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MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF REEF MANAGERS AND  
SUPERINTENDENTS OF URBAN NATIVE ADMINISTRATION AND  
NATIVE COMMISSIONERS HELD IN THE BOARD ROOM, 501/2,  
HIS MAJESTY'S BUILDINGS, ELOFF STREET, JOHANNESBURG,  
AT 10 A.M. ON THURSDAY, THE 20TH JULY, 1944.

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PRESENT: Mr. L.I. Venables, Johannesburg (Chairman);  
Councillor James Gray, M.P.C., Chairman, Non-  
European Affairs Committee, Johannesburg;  
Mr. N.P.J. O'Connell, Acting Native Commissioner,  
Johannesburg;  
Mr. A.S. Welsh, K.C., Johannesburg;  
Mr. D.F. Hennessy, Johannesburg;  
Mr. T.F. Roos, Native Commissioner, Germiston/Boksburg;  
Mr. A. Carinus, " " Springs/Nigel;  
Mr. W.G. Meyer, Germiston;  
Mr. G. Viljoen, Vereeniging;  
Mr. H.S. van der Walt, Chief Health Inspector,  
Krugersdorp;  
Dr. F.J. Language, Brakpan;  
Mr. G.C. van der Watt, Krugersdorp;  
Mr. J. Dowdeswell, Randfontein;  
Mr. A.E. Venske, Boksburg;  
Mr. J.R. Brent, Pretoria;  
Mr. C.W. Prinsloo, Pretoria;  
Mr. B.P. Dodd, Benoni;  
Mr. E.J. Baker, Springs;  
Mr. G.R. Johnson, Nigel;  
Mr. W.E. Barber, Eastern Native Township;  
Mr. J.A. Campbell, Mai-Mai Hostel and Bazaar;  
Lt.Col. T.W. Armitage, D.S.O., Orlando;  
Mr. E.F. Kieser, Pimville;  
Mr. A.W. Oliver, Wolhuter Men's Hostel;  
Mr. A.R. Cleverly, Western Native Township;  
Mr. A. Venter, Wemmer Men's Hostel.

APOLOGIES: Councillor Mrs. M. Kirby, Johannesburg.  
Mr. D.S. Jacobs, Heidelberg.

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(1) CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES.

The minutes of the last meeting, having been circulated, were confirmed.

On behalf of the Association, the Chairman extended a cordial welcome to Councillor James Gray, M.P.C., Chairman of the Non-European Affairs Committee of the Johannesburg City Council. He also welcomed Mr. C.W. Prinsloo, who had recently assumed duty as Assistant Manager of the Pretoria Non-European Administration Department, and Mr. H.S. van der Walt, Chief Health Inspector of Krugersdorp.

(2) MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES.

(a) Exhibition of Films unsuitable to Native Youths.

The Chairman, who had been asked to report the present position in this connection, recalled that considerable correspondence had taken place between the Department of the Interior and the Union Department of Native Affairs, and arising therefrom an enquiry had been received from the latter Department. The matter had then been considered by the Reef Managers' Association, whose representations and suggestions had been embodied in the reply to the Government. He read this letter and stated that nothing further had been heard from either of the State Departments concerned as to what decision had been reached. He added that under the Film Censorship Regulations, the Board, in approving a film, might impose a condition limiting its exhibition to certain classes of people, i.e., Coloureds, Natives or Europeans, and in this event natives attending a performance approved for exhibition only to Coloureds and/or Europeans, would contravene the provisions of the enabling Act, and some measure of control

could/....



could be exercised by the Police in enforcing these regulations.

On being questioned by the Chairman as to whether the films exhibited in the cinema hall in the Coloured Location, Benoni, were intended for exhibition to Coloured persons only, Mr. Dodd replied that he was not in a position to say, and added that the licence in respect of this cinema had not been renewed for the current year as it did not comply with the requirements of the Fire Department.

Further discussion ensued and it was agreed to approach the Department of Native Affairs regarding the present position.

(b) Jurisdiction of Rent Board over houses in Municipal Townships.

Mr. Dodd, who had undertaken to make further enquiries in this connection, reported that the circular he had seen and to which he had made reference at a previous meeting, had originated from the Department of Social Welfare. He had been advised that this was a private document and he could not therefore elicit further information. He had, however, interviewed the Secretary and Chairman of the Rent Board in the Benoni area, and he read a communication received by him in this connection, to the effect, inter alia, that as the Benoni Location had been proclaimed under the Natives (Urban Areas) Act No. 21 of 1923; the Rent Board had no jurisdiction there.

Mr. Welsh queried whether the Natives (Urban Areas) Act pictured the existence of sub-tenants. If it was recognised that a tenant could sub-let, the Rent Board had jurisdiction between the tenant and the sub-tenant but not between the Council and the tenant.

Mr. Dowdeswell raised the question of the exorbitant rentals charged by tenants sub-letting. The Chairman said this experience was common to most Reef local authorities and Location Superintendents should refer all sub-tenants exploited in this way to the Rent Board.

In regard to the total abolition of sub-letting, Mr. Brent said this would constitute a hardship in the case of a native who had built his own home and was then transferred to another district. The Chairman stated that in this event he could be given a period of say six months to dispose of the improvements.

At the request of the meeting, it was decided to refer the question of the jurisdiction of the Rent Board over houses in Municipal Locations to the Union Department of Native Affairs for representation to the Secretary for Social Welfare.

(c) Use of Native Labour in the erection of Native Dwellings.

The Chairman read to the meeting certain correspondence received by the Pretoria Non-European Administration Department from various Building Trades Unions, copies of which had been circulated to members.

Mr. Dodd said he proposed submitting this correspondence, together with the views of the meeting, for the information of the Non-European Affairs Committee of the Benoni Council.

Mr. Welsh referred to a paragraph in the Report of the Native Economic Commission, 1930/32, reading as follows :-

" In Native locations there should be no prohibition  
" against Natives doing skilled work. At present trade  
" unions insist that standard rates should be paid on such  
" contracts, and this in practice confines the work to  
" Europeans. Your Commission considers that it is un-  
" reasonable to expect Natives to pay rent based on  
" capital charges, created by much higher wages than  
" Natives in practice earn. This overcapitalizes the  
" location ab initio, and frequently there is no escape

from/....

*of City Council  
of Native  
discussions*



" from the necessity to subsidize rent. In time this will  
" have a harmful effect on the location itself, inasmuch  
" that urban authorities, faced by successive losses on the  
" Native revenue account, will be chary of undertaking further  
" expenditure. Your Commission considers that any attempt  
" to apply the industrial colour bar against Natives in  
" locations should be made illegal, in the same way as it is  
" now done in respect of trading in locations. This is a  
" question the settlement of which the community cannot leave  
" to the self-interest of trade unions, since far-reaching  
" national social issues are involved therein".

Mr. Meyer read to the meeting a newspaper report regarding a three-roomed house for natives designed by Dr. H.J. van der Bijl at an estimated cost of £280. Dr. van der Bijl had suggested that unskilled native labour should be used in the construction of homes for natives.

The Chairman said he had inspected this house which embodied valuable principles which could with advantage be embodied in mass-production housing schemes. He was not in a position to say, however, how the house would stand up to prolonged wet or extreme weather.

The representatives from Krugersdorp, Brakpan and Vereeniging stated that in their areas houses erected with skilled labour had been designed at a cost less than £280.

The Chairman suggested that the problem should be approached from the point of view of potential juvenile delinquents, for the majority of whom under existing conditions there were insufficient educational facilities. It was most important that greater economic opportunities should be created for natives, and education, which included vocational training, should form the basis of such a policy. This view was supported by the Juvenile Delinquency Conference held in 1938. Local authorities should be urged to define their native policy and to express views on whether they were in favour of developing local industries in locations aimed at serving the needs of natives in the provision of goods such as furniture, clothing and footwear. Natives should be trained to produce many of the goods and services they required, including the provision of houses. He advocated the erection of an economic type of house, containing such amenities as electric light, hot and cold water, sewerage, etc., which could be sold to the advanced type of native at an economic price. In regard to the pre-fabricated type of house, which did not involve the employment of much skilled labour, this principle was also worthy of investigation with a view to securing houses at a reduced cost.

He did not know whether the law would permit a local authority to employ native skilled labour at a wage less than that laid down in the wage determinations. If this difficulty could be overcome, he would be inclined to advocate, after consultation with the building industries concerned, a wage less than that of the European artisan. The Association of Reef Managers should adopt a progressive attitude on this question and recommend to the various Councils concerned consideration of the principles outlined. He moved accordingly and Mr. Brent seconded the motion.

Mr. van der Walt questioned whether, as it was permissible in certain locations for a native to erect an approved type of dwelling in accordance with by-laws, he would be obliged in employing native skilled labour to pay them the wages laid down in the wage determination affecting that type of industry.

Members were in general agreement with the views expressed by the Chairman, with the exception of the lower rates of pay proposed for native skilled artisans. Mr. Oliver said trade unions would not agree to this principle as it might affect their standard of living. On the suggestion of Mr. Viljoen, it was unanimously agreed to accept as a principle that such natives should receive lower wages only when employed in native locations, and that they be paid the same



rates as Europeans when employed outside.

It was resolved to circulate for consideration by all Urban Local Authorities represented on this Association, the following :-

(1) That this Association is perturbed at the incidence of juvenile delinquency in the locations and urban areas on the Reef and in Pretoria.

(2) To combat this evil more adequate educational facilities, particularly of a vocational nature, are urgently required.

(3) The Association advocates as a principle the creation and development of local industries in native locations where goods can be produced for local native consumption by natives trained in skills at institutions visualised under paragraph (2) hereof.

(4) That the vocational training and local industries should include provision for the production of houses in locations by native skilled labour.

(5) That Reef urban local authorities consult with the Master Builders and Trades Unions concerned on the question of establishing for qualified natives a wage at rates less than those appertaining to European labour while the natives concerned are employed within a native location: Provided that the standards laid down in the various wage determinations shall apply outside native locations.

(6) That local authorities be urged to subsidise experiments directed to the evolution of cheaper houses for Africans and particularly pre-fabricated types capable of being erected with the minimum of skilled labour.

(d) Native Laws Amendment Act, 1944.

The Chairman read to the meeting a précis prepared by Mr. Welsh on the amendments to the Natives (Urban Areas) Act introduced by the Native Laws Amendment Act, 1944 (Copy attached). This was considered section by section.

Clause 5:

In this connection, Dr. Language said it would be helpful if the Union Department of Native Affairs could give a definition of the term "social or recreational amenities".

The meeting concurred and resolved that that Department be approached and asked to define within broad limits what items of expenditure could be included under this heading.

Clause 10:

Mr. Welsh explained that in the principal Act there was provision, where there was no municipal supply of kaffir beer in existence or no native licensee under Section 21 bis, for domestic brewing by householders in a location or native village. Clause 10 empowered the Minister to authorise the home brewing of kaffir beer even where the municipal and licence systems were in force and even outside native locations and villages. In cases where there was no municipal supply or licensee but where there was domestic brewing, permits might be approved for persons outside a location, subject to certain conditions and a limitation in quantity.

This clause also empowered the Minister, if he was satisfied that domestic brewing in an urban area was leading to abuse, to withdraw the notice in respect of such area.

It was decided to place the subject of home brewing on the agenda for the next month's meeting.

(3) POLITICAL MEETINGS IN LOCATIONS.

Dr. Language spoke of the increase of political agitation in locations and asked what attitude local authorities should adopt.

(At this stage Mr. Ballenden arrived.)

The/...



The Chairman intimated that this question had been discussed at a previous meeting of the Association and he read a report to the Johannesburg Non-European Affairs Committee in this connection. In addition, his Department had apprised the Government Departments of Police and Native Affairs of the position. He considered that local authorities could do little more than watch the position, and that trouble would be precipitated if the persons concerned were prohibited from airing their grievances. Such prohibition would probably have the effect of driving the movement underground. He suggested that the remedy might lie in the enlargement of powers and altering the constitution of advisory boards; for example, the introduction of the "ward system" would create small areas where an advisory board member's sphere of influence would be restricted to his particular area.

The meeting decided to take no action in this matter at the present time.

(4) SUPREME COURT DECISIONS.

(a) Jack Makaya vs. City Council of Johannesburg.

In this case the Chairman said the matter had been taken in appeal to the Transvaal Provincial Division, where the Court was against the Municipality on the question of a regulation which provided powers of ejection. The Johannesburg City Council had resolved to take the matter on Appeal to the Appellate Division and the appeal was set down for hearing in September.

He did not consider there was any point in discussing this matter further.

(b) Rex vs. Mokonyane.

Noted.

(5) GENERAL.

(a) Natives posing as Coloured Persons.

The Chairman said at its meeting on the 20th April, 1944, the Association had discussed this matter and had later made representations to the Commissioner of Inland Revenue and suggested that Receivers of Revenue be requested to invariably refer all applications of the nature referred to to their district Pass Officer for report before considering an application for exemption. A reply had now been received to the effect that instructions were being issued to Receivers of Revenue which should achieve the desired result.

(b) Procedure in Submission of Items to Government.

Mr. Ballenden suggested that it would be an act of courtesy on the part of the Association, when submitting items discussed at its meetings for the consideration or comments of a State Department, to forward such representations through the Secretary for Native Affairs.

The meeting concurred in these remarks and resolved accordingly.

(c) Proclamation under Section 5 bis of Act 21/23.

It was decided to circulate for general information the proclamation issued under 5 bis of Act 21 of 1923 in respect of the Pretoria area.

(d) Welcome to Acting Native Commissioner, Johannesburg.

The Chairman extended a welcome to Mr. N.P.J. O'Connell, representing the Native Commissioner, Johannesburg, who had recently assumed duty in Johannesburg after service in the Transkei.

(e) Dr. F. Hinsbeeck.

Mr. Ballenden mentioned that Dr. Hinsbeeck had intimated that he would not be able to attend the Association's meetings as he was no longer in charge of Native Administration at Roodepoort, although Asiatic Administration was still under his control. He queried whether the Association's constitution would permit of Dr. Hinsbeeck still being permitted to be a member of the Association.



Members agreed that as Dr. Hinsbeeck had been one of the Association's most active members, he should be communicated with and asked to continue his membership.

The Chairman said this raised the question as to whether the Association's activities should embrace Non-Europeans, and it was decided to place the matter of the Association's constitution on the agenda for the next meeting.

The meeting terminated at 12.45 p.m.

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