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See also account- in Survey ?

Rare Photo-Album 1956-57

B/10/3

(Typescript attached—
see p. 99 on)

properties and merits, provided that ^{or an} any charge made is for medicines supplied, and not for diagnosing the disease or prescribing a remedy.

These restraints apply also to tribal medicine men and herbalists; except in Natal where those skilled in healing and herbs ^{may} be licensed to practise curative medicine among Africans for gain, even to the extent of performing surgical operations. Policy is aimed at their gradual elimination, however: no new licences may be issued unless with the Minister's consent, which is seldom given. There were 322 herbalists practising legally in Natal at the time when Dr. Simons wrote; but, as he pointed out, many others carried on illegal practices.

Herbalists sell bark, herbs, bones, skins and other nostrums under a general dealer's licence, and patent medicines under a patent medicine dealer's licence.

RIOTS AND DISTURBANCES.

Disturbances that have occurred in connection with specific issues, for example the treason trials or passes for women, are dealt with in the relevant section of this Survey.

Newclare.

There were further disturbances during December and January of the year under review at Newclare, one of Johannesburg's most evil slums, which is the area that has for so long been terrorized by the 'Russians' - a group of militant - minded Africans of Sothe origin (67). Troubles at Newclare during the past year, however, have been between members of two rival Sothe clans, the Matsieng and Masupa, rather than between the 'Russians' and Africans of other tribes.

A minor incident during December led to fighting, during which numbers of members of one clan were injured. Their supporters poured into the township on the following evening and waged minor warfare against the rival group - knives, knobkerries, sticks, stones, home-made battle axes, pistols and shotguns were used. Eventually the fighting was stopped by the police, one African constable receiving fatal injuries.

A further serious clash occurred some six weeks later, many injuries being caused, and one member of the Matsieng clan being fatally wounded. His funeral triggered off another battle in which about a thousand men and women were involved. The homes of some members of the Masupa clan were wrecked and, again, many people were injured. This time the police were forced to open fire before they succeeded in quelling the riot. It was reported that about thirty Africans were admitted to hospital.

Vlakfontein.

General unrest had for some time been simmering at Vlakfontein,

(67) See Survey of Race Relations 1955/56 pages 97 & seq. for previous history of the 'Russians'.

the large African township to the east of Pretoria, caused by a variety of factors, one of which was the extremely high transport charges. Matters were brought to a head in October 1956, when the Location Superintendent, who had been urging the Africans to tidy up their gardens and to build fowl runs of acceptable standard, decided to demolish those fowl runs that were unsatisfactory. Some of the municipal police, whom he ordered to do this, exceeded their instructions and began uprooting trees and plants in the gardens. The women were furious, and some of them stoned the policemen.

The following day was a Saturday, when many of the men were at home. Several thousand angry men, women and children gathered for a meeting outside the beerhall, where a European was in charge. Passions mounted and eventually boiled over: the crowd stoned the beerhall, smashed its windows, damaged the bicycles of municipal policemen, and then set fire to the beerhall and to the car of its manager.

The S.A. Police were hurriedly summoned: their vans were stoned as they arrived. They poured out of their vehicles and made a baton charge to disperse the crowd, but as soon as they retired the mob re-formed. Six baton charges were necessary before control was established, individual policemen, who found themselves in difficulties, opening fire with their revolvers. Eight police constables and six civilian Africans were injured.

Fifteen Africans were later convicted on charges of assault. The Location Superintendent was replaced shortly after the riots; but a committee of inquiry later absolved him of all blame.

Langa

Police raided a meeting of the African National Congress at Langa township, Cape Town, during February 1957, in order to arrest some nine Africans from other areas who had entered the township without permission. This was highly resented, stones were thrown, and a baton charge was made by the police to disperse the crowd.

Welhuter Beerhall, Johannesburg.

One evening in August 1957, when most of the customers of the Welhuter Beerhall near the centre of Johannesburg had already left, supplies of a matured brew of kaffir beer came to an end, and a new brew was served. The customers who remained, some 200 of them, protested about its quality and queued up to demand the refund of their money.

Some of them became impatient and threw their beer mugs in the air. This mood caught on. The crowd rushed into the street, stoning the beerhall and passing cars. Large numbers of policemen were forced to cordon off the area before order could be restored.

Daveyton.

The model African township of Daveyton, Benoni, where the principle of ethnic grouping was first applied, was described in the last edition of this Survey. (68)

Serious rioting occurred there during March 1957. It was said that a gang of unruly Xhosa children attacked a school serving the Swasi group, killing one of the pupils and injuring two teachers. The children poured out of the building and hundreds of them were seen engaged in fighting.

The parents gradually became involved. Before long, thousands of Swasi and Xhosa were engaged in open tribal warfare. At least four, but probably more, were killed. In spite of the efforts of the police, fighting continued for over two days and nights - at least another five people were killed. On hearing that two members of their tribe were amongst the casualties, the Zulus joined forces with the Swasi, while it was rumoured that the Sotho were contemplating coming to the assistance of the Xhosa.

The utmost confusion reigned until the police eventually managed to regain control. The schools were closed; some two thousand Africans stayed away from work; more than that number of women and children sought temporary refuge outside the township.

Africans feel very strongly that the system of ethnic grouping, which accentuates tribal division, was at the root of the trouble.

Dube Hostel, Johannesburg.

(a) The background.

It will be recalled (69) that following the passing of the 'Locations in the Sky' Act, Johannesburg Municipality obtained a housing loan for the erection of a cottage hostel at Dube (one of the African townships grouped together to the south-west of the city). This can accommodate 5,152 men. The City Council planned to build further hostels, and meanwhile to use the Dube one to cater for men who were living as sub-tenants in slum areas, or as illegal lodgers in back yards or on the top of blocks of flats, allowing those who had in the past been lawfully accommodated to remain where they were for the time being. But the Minister of Native Affairs insisted that at least half the accommodation should be used for the rehousing of people to be moved under the 'Locations in the Sky' Act - which provided that, unless specially authorised, no owner of a building in the 'white' part of a town may allow more than five Africans to live there.

(69) See Survey of Race Relations 1955/56, pages 124 et seq.

(68) Survey of Race Relations 1955/56, page 123.

Of necessity, then, the Council moved large numbers of cleaners and domestic servants to Dube from blocks of flats and offices, hotels and other buildings in the 'white' areas. These men were nearly all Zulus, their class being known colloquially as Isicaga. For convenience, the illegal lodgers who filled up the remaining accommodation were also selected mostly from the Zulu tribe.

This caused two difficulties. Firstly, it was socially undesirable to place over 5,000 single men in the midst of family dwellings. Secondly, the families in the neighbourhood were of mixed, but mainly Sotho origin, so that the illfeeling that developed tended to canalise along tribal lines.

Cut

(b) Riot in May 1957

During May 1957, the Superintendent of Dube Hostel called in the police to arrest certain Africans who were said to be preying on the residents, and to confiscate dangerous weapons that were being collected.

About twenty Africans were arrested and taken to the Superintendent's office. Scores of the residents suddenly turned on the police, attacking them with stones and knobkerries, and in the confusion the prisoners escaped. As the crowd grew, the police fired warning shots in the air, then retired to await reinforcements.

For a time the Africans continued angrily to stone the municipal offices, smashing hundreds of windows; but, according to evidence given later by the Superintendent (70) (at an inquest) he eventually succeeded in quietening the crowd. Then, he said, the police reinforcements arrived, piled out of their lorries, and made a baton charge. At some stage (whether before or during the charge is not clear), stones were flung at the police. Then, again, the Africans turned on the police, who opened fire with revolvers and later with a sten gun. Eventually the Africans were forced to withdraw, dropping large numbers of assorted weapons as they ran.

A European constable and twelve Africans were admitted to hospital, and two Africans were shot dead by the police - later, at the inquest, the magistrate recorded a verdict of justifiable homicide.

(c) Mounting tension.

As is described in a later chapter of this Survey, residents of the African townships have for years been preyed upon by the tsotais - gangs of youths of no specific tribal affiliation. There is a grave state of lawlessness. The tsotais are particularly active on the trains on Friday evenings, robbing workers returning from the city of their pay-packets.

Is there any comment or evidence in the papers?

(70) As reported in Rand Daily Mail, 18 October 1957

The izicaga (or Zulu 'flat-boys') who had been moved to Dube were not accustomed to this treatment. Lacking adequate police protection, they decided to take matters into their own hands and declared war on the tsotsis. Older residents of the townships learned to avoid travelling on the trains between 6 and 7 p.m.

Weeks of tension ensued. The illfeeling that had developed between the izicaga and the families in the township had tended to develop along tribal lines, as is explained above: now the izicaga apparently began identifying the tsotsis and other gangsters with the Sothe people.

(d) Riot in Dube, Meadowlands and other townships, in September.

Fighting broke out on a Saturday afternoon, 15 September 1957, between rival gangs of men armed with knobkerries, iron bars, battleaxes, sticks, and firearms. Suddenly, thousands in Dube, Meadowlands and other townships went berserk, a major battle taking place between members of the Zulu and Sothe tribes near the hostel, in the streets, and between the houses.

After some hours order was restored by the police, who used firearms as well as batons. It is alleged by Africans that some of the police firing was indiscriminate, being directed blindly into the grounds of Dube hostel. More than 40 Africans were killed during the riot or died of wounds, and scores more were seriously injured.

(e) Action taken after the riot.

A series of meetings was immediately held by some sixteen African leaders, among them the Field Officer of the Institute of Race Relations, and concrete suggestions were placed by them before the authorities. As short-term measures they suggested that representatives of the Sothe and Zulu paramount chiefs should be asked to tour the townships, urging their people to refrain from lawless acts (this was done); that the police should concentrate on disarming warring factions before trouble started; that funeral gatherings created potentially explosive situations; and that meetings in the townships should not be limited to members of one tribe.

As longer-term measures, the leaders urged that the system of ethnic grouping, which accentuated tribal division, should be abolished; and that hostels for single men should not be built amongst family dwellings.

The Director of the Institute of Race Relations pressed for the appointment of a commission of inquiry; urged the City Council to meet with representatives of the police, the Government Native Affairs Department and the African people, to discuss methods of avoiding further clashes; and once again maintained that if the police had insufficient forces to control the situation, the scheme of civilian guards, under police control, should be revived.

*Izicaga encouraged by fact is organized action taken against them
assaulted
1) tribes or
new women
2) children
thought no action was taken*

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Johannesburg City Council urged the Government to appoint a judicial commission of inquiry. The private secretary to the Minister of Justice replied: "It is considered that in view of previous inquiries, which were instituted when similar occurrences took place, and the known facts of the present events, the establishment of such a judicial commission is unnecessary".

The City Council then decided itself to appoint an independent commission headed, if possible by a retired judge, to consider:

- (i) the immediate causes of the riots;
- (ii) the root causes of the conditions of unrest in the South-western Native areas which gave rise to the riots; and
- (iii) what remedial measures may be necessary and advisable to avoid similar happenings in the future.

GENERAL RESEARCH.

Research projects connected with education, employment, health and so on are dealt with in appropriate chapters of this Survey. Some of the more general projects in progress are described below.

Afrikaans-English relations.

S.A. Institute of Race Relations:

- (i) Causes of friction between Afrikaans and English-speaking people (Study sponsored by the Institute)
- (ii) A pilot study, in the Bloemfontein area, of the school language medium question and of the reason for the development of parallel English and Afrikaans cultural, economic, welfare, sporting and other bodies.

Coloured affairs.

Stellenbosch University:

- (i) Kontak en assosiasie tussen kleurlinge en Naturelle in Wes-Kaapland.
- (ii) 'n Sosiologiese studie van vroulike kleurlinghuisbedienendes in Wes-Kaapland.
- (iii) Aspekte van die houdings van kleurlinge teenoor Blankes.
- (iv) Drankmisbruik en misdaad onder kleurlinge in Wes-Kaapland.
- (v) Rel-differensiasie in die gesinslewe van die kleurlinge in Wes-Kaapland, met spesiale verwysing na die vroueonderrol.
- (vi) Maatskaplike stratifikasie en vertikale mobiliteit onder die Kleurlinge van Stellenbosch.

Natal University:

Psychological factors in marginality in a S.A. Coloured Community.

Witwatersrand University:

Die wederaydige beïnvloeding van die Blanke-, Bantoe-en
kleurling-kulture in Noord-Kaapland.

Indian Affairs.

Pretoria University:

Die Indiërvraagstuk in Natal, 1870 - 1914.

African Affairs

Rhodes University:

Study of a mixed community of pagan and Christian Bantu in
the Border region

Witwatersrand University:

- (i) An investigation into educational and occupational differences
in test performances on a battery of adaptability tests designed
for Africans.
- (ii) Child-rearing practices and personality development in an urban
African community.
- (iii) African civilisation in Southern Africa before European conquest
(Study sponsored by the University)

University of South Africa:

Die verhouding Blank tot Naturel in die Transvaal tot 1902.

Institute of Race Relations:

- (i) Insurance companies operating amongst Africans in Durban.
- (ii) Reaction of African families in Durban to the carrying of passes.

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SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS, Unrests, banishments, removals, 1948-1969

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