RR. 25/57.

M.H.

SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS (INC.) SUID-AFRIKAANSE INSTITUUT VIR RASSEVERHOUDINGS (INGELYF)

P.O. Box 97,

JOHANNESBURG.

Posbus 97,

1st February, 1957.

ALEXANDRA AND PRETORIA BUS BOYCOTTS. STATEMENT BY THE S.A. INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS.

The S.A. Institute of Race Relations considers that whatever additional grievances lend strength to the bus boycott movement, its starting point is economic: the additional burden of 2d. a day to an underpaid working class population, the majority of whom can never balance budgets, means a further deprivation of food for undernourished families.

In 1944, after an exhaustive investigation, the Commission of Inquiry into the Operation of Bus Services for Non-Europeans came to the conclusion that, at that time, Africans could not afford the then suggested increased fare. The following figures are taken from that Report:-

	All Johannesburg Townships.	Alexandra Township.			
Minimum family expenditure necessary for health.	£12. 18. 6.	£12. 11. 11.			
Average family incomes.	£ 9. 18. 1.	£ 9. 17. 9.			
Monthly deficit.	£ 3 5.	£ 2. 14. 2.			

Since that time, while levels of wages have rison, levels of prices have also rison - and recent surveys have shown that the gulf between essential minimum expenditure and estimated income has widened. For example, using much the same basis of calculation as the 1944 Commission, the Institute obtained the following average figures for all Johannesburg townships and locations:-

	1950.	1954.
Minimum family expenditure		
necessary for health.	£17. 14. 4.	£23. 10. 4.
Average family incomes.	£12. 16. 6.	£15. 18.11.
Monthly deficit.	€ 4. 17.10.	€ 7. 11. 5.

Johannesburg Non-European Affairs Department conducted family income surveys in all townships and locations in 1952. The percentage of families with incomes below the essential health minimum was about 69% for Johannesburg as a whole. The income of close on one-half of the families (44 per cent) was below £15 per month.



distributive trade, and (excluding holiday pay and deductions for the services levy) up to about £13.14.0. in the building trade. These sums, representing the wages earned by the head of the family, are about half only of family requirements as calculated by the Institute.

Wages paid to the vast majority of labourers employed by the Municipality are even lower - £9.5.3. per month rising to £9.9.7. General unskilled labourers in Johannesburg, not covered by wage awards, agreements or determinations for specific industries, receive only £8.12.3. during the first year and thereafter £8.16.7.: this is in terms of a determination made in 1942 which has never been revised.

There is, therefore, the most urgent need to revise all unskilled African wage rates.

One of the most disastrous aspects of the existing deadlock is that it arises from the lack of contact and effective means of consultation between the urban Africans and those who regulate their conditions of life. The Institute of Race Relations urges that in the steps taken to end the boycott such consultation is imperative. By no other means, and certainly not by threats or force, will a solution acceptable to those concerned be found and submerged and subsidiary grievances become apparent.

While forms of intimidation frequently accompany boycotts and strikes, the Institute considers that it would be a grave error of judgment to attribute the solidarity of African feeling on this issue to terrorisation.

In view of these facts, the Institute considers that the boycott cannot be dismissed as a political movement and that there is a real need for objective inquiry into the position.

THE INSTITUTE THEREFORE SUGGESTS

- (a) THAT a judicial commission of inquiry be set up, consisting of representatives of industry, commerce, local governments, the government, and the African people, with terms of reference of the following nature. (The Departmental Committee on Transport Services for Non-Europeans may already have covered some aspects of such an inquiry):
 - i. the adequacy and efficiency of systems of road and rail transport for Africans in Johannesburg, Pretoria and the Reef;
 - ii. African wages in relation to essential working class standards of living;
 - iii. in light of (i) and (ii) the need, or otherwise, for the subsidization of transport services, or for the provision of other means of low-cost transport;
 - iv. the method of such subsidization or provision of low-cost transport as may be considered necessary;

- (b) THAT until such time as this suggested commission reports, which should not be more than six months, previous fares should be re-introduced and be subsidized by the government to cover losses incurred by PUTCO. The Institute points out that the sum involved will be small compared with the losses and dislocation which will be caused by a continuance of the boycott;
- (c) THAT industry, commerce, the African people, the local authorities concerned and the government together seek a solution along such lines.

4 February 19571

The Chairman,
Alexandra Township Bus
Boycott Committee,
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Sir.

The Institute of Race Relations is, as you know, very Concerned about the present boycott position and I write to ask whether your committee would meet with members of the Institute's Executive Committee to discuss the matter. A date and time of meeting could be arrenged to suit your convenience. I tentatively suggest Thursday, either at 5.30 p.m. in the Institute's offices, Auden House, 68 de Korte Street, Braamfontein, or at 8 p.m.; or, alternatively, on Thursday at 6 p.m. or 8 p.m. at my house, which is just off the Pretoria road, opposite the northern edge of Alexandra. This latter might be more convenient to your committee.

I enclose some copies of a statement which the Institute has drawn up. The Institute is not wedded to it, and it might serve as a basis for discussion.

If your Committee thinks it desirable, I will approach the President of the Chamber of Industries and the President of the Chamber of Commerce to be present at the meeting, but I shall await your Committee's advice as to the desirability of this.

I shall be grateful for an early reply.

Yours faithfully,

Quintin Whyte DIRECTOR The Hon. the Minister of Transport, House of Assembly, CAPE TOWN.

Dear Sir,

Enclosed is a statement issued by this Institute and I shall be grateful if you will give it some consideration. It would appear likely that the boycott will continue for some time unless some form of inquiry is initiated. From the figures in the memorandum it is clear that even the extra 2d. per day constitutes a considerable hardship when it is remembered that the budgets mentioned are based on minimum expenditure necessary for health.

While it is obvious that the boycott cannot go on indefinitely, the longer it does go on the greater the sense of grievance that will be engendered and the greater the danger of some incident giving rise to public disorder.

So not only because the economic position of the residents of Alexandra and elsewhere require consideration, but also because of the potential danger of the situation, I will be grateful if you would consider the position once more.

Yours faithfully,

Quintin Whyte DIRECTOR

Enclosure

The Secretary for Native Affairs, Department of Native Affairs, Parliament Street, CAPE TOWN.

Dear Sir,

I enclose a statement issued by the Institute and I shall be grateful if you will give it your consideration,

You will no doubt recall the boycott of 1944, which went on for six weeks. Then as now the people have shown the greatest discipline but my fear is that some incident, possibly arising from such police activity as pass checking, possibly from some accident, possibly from the irritation of tiredness, some public disorder may break out. I have already suggested to the Hon. the Minister of Justice that the police should not use the boycott situation for routine police activities about passes etc.: they would appear to be an unnecessary irritation in an already difficult situation.

The economic position of the people of Alexandra would seem to have deteriorated since 1944 when the then government, after consideration of the findings of the Commission of 1944, agreed to subsidise fares. The figures in the memorandum are not drawn only from Institute surveys but also from others, and they all do approximate pretty closely. To treat this boycott as an expression of political feeling only and not as a protest about economic disabilities, is to ignore past history and present conditions.

In 1944, if I remember rightly, the bus boycott went on for six weeks before the inquiry started. There is every likelihood that this one will pursue a similar course unless some inquiry is instituted and some compromise reached. If no such action is taken the boycott must come to an end some time, but I would be unhappy to think of the feeling of resentment of the African people at the end of it all.

I do hope that you will find it possible to advise your Minister to seek a solution along some such lines as those indicated in the memorandum.

Yours faithfully,

Quintin Whyte DIRECTOR

Enclosure.

6(a)

Geliews in u antwoord te verwys na In reply please quote

UNIE VAN SUID-AFRIKA.



UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

KANTOOR VAN DIE-OFFICE OF THE

3 8 8 164 e 18 3 1 3 1

Secretary for Native Affairs, Marks Building, CAPE TOWN.

图 4-2-1957

The Director,
South African Institute of Race Relations,
P.O. Box 97,
JOHANNESBURG.

Sir,

Alexandra and Pretoria Bus Boycotts: Statement by the S.A. Institute of Race Relations.

I wish to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th February, 1957, together with annexure, the contents of which have been noted.

Yours faithfully,

SECRETARY FOR NATIVE AFFAIRS.

FEB 1 8 1957

... white

Norah Taylor Studios

NORAH TAYLOR, L.T.C.L., L.O.S.M., L.R.A.M. (ELOC.), L.T.C.L. (SING.)

and Qualified Staff, including

VIVIENNE HARDING, L.T.C.L.; ADELAIDE DU RANDT, F.T.C.L., L.R.A.M.;
AND SONIA MYERS, L.T.C.L.

(Members of the S. African Guild of Speech Teachers)

SPEECH TRAINING . DRAMATIC ART

TELEPHONE 23-6962

33, RISSIK MANSIONS, RISSIK STREET, JOHANNESBURG.

MAR 1 3 1957

The Secretary,
The Institute of Race Relations,
P. a Box 1 gm,
Tohannes Burg

Deer Sir,

Race Relations I wish to see an end of the Those consideration of some use if placed before The right theople. O an effort should be made to explain matters to the women of the townships dwing week-days. (Women can influence public opinion & most women are ignorant of what is happening. My studio-maid (from Alexander Township) of my wash woman (from Sophiatown) have no neal knowledge of the facts of The case, Both were surprised to hear, of

Tof the offer of the penning se-fund on fares a more and prised that To her of the refusal -of the Offer.)

(2) a lond-speaker van should go up & down The main streets of the townships on Sundays explaining every-- thing in detail. (very few natives attend The public meetings, of holding any meeting in the evening is useless. (3) societings should be called in all churches, halls & public squares at a given time on a given day so that every person may have a chance of fearing to from of all argnements. (4) Help should be asked from the House-wives League - - Women's associations of every kind. (2, as a honsewife as well as a fusiness woman, here had enough of the Goy- cott of I feel sure that other women feel as I do,) Jam faithfully, hand lay h

Vellow boky

15th April, 1957.

The Secretary for Labour, Compensation House, 215, Schoeman Street, PRETORIA.

Dear Sir,

Many of us are very disturbed about the uncertainty of the position which exists in Johannesburg after the recent bus boycott. As you know the settlement reached is of a temporary nature and the subsidy from the Chamber of Commerce will come to an end in June. Should nothing be done in the meantime, we will probably be back where we were when the boycott began.

I am writing to you in the hope that your Department will consider the position and try to ensure that some immediate steps are taken. As you know the Wage Board takes up to eighteen months to make an investigation. A judicial commission of inquiry into wages, transport costs, etc. will also take a considerable time. While either or both should be undertaken, there is need for some quicker action to forestall any recurrence of recent events on the Reef and Pretoria.

There would appear to be various lines of action that could be taken :-

(a) A larger proportion of the Native Services Levy might be paid to PUTCO, even as a temporary measure without prejudice to future action.

There are certain difficulties attendant on this suggestion, however. Both Johannesburg and Pretoria have large housing schemes in hand. Should more be allocated from this Fund to transport, this might hinder the provision of services for such schemes. From published figures it is apparent that a sum considerably in excess of that accumulated in the Services Levy Fund will be required to finance the provision of services which have already been approved by the Minister of Native Affairs. Enabling legislation would have to be passed.

- (b) The Minister might be asked to raise the cost-of-living allowance payable to unskilled workers in the lowest income groups. Recent wage determinations have raised the wages of unskilled workers in certain occupations but general unskilled workers, including municipal employees, fall under Determination 105 which has not been revised since November, 1942.
 - Determination 170, Government Notice 2443 of November 1953, as amended by Government Notice 506, March 1955, lays down minimum wages for the Commercial and Distributive Workers trade. Minimum wages payable to adult general workers in Johannesburg are £2 a week (£8.13.4. a month). The cost-of-living allowance payable to individuals with basic wages of this amount is at present £3.19.1., making a total of £12.12.5. a month.
 - Under Determination 105, on the other hand, minimum wages payable to general unskilled workers are £1.7.0. a week in Johannesburg (and even less in Pretoria). If cost-of-living allowance at the present rate for this wage group i.e. 13/9 a week, is added, the monthly total works out at only £8.16.7.
 - In the Johannesburg Municipality the majority of unskilled workers receive £9.5.3. rising to £9.9.7. monthly. If the suggested increase of 6/-. a week in wages for daily paid workers is approved, the monthly total will be £10.11.3. rising to £10.15.7.
 - On the basis of average hours worked, Africans employed as unskilled workers in the building industry receive an average of about £13.14.0. including cost-of-living allowance but with holiday pay deducted. The lowest paid workers in the engineering industry receive about £11.12.1. including cost-of-living allowance.
 - It is quite obvious that unskilled wage rates must be revised but this will take time. Cost-of-living allowances have always lagged far behind the real increase in the cost-of-living and in any case they were pegged in March, 1953 when the retail price index was 188.9: it is now 208.5 (February, 1957).

Even if minimum wages including cost-of-living allowance were raised say to £12.12.5., - the minimum in the Commercial and Distributive workers trade - (see attached) it would be far below the minimum essential for healthy and decent family living. (See RR.67/57 "African Poverty"). A cost-and-management consultant recently employed by the Johannesburg Municipality calculated that "the absolute barest minimum" needed by a family of five is £21 a month. The Institute of Race Relations calculated this "barest minimum" at £25 or more a month.

Should the Minister decide to raise the cost-of-living allowances, he can do so at once; there is no need for legislation.

Very considerable relief would be given. Such a course of action would not, however, cover, for example, domestic servants, washerwomen, casual labourers, nor help school children who have to use the buses. For this reason, African leaders might not accept the suggestion. It would seem, nevertheless, to be a possible step.

- (c) A third suggestion is that legislation should be immediately introduced requiring every employer of African labour (except those paying wages above a set amount) to pay each worker an amount equal to any increase in fares charged for public transport. Employers paying a wage of £6 a week or over could be exempt in so far as the workers receiving these wages were concerned. This would appear the most feasible measure.
- (d) A fourth suggestion is that PUTCO, which is not a public utility company in the accepted sense, should be taken over as a non-profit company. The exemptions from licence fees and other taxation which such a company would enjoy, might enable it to run at a lesser cost than the present company.

Long-term measures must also be taken. The Minister has said that the question of wage rates for unskilled workers will receive priority, and it is hoped that the Wage Board will be enabled to give this matter immediate attention.

It is not, however, only a matter of wages. It would be preferable that Africans are able to pay economic transport out of adequate wages. But transport costs are unduly high owing to the long distances separating African residential areas from employment centres, and it would seem inevitable that Non-European transport will have to be subsidised in some form.

A Departmental Committee on Transport Services for Non-Europeans is shortly to report, but subject to this, the Institute of Race Relations urges that a judicial commission of inquiry be set up, consisting of representatives of the Department of Railways and Harbours, the Wage Board, the Central Native Labour Board, industry, commerce, local governments and the Non-European people, with terms of reference of the following nature:

To inquire into and report upon -

- (i) the adequacy and efficiency of systems of road and rail transport for Africans in the main industrial centres;
- (ii) African and Non-European wages in relation to essential working-class standards of living and the minimum wages that should be paid;
- (iii) in light of (i) and (ii) the need, or otherwise, for the subsidisation of existing transport services or for the provision of other means of low-cost transport;
 - (iv) the method of such subsidisation or provision of low-cost transport as may be considered necessary.

The Institute of Race Relations expresses the very sincere hope that the Government will take steps to meet both the short-term and the long-term situation. We shall be very glad to have an opportunity to meet with you to discuss the suggestions contained in this letter. Enclosed is a memorandum entitled "African Poverty" which is relevant to the matters discussed in this letter.

Yours faithfully,

Quintin Whyte,

Encl.

cc: Secretary for Native Affairs.

Professor N.J.J. Olivier, c/o S.A.B.R.A., Pretoria.

THE EFFECT OF RAISING COST-OF-LIVING ALLOWANCE TO BRING TOTAL MONTHLY WAGES TO A MINIMUM OF £12. 12. 5

Monthly pay		Present c.o.1.		Suggested c.o.l. allowance								
	Up to £4. 6	. 8.	£2. 6.	7.	Between	n#12.1	12.	5.	and	£8.	5.	9.
Over	£4. 6. 8. to	25. 8. 4.	£2.16.	4.	н	€8.	5.	9.	n	27.	4.	1.
11	£5. 8. 4. to	26.10. 0.	62.19.	7.	11	27.	4.	1.	п	26.	2.	5.
	£6.10. 0. to	27.11. 8.	£3.12.	7.		26.	2.	5.	н	25.	0.	9.
11	£7.11. 8. to	£8.13. 4.	23.19.	1.		25.	0.	9.	п	23.1	19.	1.

No worker would, thus, receive less than £12.12. 5. a month - the amount at present paid to adult general labourers in the distributive trade.

L.A.B. 49.

Telegrafiese Adres
Telegraphic Address

Alle briewe moet gerig word aan die SEKRETARIS VAN ARBEID.

All communications should be addressed to the SECRETARY FOR LABOUR.

3) For Verwy

Verwys in u antwoord asb. na:— In replying please quote:—

No. 1055.

UNIE VAN SUID-AFRIKA.-UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

DEPARTEMENT VAN ARBEID,
DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR,
ONGEVALLEGEBOU,
COMPENSATION HOUSE,
SCHOEMAN STR.,
PRETORIA.

4PA 29 1957

27-4-1957,

The Director, S.A. Institute of Race Relations, P.O. Box 97, JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Sir,

I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated the 15th instant. A further communication will be addressed to you in due course.

Yours faithfully,

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR.

Telegraphic Address ... ARBEID"

'Allc briewe moet gerig word aan die SEKRETARIS VAN ARBEID. All communications should be addressed to the SECRETARY FOR LABOUR.



Verwys in u antwoord asb. na:— In replying please quote:—

No. 1182.

UNIE VAN SUID-AFRIKA.-UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

She we have the compensation House, Schoeman STR

at Free. 194 man

1957

27 JUN 1957

DEPARTEMENT VAN ARBEID, DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR,

SCHOEMAN STR.,

PRETORIA.

27 JUN 1957

The Director, South African Institute of Race Relations, P.O. Box 97, JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Sir,

With further reference to your letter of the 15th April, 1957, I have to advise you that your suggestions relative to transport and the disposal of Native Service Levy Contributions, touch on matters wholly outside the scope of this Department's activities on which no comment can be made.

A reference to the Wage Board for the revision of Wage Determination No. 105 will be issued shortly. In this connection, however, it must be pointed out that only a relatively small number of Natives are subject to Wage Determination No. 105. Statistics show that, of an estimated number of 731,000 Natives employed on the Rand, approximately 25,000 only are covered by Wage Determination No. 105, i.e. 3.4%. The cost of transport is, in any event, only one of many factors taken into consideration before a recommendation is made by the consideration before a recommendation is made by the Wage Board.

The process of improving wages is a continuous New wage determinations and fresh industrial council agreements are constantly being made or negotiated so that the wages of all employees - including unskilled workers are continually under review. The interests of Native employees are safeguarded by the Central Native Labour Board and during 1956 the Board members and Native Labour Officers attended no less than 106 meetings of Industrial Councils as well as various public sittings of the Wage Increased minimum wages resulted in many Board. instances as a direct consequence of the Central Native Labour Board's representations.

The scale of cost of living allowances is a matter which receives regular consideration but, as you will appreciate, there are many aspects of the problem which require examination. A general increase in minimum allowances may, for example, have inflationary tendencies which may more than offset the increase. Moreover the constant adjustment of the wages prescribed in wage determinations and industrial council agreements frequently has the effect of increasing the cost of living allowances payable to employees, in that, the increases in wages which they receive have the effect of placing them in a higher cost of living allowance group. It is further desired to mention that there is nothing prohibiting employers from paying increased allowances in accordance with their capacity to pay and/or the productivity of the employees. In prescribing minimum cost of living allowances the Government has left the initiative for increased allowances in the hands of private enterprise.

In the light of the foregoing, it would seem doubtful whether a personal discussion of the matter with members of your Institute, as suggested by you, would serve a useful purpose.

Yours faithfully,

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR.

Public Utility Transport Corporation, Ltd.

MH

(REGISTERED OFFICE: CITY TRUST HOUSE, 106, FOX STREET, JOHANNESBURG)
(GERECISTREERDE KANTOOR: CITY TRUST GEBOU, FOXSTRAAT, 106, JOHANNESBURG)

HEAD OFFICE/HOOFKANTOOR
2ND AVENUE/2DELAAN, WYNBERG

PLEASE ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO THE CORPORATION AND NOT TO INDIVIDUALS ADRESSEER A.U.B. KORRESPONDENSIE AAN DIE KORPORASIE EN NIE AAN INDIVIDUE NIE

TELEPHONE 40-1211

TELEGRAMME "BUSUTILITY"

REF. NO.
VERW. NR.

P.O. Box/Possus 9571, JOHANNESBURG

28th June, 1957.

The Director,
S.A. Institute of Race Relations,
21 Stiemens Street,
Braamfontein,
Johannesburg.

Dear Sir,

I have to advise that with effect from Monday, lst July, 1957, the Corporation will revert to the weekday fares charged prior to the 7th January last, on the routes shown on the annexure attached hereto.

Yours faithfully,

T. H. FRITH

PUBLIC UTILITY TRANS ORT CORPORATION LIMITED

the the

PUBLIC UTILITY TRANSPORT CORPORATION LIMITED

SCHEDULE OF FARES EFFECTIVE AS FROM MONDAY, 1ST JULY, 1957.

(From Monday Mornings until 2.00 p.m. on Saturday (Public Holidays excluded)

JOHANNESBURG ROUTES

	Particulars of Route		New	
		Route Mileage	Cash Fare 1.7.57	Previous Cash Fare
1.	Alexandra - Noord St.	8.9 Miles	4d	5d
2.	Alexandra - Von Weilligh St.	9.5 "	6d	7d
3.	Bergvlei - Noord St.	8.0 "	6d	7d
4.	Alexandra - Germiston	16.6 "	9d	10d
	do - Primrose	14.1 "	7d	8d
	do - Solomon's Store	12.8 "	6d	7d
	do - Edenvale	11.2 "	4d	5d
	Germiston - Rietfontein	9.9 "	7d	8d
5.	Alexandra - Rosebank	5.5 "	4d	5d
6.	Alexandra - Denver	11.3 "	9d	10d
	do - Rosherville	14.3 "	1/-d	1/1d
	do - Kitchener Road	9.3 "	6d	7d
7.	Sophiatown/Western Native Township - City	5.5 "	3d	4d
3.	Sophiatown - Milner Park	3.5 "	3d	4d

OUR LETTER TO THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR

BUS BOYCOTT AND AFRICAN WAGES.

Extract from letter d.d. 27th May, 1957, from Prof. N.J.J.Olivier. (Translation.)

During the SABRA Conference Quintin handed me a copy of the Institute's letter to the Secretary for Labour, etc., about the bus boycott, and of the memorandum which the Institute sent with it.

In an accompanying letter he asked me whether SABRA could not perhaps support some aspects of the Institute's representations. I wish to say briefly that we have discussed the matter informally with a few M.Ps, etc, It would appear that it is unnecessary to take further steps, as draft legislation to solve the problem will be put to Parliament in the near future — in any case as far as the increase of bus fares is concerned. This information is confidential — although I assume that you have already heard about it. I would have liked to give you more details how, but I am not in a position to do so at this stage. I am inclined to think that the proposed measure — at least to meet the short-term problem — will satisfy the Institute and us. Do tell Quintin that this is my opinion.

co chile

11 July 1957.

Secretary for Labour, Department of Labour, Compensation House, Schoeman Street, PRETORIA.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter No. 1182 of 27 June, 1957. We are glad to note that Wage Determination No. 105 is to be revised shortly, and that the Native Transport Services Act has been passed.

Yours faithfully,

Quintin Whyte DIRECTOR

Collection Number: AD1715

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

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