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City of Johannesburg



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JOHANNESBURG.

(1939?)



ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIAL WELFARE BRANCH.

SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF NATIVE WAGES
IN THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG.

- (i) 93 Families.
- (ii) 29 Bachelors or men with wives in the country.

C O N F I D E N T I A L R E P O R T .

TOWNSHIPS.

Western Native Township.	52
Eastern Native Township.	23
Orlando Native Township.	14
Sophiatown.	2
Newclare.	1
Pimville.	1

TRIBES

Basuto.	45
Zulu.	19
Xosa.	10
Fingo.	3
Shangaan.	3
Swazi.	2
Nyassa.	2
Rhodesian.	2
Bavenda.	1
Bapedi.	1

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CITY OF JOHANNESBURG
NON-EUROPEAN AND NATIVE AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF NATIVE WAGES (100 FAMILIES) IN CITY OF JOHANNESBURG. (SURVEY CONDUCTED BY ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIAL WELFARE BRANCH.)

EXTRACTS FROM QUESTIONNAIRE.

93 families returned questionnaires.

<u>POPULATION.</u>	$\frac{59}{78}$ have their permanent home in town = 75.6% $\frac{19}{78}$ " " " " " " country = 24.4% Average No. of children in 77 families = 3.03 " " " occupants of 90 houses = 4.98.
<u>EARNINGS.</u>	Average man's salary in 88 families (p.m.) = £5. 5. 4. " wife's " " 40 " " = £2. 6. 3. " other earnings, 42 " " = 17. 6. " total " " 87 " " = £6.11. 9. " savings " 14 " " = £4. 3. 6.
<u>EXPENDITURE.</u>	Average rent in 93 families (p.m.) = £1. 2. 1. " food and fuel in 89 families (p.m.) = £3. 7.11. " school fees " 50 " " = 4. 5. " church dues " 52 " " = 3. 8. " medical fees " 56 " " = 14. 7. " clothes exp. " 34 " " = £2. 8. 2. " transport " 68 " " = 12. 2. " pleasure " 25 " " = 11. 6. " societies " 54 " " = 4.10.
<u>DEBT.</u>	Average total debt " 34 families = £20.17. 6.
<u>H.B.</u>	95% gave a budget for food and fuel averaging approximately 50% of the total income of the household per month. Only 15% admit savings, while 36% admit debt, totalling approximately 300% of the monthly income.

Admission of expenditure other than that on rent and food:-

Transport 68, Medicine 56, Benefit Societies 54,
Church 52, School Fees 50, Clothes 34, Pleasure 25 -
in 93 families.

More families contribute to societies for insurance than to school or church - if this is a true reflection of the position it is a cynical commentary on the estimate of value placed by the Bantu on mental and spiritual insurance as compared with material security.

Few grown-up town children contribute to their parents support if the father lives in town.

Country boys invariably send money home, but do not subscribe to life insurance or burial societies. They are looked after and buried for nothing at home. (Note later comment on transport.)

Business houses are often compelled to employ town boys because of their knowledge of the City, and their ability to speak, read and write English. Institutions with compounds prefer country boys from one district.

When wives live in town the family has "too much money" and debt increases through irresponsibility. The biggest budgets generally included the biggest debts.

Illicit brewers always choose to pay fines in cash.

Social effect of Woman Wage Earners. Wage often above that of husband. 5 in 34 earn more than husbands, on their own admission.

Need for an intermediary between native workers and employers in occupations not covered by Wage determinations on Industrial Conciliation agreement.

A definition of "skilled" and "unskilled" labour is necessary. In the absence of apprenticeship for natives what standard is used for the determination of skill and the right to a higher wage?

The new Bakery determination will establish the principle of a minimum wage that will approximate to the cost of living of the lowest paid producing unit in the industry. It will not have any discriminating clauses relative to hours of labour, holidays with pay and terms of contract. The rate of wages laid down provides for deductions in respect of employees housed and/or fed on the premises of the employer as follows :-

	<u>Per Week</u>	<u>Per Month</u>
(a) Board.	7/3	£1.11. 5.
(b) Lodging.	2/-	8. 8.
(c) Board & Lodging.	9/3	£2. 0. 1.

"The amount is an interesting commentary on the cost of living budgets for the average native family, prepared by Joint Councils and Native organisations, and lends support

to their/

to their conclusions that £6. to £6.10. 0. per month is a moderate estimate of the needs of the average family in a town location in this area" - W.G. Ballinger in report to the Friends of Africa.

It will be noted in the questionnaire findings that the average total earnings for 88 families is £6.11. 9; but this is through the joint efforts of the household.

"The time has come for Governments to lay down and act upon the policy that European enterprises in Africa must include in their costs, in addition to their wage bill, such expenditure in the provision of houses, diet, sanitation and medical care as will result in lower morbidity and mortality rates amongst their labourers than those prevailing in their village homes. That is the least price that should be paid for the social and moral loss resulting from the destruction of village and family life". ('The Star', December 9th, 1937, commenting on The Industrialization of the African, a pamphlet issued by the International Labour Bureau).

At a session of the Native Representatives' Council held in Pretoria on Thursday, December 9th, a resolution was proposed by the Regent of Zululand that the Government appoint a commission to enquire into native wages in all industries. A member of the Wage Board pointed out that Industrial Agreements were based not on colour but on the ability of the industry to pay. A minimum wage act would have to be based upon the ability to pay of the lowest paying industry. This would have the effect of lowering not increasing wages. The need was for investigation of conditions in individual industries. ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE. Natives who live in the country have to provide for (i) transport to and from home,

- (ii) existence without pay during 'holidays' - this latter applies to town dwellers as well.

Of all the firms interviewed, the 'Star' alone allows all native employees a fortnight's holiday on full pay.

It is significant that South Africa has refused to ratify the Indigenuous Workers' Convention held in Geneva in 1936, because the proposed proviso to Article 20 of the Convention was deleted in Committee. The deletion had the approval of the South African Worker Representative and was unanimously accepted by the Plenary Session. The article reads :-

"The expenses of the journey of the recruited
"worker shall be borne by the employer".

The deleted proviso reads :-

"except where it is not the custom to do so"

It is not the custom to do so in South Africa.

It was estimated by the Native Economic Commission 1930-1932 that the expense of travel to the gold mines of Transkeian natives was 15% to 20% of the cash earnings for the period of contract of 270 shifts, those earnings averaging from £24.15. 0. to £29. 7. 3.

As Great Britain/

As Great Britain and Southern Rhodesia have ratified the Convention it seems unfortunate that South Africa cannot see her way clear to do so.

While South Africa does not take cognisance of colour in determining minimum wages, the South African Trades and Labour Council, at their annual meeting in April, 1937, indicated the trend of labour opinion in advocating that for unskilled workers the following minima be fixed :-

Europeans.....10/- per diem.
Native Workers..... 5/- " "

BACHELORS AND MEN WITH WIVES IN COUNTRY.

29 cases investigated.

Quarters :	Western Township.	8.
	General Hospital	
	Compound.	8.
	Medical Research.	8.
	Wemmer.	3.
	Wolhuter.	<u>2.</u>

29.

Tribes:	Zulu.	24	N.B.	Vast majority of Zulus whose wives are in the country c.f. married men's budget with Basutos living with families in town.
	Xosa.	2		
	Masuto.	1		
	Pedi.	1		
	Shangaan.	<u>1</u>		
		29		

Average Salary : £4. 5.10. p.m. for 29 boys. (Av. total earnings £4.16.10. p.m. for 29 boys).

"	Rent.	16.11	"	"	6	"
Food.		1. 8. 3	"	"	16	" (Majority £1. above board provided).
School.		6. 8½	"	"	5	"
Church.		1. 5	"	"	11	" (Note low number subscribing to Church).
Medicine.		9. 6	"	"	5	" (Some injections).
Transport.		5. 6.	"	"	10	" (Incl. 25/- per annum for rail fare home).
Pleasure.		8. 0	"	"	4	"
Societies (Burial & Insurance)		3. 8	"	"	3	" (All town dwellers).

"Expenses" include monthly contributions to homes (approximately £2. per month), dipping, grazing, poundage, extra labour to help on farm, dog licences, taxes, etc. All country boys own cattle, sheep and goats beside houses and most specify the numbers of their stock.

Only 3 widows returned budgets, so that their replies have not been used for this report.

When food, quarters and uniform are supplied, £2. per month is added to budget. Food and quarters £1.10. 0. Quarters and uniform, without food, £1. 0. 0.

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