Soil Vehicles, Vacuum Tank Drivers etc., as well as Freight Transport Drivers and Overseers.

In April 1958, it further approved of the employment of daily-paid Bantu industrial workers in the Bantu areas in eleven trades including blacksmiths, boilermakers, electricians, motor mechanics, welders etc. At the same time it approved of the training of learners in these trades.

In a reply to a request for Government approval the Council was advised that as the skilled work in these workshops has all along been performed by White persons, and as no direct personal service is rendered to Natives, it is considered that the Council should continue to employ Whites on that work. This reply appeared to be somewhat contrary to what the Council had accepted as being Government policy.

The skilled work referred to consists mainly of the maintenance of vehicles, plant and machinery which is an essential ancillary to the services rendered in the laying of sewers, provision of water mains, construction of roads and stormwater drainage, refuse removal and maintenance of these services. It seems anomalous that the service itself should be permitted but that the maintenance of the equipment required to carry it out should be placed in a different category by your Department. This work has never been carried out by an approved establishment of Europeans but European artisans have been seconded from the city area pending the training of Bantu personnel.

It is desired to point out that in-service training does not involve the trainee being at all times in direct or continuous contact with the people who are to benefit from his work. The trainee employed on a building project on the site itself has no such contact as there is no member of the public on the site where he works. There is also no member on the site on which the plant operator or the road constructor works. The same position applies to the training of personnel in the trades under consideration.

It is possible that the list of trades specified by the Council and for which it sought Government approval was too comprehensive, but it is most necessary and indeed urgent in the opinion of the Council for the employment and training of Bantu in the trades of Motor Mechanics and Fitting and Turning as well as a number of other trades. Attention is drawn to the fact that Bantu have been trained and are being trained in these trades at the Government Institution at Vlakfontein. Presumably the only intention of so training them is to offer them a prospect of employment in the Bantu areas, as clearly if they cannot be employed there they cannot be employed anywhere else.

If necessary could not an Act on the same lines as the Building Workers' Act restrict their employment to the Bantu areas?

Similar letters have been sent to

and it would be appreciated if a discussion could be arranged as soon as the Parliamentary Session is over and you return to Pretoria.

If there is any further information you would like to have in the meantime I shall be only to glad to supply it.

Trusting to hear from you in the near future.

Yours faithfully,


TOWN CLERK.

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