

Transvaal Carnegie Non-European Library,  
P.O. Box 564,  
Pretoria.

24th November, 1949.

Secretary,  
Native Education Commission,  
c/o Department of Education, Arts and Science,  
New Standard Bank Buildings,  
Pretoria.

Dear Sir,

In response to your request for a written statement covering questions asked, and points discussed, by your Commission with a deputation from the Transvaal Carnegie Non-European Library, on November 22nd, 1949, we wish to state the following:-

1. The great need of the T.C.N.E.L. is for funds. The service is costing between £700 - £800 annually, an amount greatly in excess of the annual income. This expenditure has been possible only because of a grant of £1000 made in 1931 by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, and because funds accumulated during a period of two years when T.C.N.E.L. was forced to close down.

T.C.N.E.L. is down to its last £250, and notification has been received that the Department of Native Affairs may be unable to contribute its customary annual grant of £300.

The main sources of revenue are, as stated in our 10th annual report, 1948, £300 from Native Affairs, £150 from the Transvaal Province, (this grant has recently been raised to £300), and during 1948, various municipalities contributed a total amount of £144.

2. As stated in our memorandum on library services for the Bantu, the T.C.N.E.L. administers a free library service. All costs are borne by the T.C.N.E.L. This service would be unable to function without the assistance of the Transvaal Education Department (Native Education), which provides premises and a staff of six African assistants. The same assistants administer the T.E.D. African Teachers' Library.
3. The T.C.N.E.L. service is extended to non-Europeans, including African, Indian and Coloured. The service is twofold. There are at present 100 depots in the Transvaal receiving books for general reading from T.C.N.E.L. During 1948, it was estimated that over 20,000 books had been read at the depots.

The T.C.N.E.L. administers a student section and this service is extended to non-Europeans living anywhere in the Union of South Africa, Rhodesia and the Protectorates. There are 454 members, 1 from Swaziland, 1 from Bechuanaland, 1 from Basutoland, 1 from Southern Rhodesia, 2 from the Orange Free State, 7 from Natal, 15 from the Cape Province, and 426 from the Transvaal. The fact that the majority of members live in the Transvaal can be attributed to the inability of T.C.N.E.L. to advertise the service widely as the library would not be able to keep abreast with the demand for books and service which would follow such publicity.

During/.....

During the period July 1948 - 1949, 1039 books were lent to students and no books were lost.

4. Union Education Department has a student service for non-Europeans similar to that of the T.C.N.E.L. The important differences are:-

(i) U.E.D. charges a deposit of 10/- per book issued. T.C.N.E.L. service is free.

(ii) U.E.D. does not allow non-Europeans to visit the library to choose reading matter. T.C.N.E.L. invites readers to come to the library to select study books and also offers members recreational reading matter. Over 200 personal visits are made to the library each month by non-European members.

(iii) U.E.D. does not employ non-European librarians. The African staff of the T.C.N.E.L. is being trained in library courses administered by the S.A.L.A. The assistants are, at the same time, doing practical library work and serving their own reading public.

With reference to the three questions specifically asked by the Commission, we wish to reply as follows:-

1. What minimum qualifications would you consider necessary before a Native can be trained as librarian for a rural area?

Junior Certificate is considered to be the minimum qualification before an African may be trained as a librarian for a rural area. The South African Library Association recently made provision for a special course called the preliminary, for unmatriculated non-Europeans possessing the J.C. certificate. With the preliminary and two years library experience, the non-European may proceed to the elementary and intermediate, but a degree is required for the final examination.

2. How long would such training take? How long must he be in training before he can start being used while still in training?

- (a) Library training, through courses such as the South African Library Association, covers a period of several years. It is found that students generally require one year for the elementary, at least two years for the intermediate and two for the final. Unmatriculated non-Europeans would have to allow one year extra for the preliminary. The total cost of the course covering correspondence courses and examination fees is £4/.
- (b) Non-Europeans could start being used after a month of practical experience spent in a library such as the T.C.N.E.L. Under its present administration, the T.C.N.E.L. would be unable to provide facilities for such training. It should also be noted that a month's training would only equip non-Europeans for library work in small depots.

3. What are the main centres of publication of Native books in Native languages, in South Africa? What kinds of books

are mostly/.....

are mostly published (textbooks, novels, political pamphlets etc?).

The main centres of publication of Vernacular books in South Africa are as follows :-

- i) Morija Press, Basutoland - S. Sotho.
- ii) Lovedale, Cape - S. Sotho, Xhosa and some Zulu.
- iii) Venda Literature Depot, Louis Trichardt - Venda.
- iv) Northern Sotho Book Depot, Eerste Fabriek - N. Sotho.
- v) Central Mission Press, Johannesburg - Shangaan.
- vi) Witwatersrand University Press - Tswana.
- vii) Shooter & Shuter, Maritzburg, - Zulu.
- viii) Some publishers like Van Schaik and Nasionale Pers publish vernacular.

In N. Sotho books published are mainly for those studying the language, e.g. grammar books by Drs. Schwellnus and Ziervogel. There are some novels and plays and poetry but interest is particularly on social questions. Religious works are widely read.

In S. Sotho there are novels, religious works and poetry.

In Tswana books are mainly translations of English works like Bunyan and Shakespeare. There are some novels.

In Shangaan there are mainly school-books, some biographies and study books.

In Zulu there are novels, biographies, poetry and study books.

In Xhosa there are mainly novels.

There is a growing need for vernacular literature so that the African may be kept in contact with his own cultural heritage. The appointment of a board to sponsor vernacular writings is strongly recommended.

Signed: S. Nicholson.

HON. SECRETARY.

M.A. Peters.

LIBRARIAN.

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