

memo. on

Native Education Bill -

Advisory Board on Native Education
Jul -

1945

ADVISORY BOARD ON NATIVE EDUCATION
TRANSVAAL PROVINCE

Memorandum on
NATIVE EDUCATION BILL

(As adopted by the Board at
its meeting held on 17th May, 1945)

The Native Education Advisory Board of the Transvaal Province having considered the provisions of the Native Education Bill submits the following observations :

1. The (Transvaal) Board welcomes the Bill which provides for the assumption by the Union Government of responsibility for the financing of Native Education.
2. The Board also welcomes the provisions made in the Bill for the appointment of a "Union Advisory Board on Native Education to advise the Union Government and the Administrations of the Provinces on matters relating to Native education and the maintenance, extension and improvement of educational facilities for Natives". This (Transvaal) Board assumes that the Union Board will be in a position to act on its own initiative in bringing to the Minister's notice, and in making recommendations to him on any matters relating to "the maintenance, extension and improvement of educational facilities for Natives". If this is not to be so, the Minister should be urged to agree.

The (Transvaal) Board hopes that it is not intended that the Advisory Boards on Native Education now functioning in the four provinces shall be abolished. Since the administration of Native Education is to be continued under the Provincial Administrations, the provincial advisory boards should also be continued as they are conversant with the educational needs of the African people in their own provinces and have more detailed knowledge of the educational organisation of their provinces than the proposed Union Advisory Board could have.

The Board urges that the provincial Advisory Boards be continued, and that their functions be extended to permit of their being competent to submit their views and recommendations on Native Education to the Union Advisory Board as well as to their own Provincial Administrations.

3. It is noted that Clause 3(2) of the Bill provides that the membership of the Union Advisory Board shall include a representative of each Province. It is suggested that this representative should be an ex-officio member of the Provincial Advisory Board in each case. The Board has been informed that the Minister of Education has intimated his intention to invite the Natives' Representative Council to nominate one or more representatives to serve on the Union Advisory Board. The inclusion of Africans in the membership of the Board is heartily welcomed.

This Board urges that the interests of the Missionary bodies which have in the past carried, and still continue to carry, heavy responsibilities in Native Education, should also be represented in the membership of the

Union Board. This can be effected by enabling each provincial advisory board (on which missionary interests are well represented) to nominate one of its members to serve on the Union Board. It is also important that the Provincial Advisory Boards be represented on the Union Board as the latter will also be advising Provincial Administrations.

4. The Transvaal Board is deeply concerned about the utter inadequacy of the funds available for Native Education in their Province, and, indeed, throughout the Union. It had hoped that the Union Government would this year have made provision for placing the finances of Native Education in a position to enable the Provincial Administrations to make a beginning with the task of providing educational facilities for those African children who are being turned away from the schools in great numbers, registering and subsidising the large numbers of schools for whom no funds are available, and, over a period of time, bringing into school the vast numbers of African children of school age.

Whilst the Board appreciates the reasons for the omission in the Bill of any provision for a per caput figure that would make possible "the extension and improvement of educational facilities for Natives", it is profoundly disappointed that in this year's Budget the amount made available for Native Education is so inadequate that even existing services can hardly be "maintained". It had hoped that the Union Government would accept the view expressed by the "Committee on Provincial Financial Resources", appointed by the Minister of Finance in 1941, and have made financial provision accordingly, or, at least, have made it possible to approach more nearly. It will be remembered that in paragraph 358, the Committee reported that it had "found a figure approximately £5.10.0. per pupil per annum as representing the reasonable annual cost of an education which it would consider to be adequate". In the same paragraph, the Committee presented a table showing that in the year 1940/1, the grants from the S.A. Native Trust Fund for Native Education expressed in terms of a per caput grant based upon average attendance in 1939, worked out as follows:-

Cape	-	£3. 0. 4d.,	Natal	-	£2.14.0.,
Transvaal	-	£2. 3. 5d.,	Orange Free State	-	£2.5.0..

The total sum allocated to the Transvaal for the current year 1945/6 is £500.11.0. (exclusive of loan amounts and cost of living allowances) and expressed in terms of a per caput grant based on the (estimated) average attendance in 1944, works out at £3. 5. 4. No doubt the position in each of the other provinces is just as unfavourable and depressing.

The Chief Inspector of Native Education, Transvaal, has prepared a statement showing the urgent needs of Native Education in the Transvaal Province, and the Board feels that strong representations should be made at an early date to the Honourable the Minister of Education pressing for additional appropriations for Native Education for the current financial year which can be placed on the Supplementary Estimates to be submitted to Parliament early in 1946, and for the framing of Estimates for the year 1946/7 approaching as nearly as possible the total sum which £5.10.0. per pupil in average attendance during 1944 had reached.

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