

Mr Mitchell

A/B/15/2

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Tel: 23-5273

603, Stuttaford's Chambers,
Rissik Street,
JOHANNESBURG.

Hours: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

MEMORANDUM

TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE CHIEF NATIVE COMMISSIONER, WITWATERSRAND,
ON TUESDAY, 2ND DECEMBER, 1958, BY A DEPUTATION APPOINTED BY THE
BRANCH, WHOSE MEMBERS SHALL BE:-

- Mrs. J. Blake, Branch President.
- Mrs. E. Cochrane, First Vice President.
- Mrs. W. Eybers, past Branch President.
- Mrs. C. Rostovsky, Branch Convener for Housing.
- Mrs. A.M. Stern, Branch Convener for African Affairs.

The Johannesburg Branch of the National Council of Women of South Africa HAS BEEN CONCERNED for a number of years with the increasing shortage of native domestic servants. Letters addressed to the Chief Native Commissioner and relevant replies are filed as follows:

Shortage of Bantu Male Domestic Servants.

- a) Our letter of 24th November 1954: Your reply of 7th January, 1955.
- b) Our letter of 10th February 1955: Your reply of 9th March 1955.
- c) Our letter of 29th March 1955: Your reply of 26th April 1955.

Employment of Native Domestic Servants.

- d) Our letter of 16th October 1958. Your reply of 3rd November 1958.

During 1955 we also entered into correspondence with the Manager of the Non-European Affairs Dept. of the Johannesburg Municipality, and wrote letters to all Johannesburg Members of Parliament on the implications of certain clauses in the Natives (Urban Areas) Amendment Bill before it became law. At two consecutive Branch meetings we had Mr. Thacker, Chief Registering Officer to address us and to answer questions appertaining to Influx Control.

As we feared more than three years ago, the position regarding the shortage of domestic servants has deteriorated as regards both male and female natives. Accordingly, a special meeting was held on 4th November, 1958, to which members of the public were invited as well as Branch members and members of its 117 affiliated societies. Mr. J. Mullineaux, an official of the Municipal Non-European Affairs Dept. was present, to answer questions regarding the rules for the hiring of domestic labour; the increasing difficulty of obtaining suitable servants and the laws governing the carrying of permits and/or reference books. On 6th November, a deputation interviewed Mr. Koller, Acting Manager of the Non-European Affairs Dept., and placed before him 17 questions (which arose out of the written recommendations handed in at the meeting of the 4th November). Some of the questions fall outside the purview of the local authority, and this deputation therefore seeks enlightenment from the Chief Native Commissioner. It would be appreciated if information could be furnished regarding the enquiries set out on the next page.

In January, 1955, you asked us "to popularise amongst our members the idea of employing female domestic servants in large numbers". However, in the light of changing social conditions, where increasing numbers of native women prefer to stay at home to tend to their families, we consider that a Survey should be undertaken on the availability of domestic servants in the Johannesburg urban area.

INFORMATION SOUGHT FROM NATIVE COMMISSIONER: 2nd DECEMBER, 1958.

1. The present acute shortage of domestic servants is generally attributed to the implementation of Act No. 36 of 1957 (Native Laws Amendment Act). The Johannesburg Branch of the N.C.W.S.A. THEREFORE ASKS WHETHER DISCRETION CAN BE RESTORED TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY.

 - 2.a) Much wastage of good domestic labour results from native males having to return to the district of origin, until a specific employer applies for his re-entry into the urban area. The introduction of labour on a strictly conditional basis tends to lead to exploitation. IS IT THEREFORE POSSIBLE THAT, WHERE A NATIVE MALE IS INTRODUCED INTO THE URBAN AREA FOR A SPECIFIC EMPLOYER (who later has to dispense with his services), SUCH NATIVE BE PERMITTED TO REMAIN IN THE URBAN AREA FOR RE-EMPLOYMENT, through the Municipal labour pool?

 - b) We are cognisant of the fact that Native Commissioners use their prerogative in deciding whether there is a shortage of labour in their areas. IS ANY PRESSURE MADE ON NATIVE COMMISSIONERS (BY THE MINISTER) TO RESERVE LABOUR IN THEIR AREAS FOR FARM SERVICE, EVEN WHEN SUCH NATIVES ARE OFFERED DOMESTIC EMPLOYMENT IN URBAN AREAS?

 3. Many householders are making adjustments to acute shortage of permanent domestic servants, but still require casual or daily help to maintain homes and gardens. Many try to obtain a daily labourer, but have no source of supply. IS IT AT ALL POSSIBLE FOR THIS CATEGORY OF DOMESTIC WORKER TO BE INCLUDED IN A LABOUR POOL?

 4. In terms of Section 10 of the Natives (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act. No. 25, any work-seeker (male or female) may not remain in the urban area without a work-seeker's permit.
 - a) TO WHAT EXTENT IS THIS SECTION OF THE LAW BEING APPLIED TO MALES AND FEMALES?

 - b) AS IT IS NOT YET COMPULSORY FOR NATIVE FEMALES TO CARRY REFERENCE BOOKS, WHY ARE NOTICES BEING SENT TO HOUSEHOLDERS, IMPLYING THAT SUCH IS THE CASE?

 5. WHAT JURISDICTION DOES THE NATIVE COMMISSIONER EXERCISE IN REGARD TO THE LEASING BY THE MUNICIPALITY OF GROUND IN THE NATIVE TOWNSHIPS FOR THE PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING CRECHES FOR THE CHILDREN OF DOMESTIC FEMALE SERVANTS?
-

SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS (INC.)
SUID-AFRIKAANSE INSTITUUT VIR RASSEVERHOUDINGS (INGELYF.)

INSTITUTE COUNCIL MEETINGS 1961.

MEMORANDUM

BY

MRS. PATRICK MURRAY

Corresponding Member for Laws & Suffrage,

PORT ELIZABETH BRANCH,
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN.

CAPE TOWN

JANUARY 17-20, 1961

SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS (INC.)
SUID-AFRIKAANSE INSTITUUT VIR RASSEVERHOUDINGS (INGELYF.)

P.O. Box 97

JOHANNESBURG

Posbus 97.

MEMORANDUM ON THE SUBJECT OF AFRICANS WHO BECAUSE THEY LIVE IN PERI-URBAN DIVISIONAL COUNCIL AREAS OR DORMITORY SUBURBS WHICH ARE SEPARATE MUNICIPALITIES, ARE DEBARRED FROM SEEKING WORK IN THE CITY WHICH IS THE REASON FOR THE EXISTENCE OF THESE SETTLEMENTS AND/OR SUBURBS.

By

Mrs. Patrick Murray

(submitted through the Port Elizabeth Branch
of the National Council of Women).

The Divisional Council of Port Elizabeth has built a flourishing Location at Veeplaats which is about ten miles from the centre of Port Elizabeth, and which is so close to the outlying parts of New Brighton, the Port Elizabeth Municipal Location, that residents of New Brighton frequently do their shopping in Veeplaats.

Veeplaats is within the Divisional Council Local Area of Bethelsdorp, a very old Mission Station and many of the inhabitants are people who are of the third or fourth generation living there. These people have always sought their work in Port Elizabeth, and unless they can be allowed to continue to do so, they cannot manage to exist, as the rents both for the Divisional Council Location houses and for the shacks on the Commonage are in proportion to wages paid to African urban workers.

There are no farms in the Bethelsdorp Local Area, as it is entirely a Non-European area. Bethelsdorp was a Mission Station for Hottentots run by the London Missionary Society before Port Elizabeth ever existed, and I believe that there is an Act of the old Cape Parliament dealing with it. Bethelsdorp itself and Kleinskool and Missionvale are still predominantly Coloured in their population, but the lower part of the area, Veeplaats, has a large African population, and, as stated above, has had for several generations.

Some of the Africans living at Veeplaats have worked for firms in Port Elizabeth for many years, and, as long as they continue in the same work, nothing is said, but if for any reason they are put off work either temporarily or their services are dispensed with, and they endeavour to seek other work in Port Elizabeth, the Municipal Labour Bureau in New Brighton will stamp their Reference Books, "Not to be employed within the Municipal Area of Port Elizabeth". When this happens to the Wage Earner it means disaster for the family, as the only work available anywhere near Veeplaats outside the Municipal Area of Port Elizabeth is in a couple of Salt Pans and a few brickfields, all of which seem to be permanently full staffed, and which in any event, could not possibly absorb anything like the African population of Veeplaats.

It is said that these people should seek work on farms elsewhere in the Divisional Council Areas of Port Elizabeth or perhaps Uitenhage, but there is no kind of public transport that would take them back and forth between their homes at Veeplaats and outlying farms, always supposing they could find work on them, and be paid enough to maintain their families, and moreover, their children are at school in Veeplaats, their roots are there, and naturally they cling to the only home they have ever known.

I dealt personally the other day with a case of a man who had worked for twenty years with one of the big Oil Companies in

Port Elizabeth, and who lived at Veeplaats. His son, who was born and brought up in Veeplaats reached the age of sixteen and left school, and his father was able to get him a job with his own firm, where he could keep an eye on him and see to it that he worked well so that when the father was too old to work the son could continue the family connection with the firm. The Oil Company sent the boy with a note to the Municipal Labour Bureau to ask if they would give the necessary permission for him to work for them, and across the note sent by the Oil Company was scrawled by some clerk in the Municipal Native Labour Bureau, "Kindly let this Bureau know of any vacancies you have, and they will be filled by this Bureau". I wrote to the Manager of the Oil Company asking him to take the matter up at a higher level, but, presuming that the Labour Bureau persisted in its attitude, that boy would be left to lounge around the location at Veeplaats with nothing to do but get into trouble and to deteriorate in character.

This is only one of many such cases, and the African representatives on the Bethelsdorp Local Area Committee of the Divisional Council have interviewed me on the subject, saying, "We are knocking on every door to ask if there isn't someone who can help our people about this state of affairs". I feel that if they knock at the door of the N.C.W. they should not be sent away without some effort, even if eventually in vain, being made on their behalf.

I am not personally aware of the position at Walmer, but it will be easy to gain information. Mr. Grey, the Commissioner for Bantu Affairs, has told me that exactly the same situation exists there. Walmer, although a separate Municipality, is in reality a dormitory suburb of Port Elizabeth. I think it would be safe to say that all the workers who live in Walmer, with the exception of the very few employed by the Municipality and in the few shops that exist there, earn their living in Port Elizabeth. The Africans whose home is in the Walmer Location, however, and whose parents and grand-parents lived there, are subjected to the same hardships as the peri-urban Africans who live at the Veeplaats Location in being debarred from seeking work in Port Elizabeth.

Now it seems to me that the purpose of the Natives Urban Areas Act was principally to prevent rural Africans from streaming into urban areas, creating slums in the urban areas, and living there under appalling conditions. It is being used, however, to prevent people who are adequately housed on the outskirts of a city, but just outside the Municipal Boundary, from working in that city, with consequent great hardship to them.

I should like the National Council of Women to bring to the notice of the Minister for Bantu Administration the plight of these people who have been pushed out from the city itself by the natural growth of industrial, commercial and residential areas until they crossed an invisible line and became thereby ineligible for work in the only place they have ever known. The divisions between Port Elizabeth and Walmer, and between Port Elizabeth Municipal Area and the Divisional Council's Local Area of Bethelsdorp are quite artificial. As far as the Divisional Council is concerned, all residents in Port Elizabeth directly or indirectly help to pay Rates to it, and as far as Walmer is concerned, it would not exist except to house workers who earn their living in Port Elizabeth.

There may be other cities in the Union where similar anomalies exist. I would ask the National Council of Women to investigate the problem on a country wide basis - or, if it is thought to be a problem peculiar to the Cape Province - on a Province wide basis, with the idea of bringing it to the attention of the Minister and/or the Administrator.

ALB/15/1

EMERGENCY MOTION FOR RESOLUTION

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF SOUTH AFRICA, IN PLENARY COUNCIL ASSEMBLED, ONCE MORE PROTESTS STRONGLY AGAINST THE DICTATORIAL POWERS GIVEN TO THE MINISTER OF BANTU ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT AND OF BANTU EDUCATION, THROUGH THE BANTU LAWS AMENDMENT ACT OF 1970, AND PROTESTS FURTHERMORE AGAINST THE DRASTIC WAY IN WHICH HE HAS MADE USE OF THESE POWERS.

Proposed by Pretoria Branch Council.

MEMORANDUM

In April 1969, this Council unanimously resolved to telegraph the Honourable the Prime Minister, requesting deletion of Clause 11 of the Bantu Laws Amendment Bill. This telegram was followed by a letter to the Prime Minister, dated 7th May, 1969. The letter was referred to the Department of Bantu Administration and Development, from whom a reply, dated 12th June, 1969 stated that "it is not at all the intention of this Bill to take all these excessive powers" to which our letter referred. By the time the Bill had reached the committee stage in the last Parliamentary session, a letter was addressed to Dr the Honourable P. Koornhof, Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration and Development.

Clause 11 of this Bill allows the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, after consultation with the Minister of Labour, to prohibit the employment of Africans in any specific jobs in any area or by any specific employer. The Minister is required to give one month's notice of his intention to apply the provisions of the Act to certain jobs. Representations for exemptions may be made to the Minister during the month of notice.

On April 3, 1970, despite the assurances given by the Administrative Control Officer of the Department of Bantu Administration and Development, in his letter to Council of 12th June, 1969, a proclamation was issued under the Bantu Laws Amendment Act of 1970, prohibiting the employment of Africans in any of the following categories:-

1. Counter assistants or salesman in shops or cafés.
2. Receptionists in commercial or professional undertakings.
3. Telephonists or telephone switchboard operators in shops, offices, factories or hotels.
4. Clerks, cashiers or typists in shops, offices or factories.

With/...

With this announcement Dr Koornhof stated: "This brings an end to labour integration. I am proud to announce it."

This prohibition applies to all African men and women, regardless of age or where they worked, except in areas specifically exempted (R.D.M. 3.4.70). The proclamation further implies that if any African were allowed to continue work in any prohibited post after the month's period of grace, his labour registration could be cancelled, apart from any criminal action which may be taken.

While the provision of the Bill does not directly affect the remaining rights of Africans to live in urban areas, they could lose these rights if their jobs were taken away from them and their labour registration cancelled, for taken in conjunction with Clause 10 of the Bantu Homelands Citizen Bill it makes every African an alien in the white areas of South Africa. It makes the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development the sole dictator over the lives and livelihood of millions of urbanised Africans. When questioned in Parliament about Section 10, the Minister said of African rights in "white" South Africa, "I am going to remove each and every one".

There has been a strong reaction from the public in response to the Proclamation of April 3, 1970 in respect of the prohibitions. In a cover-up the Minister has stated that the public had "got Dr Koornhof all wrong", that nothing had been finalised and that it will all take time! Mr. Botha put the "misunderstandings" down to "misrepresentations in the English press". It would be interesting to observe how this statement of misunderstandings and misrepresentations ties up with the Minister of Planning, Dr Carel de Wet's threats against Mr Harry Oppenheimer, Chairman of Anglo American Corporation. He stated that any requests from industries in which Mr Oppenheimer had an interest would be treated with the greatest suspicion and would be dealt with personally. He warned Mr Oppenheimer (who was at the time in Australia) that unless he gave an assurance by April 21, that his companies would not promote labour integration, the Government would treat his requests for labour differently to those made by other industrialists. It is well known that Mr Oppenheimer is one of those industrialists who has repeatedly warned the Government of the threat to industry and general economic development of this country, posed by their relentless pursuit of the policy of Apartheid. It is interesting to note the ramifications of what has become known as the "Oppenheimer empire". The three giants of the hundreds of companies in the Anglo group are Anglo American Corporation, De Beers and Charter Consolidated. They control worldwide operating assets. At their roots are many hundreds of separate companies in mining, industry, financial holdings, listing some of the biggest names in the country. (R.D.M. 22.4.70).

Minister/ ...

Minister Botha, when challenged to supply figures of how many Africans would be put out of work by the Prohibition, was unable to supply figures. Obviously he had no idea of the extent of the educated and urbanised Africans in "white-collar" employment, as is evidenced by the comic-opera turn about, but this Law remains on the Statute Books and is potentially dangerous. These African people represent an emerging African middle class which should be encouraged and stabilised, if only for the security of the white population. Not a single white worker was being put out of a job, any white worker who cannot find a job in these days of labour shortages must be pretty well unemployable. With this law on the Statute Books the Bantu has a constant threat hanging over him. He must live in uncertainty and suspense and this must surely be reflected in the quality of his work. Apart from these considerations the strongest protest against this Act is on moral grounds. To prevent a man from being allowed to utilise his abilities and contribute to the common good is both inhuman and undemocratic.

For a long while leading organisations in Commerce and Industry have been requesting the Government to relax its attitudes to job reservation. That this is, in fact, practised in Government organisations, is revealed in many instances. In the Railways alone 9,000 "White" jobs have had to be opened up to Africans, and further concessions are constantly being made, always with the understanding that these new categories of jobs for Africans are "temporary". The arrangement is that the situation will be reviewed after two years, and that if Whites become available for the posts the Africans will be moved out!

Despite constant warnings and statistics to support the call for more African labour, the Government has seen fit to pursue its ideology of complete Apartheid and, as with this Act under discussion, proclaimed still stricter measures. The implementation of Clause 11 will still further reduce the present labour forces, with far reaching consequences for all races, and the subsequent drop in the economy of the country will substantially lower the standard of living of every South African citizen, regardless of race.

On Saturday, April 18, 1970, according to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, it was reported that if nothing is done about the shortages of both skilled and unskilled labour, bottlenecks will develop in the economy of the country and our development will flatten down to less than 5% per annum after 1980. We have at present the

domestic/ ...

domestic financial capacity to maintain a growth rate of 5.8% for the next 10 years, but taken at its highest, this figure of 5.8% does not represent undue growth for a young, growing country. This fall-off in the growth rate would coincide with the period when we would be going through the middle of our non-White population explosion. Conservative estimates predict that by the year 2000 while the White population is expected to have doubled itself, the population of non-Whites should have more than trebled, with a labour force in White areas of approximately 3,058,000 Whites and 12,713,000 non-Whites.

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

©2013

LEGAL NOTICES:

Copyright Notice: All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of paper documents and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.

This document forms part of the archive of the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR), held at the Historical Papers Research Archive at The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.