

JOHANNESBURG COUNCIL for ADULT EDUCATION.

MEMORANDUM.

submitted at the request of the Director of Adult Education to show the difficulties under which the Council is working and to suggest solutions.

The Johannesburg Council for Adult Education is submitting this Memorandum to the National Advisory Council for Adult Education with the intention of persuading it and subsequently the Minister of Education that the maximum of £100 granted to Local Councils for administrative purposes is quite inadequate.

It is emphasised that the Council is not necessarily advocating an increase in expenditure on Adult Education in a time of financial stringency. What is suggested is the re-allocation to the benefit of Local Councils of the money normally available to the Department for distribution.

The arguments on which this Memorandum are based are applicable, it is thought, to Local Councils in general. They are :

a) The Local Council is the unit of the Adult Education scheme. There is little doubt that the Local Council - as long as it is thoroughly representative - is the best vehicle for the promotion of the scheme in any area. That being the case, it should be a primary duty of the Department to establish and foster representative and efficiently organised Local Councils, a duty which involves many aspects not the least being the provision of adequate finances. If the Department fails in this duty, the Adult Education scheme will disintegrate from the top.

b) While it can be argued that Local Authorities should contribute towards the expenses of Local Councils, it is nevertheless true that little local support can be expected unless local councils can prove their value to the community. A near-penniless Local Council is in no position to prove its value. It is therefore clearly the duty of the Department to ensure that Local Councils formed by enthusiastic citizens have a good start so that Local Authorities become interested in them. At that stage the Department's burden would be shared by the Local Authorities.

These arguments, stated generally, are particularly applicable to the Johannesburg Council for Adult Education and the rest of this Memorandum is devoted to its difficulties and their solution.

The fault committed by this Council is that it has established itself so rapidly as a body prepared to work in the field of Adult Education that it has outstripped the formulation by the Department of its policy towards Local Councils. While the Department's difficulties in this unfortunate dilemma are appreciated, it must be clear that this Council cannot draw back nor even halt. Unless it can proceed soon with positive work in the field of Adult Education, the enthusiasm which has been shown will begin to wane and the Council go into decline. When it is realised that the Council is representative of almost every important institution and organisation in the City and that it has roused these bodies to the hope that something positive is at last to be achieved, the harm that its decline would do to the cause of Adult Education in the City - in fact to the whole National scheme - becomes painfully obvious.

It is, in fact, somewhat remarkable that institutions of the standing of the Johannesburg City Council, the /University of

University of the Witwatersrand and the Witwatersrand Technical College and many organisations of importance continue to show great interest in the Council which has as yet done little adult education work. This interest can only be ascribed to the fact that these bodies realise the potential value of the Council. That this realisation is widespread is a measure of the achievement of the Council in its first year. It has established itself firmly, constituted itself soundly and provided for its efficient running by an Executive Committee of prominent citizens. It is, in fact, a Council equipped to undertake large-scale work if only it has the financial support of the Department.

The Council has now reached the stage when it must justify the hard work and enthusiasm put into its formation. It has formulated a number of schemes for promoting Adult Education in the City and is anxious to proceed with them. These plans are outlined below and should serve to show that the Department is not being asked to grant money without evidence that it will be wisely spent. It is not, however, practicable at this stage to estimate the cost of any of these schemes except the Bulletin. The success of the others will at first depend largely upon the Council's ability to maintain and increase the amount of its secretarial work. It can only do this, as it has persistently argued during the last six months, by paying for this work which is beyond the most generous limits of voluntary effort.

The Plans of the Johannesburg Council for Adult Education.

A) The Bulletin.

The issue of a regular Bulletin is considered to be one of the best means of achieving co-ordination and co-operation in the field of adult education. There are in Johannesburg at least two hundred voluntary organisations holding regular meetings which receive very little publicity. The Bulletin would serve to bring the activities and programmes of these organisations to the notice of the public and would stimulate interest in them.

The Bulletin would be distributed through affiliated organisations and through the Johannesburg Public Library which is anxious to co-operate in the matter. Experimental Bulletins have already been issued and the publication of a regular Bulletin is at present being investigated by a sub-committee.

It is hardly necessary to add that the publication which the Department hopes to issue quarterly will not eliminate the need for a local monthly publication.

B) Information Bureau.

The City Librarian has offered facilities at the Johannesburg Public Library for the establishment of an Information Bureau. Arrangements are in hand but the character of the Bureau and its establishment naturally depend on decisions with regard to the Bulletin.

C) Expansion of Adult Education Facilities.

The Council hopes to encourage existing organisations to hold meetings and perhaps establish branches in areas and suburbs in which adult education is most needed. It wishes to arouse interest in hobbies and useful leisure time activities. It hopes to see to the provision of formal education facilities for adults in these areas - night schools, continuation classes and correspondence courses. It intends, furthermore, to bring pressure to bear on the local

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authority with regard to the building of more community centres.

D) Industrial Welfare.

The Council wishes to encourage the promotion of leisure time recreational and educational facilities for workers in commerce and industry. It hopes to secure the establishment of permanent facilities in large factories and businesses.

E) Compulsory Adult Education for School-Leavers.

The Council is greatly interested in the scheme for the compulsory education of school-leavers under the age of eighteen and is prepared to co-operate with the Department in this matter.

Suggestions for Financing the Johannesburg Council for Adult Education.

It is the carefully considered opinion of the Council that it requires £660 for the present financial year (of this it has received £100). The Department would seem to have the following alternative methods of finding this money :

a) By securing an increase in the vote for Adult Education so that the maximum of £100 granted to Local Councils can be raised without prejudice to the amount of money distributed at present to voluntary organisations.

b) By re-allocating the money at present disbursed by the Department so that Local Councils receive more. The apparent loss to voluntary organisations would be more than balanced by the increased co-ordination of and publicity given to activities in each area. Local Councils could perhaps receive a percentage of the total amount allocated to organisations applying through them.

There has been a suggestion that a central office staffed by a secretary and typiste should be established in Johannesburg for the use of the three local councils in the City. This suggestion does not originate from this Council and, as it is not considered feasible, it is not proposed here. It would almost certainly be the most expensive and least productive of the schemes which could be put forward to meet the difficulties in Johannesburg.

CONCLUSION.

The Memorandum can only end on a note of urgency. The funds of the Council will have been exhausted by end-September and it will have no alternative but to go out of existence if an additional grant has not been made by then. The Department, has, on numerous occasions, made it clear to the Council that it would be happy to receive suggestions from Local Councils to help it shape its policy. This Council has often acted on that request which it feels competent to do as it is so thoroughly representative of local opinion and as its Executive Committee comprises a number of people who are deeply interested in the Adult Education scheme. In submitting this Memorandum, the Council is making what it considers to be a most important suggestion - that Local Councils must be given every facility to carry out their task of co-ordination if the scheme is to prosper. It is therefore urged that the matter be given immediate attention as the shaping of policy in this direction can obviously only be longer delayed at the expense of Adult Education not only in Johannesburg but throughout the country.

On behalf of the Executive Committee,

P.O. Box 6182,
Johannesburg.
8th August, 1949.

D.A. Etheredge,
Secretary.

JOHANNESBURG COUNCIL for ADULT EDUCATION.

P.O. Box 8669,
Johannesburg.

MEMORANDUM.

At the meeting of representatives of societies held 23rd June, 1948, there were 126 present representing 83 organizations under the able Chairmanship of Dr. A. M. Keppel-Jones. Dr. Schoeman, representing the Director of Adult Education (Pretoria), addressed the meeting. He outlined the development which had taken place in the field of Adult Education and spoke of the Department's ultimate objectives. He stated that in the meantime the Department desired to work through the voluntary and semi-official bodies already working effectively in this field and it was their intention to seek to extend the present work through subsidies to such bodies. It was eminently desirable that there should be one or more representative Councils in each local area which would act in an advisory capacity to the National Council for Adult Education. A Regional Organizer, Mr. P. J. Delpert, had already been appointed for the Witwatersrand and Southern Transvaal area. He would begin his duties on 1st July, 1948.

Dr. Schoeman emphasized that the Department had no intention of interfering with the functioning of voluntary societies in any way whatever. He also stated that the exact size and composition of local Councils, such as that proposed for adoption at this meeting was a matter for the decision of the local bodies concerned.

The meeting then proceeded to discuss the proposals submitted to the meeting for consideration, with the following results:

1. It was agreed that there should be a Johannesburg Council for Adult Education and that it should be made up as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Representing City Council ----- | 3 |
| Representing University ----- | 2 |
| Representing Technical College -- | 2 |
| Representing Tvl. Ed. Dept. ----- | 2 |
| Representing S.A.B.C. ----- | 1 |
| Representing Union Ed. Dept. ---- | 4 |
| Representing Societies ----- | <u>14.</u> |

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2. It was agreed that all participating voluntary and semi-official bodies, other than those named in (1), should be divided into seven broad groups under the following designations:

Art and Music and Theatre.
Fraternal.
Hobbies.
Learned and Scientific.
Religious.
Welfare.
Youth.

Any organization could choose the group in which it felt the major part of its work placed it but it must agree to one only for the purpose of this Council organization.

3. It was agreed that each of the seven groups should elect two representatives to serve on the Council.
4. It was agreed that the organizations in each group should appoint one representative to attend a meeting. From those representatives present at the meeting, two should be elected to represent the group on the Council.
5. It was agreed to proceed at once with seeking the appointment of representatives of the official bodies named.
6. It was agreed that it was desirable to have a more general organization than the Council on which each society could be directly represented and which would meet from time to time as was deemed necessary.
7. It was agreed to charge the first Council appointed with the duty of drafting a Constitution which would adequately provide for -
 - A. The composition of a general body on which all interested organizations could be directly represented.
 - B. The continuance by election and appointment of the Council described in (1), which would in effect be an "Executive" of the body mentioned in (A).
 - C. The selection of officers of the Council.
 - D. The administration of the Council.
8. It was agreed that when the Constitution had been drafted it should be submitted to all the bodies concerned and a meeting of representatives summoned to formally adopt it.
9. It was agreed that the Acting Joint Secretaries, Mr. D. A. Etheredge and Mr. K. C. Johnson, be appointed to serve pending the formation of the Council and to take such executive action as shall be necessary to achieve the purposes set out above.
10. It was agreed that the cost of establishing the Council from the present meeting onward should be recoverable from the funds of the Council when duly constituted.
11. It was agreed that there should be a nominal Annual Affiliation Fee for member organizations.

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