

## LITERATURE FOR NATIVE TROOPS.

As the result of an appeal made by the Chaplains to Rev. E. W. Grant, the Rev. J.J.R. Jolobe, in October visited the Camps in the Welgedacht Area where Native troops are stationed.

Mr. Jolobe reported that there was a great need for the provision of suitable Literature for the Native troops, so as to help them in their spiritual and moral life, and enable them to employ profitably their evening hours of leisure, and satisfy the demand of some for educational advancement. The Lovedale Press Sub-Committee carefully considered the matter at a meeting at which and Mr. Jolobe were present, and it was arranged that the convener of the Literature Section of the Christian Council should personally visit the Welgedacht Area and examine the whole situation.

Native troops are now attached to every Unit of the South African forces throughout the Union ; numbers of them also have gone North with the South African Forces. A large number of them are in the various Camps in the vicinity of the East Rand and Pretoria.

It must be remembered that the men are constantly passing from one Camp to another.

For the spiritual help of the Troops, the following full-time Chaplains have been appointed:-

Padres:	R. A. MORTIMER	Free Church
	W. H. BROOKE	Church of England
	G. MARTIN	Roman Catholic
	C. J. V. R. SMIT	D. R. C. Church
	R. A. THOMPSON	Free Church
	A. J. H. F. VOGEL	D. R. Church

The Chaplains are deeply impressed with the need for providing troops with Literature, and have been endeavouring to meet the need. The following types of Literature are specially called for in the various vernacular languages:--

- Bibles, Testaments and Gospels
- Hymn Books and Prayer Books
- Books dealing with hygiene (including sex hygiene) and First-Aid
- Books suitable for candidates for Church membership
- Books and Pamphlets (Preacher's Helps) for Evangelists and other Preachers.
- Tracts.
- Phrase Books and other educational works.
- General reading, vernacular novels etc.
- Vernacular songs and choruses.

To make more widely known the Literature available, the writer took with him to Johannesburg, samples of Books of different kinds, and these have been passed round amongst the Chaplains and others.

One of the earliest needs made known to the Christian Council was for the production of a small tonic sol-fa Hymn Book in Sotho, Xhosa and Zulu. By a combination of effort on the part of Senator C. J. vR. Smit and Capts. Brooke, Thompson and Martin, in consultation with Padre Vogel of Premier Mine, and with the help of Lovedale and particularly of the Morija Press, the latter Press was able to produce the Hymn Book required and this is now in use. It is sold at 6d. per copy.

As a result of visits paid to different Camps and of discussions with Chaplains, Military Officials and others, I would

I would offer the following observations:

There is deep need for a big effort to provide the Native troops with Literature. They have been brought together from many parts of South Africa and as soldiers find themselves in unfamiliar work and circumstances. Literature may be of great assistance to them in maintaining and enriching their spiritual life, and in protecting them from the moral dangers to which they are exposed. In the early evenings many of them have leisure which could be devoted to reading were books and pamphlets available. They are at all stages of education, and many of them would welcome the opportunity of improving their attainments.

The Chaplains take with them to all services, and for sale, vernacular copies of the Bible, Gospels, Hymn Books, etc. Particularly at the beginning of the month shortly after pay day, these are bought in fair numbers, and the Chaplains find, in addition, that the contacts made through literature are of special value. The sales effected and the contacts made in this way, are largely dependent on the interest and enthusiasm of the individual Chaplains, and as they are liable to be moved to other Camps in the Union or to go North, there is an obvious need for some permanent and organised system for the getting of literature to the men. It must be remembered that any system of provision and distribution must be worked in harmony with the requirements of the Military Authorities. Many of these authorities are conscious of the need and are sympathetic towards efforts aiming at supplying what is a felt want.

As the result of a discussion with the Chaplains, they offered to be responsible for a system of distribution. The Military authorities have made available a room at the Welgedacht Depot to be used as a book room and the Chaplain at Welgedacht will be mainly responsible for ordering and receiving books and distributing them as required to the other Chaplains. The Chaplains frequently see each other and they have a weekly gathering for general consultation. In addition, they have the frequent use of motor transport. It seemed to the writer that the Chaplains were in the best position to take the oversight of this matter and their willingness to do so was a source of deep satisfaction. It is probable that this is the beginning of a very notable piece of service to the African soldier. The attention of the Christian Council is directed to this important matter, and it is hoped that the Council will accord to the Chaplains all possible sympathy, support and practical help.

In the various camps Y.M.C.A. Huts have been established. These are at different stages of development. The spiritual and other work done in these huts is highly appreciated by the Chaplains.

In addition to spiritual and recreational facilities the Y.M.C.A. workers have made provision for the sale of many commodities which soldiers want, namely —cigarettes, soap, tea etc. The sale of Literature has not been developed at these Huts, though at one or two simple reading books may be purchased and books (generally English Novels), given by the Johannesburg Public Library, may be borrowed.

Another form of help which might be provided by the Christian Council is in the provision of funds for certain literature purposes. There is a place for the distribution of free Literature, particularly in the form of Tracts and small Booklets, but it is recognised that in this as in other matters, Natives value more that for which they have to make some payment. It would be particularly useful if funds could be provided for the cheapening of certain publications of proved value, such as Gospels, special Hymn Books for the Troops, etc. Some Chaplains have devised a system by which they use the fly leaf of Bible or

or Gospel as Certificates of Church membership and mark on these the dates of contacts with soldiers, attendance at communion, etc. The assurance that every man possessed a Bible or Book is even more desirable because of this. By the efforts of some Chaplains special publications designed for the help of the men have been published at cheap rates. It is possible sometimes to gather funds for the first publication of certain items, but difficulty is experienced when new editions are called for, since in many cases funds are readily given for the first publication of a book, but not for re-printing. Republication is sometimes assured by making the charge for the copies of the first edition at such a figure that a margin is over to ensure reprinting.

The needs are so evident that it is suggested the Christian Council should make an appeal for funds for the provision of approved Literature for Native troops.

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In addition to the provision of Literature, a greatly felt need is for the extension to Natives of some form of educational service. On the European side the need has been felt for educational Officers who will lecture to the troops on various aspects of the War and also on general subjects. Such Officers have become a recognised part of His Majesty's Forces. It may be claimed that the need is even more clamant on the Native side. Natives require definite teaching for the clarifying of their ideas on War issues, the heightening of morale etc. In addition many of them are of very meagre education. Thus they require schooling of an elementary kind to give them ordinary efficiency as soldiers. It would be unfair to lay any part of this burden on the Chaplains. A much better system would be the appointment of educational officers with knowledge of Native background and of the technique of adult education, whose full time could be given to this duty. It is suggested that the Christian Council should press for this.

Since my visit to the Transvaal, I have received a letter from Lt. D. Gower, Army Education, Hut 14, D.H.Q., Pretoria, who states : " At present we have three educational officers posted in the Union, and several up North who are interested in catering for the Native troops attached to their units.

"The greatest problem seems to be to provide material for teaching these Natives to read in their own language, English, or Afrikaans, since the Dept. to which I belong refuses to supply any school books.

"If you can think of any way of helping us, I should value your suggestions very much indeed."

I am referring this letter to the Chaplains, and I would also suggest that the Christian Council give it consideration.

R. H. W. SHEPHERD

Lovedale,  
1st December, 1941.

COPY/MMM.

From 240368 Rev. W.R.P. Evans,  
U.D.F.I.  
(Y.M.C.A. & T.O.C.H.)  
Middle East A.P.O.  
D U R B A N .

The Institute of Race Relations,  
J o h a n n e s b u r g .

Dear Sir,

I am opening a club for Native Troops stationed in Egypt, and I was wondering whether you could help me in the matter of native literature and papers and anything else that would be of an interest to the native and of value to the work.

I may add that I personally am a member of the Institute and therefore naturally turn to you for help and guidance.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) W.R.P. Evans.

16 APR 1942

*By hand*



Z. 14 A.

GELIEWE IN U ANTWOORD TE  
VERWYS NA  
IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE

No U.1/7.

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

KANTOOR VAN DIE—OFFICE OF THE

U.D.F.I. Union Headquarters,  
P.O.Box 1001,  
JOHANNESBURG.

14th April, 1942.

Institute of Race Relations,  
JOHANNESBURG.

NATIVE LITERATURE.

1. We enclose a copy of a letter received from the Rev. W.R.P. Evans, who is in charge of the Y.M.C.A. & Toc H work in Alexandria, Mideast, for your attention and kind assistance.

*A. M. Muncum. 15*  
Actg. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER: U.D.F.I., "Q". S. C.

DHD/MMM.

30 APR 1942

# UNION DEFENCE FORCE INSTITUTES

(Y.M.C.A. & TOC H ON ACTIVE SERVICE)

Telegrams: "YEOMAN"  
Telephone 22-2593.  
P.O. Box 1001.

In reply please quote: U. 1/7.

U.D.F.I. OFFICE,  
Y.M.C.A., 71, JOUBERT STREET,  
JOHANNESBURG.

All Communications to be addressed to the SECRETARY, not to individuals.

28th April, 1942.

*Senator Jones  
This letter was handed to you  
Mrs Jones on 21/4/42. you  
said you wish to take it  
over OK.*

Institute of Race Relations,  
University (Central Block),  
Milner Park,  
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Sirs,

It would be appreciated if you would reply to our Minute U.1/7 of 14th April 1942, enclosing a letter from Padre Evans from Mideast relative to Native literature.

Padre Evans is a member of the Institute of Race Relations and is therefore asking your help in the matter.

Yours faithfully,

*A. Muncum* Lt.

Actg. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER : U.D.F.I. "Q". S.C.

DHD/VB

30th April, 1942.

The Administrative Office,  
Union Defence Force Institutes,  
"Q". S. C.,  
P.O.Box 1001,  
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 14th instant, Ref.No. U.1/7, was handed to me on the 21st instant, and since then I have been making enquiries, in the hope that I would be able to give a helpful reply.

Will you please inform Padre Evans that I am making enquiries in various directions, but that I cannot at the moment say what help can be secured. I should be very glad if I could be helpful to the soldiers under his charge.

Yours faithfully,

JDRJ/NMC

7 MAY 1942

*Hand back.*



Z. 14.

GELIEWE IN U ANTWOORD TE  
VERWYS NA  
IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE

U.1/7.

No

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

KANTOOR VAN DIE—OFFICE OF THE  
U.D.F.I. Union Headquarters,  
P. O. Box 1001,  
JOHANNESBURG.

4th May, 1942.

S.A. Institute of Race Relations,  
University, (Central Block)  
Milner Park,  
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Sirs,

U.D.F.I. NON-EUROPEAN ESTABLISHMENTS.

We thank you for your letter of the 30th April, and in reply we think that perhaps we can amplify Padre Evans letter to you.

This Unit is responsible for the welfare of native and coloured troops in Mideast, and every week sees a new Establishment opened in a non-European centre. In this connection we attach reports recently received of the opening of a Club at Alexandria and Abbas Bridge. The writer helped in a similar club run by this Unit in Nairobi last year, and knows that gifts of native literature, newspapers, pictures and similar items that appeal to the native mind would be much appreciated. The sending of games for the amusement of natives is attended to by Dr. Ray Phillips.

You may be further interested to know that a few weeks ago one of our Mobile Cinemas in Mideast made a tour of an area where there were a great number of non-European labour companies, and some thousands of men were shown the film on V.D. and Malaria. Great interest was shown and it is felt that beneficial results will be obtained from this part of our work with the natives.

Yours faithfully,

*Nouglas Muncum* Lt.

Actg. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER : U.D.F.I. "Q". S.C.

Enclosure.

DHD/VB



Non-European Rest Club, Alexandria:

Seeing that Major Gen. Theron was in Alexandria on Friday the 27th March, the opportunity was taken to ask him to officially open this Club, although it has been functioning for about two weeks.

Invitations were sent out to Officers and civilians connected with military and civil welfare projects. Lt. Col. Martin, D.D.N.E.A.S. introduced the G.O.A. and stated that the Non-European troops would be very grateful to the U.D.F.I. for the provision of a rest club in Alexandria. Gen. Theron then opened the Club officially, expressing surprise and appreciation in seeing such a nice Club being made available to the Non-European troops visiting the town.

Padre Evans led the gathering in prayer, asking blessing for the work that was being done in the house. Major Eddy briefly closed the proceedings by thanking Gen. Theron for so kindly consenting to open the Club and for all the kindly interest that has been shown by the N.E.A.S. Welfare Committee and other senior Officers.

The General and Officers then made an inspection of the many rooms which were all nicely furnished, providing dining facilities for 100, games, writing tables, and interesting Pictures.

Sgt. Joseph is supervising the work and has a complete staff of non-Europeans including one specially trained worker.

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Abbas Bridge Club and Hostel for U.D.F. Non-European Troops.

The Club was officially opened on March 20th, 1942, by Major General F.H. Theron, Chief Officer, Administration, U.D.F. The ceremony was attended by the Bishop of Pretoria; Mr. Jarvie the Union Consul in Egypt, Mrs. Jarvie and a large number of the senior officers of the U.D.F. in Mideast. Lt. Col. Martin, D.D.N.E.A.S., introduced the G.O.A. and also spoke to the natives present in their own language. Col. Martin paid a tribute to what he called the excellent work of the U.D.F.I., stating that the N.E.A.S. were greatly indebted to us for the work we are doing in looking after the welfare of the Non-European troops.

Major Gen. Theron explained, in his speech, that the Club was provided by the Government which appreciated the work of the Non-European services and was most anxious to provide all possible recreation and welfare facilities for them. He was sure the Club would provide a great boon and that soldiers spending their leave there would be looked after and be very happy.

The Bishop of Pretoria said how glad he was to be present at the opening of so important a provision for Non-European troops; he had been most impressed by the provision made for them, and felt that this Club would be regarded by them as their home. The Bishop then dedicated the Club in English and Native languages.

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8th May, 1942.

The Acting Administrative Officer,  
Union Defence Force Institutes,  
"Q" B.C.,  
P.O.Box 1001,  
JOHANNESBURG.

*Literature for Non-E. Troops*

Dear Lieutenant Duncan,

I thank you for your letter of the 4th instant, No.U.1/7, and I am very grateful for the information you give in your letter and in the enclosure. I hope to be able to give a summarised account in the Institute's Bulletin, Race Relations News.

I have been making enquiries in a number of quarters, eg. Y.M.C.A., the Books for the Troops Committee, and it appears to me that the real necessity now is that the Y.M.C.A. War Work Council should arrange for paragraphs to appear in the newspapers, more especially the Non-European newspapers, asking the readers to hand in their newspapers, magazines and any books they may wish to send to the troops, to their local library, and that the local libraries should include them in the material they send forward to the U.D.F.I.

As the Y.M.C.A. War Work Council is meeting tomorrow, I propose to bring up the matter there, and I shall write to you again.

I much appreciate your interest in this matter.

Yours faithfully,

**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*

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