

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

36.318

MEMORANDUM OF EVIDENCE SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY  
INTO BROADCASTING SERVICES.

oOo

INTRODUCTION.

1. In submitting this memorandum the Institute is anxious to draw the attention of the Commission to the need for providing an adequate and attractive broadcasting service for the Non-European population of the Union. The war, which has widened the horizon and interests of Non-Europeans very considerably, the spread of education, the greater contact, of the African particularly with Western civilization, have awakened in the Non-European not only a spirit of inquiry but an intense desire to share in facilities and opportunities available in all fields to the European. The increasing influx of the African to towns where few of the tribal taboos and conventions hold good have left him bewildered in an environment which is strange, and for which his traditional mode of life is unsuited. He receives little or no instruction and guidance to help him to adapt himself to his new surroundings, with the result that his urban home life and leisure time is used unprofitably to himself.
2. Government report after government report has stressed the appalling conditions under which the urban Non-European lives - extreme poverty, unhealthy conditions of living, illiteracy, ignorance, superstition, and delinquency which has mounted in recent years. To combat this, government departments and voluntary organizations have set to work. Films, posters, lectures, pamphlets have been made use of and all directed towards an improvement of conditions. The radio has been used but little.
3. The Institute therefore feels that the radio has an important part to play in meeting -
  - (a) the desire of the Non-European for improved leisure-time amenities,
  - (b) the desire of the Non-European for knowledge and information, and in combating.
  - (c) the unattractive conditions in which he lives.

It is considered that the South African Broadcasting Corporation has a positive constructive function to perform in the field of adult education as well as an obligation to provide a truly national service. The Broadcasting Act No. 22 of 1936 by implication lays down that a national service be provided. The South African Broadcasting Corporation cannot be said to do so at present.
4. In this memorandum, attention has been devoted primarily to the urban African. The difficulties to be met by the South African Broadcasting Corporation in attempting to reach the rural Africans are recognised as extremely great and that special means will have to be adopted by the government should it wish to use the radio in rural areas, for example, in connection with soil erosion, agriculture, health, diet and so on. The Institute has relied on a survey carried out in 1943 in the Transvaal by Dr. Hilda Kuper, Dr. B.W. Vilakazi and Mr. E. Westphal: copy of the report on this survey which dealt with the position in urban areas, is attached. (Misc.5/43).
5. This preliminary research has made apparent that in 1943, Africans were already interested in broadcasting and that there were a number of listeners to "A" and "B" programmes. It cannot be doubted that the interest has increased and that the number of wireless sets in urban areas has grown over the intervening years. It is equally certain that there is a large potential audience for the South African Broadcasting Corporation which, as a public utility organization, should cater for all sections of the community.

Throughout this memorandum it is assumed that the "A" and "B" transmissions will provide for the Cape Coloured community and that the Natal studios will make provision for Indian listeners.

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

TERM OF REFERENCE 1.

" To consider whether the organisation and functions of the South African Broadcasting Corporation, under existing legislation, satisfactorily serve the broadcasting needs of the Union, and to recommend in what way, if any, such organisation and functions may be improved, if necessary by amending legislation. "

6. As already mentioned, the service which the South African Broadcasting Corporation is expected to provide is a national one directed to all sections of the population. At present, apart from 75 minutes per week given over to the "Native broadcast" on certain mornings, the usual programmes are directed towards the majority of literate or semi-literate Europeans. It cannot be said therefore that the present services for Africans are at all adequate.

7. These "Native" broadcasts are given over to news, talks, and a few musical items and it is suggested that the content of the programmes is as inadequate as the time devoted to them.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT --

the South African Broadcasting Corporation should now reconsider its functions in relation to the Non-European people in the light of post-war conditions and in view of the factors pointed out in paras. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and that it should organise its services in light of the recommendations made in this report.

Under the Broadcasting Act of 1936 it is competent for the South African Broadcasting Corporation to do so.

8. Section 2 of the Act of 1936 provides for not more than 9 and not less than 7 governors to be appointed by the Governor-General for a period not exceeding 5 years. The policy to date has been to give, as far as possible, equal representation to the English and Afrikaans sections of the community. No Governor has yet been appointed because of his special knowledge of, and interest in, the needs of Non-European interests. In view of the generally accepted principle observed not only by the government, but also by nationally organised bodies, and in view of the recommendations made in this report,

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT --

at least two of the Governors of the South African Broadcasting Corporation should be appointed for their special knowledge of, and interest in the needs of the Non-European population in broadcasting.

9. Section II of the Act deals with the establishment of local advisory councils at Johannesburg, Pretoria, Capetown, Grahamstown, Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Bloemfontein and at such other places as the South African Broadcasting Corporation may from time to time decide. Such councils may appoint advisory sub-committees. It would appear that Non-European listeners are not represented in any way on such committees. In view of the probable developments in broadcasting services for Africans and in view of the recommendations contained in this memorandum,

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT --

due consideration be given to Non-European interests in the setting up of such local councils, either by direct representation or by the appointment of separate committees.

No amendment of the Act is necessary,

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

TERM OF REFERENCE 2. (i).

"To consider whether the existing technical equipment of the South African Broadcasting Corporation is adequate to enable the Corporation to supply satisfactory broadcasts to all parts of the Union and to recommend what improvements might be made. "

10. The Institute in this memorandum is primarily concerned with the African urban population. The provision of adequate broadcast services to the Africans will depend on expansion of existing technical facilities. Elsewhere in this memorandum are recommendations which involve the acquisition of technical equipment by the South African Broadcasting Corporation. It has been pointed out how inadequate the present services for Non-Europeans are, particularly for Africans and it has been suggested that the African population must be adequately catered for. To do so the Institute

RECOMMENDS -

- (a) the introduction of a re-diffusion service (see paras.39-44),
- (b) the establishment of separate transmitters for Non-European programmes, particularly for Africans.

11. If broadcasts for Africans are to be successful then it is important that these broadcasts take place at the best time for them. To ascertain this an investigation should be carried out but it is suggested that the best time for African listeners is also the best time for European listeners, namely 6 - 9 p.m., since this is when the majority of urban Africans are free. These hours, 6 - 9 p.m., are likely to be the busiest at any South African Broadcasting Corporation studio, and the tendency will be for the Non-European broadcast to suffer from lack of studio space. Present Sunday morning broadcasts would appear to be very popular. (see paras. 23 and 31).

IT IS THEREFORE RECOMMENDED THAT -

adequate studio accommodation be provided for all services to eliminate the possibility of Non-European broadcasts suffering through inadequate studio space.

12. Recommendations have been made later about programmes, personnel and personnel training. It has been suggested that Non-European announcers and artists should be used for Non-European broadcasts. As it is possible that there will not be a sufficiency of really first-class Non-European talent to provide all local studios with programmes of the high standard required.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT -

the service for Africans have its origin in Johannesburg which has the largest concentration of urban Africans and where it is likely that the greatest amount of African talent can be secured.

IT IS ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT -

the Durban studio make provision for Indian broadcasts with Indian personnel.

13. It is felt that the Coloured population are adequately catered for by the present "A" and "B" transmissions which, however, might be re-diffused in such areas as Capetown.

For consideration of the technical equipment required for re-diffusion and Non-European broadcasts, see later.

TERM OF REFERENCE 2. (ii).

"To report upon the desirability or otherwise of establishing a powerful central broadcasting station to enable listeners particularly in African territories and in overseas countries, to receive transmissions from such station. "

14. At present there exists very great ignorance of conditions and developments in all African territories and it is desirable that in all fields there should be harmonious development and an interchange of ideas, e.g. health, housing, education and cultural activities. It is certain that a powerful transmitter would play a very large part in such enlightenment and exchange of information if the programmes to be broadcast were used at least in part towards that end. The Institute, however, hesitates to recommend the establishment of such a station if it be used for the propagation of prevailing ideas on the place of the Non-European in society and the extension of the Union's present Native policy.

THE INSTITUTE DOES RECOMMEND HOWEVER,

that the provision of broadcast services for Africans in the Union should rank higher in priority than the establishment of any such station.

-----oO-----

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

TERM OF REFERENCE 3.

"To enquire into the proposals of the South African Broadcasting Corporation to institute, in addition to its existing broadcast services, a service of commercial broadcasting, and to make recommendations as to --

- (i) The general policy to be followed to afford advertisers full scope to originate and develop their programmes along healthy competitive lines.
- (ii) Whether the existing machinery is adequate to carry such policy into effect. "

15. In 1943, the question of broadcasts for Africans was discussed by the Institute of Race Relations, the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the South African Broadcasting Corporation and the Director of the South African Broadcasting Corporation. The representatives of the Broadcasting Corporation stated that as soon as possible after the war it was hoped to introduce a third transmitter to be used largely for African broadcasts.
16. In 1945 the public was informed that a third transmitter was to be introduced for commercial broadcasts; no mention was made of a service for Africans. According to a statement by the Director of the South African Broadcasting Corporation in December 1945, this decision was made as a result of many requests to allow radio advertising, and was designed to meet "the legitimate claims of the commercial community". The Corporation will assist advertisers in providing programmes when and where required, but, it is submitted, its main function should be to ensure the taste and standard of the advertising matter; in other words, to act as censor.
17. It appears, however, that certain sections of the commercial community are not prepared to hand over control of commercial broadcasting to the South African Broadcasting Corporation lest their programmes and their independence be restricted.
18. In June 1946, the Director announced that equipment had already been ordered, and it is clear that commercial broadcasts, whether or not under the direct control of the Broadcasting Corporation will be instituted. Already the Corporation is drawing up a code of advertising ethics.
19. It is submitted that the claims of the African community are at least as legitimate as those of the commercial world, though these claims are not based on the financial contribution which the Africans can make to the Corporation, but on the needs of the Africans for entertainment and education.
20. It is believed that the funds at present at the disposal of the Corporation are insufficient for the adequate development of the present services. This position would be further aggravated should a service for Non-Europeans be instituted for the latter would have to be financed either out of the revenue of the Corporation or from other sources, such as a government subsidy. It is also understood that the South African Broadcasting Corporation, hopes, by means of commercial broadcasting, to obtain funds to allow of greater development.
21. The Non-European people of 8 million at present, exercise a very considerable demand for goods of all description and it is expected that in the future the very great latent or potential demand will become more and more effective. Commercial broadcasting will presumably be devoted in part towards this Non-European market and the Institute feels that considerable care must be taken with radio advertising for Non-Europeans. The latter, like many Europeans, can easily become the victims of advertisers. The Non-European people at the present moment require to be educated in standards of healthy living and to create false standards through the medium of radio advertising would be most undesirable. It has been found, for example, that to obtain what might be termed luxury goods and services the African will reduce expenditure on food with consequent ill results not only to himself and his family but also to his efficiency as a worker. The Institute therefore feels very strongly that advertisements directed towards the African population should be closely scrutinised to ensure that only suitable advertisements be allowed. It also feels that in any advertising broadcasts care should be taken to make sure that the susceptibilities of the African people be not in any way hurt. The Institute would like to stress these points.

The Non-European is feeling his inferior status more keenly than ever, and it is important for harmonious race relations that no unnecessary aggravation of racial tensions be permitted.

THE INSTITUTE THEREFORE RECOMMENDS -

- (a) that, although opposed in principle to a priority for a "C" service over a service for Africans, should such a "C" service be initiated, contemporaneously a service for Africans should be inaugurated,
- (b) that part of the time of the commercial service should be given over to African listeners,
- (c) that the strictest control should be exercised over the advertisements put over the air,
- (d) that due regard should be paid to the susceptibilities of the Non-European people,
- (e) that the maximum possible fixed percentage of the profits accruing from commercial broadcasts should be devoted to the development of the Non-European service.

-----oO-----

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

TERM OF REFERENCE 4.

"To consider the means for a sustained attraction of local talent to the service of the South African Broadcasting Corporation and to report upon the advisability of extending facilities at existing institutes, or, alternatively, establishing a new central institution for the training of radio announcers, technicians, script writers, producers, artists, etc., attention being given particularly to language requirements in relation to paragraph 2 (ii).

22. So far there is no training centre for African radio announcers, technicians, etc. The only institution known which trains talent for dramatic work and the services required by the South African Broadcasting Corporation is Capetown University. The demand has not been felt for the training of Africans in this field and perhaps Capetown with its liberal policy could accept a few competent Africans to be trained in its studios.
23. The Durban branch of the South African Broadcasting Corporation has a full-time African announcer, writer and producer by the name of Edward Masinga. His presence on the staff has won the sympathy and admiration of all those who tune in every Sunday at 10 a.m. Most of the African people always look forward to this time much more than any other, because they are free to listen in. Without any training, Masinga has succeeded in setting up a certain standard for vernacular one-act plays and has organised a permanent group of local artists who broadcast every Sunday morning. These artists are local teachers who concentrate on singing every obtainable African composition and also in producing Masinga's plays. There has been built in Durban African society a sort of "hearth-side" criticism of the programmes by the African and this helps to set a standard.
24. In Johannesburg local talent could be encouraged in the same manner, i.e. by employing full-time announcers who do not only the mechanical work of announcing, but can also write original scripts, produce, discover talent and contact those who are already organised.

There will have to be two announcers to cater for Zulu and Sotho. Under Zulu will be included Xhosa, Ndebele, Swazi, and Baca, and under Sotho will be included Southern and Northern Sotho and Tswana. Shangaan and Venda people easily fall in within both Sotho and Zulu.

25. The existence in Johannesburg of such artistes' companies as Sentso's Synco Fans, Motsoeloa's de Pitch Black Follies, Makhanya's Minstrels, Maimai's Male Voice Party and the musical bands like those of Rezant, the Merry Black Birds, Zulu Boy's Jazz Maniacs (the latter has on several occasions played for the University Rag) and many others within the city, are sufficient proof that local talent is plentiful.
26. There are not only organized groups but individual artistes, singers like Misses Lily Molahloe, Agnes Sibisi, Mrs. Lesoland, Messrs. Edward Manyosi, G. Mohale, Pahse, and many other artists in vocal music. At the piano there are players like Mark Radebe, Jacob Moeketsi, Michael Mlahleki and Miss Faith Galuza. Many of these artistes can be seen every December during the Transvaal African Eisteddfod. Composers of original music like Messrs. Tutu (of the Y.M.C.A.), Mlisa, Mkhize (of the Wesleyan school Pretoria) Marivathe and others await a chance to demonstrate their talent. Besides the educated talent there are groups singing indigenous African songs at the Bantu Sports Hall and in many location halls throughout the Reef. Without a full-time African staff the beginning will be difficult. While a training of a selected few may be undertaken by Capetown University to deal later with matters of announcing, script writing and correcting, producing plays and giving of guidance to aspiring artists, there is an urgent need for two full-time Africans on the staff of the South African Broadcasting Corporation.

THE INSTITUTE THEREFORE RECOMMENDS -

- (a) The full-time appointment to the staff of the S.A. Broadcasting Corporation of two Africans to act as announcers and to organise local talent.

(b)/.....

- (b) The training of Africans in radio work at the Capetown studio, in collaboration with the University of Capetown.
- (c) The employment of such Africans by the South African Broadcasting Corporation as script writers, producers, etc.
- (d) If full-time training facilities are instituted by the South African Broadcasting Corporation, these facilities be extended to all races.
- (e) Full use of local African talent such as indicated above.

-----oO-----



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

TERM OF REFERENCE 5 (1).

"To invite criticism of and suggestions on existing programmes for radio listeners, to consider such criticisms and to recommend in what ways the programmes can be made more widely popular. "

27. The existing programmes for African listeners are quite inadequate both with regard to the length of time devoted to them and to their content. The following criticism, based on reports from African listeners, are directed against the existing service -
28. (a) Arrangement and Length of Programmes -
- At present the broadcasts for Africans from the Johannesburg studios consists of three broadcasts per week of 25 minutes each; 5 minutes of each broadcast are taken up by opening and closing marches, leaving only 20 minutes for each programme proper, or a total of 1 hour per week. In view of the needs of Africans this is insufficient.
29. The present programmes appear to be a hotch-potch of items slung together without any consideration for the tastes of the listeners. Music of different types is crowded into 25 minutes at each session. The opening march may be followed immediately by jazz or Afrikaans music, then music in the vernacular (traditional or modern), then a negro spiritual and then the closing march. Occasionally, a talk on some important topical matter e.g. bread rationing, is interspersed. Such hit-and-miss arrangements are not popular. A more homogeneous type of programme would prove more acceptable to African listeners, e.g. a whole session might be devoted to negro spirituals by the "Golden Gate Quartet" and another to traditional folk-songs. The introduction of a full service for Africans would involve an investigation into the wishes and needs of the African people and attention is drawn to the recommendations made later.
30. (b) Unsuitability of Times -
- The value of the 75 minutes per week is further reduced by the unsuitability of the times allocated to the broadcasts i.e., 9.45 - 10.10 a.m.,. Most of the would-be African listeners are at work, and the only ones who can benefit from the programmes are African housewives (if they have sets), domestic servants (if their employers allow them to listen), schools (if they can afford radio sets) and mine-workers who are off shift (if there is a radio in the compound). The masses of Africans are engaged in commerce and industry at this time and are not in a position to listen in.
31. The unsuitability of the time has for the same reasons an adverse effect on the employment of local talent for these programmes. It is obvious that the present times are aimed at interfering as little as possible with the regular "A" and "B" programmes for European listeners. It is probable that the most suitable times for the majority of would-be African listeners coincide with the times suitable for European listeners. For Durban it was found that Sunday mornings were, under the present system, the most popular times for African listeners. The only satisfactory solution would appear to be the institution of a separate transmission for African broadcasts. Grahamstown used to broadcast a programme of Bantu music which was relayed from Johannesburg every Saturday at 8 p.m. This is a most suitable time for African listeners. In the provision of programmes it must also be borne in mind that among the African population there are four main language groups, Nguni, Sotho Venda and Tonga, and that Nguni has two major dialects, Zulu and Xhoso, while Sotho has three equally important dialects namely, Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho and Tswana. To start with either Zulu or Xhoso and either Northern or Southern Sotho would suffice to serve the African listeners.
32. (c) Subject Matter -
- The following types of programmes are recommended:-
- (i) Traditional Music - folk-songs and negro spirituals.
  - (ii) Modern Vernacular Music - modern Bantu compositions.

- (iii) Jazz and Light Music - including jazz records sung in the vernacular.
- (iv) Short plays - and sketches in the vernacular.
- (v) Literary -
  - (a) Poetry in the vernacular, English and Afrikaans.
  - (b) Extracts from books in vernacular, English and Afrikaans to stimulate reading.
  - (c) Sketches and plays and the encouragement of writing these by competitions.

(vi) Talks -

- (a) Popular talks in the vernacular on current events.
- (b) Talks on health, hygiene, every-day science, etc.
- (c) Talks on Race Relations, community service, civics etc.

THE INSTITUTE RECOMMENDS -

that the South African Broadcasting Corporation be asked to set up a Committee of Africans (and in Natal of Indians) to advise on the content of programmes and to undertake research into the wishes and needs of African (and Indian) listeners, not only with regard to programmes, but with regard to the many matters dealt with in the recommendations of this memorandum.

33. With regard to the programme at present broadcast on "A" and "B" transmissions, the Institute feels that something positive could be done by the Corporation to promote better racial understanding in the Union. Basic to such racial prejudice is ignorance, and informative talks, for example on the origin, customs, folk-lore etc., of the various Non-European people could be given and traditional music of the various groups relayed. Similarly, the African could be given a better understanding of European thought and culture. In this way it is felt that the Corporation could contribute constructively in the field of race relations.

THE INSTITUTE THEREFORE RECOMMENDS -

that the attention of the Corporation be drawn to the possibilities of providing on its "A" and "B" transmissions informative talks on the Non-European peoples of the Union and short programmes of traditional African and Indian music for European listeners, making use of local Non-European talent.

TERM OF REFERENCE 5. (ii).

"To report on the practicability of setting up machinery to afford listeners regular opportunities to present their views on broadcast programmes and to recommend what form any such machinery should take. "

34. The present Local Advisory Councils are quite ineffectual bodies. In the first place, extremely few listeners are aware of the existence of the Local Councils, and secondly, those who are aware of their existence do not bother to send in criticisms and suggestions to the Council, for they know that no publicity is ever given to these. Local Councils should be required to submit a full monthly report to the Director and the Board of Governors, this report to be published in full in the press. Further, the Corporation itself should keep the public fully informed, by means of the Press, of its proposals, and "Radio News" should contain an open column for listeners' criticisms. It is believed that spontaneous opinion as it finds expression in letters etc., is often not a true index to the feelings of listeners as a whole. It is felt, therefore, that the Corporation should establish some form of listener research department should funds permit. It is understood that such research if continuously carried on is very expensive; the South African Broadcasting Corporation has recently made an appointment in the person of Mr. Hastings Beck and presumably this is a prelude to greater activity in this field.

35. With regard to Non-Europeans, it is realised that little can be done because it is not known for example how many Non-European listeners there are and it is doubtful whether at the moment there are enough African listeners to provide a true sample of the wishes of the African people. Inquiries would, however, have to be made and the views of Africans qualified to speak ascertained. It has already been suggested (para.9) that a committee of Africans be set up.

36. Local Advisory Councils do not represent Non-European interests in any way. It is felt that each local council should have at least two members representing such interests especially in urban areas where a re-diffusion service has been established.

IT IS THEREFORE RECOMMENDED THAT -

- (a) the South African Broadcasting Corporation undertake such a survey as is possible of Non-European listening interests.
- (b) representation of Non-European interests be allowed for in the composition of local advisory councils. (see para. 9).
- (c) that such local councils submit reports to the Director of the South African Broadcasting Corporation and the Board of Governors and that full publicity be given to such reports.
- (d) "Radio News" should have an open forum for listeners' criticisms.

-----oOo-----

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

TERM OF REFERENCE 6.

" To report upon the possibilities of linking up broadcasting with films of a South African cultural character in such a way as to provide the nation, through the medium of films and broadcasts, with programmes having a South African background and designed to stimulate South African sentiment and exalt South African traditions. "

37. The Institute has no evidence to offer in relation to this term of reference. It would, however, respectfully draw the attention of the Commission to the fact that a South African background, South African sentiment, and South African traditions, involve all sections of the community and that the exaltation of any one particular set of traditions will react unfavourably upon race relations in the Union. The Institute wishes to point out that the background, the sentiments, and the traditions of the Non-European people of South Africa may be in conflict with those of either of the European sections of the community. In view of the possible ill-effects on race relations in South Africa respectful regard should be had for the views and feelings of the Non-European peoples of the Union.

THE INSTITUTE RECOMMENDS THAT -

No such steps should be taken unless it can be ensured that no offence can be given to any racial group in the country.

38. The Institute would, draw the attention of the Commission to the possibility of linking up broadcasts with films of an educational and informative nature. The Report of the Adult Education Commission makes mention of this.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT -

The South African Broadcasting Corporation pursue this matter in conjunction with the Union Education Department, Adult Education Division, particularly with reference to Non-Europeans.

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

TERM OF REFERENCE 7.

"To inquire into and report upon the benefits or otherwise to be gained from the establishment in the Union of a re-diffusion (or wired-wireless) service, to consider the value of such a service as a means of providing suitable programmes of entertainment and information for Natives living in Native locations, compounds and townships and to advise the Government as to the course of action which it should adopt generally in relation to re-diffusion. "

(a) General -

39. It is understood that the South African Broadcasting Corporation has already made a thorough investigation into the technical aspects of this question from the point of view of being able to introduce such a service into Native townships and other Non-European areas. It is also understood that there is a re-diffusion company already represented in South Africa and that it hopes to introduce this method of broadcast.
40. Undoubtedly very considerable expense will be involved as most Native township houses are not wired for electricity and have only street lighting. There would appear to be two ways of introducing such a service. The first is for the Corporation to undertake to do so; but as the initial outlay would be very great it is unlikely that the funds of the Corporation would permit of the service being introduced in many urban areas. It is therefore suggested that should the Corporation be asked to provide this form of service the government should be asked to provide an adequate subsidy for the purpose.
41. The second method to achieve introduction of "wired-wireless" would be for the government to give the right to a company to provide the service in such conditions as would ensure that the listeners received adequate service for a fee within their means. It is believed that in other countries companies do supply re-diffusion services under permit. Should this service be given to a company to carry out, it is suggested that it will be essential to ensure not only that the fees charged are reasonable but that the programmes re-diffused are suitable. In view of the racial composition of the Union, the varied nature of the vernaculars used, the lack of a sufficient number of good African and other artists, it is felt that this service could be more economically provided by the Corporation itself, particularly if municipalities, in their building programmes for Native housing were asked to co-operate by ensuring that each Native house had the wiring required for the service.
42. In making the recommendation that a re-diffusion service be introduced, the Institute bears in mind, as pointed out earlier (para.2) that the standard of living of the bulk of the Non-European population does not permit of its acquiring expensive wireless sets and maintaining them. While it would prefer to see Non-Europeans owning their own sets with which they could receive any broadcast programmes, it realised that in the present economic state of the Non-European peoples in urban areas this is impossible for the vast majority. It, however, wishes to draw the attention of the Commission to the desirability of providing a separate transmitter for an African service. Such a transmitter would be picked up by the Africans who were not on the re-diffusion lines, and it is certain that the number of Africans with sets will increase materially in the future.
43. It has been suggested elsewhere in order to ensure programmes of high standard that there should be a central studio for African broadcasts e.g. in Johannesburg. For purposes of re-diffusion in, say, Port Elizabeth, it is understood that there are three methods which can be adopted -
- (a) that a direct transmission can be picked up and re-diffused,
  - (b) that land lines can be used, in which case a separate transmitter would be unnecessary and,
  - (c) that recordings could be taken at the central studio and despatched to the various urban centres for re-diffusing.

The Institute is not sufficiently familiar with the technicalities involved but it would stress the desirability of enabling those listeners who can afford to use wireless sets to link up the broadcast direct and not be compelled to buy re-diffusion to enjoy the programmes specially intended for them as well as those who cannot afford sets. It is believed that the future will see the production of cheap broadcast sets specially intended for the lower income groups. It is desirable that such production should be encouraged, but should the African service not have a separate transmitter to cover, for example, the Johannesburg area, the African population will naturally be discouraged from buying even cheap sets. It should be noted that there is a growing middle class of Africans who can afford good sets.

44. The main advantages of a re-diffusion service for Africans are obvious. It will bring entertainment within the reach of thousands of urban Africans at low cost. It will fill a long neglected gap in their leisure-time. It will be an important factor in counteracting those conditions which give rise to lawlessness and crime. It will play an invaluable part in the education of adult urban Africans, particularly in matters of health, diet, hygiene and so on. It will also be of tremendous use in dealing with illiteracy amongst Africans particularly if co-ordinated with other measures which can be taken to deal with this problem: the Union Education Department would undoubtedly co-operate in any such scheme.
45. In providing this service, attention is drawn to the report attached, where it is stated that re-diffusion through one large loudspeaker in a compound is undesirable and ineffective. Where large groups are to be dealt with as in compounds or hostels, it is far better to have a number of small speakers in smaller rooms rather than one loud half-unintelligible bellow.
46. Finally, throughout this memorandum particular attention has been paid to the needs of the African and less attention to those of both Indian and Coloured. It is assumed that the Coloured population are catered for by the present "A" and "B" programmes and that the South African Broadcasting Corporation studios at Durban and Pietermaritzburg will, concurrently with the establishment of an African broadcast service, cater for the needs of the Indian population in that region. Any re-diffusion service, however, must take into consideration the needs of these two sections of the population.

THE INSTITUTE THEREFORE RECOMMENDS THAT -

- (a) a separate transmitter be set up for broadcasts to the African population,
- (b) a re-diffusion service to cater for the needs of all Non-European sections of the population in urban areas be inaugurated.
- (c) the government be asked to subsidise such service if necessary.
- (d) the South African Broadcasting Corporation seek the co-operation of the appropriate government departments particularly for the carrying out of the educative part of the programmes,
- (e) the government be asked to encourage the production of cheap receiving sets by South African manufacturers.

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

TERM OF REFERENCE 8.

"To examine the provision of the Broadcasting Act No.22 of 1936 and to report on their inadequacy or otherwise in the light of the recommendations made in respect of the foregoing terms of reference and to state specifically what amendments, if any, are considered necessary."

47. All the recommendations of the Institute in respect of the foregoing terms of reference can be put into effect under the existing provisions of the Act. No amendments are considered necessary, and it is strongly urged that no amendment should be considered which would result in differential treatment of European and Non-European.

-----oO-----

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

48. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS :

- (1) The South African Broadcasting Corporation should now reconsider its functions in relation to the Non-European people in the light of post-war conditions and in view of the factors pointed out in paras. 1,2,3,4,5,6, and that it should organise its services in light of the recommendations made in this report.
- (2) At least two of the Governors of the South African Broadcasting Corporation should be appointed for their special knowledge of, and interest in the needs of the Non-European population in broadcasting.
- (3) Due consideration be given to Non-European interests in the setting up of such local councils, either by direct representation or by the appointment of separate committees.
- (4) The introduction of a re-diffusion service (see paras. 39-44).
- (5) The establishment of separate transmitters for Non-European programmes, particularly for Africans.
- (6) Adequate studio accommodation be provided for all services to eliminate the possibility of Non-European broadcasts suffering through inadequate studio space.
- (7) The service for Africans have its origin in Johannesburg which has the largest concentration of urban Africans and where it is likely that the greatest amount of African talent can be secured.
- (8) That the Durban studio make provision for Indian broadcasts with Indian personnel.
- (9) The provision of broadcast services for Africans in the Union should rank higher in priority than the establishment of a powerful central broadcasting station.
- (10) That, although opposed in principle to a priority for a "C" service over a service for Africans, should such a "C" service be initiated, contemporaneously a service for Africans should be inaugurated.
- (11) That part of the time of the commercial service should be given over to African listeners.
- (12) That the strictest control should be exercised over the advertisements put over the air.
- (13) That due regard should be paid to the susceptibilities of the Non-European people.
- (14) That the maximum possible fixed percentage of the profits accruing from commercial broadcasts should be devoted to the development of the Non-European service.
- (15) The full-time appointment to the staff of the South African Broadcasting Corporation of two Africans to act as announcers and to organise local talent.
- (16) The training of Africans in radio work at the Capetown studio, in collaboration with the University of Capetown.
- (17) The employment of such Africans by the South African Broadcasting Corporation as script writers, producers, etc.
- (18) If full-time training facilities are instituted by the South African Broadcasting Corporation, these facilities be extended to all races.



- (19) Full use of local African talent such as indicated above.
- (20) That the South African Broadcasting Corporation be asked to set up a Committee of Africans ( and in Natal of Indians) to advise on the content of programmes and to undertake research into the wishes and needs of African (and Indian) listeners, not only with regard to programmes, but with regard to the many matters dealt with in the recommendations of this memorandum.
- (21) That the attention of the Corporation be drawn to the possibilities of providing on its "A" and "B" transmissions informative talks on the Non-European peoples of the Union and short programmes of traditional African and Indian music for European listeners, making use of local Non-European talent.
- (22) The South African Broadcasting Corporation undertake such a survey as is possible of Non-European listening interests.
- (23) Representation of Non-European interests be allowed for in the composition of local advisory councils. (see para. 9).
- (24) That such local councils submit reports to the Director of the South African Broadcasting Corporation and the Board of Governors and that full publicity be given to such reports.
- (25) "Radio News" should have an open forum for listeners' criticisms.
- (26) No such steps should be taken unless it can be ensured that no offence can be given to any racial group in the country.
- (27) The South African Broadcasting Corporation pursue this matter in conjunction with the Union Education Department, (Adult Education section) particularly with reference to Non-Europeans.
- (28) A separate transmitter be set up for broadcasts to the African population.
- (29) A re-diffusion service to cater for the needs of all Non-European sections of the population in urban areas be inaugurated.
- (30) The Government be asked to subsidise such service if necessary.
- (31) The South African Broadcasting Corporation seek the co-operation of the appropriate government departments particularly for the carrying out of the educative part of the programmes.
- (32) The Government be asked to encourage the production of cheap receiving sets by South African manufacturers.

HILDA KUPER.  
S.M. MOFOKENG.  
E. WESTPHAL.  
B. VILAKAZI.  
QUINTIN WHYTE.

SUGGESTIONS ARISING FROM THE REPORT

The Research has been apparent that Africans are already interested in broadcasting and that there are a number of African listeners-in to the A and B programme. There is a great potential audience of the Africans for the Broadcasting Corporation. Items of interest to Africans should occasionally be inserted in the existent service A, or B. The percentage of Africans owning wireless sets should be investigated and the Broadcasting Corporation would then be in a better position to plan these items for Africans. African literature, African culture, the lives of leading Africans, etc., are topics that could be made of interest not only to the African but to the European. This suggestion is quite apart from the vernacular broadcasts and it is necessary to point out that the African community consists of different educational and cultural levels. It is essential that those in charge of the broadcasts be clear in their own mind for whom they are going to broadcast. Though we do not underestimate the difficulties of broadcasting for the semi-literate and illiterate Africans, we feel that the present vernacular broadcasts could be greatly improved. Unless this is done they will achieve nothing. We, therefore, suggest that;

1. An effort be made to increase the radio receiving facilities. The Corporation should aim at building up a service for African listeners in their private houses, and should give encouragement to manufacturers prepared to produce cheap sets. Unless more radios are available other improvements are relatively worthless.
2. The time of the broadcast be altered. Informants pointed out that the best time was after 6.30 p.m. Instead of holding the broadcasts three times a week for half an hour in the morning, the Committee urges that a daily broadcast of half an hour in the evening be introduced. The music could be run with the ordinary programme and only quarter of an hour be devoted to talks in the vernacular.
3. The broadcasts be held in Zulu and Sotho on the same days if necessary using A and B Stations. Every effort should be made to obtain an extra transmitter.
4. Since the broadcasts do not take the place of the newspapers, and cannot keep pace with daily events, what is required is not a weekly or bi-weekly summary of isolated events, but summaries of general developments, political commentaries, and a thorough background of information on fundamental issues.
5. Propaganda should be incidental and indirect. The educational aspects should be stressed.
6. Africans as well as Europeans be invited to submit scripts - for which payment should be made as in the case of scripts for European broadcasts.
7. Africans be used as much as possible as announcers, entertainers and organisers of African programmes.
8. This type of investigation be repeated in six months time on a large scale and if suggestions are accepted by the S.A.B.C., special attention to be devoted to their effect on the European listeners.
9. A Standing Committee be appointed which, in addition to representatives of the Native Affairs Department, will include Africans and other Europeans interested in African development. We suggest that similar Committees be formed in other centres. The Institute of Race Relations could be glad to assist in suggesting personnel.
10. The Broadcast must be correlated with other activities aimed to improve African conditions. Thus it would be useful to instal radio sets in various clubs, meeting houses, beer halls, etc. (See G.P.S. 4620, P.4.)

The broadcasts be recognised not as a wartime service but as an essential feature for post war development.

**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*

©2013

**LEGAL NOTICES:**

**Copyright Notice:** All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

**Disclaimer and Terms of Use:** Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of paper documents and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.

This document forms part of the archive of the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR), held at the Historical Papers Research Archive at The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.