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A.N.A. 8/47.MEMORANDUM:PROGRESSION OF THE AFRICANS IN NORTHERN RHODESIA.

Preliminary notes by the Adviser on Native Affairs.
on the Evidence to be prepared for the Royal Commission.

I agree, generally, with the notes of Mr. Royden Harrison and Mr. Nichols.

I think I appreciate the need for great care in putting forward any opinions on the issues raised in the Commission's Terms of Reference, and the cautious nature of the preamble to the Terms of Reference indicates that the Government is fully alive to the need for care in handling the problem. But it is also necessary to realise that the forces that press for the opening up of industrial opportunities for Africans are becoming more and more powerful; not least among these is the economic pressure. Dr. W.J. Busschau, in his report on "The Development of Secondary Industries in Northern Rhodesia" emphasises that the aggregate purchasing power of the Territory of Northern Rhodesia will be greatest in the absence of "Colour Bar" arrangements.

Not to be ignored either is the pressure from international opinions as expressed for instance in the "Recommendations" of the International Labour Conference on Social Policy in Non-self-governing Territories. In this connection Article 41 of the 1944 Recommendations says " 2. Discrimination directed against workers for reason of race, colour, or tribal association, as regards their admission to public or private employment shall be prohibited..... 3. All measures practicable under local conditions shall be taken to promote effective equality of treatment in employment....."

Lastly, but by no means least, the African himself has become very much less acquiescent to measures which bear hardly upon him. During my recent visit to the Copperbelt I was impressed by the number of persons who said that Africans there are more and more disposed to challenge the colour bar operating on the mines. The situation shows signs of developing into one in which an irresistible force meets an immovable object.

Having said so much to utter a warning against too complacent an attitude, I feel it right to say that I agree that the progression of the African will have to be accomplished over a considerable number of years, and that the "inevitability of gradualness" should be the foundation

of any policy of African progression in the situation. Much of the preparation of Africans for more skilled work will have to depend upon the goodwill and co-operation of the European mine workers, and for this reason, if for no other, it will be necessary to emphasise that no change must be so swift as to create in Europeans a sense of catastrophe. A vision of more favourable opportunities for European youths must be given the European workers, as well as assurance that no individual European will be put out of employment to make room for an African.

It is possible that the attitude taken up at the Dalgleish Conference by the representatives of the Mine Workers' Union - that "Africans should not replace Europeans in any sphere because of resulting unemployment among Europeans" - was influenced more by the fear of immediate replacement of Europeans by Africans than by the long-term possibility of Africans entering into jobs now occupied by Europeans.

Attention should be drawn to the restrictive effects of the colour bar upon the expansion of economic activities and therefore upon the greater opportunities for the employment of Europeans, more especially in higher grade skilled occupations. Dr. Busschau makes the point in this way: "The local market for the products of secondary industries is therefore unlikely to increase quickly. It will grow very slowly with the increased productivity of the African worker in the diligent application of greater skill to the Territory's resources..... While the colour-bar measures exist labour cost will be high and the volume of employment offering will be low.... "

The importance of training young Europeans to acquire higher grade skills should be emphasised and as the African progresses the European should be equipped for other and more skilled occupations. There are strong and widespread indications that economic developments in various parts of Africa will soon create a great shortage of European and African labour.

On the other hand the African must be given hope of progression for his children if not for himself. I consider Article 42 of the Agreement to be quite incompatible with this and as long as it exists it will be an incitement to action on the part of Africans.

In these circumstances I feel that it will be necessary for the Mining Industry to be prepared, at the right moment, to put forward suggestions that will help the Commission "to make recommendations for adjustments as may be necessary". (See (d) of the Terms of Reference.)

For these reasons I find myself unable to agree with the suggestions made by Messrs. Royden Harrison and Nichols that "The Chamber's reply, if pressed, could very well be that they were solely concerned with the economic aspects about which they were unable to come to any decision at present".

Nor do I agree that the question of the rate and extent of progression need prove very embarrassing to the Chamber (see paragraph 5). I have collected a considerable amount of material on this from the Union Miniere and this should give the Commission clear indications of the answer. At the first meeting of our newly formed Native Affairs Committee it was agreed that it would be quite inadvisable for the companies to put this material before the Commission. No doubt some way will be found to let the Commission know that such material may be obtained from the Union Miniere and I suggest that the members of the Commission should visit the Union Miniere's mine at Kipushi and its works at Jadotville. "Seeing is believing", as I have just experienced at these places. Items (a) (b) and (c) of the Terms of Reference are covered by the material available.

The "wage structure for Africans in industry" can be discussed on both theoretical (economic) and practical grounds. Both Dr. Busschau and Professor Burrows have made recent investigations personally in Northern Rhodesia - Dr. Busschau has examined the possibilities of the development of secondary industries in Northern Rhodesia, and Professor H.R. Burrows (Natal University College) has made a study of cost of living in the Territory. I suggest that the help of one or both of these gentlemen be secured in the preparations of the argument on this topic. I propose to make a comparison of the wage rates of workers in Britain (and perhaps on the Continent) and those of European and African workers in Northern Rhodesia and have it available for use. It will certainly be right to resist any adjustment of wages that has no relation to living costs and the workers' contributions in skill and efficiency.

I also think it would be worth while for me to gather together authoritative Union and Rhodesian pronouncements on the effects of the colour bar. It may be found inadvisable to use this material, but it should, I think, be available.

J.D. RHEINALLT JONES.

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