

CITY OF JOHANNESBURG

NON-EUROPEAN HOUSING AND NATIVE

ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

(ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIAL WELFARE BRANCH)

QUESTIONNAIRE ON

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF JOHANNESBURG BANTU

Kindly fill in the enclosed questions as accurately as possible.

You need not answer every question, but it will help the investigation if you do.

All information you give, will be treated in strictest confidence.

---

1. Address.
2. Tribe.
3. Is your permanent home in town or in the country?
4. How many people live in your house?
5. Age of children.
- 6 (a) Husband's salary.
- (b) Is any allowance made for housing or food?  
(Specify details)
7. Place of employment.
8. How long have you been in your present employment?
9. What increase in salary have you had?
10. What does your wife earn?
11. How does she earn this money?
12. What other people in your house are earning?
13. How much of this money does each give to the support of your house?

Person	Money given

14. How much per month do you pay for the following?

<u>Rent</u>	<u>Medicine and Doctors</u>
<u>Food</u>	<u>Clothes</u>
<u>Fuel and light</u>	<u>Transport</u>
<u>School Fees</u>	<u>Pleasure</u>
<u>Church Fees</u>	<u>Other expenses</u>

15. Do you belong to any benefit society (burial, insurance, &c.)?

<u>Society</u>	<u>Monthly Contribution</u>

16. How much per month do you put in Savings Bank?

17. How much have you in Savings Bank?

18. Do you possess any stock or other property?

19. Are you in debt, and to what extent?

What do you owe for:

Furniture

Rent

School and Church Fees

Clothing

Food

Other debts

General Remarks

(b) FAMILY LIFE: Emphasis has already been laid upon the fact that the extension of the diet of town natives has not kept pace with the developments in other forms of expenditure, and that money which ought to be spent on food to maintain health is too often spent on clothes and other articles.

This phenomenon is, however, not without considerable social value. When there are so many influences tending towards the weakening of self-respect and personal pride- examples of which are promiscuous sexual intercourse and drunkenness- it is encouraging to see family pride and social ambition manifested in care for the children's appearances. It marks the upward struggle and leads to regular habits of labour. It is also an important factor in the integration of family life. It serves to mark off the "haves" from the "have-nots", and thus to raise the family in its own estimation and in the estimation of the rest of the community.

The education of the children is also an important matter in the family life. Parents make great sacrifices for the sake of their children's education. Despite the fact that, outside the Cape Province, school fees are payable for elementary education and school books must be bought, the demand for education has not abated at all during the depression. The fees range from 3d to 1/- a month, higher fees being paid for secondary education, while the purchase of the necessary school books and materials calls for as much as ten or twelve shillings *a year.*

There is a strong faith in Education as a means to power, especially as a weapon to obtain a higher grade of employment. This faith has, however, been disturbed by the failure of large numbers of educated youths to obtain any sort of employment during the last two years. Boys and girls are kept in school far later than workers' children in Europe, partly because they enter school later and have many interruptions, <sup>(54)</sup> but mostly because the parents are determined that their children shall have the necessary educational equipment for skilled trades or professional or semi-professional work. The average age of the native pupils has dropped considerably in recent years, and it is by no means uncommon for a town child to pass Standard VI at the age of 12. This lower school age is bringing with it certain problems. In the first place the child is on the labour market at an earlier age and the number of those seeking employment is therefore greater. The children are better occupied in school than on the streets. Secondly, the children become economically independent of their parents at too early an age and thus ~~they~~ break loose from family control (55)

(54) *On Mondays and Fridays some town schools have many fewer pupils as the children are taken off from school to fetch or take washing.*

(55) 2. Use has been made of a manuscript record of an investigation conducted by a native African, Mr. Paul Mosaka, for the S.A. Institute of Race Relations in regard to The Social and Economic Causes of School leaving among Native Children in an Urban Native Township. From another source one hears of that in many cases parents are too poor to feed their children who are allowed to keep for themselves what they can make as news-paper boys, caddies etc.

Perhaps nowhere is the sharp conflict between the tribal outlook and the civilised outlook more evident than in the relations of the school with the uneducated parents. Despite the keenness of the parents for the education of their children they are conscious of a growing gulf between them and their children. Their children learn "skills" quite beyond the comprehension of their ignorant parents, they speak of things outside their parents' world of ideas, and they too often lose respect for parents whose stupidity and ignorance make their children ashamed of them. All this results in the loss of parental control. (56)

The acquisition of furniture ranks next in importance in an urban Native home. The most common items of furniture are a table, chairs, a sideboard, ~~dressing tables~~, and at least one large and comparatively expensive double bedstead. This furniture is generally bought on the hire-purchase system and is usually of poor quality. The sideboard contains little storage room, being more elaborate than commodious, and the large bed is too often overcrowded.

Not infrequently there will be found a cupboard or two made by the father, but most homes are very short of storage room for food and clothes.

It is again difficult to generalise on these matters for there are so many gradations in native town life- many of them only discernible to the close observer- that any descriptive statement will fail to disclose on the one hand the extraordinary poverty of equipment in some homes, and on the other hand, the full equipment in many. It is possible, however, to say that the majority of native homes- even in the most squalid of surroundings- are remarkably clean, neat and self-respecting. Whether one visits the homes in rural towns or the slum yards of the larger (37) towns one is impressed by the care which the average native housewife bestows on her home. The casual visitor to the "slums" is inclined to carry away an impression of squalor only, but the careful observer will notice the clean neat homes within tin shanties. Curiously enough this house pride does not always extend to the care of the outside appearances or to the surrounding ground even in a township where the

---

2.56. This is exactly similar to the experience of European countries ~~also~~ <sup>during</sup> the ~~centuries~~ <sup>last century</sup>.

3.57. The writer has paid detailed visits to Native townships at nearly sixty different urban centres of the Union during the past five years.

houses are on spacious plots of ground.

Whilst it is true that this high general level of house-pride and care is to be found also in the Native Reserves, it is somewhat remarkable that it should be so in the towns. The high cost of living in relation to the low incomes has resulted in over-crowding as well as in real poverty. Overcrowding makes difficult the keeping of a clean and tidy home. That Native housewives should be able to maintain the dignity of the home in such adverse living conditions indicates that, despite all the difficulties, Natives are adjusting themselves to their new social milieu. They are making desperate efforts to live on a "civilised standard". It is significant that the best homes are to be found in towns where the Natives have built their own homes on stands let to them at a moderate rental by the Municipality. There one finds much less over-crowding because the rental allows of a greater margin for decent living.

(c) MORAL LIFE:

A serious aspect of over-crowding is the moral deterioration that occurs in the life of the household. While, as indicated earlier, no inconsiderable proportion of the marital unions in the towns are irregular both from the point of view of Bantu law and of the ordinary marriage laws of the country, it is also true that these tend, with the settling down of the population to an organised life under town conditions, to become permanent unions, and for the children to grow up under normal conditions of family life. But where a family is limited to the use of two rooms— even where the cooking is carried on outside or in a "lean-to"—normal development is not at all likely.

It is probably no exaggeration to say that however difficult it may be for the Native town dweller to adjust himself to the economic and social conditions of urban Native life, the moral adjustment is much harder. In the Reserves the tribal sanctions do still have considerable influence over personal conduct. At any rate there is still a homogeneous public opinion that operates. In most of the towns the Native population, even where it consists of people of one tribal group, has been drawn from different areas of the country, and has not yet coalesced sufficiently to provide a solid body of public opinion. The process can, however, be seen at work in such towns as Bloemfontein and Kroonstad in the Orange Free State. In the larger towns the people of the locations and townships are drawn from many different tribal groups and areas of the country. In many instances they are found to retain their tribal loyalties; at any rate they remain separate. But in all cases the surrounding influences make for inter-mixture, (e.g. attendance at common schools, common recreation and common forms of employment) and inter-marriages take place. The children

grow up without any appreciation of tribal traditions and ~~we~~ have much more in common than their parents have. It is not surprising then to find that these children do not respond to many, if any, of the tribal sanctions which may govern their parents. Thus it is that the Church, the School and cognate agencies have to supply new sanctions. The Missionary Societies have found their share of the task to be almost too formidable and the School is being so starved of resources that a very considerable proportion of urban children are bereft of any educational influence.

Indeed the position of the native juvenile in many towns is a perilous one. Deprived of the wholesome influences of homelife through overcrowding; excluded from the training and discipline of education because of poverty and the lack of room in the schools; unable to secure employment because of National policy and the general depression, he is isolated from those agencies that could most effectively equip him for a self-respecting and serviceable life. He is drifting into delinquency and vice.

At the moment the prospects for Native girls are more favourable than they are for the boys. They are increasingly taking the place of Native "boys" in domestic service. They are definitely competing with the Natives from the Reserves who are finding that their own economic and social needs have grown faster than wages for domestic service. During the depression wages in domestic service have dropped considerably and in consequence Native women and girls, who can accept the lower wages more easily than the men, are more favoured for employment than they were. But this in turn is making the girls independent of their parents so that parental control becomes less effective. The lack of parental control is also seen in the decay of lobolo, which plays little part in cases of seduction and is definitely less effective as the nexus in marriages. Where it is passed it takes the form of cash of which little remains in the family.

The presence in our towns of large numbers of single men and the great influx of women have been responsible for a great deal of immorality. While it is possible that in most instances the men have formed alliances with one woman and that many of these have become more or less permanent marital unions, it is noticeable that in several towns a class of professional prostitute has grown up dependent upon the proceeds of liquor and *has much temptation* prostitution. In addition the female servant ~~tends~~ to drift into immorality. The usual practice of housing the servants in separate quarters easily accessible from the streets encourages the tendency, that is induced not a little by boredom. *living conditions*



np

Living conditions which do not allow of privacy in a home, the weakness of moral sanctions of any kind in newly-formed and somewhat heterogeneous communities and the slow re-integration of community life in our towns do not help in the maintenance of a decent moral life. The present state of the moral life in native urban communities is puzzling to the social worker, but the fact that large numbers of natives do lead a clean decent life in such circumstances indicates that some sort of moral order will eventually be secured in the life of Native urban communities.

(d) PUBLIC LIFE:

Perhaps the surest indication of this better order is the improvement which is definitely taking place at many centres in the tone of the public life of the Native communities. A Native Advisory Board, like a Town Council, is a useful index of the state of public opinion in the Native townships. The new townships created under the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 have gathered together into single communities large numbers of individuals of differing tribes. At first these communities present the worst features of a mining camp, and the Advisory Boards of Natives set up under the Act are of little use. The members are either too timid of the turbulent people or they are themselves typical of the worst elements in the community. But gradually a crowd of separate entities becomes an organism, and a new urban community is developed with characteristics of its own. The people tend to become more stationary. In the course of a few years the changes in the community are reflected in the personnel of the Advisory Board, and the better element comes into its own.

The Native Economic Commission has expressed the view (58) that it is not too late to use tribal loyalty to assist in the development of a sense of responsibility in, and a share of, Native municipal administration among the urban Native people in those centres where the people are in homogeneous groups.

Perhaps the most serious obstacle to the growth of this civic sense is the suspicion of and even hostility towards authority that is bred by police administration. To the serious student of Native life the bitter relations which now exist between every section of the urban Native population and the Police force causes grave concern. It is not within the province of this essay to examine the charges and counter-charges which are made in this connection, but the situation is, nevertheless, one that must be appreciated to realise its effects upon the moral life

and public

of the urban Native population. The fact that, from one cause or another, there is no section or class or group of the town Natives that does not find itself in conflict with the Police is in itself an indication either of the essentially lawless character of the town Native population or else that there is something radically wrong with the police administration. The Native Economic Commission says that "by nature the Native is a dignified person" (59) and that "the general consensus of opinion throughout the Union of responsible witnesses is that the Natives are a law-abiding people. Under their tribal system discipline was well maintained, and the habits so instilled into them persist today in the majority of Natives!" (60) But wholesale convictions and imprisonments for statutory offences "many which are not crimes in the ordinary sense" (61), assaults by police both before and after arrest, and the kidnapping of passers-by into Police vans which run through the streets of Johannesburg capturing prisoners and pouring them into police cells, do not coincide with this view. It is obvious that the police system will have to submit to drastic reform and the calendar of criminal offences that may be committed by Natives restricted before there can be hope of creating in the minds of Natives a desire to co-operate in the maintenance of law and order. A cynical commentary upon the situation was made by a well respected Native to the writer "You white people run to the Police for help and protection: we run from them for safety!"

#### CONCLUSIONS:

It is perhaps too early yet to express definite views as to the effects of urbanisation on the Natives. In some respects - particularly in health and moral life - there are disquieting symptoms - while in other respects - such as the extension of social interests - the indications are that the town natives are becoming adjusted to their economic and social environment. The process of adjustment is certainly accompanied by considerable suffering. Whether it could be eased by legislative and administrative measures cannot

---

59. Report Par. 508.

60. Ibid, Par. 772.

61. Ibid, Par 774. See Par. 774 for list of convictions of Natives in 1930 for statutory offences. Total 261,350, to which Pass Laws contribute 42,262. Taxation Act 49,772 and Urban Areas Act 20,877.

be discussed here; whether it will be ended by the forcible removal of Natives from the towns, as is advocated by some, must be considered elsewhere. It should, however, be noted that the Native Economic Commission has declared unanimously that the latter course is impracticable and unfair to the Natives who have already become permanent town dwellers while the Commission also has made numerous recommendations for their better adjustment to town conditions. (b)(2)

---

(b)(2) See Report. Par. 694.

24/33.

SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS  
SUID-AFRIKAANSE INSTITUUT VIR RASSEVERHOUDINGS

URBAN NATIVE ADMINISTRATION

N.B. All the points raised in the following memorandum have been brought to the notice of the Adviser on Race Relations during the past several years at a great many centres and by municipal officials, Advisory Boards, etc., etc., and are now brought together for the information of the Conference.

A. The Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923

The preamble to the Act says

"To provide for improved conditions of residence for Natives in or near urban areas and the better administration of Native affairs in such areas; for the registration and better control of contracts of service with Natives in certain areas and the regulation of ingress of Natives into and their residence in such areas; for the exemption of coloured persons from the operation of the pass laws; for the restriction and regulation of the possession and use of Kaffir beer and other intoxicating liquor by Natives in certain areas and for other incidental purposes."

B. How has the Act worked?

I. Economic aspects

1. Has the Act had any effect in reducing rents?
2. Has it affected the cost of living for Natives in any way?
3. Has it restricted the supply and movement of Native labour?
4. Has it affected Native wages?
5. Have the rents been rendered excessive by
  - (a) use of White labour; (b) use of expensive material;
  - (c) cost of the land; (d) high redemption charges;
  - (e) continued loan charges after payment of loans.
6. Should municipalities include ward charges in the rentals?
7. What effect has the Act had upon municipal rates.

II. Social Aspects

1. Has the housing under the Act given Natives
  - (a) more hygienic conditions
  - (b) better conditions for family life
2. Is community life in the locations better organised in respect of
  - (a) Water and Light
  - (b) Roads
  - (c) Sanitation
  - (d) Improved Locality
  - (e) Medical and health services
  - (f) Recreation
  - (g) Religious and educational services
  - (h) Control of Crime and Vice.
3. What effects has the removal of the Native population from the towns had upon health through better housing and, on the other hand, through having to travel long distances in wet weather?
4. What social effects have followed from the imposition of lodgers' fees?

5. Are Regulations too numerous and irksome?
6. Are relations between Europeans and Bantu improved? as a result of the Act?
7. Is the Native population more content?

### III. Administrative Aspects

1. Is Location administration more efficient?
2. Is there an improvement in the type of Superintendent employed?
3. Are relations between Superintendents and people satisfactory?
4. Are the Advisory Boards becoming more effective?
5. Do Advisory Board elections yield satisfactory results? If not, would secret ballot and the block system improve matters?
6. Are the Boards' listened to by Municipal Councils?
7. Is it possible and desirable to use "tribal loyalty as the basis for the "Blockman" system of election to Advisory Boards (see Par.510, Report of Native Economic Commission)?
8. Should municipal employees be eligible to membership of the Advisory Board?
9. Should the Superintendent be Chairman of the Advisory Board (see Pars.514-5, Report of Native Economic Commission)?
10. Is there sufficiently direct means of communication between the Advisory Board and the Municipal Council?
11. What should be the status and functions of Advisory Boards?
12. Are Natives given opportunities of employment in Locations as (a) Clerks, (b) Sanitary officials, (d) Nurses?
13. Is the Native Revenue Account justly administered in respect of the charges made against it (e.g. (a) proportion of general municipal administration of the town, (b) Loan Redemption Charges.  
N.B. See attached hereto copy of a memorandum by the late Provincial Auditor of Natal)?
14. Is there adequate inspection of municipal Native administration by the Native Affairs Department (See Par.516, Report of Native Economic Commission)?

### C. Suggested Amendments to the Act

1. Provision for Freehold Tenure or Long Period Leases (See Par.503, Report of Native Economic Commission).  
Note. The Natives (Urban) Areas) Bill as originally submitted to Parliament provided for ownership of lots in Native villages. This was however deleted by the Select Committee of Parliament. Section 1(b) provides for leasing but does Section 1. prevent ownership? See also Par.519 of Report of Native Economic Commission.
2. Superintendents to be Government officials or to receive special protection in respect of status. Improved qualifications could be demanded or improved status.
3. Fixation of maximum municipal rentals in Locations with definite relation to local wages (e.g. not to exceed 20% of the average local wage for unskilled labour).
4. Better provision in respect of Advisory Boards
  - (a) Chairman not to be Location Superintendent
  - (b) Elections to be controlled by the Magistrate
  - (c) Municipal employees to be ineligible as members of the Board
  - (d) Advisory Boards to meet at regular intervals.
5. Assumption by Central Government of definite proportion of approved Housing Schemes.

#### D. Suggested Administrative Improvements

1. Special consideration to be given to the needs of advanced groups by the setting aside of special areas for their occupation and for differentiation in respect of forms of control.  
N.B. Special forms of tenure might be given.
2. Institution of Building Loans for "own houses" (see Par.502 of Report of Native Economic Commission).
3. Preferrent use of Native labour in Locations (cf. Par.506 Report of Native Economic Commission).
4. Employment of Natives as Clerks, Sanitary and Health Officers.
5. Closer inspection of Native Revenue Accounts to restrict undue burdening with general municipal charges, loan redemption charges, etc.
6. Appointment by the Government of an adequate staff of Inspectors of Native Locations (see Par. 516 of Report of the Native Economic Commission).
7. Publication annually of the reports of the Inspectors and of Departmental strictures on Native Revenue Accounts.
8. Enforcement of Section 22 of the Act (as amended) in respect of Native Trading where municipalities refuse to grant trading rights.
9. Abolition of Lodgers'fee in respect of bona fide members of the family of an occupier.

#### E. Special Proposal - Congress of Advisory Boards

Extract from the Annual Report for 1932 of the South African Institute of Race Relations:-

"The Congress serves to bring delegates from the Boards for exchange of experience and opinions. In this connection the example of the Transkeian Bunga might well be followed. That is to say, just as magistrates sit in the Bunga and thereafter meet together, so it might be advantageous if Location Superintendents attended the Congress, which would thus become a valuable organ of urban Native local government. At present many municipalities discourage attendance at the Congress, but if it were placed on the sound footing of the Bunga, with Government and Municipal officials in attendance, it could provide the country with a valuable instrument for the better development of the Advisory Boards and for better municipal Native administration; and also prove an effective means of communication between urban Natives and the Union Native Administration on broad questions of policy and administration.

**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.