

THE REHABILITATION OF COLOURED TUBERCULAR EX-SOLDIERS.

It is a well-known fact that large numbers of Coloured men have been released from the South African Army, who are suffering from Tuberculosis of the lungs, in a curable form. It is highly probable that many more such cases will be found before the end of the war.

Plans are now being made for the cure of these men, and their gradual return to normal life and employment.

The incidence of cures of T.B. among the Non-European has up to now, been very low, but, given the following essentials, it is bound to rise considerably:--

Suitable paid, part-time occupations,
Security for themselves and their families,
Construction of training for their rehabilitation,
Proper home contacts, entertainments, and social amenities.

These assure the mental, spiritual and physical well-being of the patient, without which permanent cures cannot be affected.

I have been invited to draft a plan for the rehabilitation of these men, under the auspices of the Governor General's National War Fund. Such a plan is now submitted, based on the practical experiences of this form of work among this class of men (in civil life) in Cape Town, during the last four years.

Any scheme of this nature must, of necessity, be elastic and open to improvement, and it will be realised therefore that any costs which are quoted cannot be taken as final or correct, they are merely rough estimates. The principles on which this scheme is based are these, which supplement the four points given above.

Confidence, team-work, a spirit of self help, medical supervision and gradual expansion.

The proposed training would include hand-crafts, skilled trades (building, shoe-making, carpentry, gardening, etc.), education in food-values, cleanliness, and the domesticities, entertainments, (games, concerts, cinemas, etc.).

The estimates below are based on the needs of a colony of about 100 men, whose cure, depending on their ability to apply healthful living, would be effected within a year; their places being taken by others as they leave. Contact with discharged members will be maintained.

1. Site. Some 50 acres of arable land will be needed. Unless crown land can be obtained this would cost about £2,500.
2. Buildings. The settlers themselves must play an integral part in the planning and building of their houses, especially in the early stages. To this end the first group of say ten men would be housed in a temporary wooden hut, to cost some £100. They would be trained to lead teams consisting of gardeners, builders, shoe-makers, carpenters, and domestic workers, and should therefore be carefully selected, as the groups would be built up around them. Six such men are now available.

3. Married Quarters. These trainees will start planning suitable (permanent) married quarters, as soon as possible to be erected by others who are fit enough to work. The quarters would consist of two-roomed cottages, with deep verandahs, each costing about £100. Some fifty would be required eventually.
4. Permanent Single Quarters. A building (or buildings) with wide verandahs, to provide accommodation for 50 single men, will also be required. Recreation room, dining hall, and kitchen are included in a plan to cost £300 (including equipment).
5. Workshop. This will be needed to accommodate the following trades: Cabinet making, shoe repairing, sandal making, tailoring, leather work, photography, and arts and crafts. Experience has shown that men working co-operatively for four hours a day can earn quite a good living, but this is only made possible by the aid of labour saving machinery. The building proposed should cost £200. As the settlement develops and as the equipment becomes procurable, a sum of £300 would be needed for this.
6. Sick-bay. Some of the men will be too sick to work, and will need rest and medical care. For them a sick-bay will be needed under the supervision of an elderly doctor (resident). This could be a separate building planned to hold some 20 men, and should not cost (with equipment) more than £500.
7. Superintendent's house, store rooms and office. This to cost not more than £1,000.
8. Services. As far as laundry, baking, boot repairing, and vegetable growing and general utilities are concerned the settlement would aim at self support.
9. Wages. For most people money is a powerful incentive to work. Wages would therefore be paid to everyone in the settlement. From their wages the settlers will pay a portion for their board and lodging. Wages will vary according to the man's training and work ability, but will never meet the cost of upkeep.
10. Subsidy. Even after receipts from sales of work done have been deducted, there will be a large sum to be found for general expenses. A subsidy will therefore be essential. A rough estimate is 8/6 per head per day, up to 25 inmates, the amount then should gradually diminish, as earnings will increase and overhead expenses remain the same.
11. Co-operation. The key-note of the whole scheme is team-work. If the ex-soldier, with the handicap of T.B., is to be rehabilitated, then months of careful training will be essential, to teach him how to live, how to work, how to co-operate and how to adjust himself again to the stresses and strains of modern life.

George Muller.

January, 1944.

HANDED IN BY COUNCILLOR S.J.FORT
COUNCIL MEETING, JANUARY, 1944

UNEMPLOYABLES.

A number of volunteers awaiting discharge at the Dispersal depots are men who, for various reasons, will not be able to hold for any length of time the jobs that are found for them. Men who are chronic alcoholics, mental retardates and habitual malingerers and loafers fall into this class. Most of them are not entitled to any pension and they do not fall under any of the existing schemes for readjustment and rehabilitation. Such men, if found jobs in the open labour market and duly discharged, will inevitably lose those jobs through their incompetence, folly and improvidence. They will soon be walking the streets in a state of penury, railing against the Government, and their families will be dependent upon charity or upon such assistance as the Governor-General's National War Fund can give. There are twenty or more such men at present awaiting discharge at the Pollsmoor Dispersal Depot, and this Committee cannot approve of their discharge under present conditions. To find them jobs which they will certainly not hold for more than a few days or weeks, is no solution to the problem, - it is simply a postponement of piling up of trouble.

Men who were drunkards, wastrels and loafers before enlistment are not, as a rule, improved by their period of service. The majority of them are more unsettled and difficult to deal with because they feel that, as they have "done their bit", they are entitled to make preposterous claims on the Government. They are mostly of low mental calibre with a low standard of education and few of them have had any sort of technical training, therefore only poorly paid jobs are available for them, and many of them are married men, with three, four and more minor children. Even if jobs are found for them and they are discharged, there is a big drop in the standard of living to which they have become accustomed during the period of service - this increases their discontented, restless state of mind and hastens their downfall.

This Committee feels strongly that no adequate provision has yet been made to meet the problem created by this type of ex-volunteer. To grant them allowances to live at home whilst their cases are being settled is only to postpone and aggravate the problem, for the longer such men are allowed to live in idleness the better they like it and the more reluctant they are to give up their life of ease as state pensioners. The wives and children of these men should be our particular concern. A worthless father should not be allowed to drag his innocent family down into the gutter with him. Nor should he be allowed to procreate any more children when he cannot support those he already has. We repeat, to discharge such men with jobs that they cannot possibly hold down, or to discharge them without jobs because they refused work at 8/-, 9/- or 10/- a day, will create a serious social problem and will condemn their dependants to misery and degradation.

Some months ago the Post War Employment Sub-Committee of the Defence Force Liaison Committee recommended the formation of a Civil Conservation Corps to absorb such ex-volunteers as these, but nothing seems to have been done to bring such a Corps into being. The idea is that men who cannot find a permanent place in the open labour market should be transferred to the Corps without any undue delay. They should receive the same pay as in the Army and their dependants would receive the same allowances, therefore there would be no rude shock of financial readjustment.

They would live in Camp under control similar to that to which they have become accustomed in the Army and they would be employed on National works, such as soil conservation, afforestation, water conservation, eradication of such noxious and harmful weeds as Hakea, and a hundred and one other important tasks that the Department of Agriculture and other Departments could suggest. After a period of Adjustment spent in the Corps, a period which would vary in length according to the individual concerned, he would be found a job suitable for him in civil life. If he failed to make good, he could easily be taken back into the Corps for a further period of adjustment and training.

It seems to this Committee that some scheme similar to that briefly outlined above is urgently needed. We recognise the fact that some pressure will have to be brought to bear on the men to induce them to join the proposed Corps - it might even be found necessary to exercise compulsion. Steps should be taken at once to prevent any increase in the number of ex-volunteers walking the streets, unemployed, begging, and with wives and children living precariously on charity. The men already on the streets should be taken off at the earliest possible moment. It is our considered opinion that a body such as the proposed Civilian Conservation Corps offers the best solution to the problem.

Under the Direction of Col. G.C.G. Werdmuller, Director of Recruiting.

When it is desired to form a Cape Coloured Link Defence Committee a Meeting should be called by those interested, and the conveners should extend invitations to all sections of the community to attend. The Mayor and Resident Magistrate should be invited, and on advice being received that a Meeting has been convened, a representative of the Director of Recruiting will be instructed to attend, to assist in giving the necessary guidance. The Chairman, after explaining the aims and objects of the Cape Coloured Link Defence movement, should call for nominations for the General Committee and it is emphasised that this Committee should be as representative as possible, and free from any political leanings save those of loyalty to the State.

As agreed at the conferences in Cape Town, Kimberley and Port Elizabeth existing committees representative of the Cape Coloured Community may be accepted as, or converted to, Link Committees. This may be achieved by the addition or co-option of additional representatives where this is necessary.

On the other hand the General Committee should not be too large otherwise it will become unwieldy and defeat its own ends.

After the General Committee has been elected, it must be decided whether the activities of the branch are likely to be on a scale sufficiently large to warrant the existence of more than one or two Sub-committees, or whether all the business of the branch could be dealt with by the General Committee. In smaller towns one or possibly two Sub-committees have been found quite sufficient, but in large centres the work involved has made it necessary to create a number of Sub-committees each dealing with different matters. This, however, is a domestic matter and each centre is at liberty to decide for itself how many Committees are necessary to transact its business.

The General Committee should elect a Chairman and an Honorary Secretary. The Committees nominated should be forwarded to the Director of Recruiting, Pretoria, together with the names of the Committees at the earliest opportunity. As in the case of Defence Force Liaison Committees (European) both men and women may serve on the Committees.

A separate section has been established in this Directorate to deal with all matters pertaining to the Cape Coloured Defence Link movement.

The existence of the Committee should be advertised or made known to the relatives of all men who have left the town and district on active service, and its services placed at their disposal and at the disposal of the general public as well.

Official announcements will be sent to the Committee as occasions arise.

This Directorate considers that the work of Link Committees will be stimulated by closer co-operation and greater personal interest amongst Dispersal Depots, Recruiting Officers, and Commands in which these Link Committees operate. Every effort is being made through proper channels to bring this about.

It is known that subversive elements are constantly at work in our midst to damage our war effort.

It is only necessary at this stage to mention a few of the activities which are employed to the detriment of our war effort. They are, for instance, the spreading of false rumours and reports and the dissemination of false information. These activities, unfortunately, sometimes succeed.

Every possible step must be taken by the contradiction of all false rumours and reports to counteract any activities which are prejudicial to our War effort, and it is felt by this Directorate that a death blow can be struck at them through the services of Link Committees who are in close touch with their areas and the members of which must become aware of such activities almost at their inception.

All/.....

VERDEDIGINGSSKAKELKOMITEES VIR KAAPSE GEKLEURDES.

Onder die bevel van Kolonel G.C.G. Werdmuller, Direkteur van Werwing.

Word dit verlang om 'n Verdedigingsskakelkomitee vir Kaapse Gekleurdes te stig, moet 'n vergadering deur die belangstellendes belê en uitnodigings aan alle seksies van die gemeenskap gerig word. Die burgemeester en Magistraat moet uitgenooi word, en sodra hierdie Direkteoraat in kennis gestel is dat 'n vergadering belê is, sal 'n verteenwoordiger van die Direkteur van Werwing afgevaardig word om die vergadering by te woon om enige nodige leiding te verskaf. Die voorsitter verduidelik die doel en strewe van die verdedigingsskakelkomitees vir Kaapse Gekleurdes, en vra dan nominasies vir die algemene komitee. Daar word nadruk op gelê dat die komitee so verteenwoordigend moontlik moet wees en sy lede sonder politieke neigings, behalwe dat hulle getrou aan die Staat moet wees.

Soos alreeds op die konferensies te Kaapstad, Kimberley en Port Elizabeth saamgestem is, mag komitees wat tans die Kaapse Gekleurdes verteenwoordig by die verdedigingsskakelkomitees in- of bygevoeg word. Dit mag te werk gebring word deur die byvoeging of tot medelid kies van een of meer persone waar dit nodig mag wees.

Aan die ander kant moet die algemene komitee nie te groot wees nie, anders word dit lomp en beantwoord nie aan sy doel nie.

Word die komitee gestig, moet daar besluit word of die werksaamhede van die tak waarskynlik groot genoeg van omvang sal wees om die bestaan van meer as een of twee onderkomitees te regverdig en of die algemene komitee alle aangeleenthede van die tak kan behartig. Dit is bevind dat in die kleinere dorpe een of miskien twee onderkomitees heeltemal voldoende is, maar in die groot sentrums het die werk daaraan verbonde dit nodig gemaak om 'n aantal onderkomitees, elkeen waarvan verskillende sake behartig, te stig. Dit is egter 'n huishoudelike saak en dit staan elke sentrum vry om self te besluit aangaande die komitees wat nodig is om die werksaamhede uit te voer.

Die algemene komitee moet 'n voorsitter en ere-sekretaris kies. Die name van lede van komitees moet so spoedig moontlik aan die Direkteur van Werwing, Pretoria, gestuur word. Soos in die geval van Verdedigingsskakelkomitees vir blankes mag beide mans en vrouens op die komitees dien.

'n Spesiale seksie is in hierdie Direkteoraat in die lewe geroep om alle sake in verband met Verdedigingsskakelkomitees vir Kaapse Gekleurdes te behartig.

Dat so 'n komitee bestaan, moet dan geadverteer word of die verwante van almal wat die dorp en distrik op aktiewe diens verlaat het, moet daarvan verwittig en sy dienste tot hulle beskikking en dié van die publiek in die algemeen gestel word.

Amtelike aankondigings sal na die geleentheid voordoën, aan die komitee gestuur word.

Hierdie Direkteoraat is van mening dat die werksaamhede van Verdedigingsskakelkomitees aangevuur sou word deur nouere saamwerkings en ruimer persoonlike belangstelling tussen Uiteengangsdepots, Werwingsoffisiere en die Kommandemente waarin sodanige komitees werksaam is. Alle pogings word deur die behoorlike kanale aangewend om dit te bewerkstellig.

Dit is bekend dat ondermynende elemente gedurig in ons midde besig is om ons oorlogspoging skade te berokken te belemmer. Hulle is b.v. die versprei van valse gerugtes en rapporte en van leuenagtige informasie. Ongelukkig slaag hierdie soort bedrywighede somtyds.

Alle moontlike stappe moet deur teëspreek van alle valse gerugte of rapporte aangewend word om enige pogings te bestry wat nadelig inwerk op ons oorlogspoging en hierdie Direkteoraat voel dat die genadeslag aan al sodanige werksaamhede toegedien kan word deur die dienste van Verdedigingsskakelkomitees, wat in noue aanraking is met hulle areas en waarvan die lede vanself kennis moet dra van daardie soort bedrywighede, byna vanaf die aanvang daarvan.

COLOURED PEOPLE IN THE NAVY.

Rev. Dr. Anson Phelps Stokes, President of the Phelps Stokes Fund, writes:-

The Coloured people have been definitely assured by a statement from the Secretary of the Navy that they are to be given regular service positions in the Navy. According to the present plan, the sailors and gunners would be on smaller ships of their own under white officers, but it is expected that there will be petty officers chosen from among the Negroes. Of course our coloured people in this country have had relatively little sea experience or tradition. I personally have no doubt that the time will come when they will have officers of their own as they have in the Army. I find that there are a good many officers' training camps where coloured officers are being trained, although generally they are trained separately.

DIFFICULTIES OF DEPENDANTS OF AFRICAN SOLDIERS.

(see Executive Minutes RR 21/42. Item 6)

I have discussed this matter with my parliamentary colleagues and as a result I have sent to the Secretary for Native Affairs a statement made by a soldier, and the statement which Mrs. Hellman kindly sent me. Mrs. Ballinger has also raised the matter in Parliament.

I have received a reply from the Secretary for Native Affairs that an inter-departmental Conference is shortly to be held in Pretoria " at which the vexed question of the payment of allotments" will be discussed.

The contents of my letter are to be brought before the Conference.

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