

Health Problems.

The Bantu community requires the same medical and public health attention as any other section of the community.

The suffer from the same diseases which respond to the same method of treatment as in European because disease knows no barriers, frontiers or colour bars.

Our public health schemes should be single-eyed and aim at one thing, that is to apply the best and most approved methods to improve health to reduce the incidence in the occurrence of preventable diseases and to tolerate no conditions as are likely to jeopardise the health of even the Bantu community.

In cities like Chicago, Nulwankee, New York and elsewhere where I have lived in the United States of America, public health schemes be they maternity welfare or child welfare, or Tuberculosis clinics or school inspection included the whole community both white and negro sections. The facilities provided are opened to the whole community.

Here ~~are~~ we have two problems that are giving great concern to those who believe in the unity or success of human needs especially health needs. One problem is that of the high infant mortality of Bantu children. The other is the problem of venereal diseases and their treatment. These problems are common to both communities European and Bantu but our method of approach to them in the way of treatment and treatment facilities has been more racial in its point of view than being dictated by public health principles. To illustrate.

Infant Mortality The infant mortality among the Bantu is high in urban areas and is perhaps increasing even in some of the native territories. Here at the Reed - Gastro-enteritis carries away a large number of infants especially for the months of September to through November. Broncho-pneumonia during the older months or as the end results in certain cases of Gastro-enteritis. The rate is much higher than that of the European community Some of the other factors that enter into this are withing control

disabilities and warn us against asking immediate reforms and removal of the discriminations which are sapping our very existence, causing abject poverty which lead us to crime, ignorance, starvation, chronic illness and premature death, I wish them to recall the wise words of Senator Nicholls who once said: "Wisdom dictates that we should uncover our sores, sterilise them, and try to heal them - not cover them up with treacle." All thinking Africans are adopting this advice, and expect all others who are honest and sincere about African advancement to adopt it and apply it in Native Affairs or race relations in South Africa.

The African people will be badly misled if they expect to get rights they do not ask for; if they asked for half and expect to get the whole. That is not the way of the world. Often one has to fight and die in defence of obvious rights. The present world war is an exaggerated example.

The future of the African people is in the hands of their leaders. It will depend on the type of leaders they have. If the leadership has vision and courage with honesty and sincerity of purpose; if the interest of the people and the cause of the race are paramount over and above any other personal consideration of the leaders, with cooperation instead of competition among the leaders, and elimination of petty tribal considerations, there is every hope for the salvation of the African people in South Africa.

Divisions of the African people into tribal groups even on common national issues must be left as the refuge of the ignorant and of those who place their personal interests above the cause of the race. All patriotic Africans, all true leaders must and will join together in a united, common struggle for African rights through Africans' own organisations. Only traitors and black Quislings will support other loyalties.

However, the strength and backbone of even a leadership that meets these stern requirements is a strong membership in a National organisation like our African National Congress. A united rank and file is the inspiration of any leadership. They are the incarnation of the will of the people translated into action in national unity symbolised by the smooth working and cooperation of the leaders in the national organisation.

Without a strong, active, and militant African National Congress, even our parliamentary representatives and our members of the Native Representative Council, with their talented membership, can accomplish nothing unless they have the backing of a strong national organisation. They need such an organisation as the source of their strength and the fount of their policy and action. Without it they will be dubbed agitators who are making demands that are not supported by the rank and file of the African people or desired by our chiefs.

This then is a challenge to you and to me to organise our people into a strong African National Congress to lead as well as to back up the case of our Parliamentary and Council representatives; of our workers our Trade Unions, our teachers, and any other section of our people who are struggling for our rights and for our freedom.

We call upon our Ministers of Religion to unite, cooperate with, and support the African National Congress and to urge their members to join the African National Congress. We call upon our men and women, throughout South African to come under the banner of Congress and save themselves through it.

We MUST claim our rights now and the powers that be must make fundamental legislative changes in our status NOW during the war to encourage us to redouble our war effort as well as to indicate as far as the African is concerned the shape of things to come. Reconstruction can and must begin now during the war or else post war reconstruction will be but a dream that will never come true. Post-war reconstruction must be a continuation of reforms and programmes begun now.

We cannot win peace; we cannot maintain the pre-war race relations and discriminating conditions among our races and colours in South African and expect to win peace. There must be a change - a radical

Collection Number: AD843

XUMA, A.B., Papers

PUBLISHER:

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 is part of the archive of the South African Institute of Race Relations, held at the Historical Papers Research Archive at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.