

REPLY BY CLR. P. R. B. LEWIS, CHAIRMAN OF THE NON-EUROPEAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, TO THE NOTICE OF MOTION BY COUNCILLOR E. CUYLER ON AGENDA FOR COUNCIL MEETING DATED 24TH MAY, 1960.

NOTICE OF MOTION READS:

"That it be a recommendation to the Non-European Affairs Committee that the City Council accepts the offer of the Natives Resettlement Board to move the Bantu from the Western Native Townships to Diepkloof on behalf of the City Council."

If we refer to Act 19 of 1954 - The Natives Resettlement Act - we find that Section 12 states:

"The object for which the Board is established is to effect the removal from specified areas of natives residing in those areas and to provide for the settlement elsewhere of such natives."

In terms of the Act the first specified areas were: Sophiatown; Martindale, Newclare and Pageview. Later, I understand, Alexandra Township was declared a specified area. When the Board was formed it was envisaged that the areas under its control would ultimately be handed over to the Johannesburg City Council, and that Johannesburg would be charged with the amount expended by the Board. Under the Act powers are given to compel the Johannesburg City Council to assist in the providing of services, but compulsion has not been necessary, and the Board has publicly acknowledged that it has had great co-operation from the Council in this regard.

The Resettlement Board recently suggested to my Committee their preparedness to re-house at Diepkloof the native families now residing at Western Native Township. It would appear to me that the Board would require Western Native Township to be proclaimed an area within its jurisdiction to be able to remove the residents to Diepkloof, and that ownership of Western Native Township would pass from this Council to the Resettlement Board.

I feel, however, that this is going completely against the original intention when the Act was passed. The City Council is the permanent body and the Resettlement Board the temporary one, so we would have the effect of the ownership of Western Native Township being transferred from the permanent body to the temporary body, and later being transferred from the temporary body to the permanent body.

The City Council is prepared and willing to remove the natives from Western Native Township. The reason why this has not as yet been done is, firstly, that there has been more urgent work to be done in providing housing for Natives who are not as adequately housed as those in Western Native Township, and, secondly, the difficulty has been to provide the ground on which the new houses are to be built.

An estimate of the Council's requirements in respect of the families still to be re-housed are as follows:

<u>Pimville</u>	7341 families
<u>Shantytown</u>	253 families
<u>Western Native Township</u>	2203 families
<u>Waiting List</u>	8200 families
<u>Peri-Urban</u>	<u>243 families</u>
<u>A total of</u>	<u>18240</u>

The sites available on ground acquired by the Council are as follows:

<u>Moroka</u>	3000 Sites
(At present a re-layout of this area is awaiting Government approval)	
<u>Albertynsville/Avalon</u>	4200 Sites
(This area is being laid out as a Township to be called Chiawelo Extension. The final approval of the re-layout by the Government is still awaited)	
<u>Existing Sites</u>	3065 Sites
(Of these 1395 are temporarily unusable because of rocks, marshy ground and buffer strips.)	
	<u>10265</u>

A shortage of approximately 7000 Sites.

In addition, it is estimated that 2000 sites are required each year for the natural increase in population.

In 1954 the Council commenced negotiations to purchase portion of Farm Diepkloof No: 9 from the Crown Mines, Limited. On the 15th July, 1957, Crown Mines, Limited, agreed to sell this ground to the Council. Shortly after this, the Resettlement Board asked the Council to forego their rights under the negotiations as they needed the ground to accommodate the

Natives it was proposed to remove from Alexandra Township. The Council was reluctant to give up this ground, which would have provided 5300 urgently needed sites in an area reasonably near to the City, and immediately adjacent to Noordgesig Township and stretching towards the Baragwanath Hospital. However, in July 1958, the Council passed Resolutions -

- (a) Welcoming the steps taken to improve the housing conditions of those living in Alexandra Township;
- (b) agreeing to abandon its proposals to acquire portion of Diepkloof No: 9, in spite of its urgent need for additional ground for its own housing programme, and
- (c) offering its assistance to the Government in the execution of its scheme.

At that time the Council re-stated its representations for the amendment of the area recommended by the Mentz Committee of 1953, regarding the boundaries between the black and white areas in the South Western areas, by the inclusion in the black area of Pimville and adjacent ground approximately 1200 acres in extent, which would provide ground for approximately 7000 houses, and thus assist the Council to replace the ground in the Diepkloof area. The great advantage of this ground is that it already belongs to the Council, it is adjacent to the existing native areas and well situated for transport. When the Mentz Committee was considering the boundaries, the main Johannesburg-Potchefstroom road was routed through this area, but now that it has been decided to build the main road South of Pimville, I feel that there is every justification for seriously considering the Council's proposals. This matter has been raised with the Government Inter-Departmental Committee at a Meeting held in August 1959, and a decision on this matter was held over owing to the absence of the Chairman, and no Meeting has been held since. It is now hoped that an early Meeting will take place, as, with the rising of Parliament, the members of the Committee have now returned to Pretoria.

When the Council agreed to forego its rights regarding the acquisition of the Diepkloof ground it was because of the Resettlement Board's need of that ground to house the Alexandra natives. If the Board can now see its way clear to release plots to re-house the natives of Western Native Township, is there any reason why it cannot agree to transfer a portion of the ground to the Council so that it can itself

re-settle these people? The Resettlement Act makes provision for such a transfer. Section 28 reads:

"The Board may, with the approval of the Minister and subject to such conditions as may be determined by him in consultation with the Minister of Finance and the Council, on not less than three months' notice in writing given to the Council, transfer any land owned by the Board together with any improvements thereon to the Council which shall be bound to accept transfer thereof, etc. , etc."

Why do I suggest that the Council should do the re-housing of these families instead of the Natives Resettlement Board?

1. This Council accepts the re-housing of the people of Western Native Township as its responsibility, and this appears to coincide with the feelings of the Department of Bantu Administration and Development, as in a letter from the Secretary, dated 30th May, 1959, he stated:

"You were advised that it was considered that your Council should be responsible for the removal of the Bantu from Western Native Township as it was regarded as a Location. The Department still supports that view."

2. We believe that due to the fact that the Native Revenue Account is subsidised by the Rate Fund and by Kaffir Beer Profits, that the Council provides facilities to our natives which the Resettlement Board is unable to do.
3. Our Housing Division is only too anxious to get additional work, and whereas in 1958 it had such a heavy programme that it would have been difficult to undertake buildings to re-house the Alexandra Natives, it can now easily cope, subject to the necessary funds being made available.
4. The Council is anxious to re-house the Coloured population, and needs the Western Native Township ground for that purpose.
5. Because of the undertakings given to the residents of Western Native Township that when they were moved it would be to an area under the jurisdiction of this Council.

The last thing I want to do is to cross swords or create ill-feeling with the Natives Resettlement Board. They have

a difficult job to do and are anxious to complete it as soon as possible, and I want to be helpful. I believe that the reason why the Resettlement Board have made this gesture is to have some place to move the Coloured people at present housed in Sophiatown, Martindale and Newclare. I recognise the difficulty of having some place to move people while areas are being re-built. The Council is in the same position in this regard as the Resettlement Board. Until some moves can take place, it is difficult to start on the re-housing programme. For instance, in the area which the Council has expropriated in Newclare there are resident 400 families. The new scheme provides for re-building accommodation for 800 families, but where are the 400 families to be moved in the interim? While we all hope a start will soon be made in Langlaagte and Bosmot, some room to manoeuvre is required immediately. The steps I would recommend are as follows:

1. I can see no reason why the Board cannot immediately transfer portion of Diepkloof to the Council, thus enabling it to re-house the families in Western Native Township. The Council agreed to release its rights to this ground for a specific purpose, and if the ground is not required for that purpose, I think there is a moral obligation on the Board to transfer it to the Council.
2. The Council should approach the Government to speed up the approval of the plans for the re-layout of Moroka, and the approval of the plans for Chiawelo Extension.
3. The Council should, as soon as possible, remove the natives from 169 houses in the Southern portion of Western Native Township, so that these houses could be used as a transit area for the removal of Coloureds while areas are being re-built.
4. Negotiations regarding the black-white boundaries of the Pimville area should be pursued.

I am concerned with Clr. Cuyler's motives in raising this matter in the Council before the Non-European Affairs Committee has had an opportunity to ~~consider the Resettlement Board's verbal proposals.~~ *discuss this matter with the Interdepartmental Council for Johannesburg.*

I feel that Clr. Cuyler has divided loyalties. First

and foremost he has his loyalty to his Party - then he is a member of the Resettlement Board - he is also a member of the Road Transportation Board, and a member of this Council. Has he moved this motion to help the Council or to help the Resettlement Board? The Bible says man cannot serve two masters. I may be wrong, but I believe Clr. Cuyler likes to create dissention between this Council and his Party and the Government, and he wants us, today, to appear unco-operative.

On the 20th of this month a news item appeared in the 'Transvaler'. The heading was "N.P. GAAN V.P.-RAAD OOR SOPHIATOWN OPKEIL". A translation of the article is as follows:

"National Party is going to make things hot for the United Party Council, regarding Sophiatown. It was learned that the squabble of the Johannesburg United Party Council in connection with the clearance of the western black spots will be referred to by the Council at its next monthly meeting by Mr. Eben Cuyler, leader of the National Party Group.

Because the Council does not want the Natives Resettlement Board to move Natives from the Western Native Township - which will become a Coloured Group Area - to Diepkloof, no progress could be made in regard to the cleaning up of Sophiatown. There are still several hundred Coloureds in Sophiatown and there is no alternative accommodation for them.

Temporary: If the Council will allow the removal of Natives from the Western Native Township, then Coloureds could temporarily be accommodated until other residential areas are ready to receive them and then the area could be re-planned for them."

I would be very surprised if the comment did not emanate from Mr. Cuyler. Does it not appear that in the guise of "sweet reasonableness" Clr. Cuyler is trying to drive a wedge between the Resettlement Board and this Council?

At the last meeting with the Chairman of the Resettlement Board he commented on the co-operative spirit that was

prevailing.

I believe Clr. Cuyler would like to see the control of Native Administration in the City taken out of the hands of this Council and handed over to a Government Department. I believe he would like to see the Natives Resettlement Board becoming larger and larger, and remaining a permanent body. In my opinion this was never the declared intention when the Board was created. I would like to think that the Board was considering transferring to this Council all those schemes that they have completed.

My views differ fundamentally from Clr. Cuyler's in this regard, as I believe Johannesburg's administration of Native Affairs has been a credit to the City, and that two different administrations in adjacent areas is not desirable, and only leads to jealousies being created. One aspect in particular which is the cause of constant confusion is the policy of allowing home-brewing in one area and not in the other. The City Council has Advisory Boards, while at Meadowlands Headmen are nominated by the Board. The inhabitants of the two areas must of necessity compare notes about the differences in administration, with consequent resentments when one or the other grants greater facilities than the other.

I want to say again how much I regret that Clr. Cuyler is trying to make a political issue of this matter. ~~To my opinion there was no need for this matter to be brought to the Council before it had been considered by the Non-European Affairs Committee.~~

Secret

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