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TRANSVAAL CARNEGIE NON-EUROPEAN LIBRARY.

Minutes of a special meeting of the Transvaal Carnegie Non-European Library Committee held in the Native Teachers' Library, Beatrix Street, Pretoria, on March 30, 1949.

Present: Mr E.A. Borland (in the Chair), Mr J.R. Brent, Mr G.H. Franz, Mr C. Jackson, Mr G.C. van der Watt, Mr I.J. van Wyk, the Librarian Mrs M.A. Peters, and the Secretary.

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Lee D. Bergsman, Mr C. Christie, Mr J.D. Rheinallt Jones, Mr M.M. Stirling.

Purpose of meeting: The Chairman explained that the meeting had been called in order to discuss the future of the Carnegie Non-European Library with Mr Franz, Chief Inspector of Native Education. Mr Borland then briefly explained that the Carnegie Non-European Library had come into being at Germiston in 1931, its purpose being to lend books to non-Europeans, with a section to supply books to students working for any examinations from Junior Certificate upwards. The library was steadily built up until about 1941, when it began to be difficult to manage it from Germiston, and in 1945 the Student Section of the library was transferred to Pretoria, where the Union Education Department Library took over the books. In 1946 the general lending section was also transferred to Pretoria, where it was housed and administered by the Native Teachers' Library of the Transvaal Education Department. At the beginning of 1948 the Committee of the Carnegie Non-European Library asked the Union Education Department Library to return the Carnegie books, as the appointment of a trained librarian during the previous year made the administration of the library more satisfactory. The Union Education Department agreed to the request, and the lending of books to students recommenced in May 1948.

It has now been pointed out that there is some overlapping of services offered by the Non-European section of the Union Education Department Library and by the Transvaal Carnegie Non-European Library, and it was thought that the Carnegie Non-European Library Committee should consider possible future developments.

The Librarian, Mrs M.A. Peters, then told the Committee that the library had 244 student members at the end of March 1949, and was then issuing an average of 62 books a month from the stock of 1300 books in the Student Section. Although the library is not easily accessible, and closes each day at 4.30 p.m., visitors to the library are steadily increasing in numbers. Here they receive personal help and attention from the native librarians of the Transvaal Education Department, and are encouraged to read general works as well as books prescribed for specific examinations. These native librarians are receiving instruction in library administration, cataloguing, classification and book selection, and are rapidly becoming qualified to be of great help to their own people.

The Carnegie Non-European Library is in a difficult position at present, as its funds are inadequate, and it must rely on the Transvaal Education Department for premises and staff.

Mrs Peters then said the Union Education Department Library had a section for non-European students, with a membership of approximately 200, and a bookstock of 2500. Readers, however, must pay a deposit of 10/6 per book borrowed, and all their requests must come by post, as non-Europeans are not permitted to visit the library. There are no non-European library assistants on the staff.

The Committee then discussed the likelihood of amalgamation of the Carnegie Non-European Library with the Union Education Department Library, and considered the following points:

1. The Carnegie Non-European Library does not require any fee from its readers, whereas borrowers from the Union Department Library must pay a deposit of 10/6 per book borrowed.

2. The Carnegie Non-European Library and the Native Teachers' Library of the Transvaal Education Department are being administered by non-Europeans, who are receiving library training, whereas the Union Education Department Library staff are exclusively European. The Committee felt that non-European librarians could be of far more use than Europeans in helping the native people to make better use of library facilities provided for them.

3. The opportunity to visit a library, see the bookstock and make his own selection is of far greater use to any reader than selection from booklists and by post.

4. The overlapping of services is not a very serious matter. European students are able to borrow from their own university library, from their local municipal library, from the Union Education Department Library, or, through the Inter-library loan system, from the State Library or almost any other library in the Union.

Mr Franz moved that the Carnegie Non-European Library Committee appoint a deputation to meet officials of the Union Education Department and discuss with them the subject of library services for non-European students. The Committee agreed to this, and decided that the deputation consist of all members who could attend on the date to be fixed. The Secretary was instructed to write to the Secretary for Education and ask him to interview the deputation at a time to be fixed by him.

General. Mr van der Watt asked whether the Committee could give any help towards the establishing of a library for non-Europeans in Krugersdorp. The Committee decided that no financial help could be given, but instructed the Secretary to write to the Town Clerk of Krugersdorp asking him to arrange for a deputation from the Carnegie Non-European Library Committee to interview the Krugersdorp Town Council in the matter. At the same time the Secretary should supply the Town Clerk with information about services already being supplied by other municipalities in the Transvaal.

June 3, 1949.

Chairman.

Collection Number: AD1715

SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS (SAIRR), 1892-1974

PUBLISHER:

Collection Funder:- Atlantic Philanthropies Foundation

Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive

Location:- Johannesburg

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