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THE ATLANTIC CHARTER

THE President of the United States and the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, representing His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, being met together, deem it right to make known certain common principles in the national policies of their respective countries on which they base their hopes for a better future for the world.

FIRST, their countries seek no aggrandizement, territorial or other.

SECOND, they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned.

THIRD, they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.

FOURTH, they will endeavour, with due respect for their existing obligations, to further enjoyment by all States, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity.

FIFTH, they desire to bring about the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field, with the object

of securing for all improved labour standards, economic advancement, and social security.

SIXTH, after the final destruction of Nazi tyranny, they hope to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want.

SEVENTH, such a peace should enable all men to traverse the high seas and oceans without hindrance.

EIGHTH, they believe all of the nations of the world, for realistic as well as spiritual reasons, must come to the abandonment of the use of force. Since no future peace can be maintained if land, sea, or air armaments continue to be employed by nations which threaten, or may threaten, aggression outside of their frontiers, they believe, pending the establishment of a wider and permanent system of general security, that the disarmament of such nations is essential. They will likewise aid and encourage all other practicable measures which will lighten for peace-loving peoples the crushing burden of armament.

14 August 1941

Franklin D. Roosevelt Winston S. Churchill

THE LABOUR POLICY OF THE RAND MINES

THE Commission of Inquiry into Native wages and conditions on the Rand mines and their effect on the whole country has rightly been described as one of the most important that has ever sat in South Africa. The valuable evidence presented by various bodies has not been fully reported in the daily Press. We therefore publish below a summary of some of the outstanding points made in this evidence, much of which showed wide general agreement. The bodies referred to we are:—

(1) S.A. Institute of Race Relations; (2) Friends of Africa; (3) Natives Representative Council; (4) African Mine Workers' Union; (5) Johannesburg District Committee of the Communist Party; (6) Mr. D. B. Molteno, M.P.; (7) The British High Commission Territories; (8) Dr. J. N. Reedman and Mr. P. H. Guénault, of the Witwatersrand University.

The numbers have been used to indicate the responsibility for particular statements quoted or summarized. The summary, which is based on the original memoranda, was compiled by Hilda Kuper with the assistance of Kathleen Theron.

THE Chamber of Mines bases its policy on the assumption that the Native mine workers are peasants able to subsidize mine wages from the land. This fundamental assumption is challenged by all the bodies.

The Natives in the reserves are suffering from land and food shortage. Their subsistence economy was rendered impossible by the radical delimitation of Native Areas culminating in the Natives' Land Act of 1913. Even with the addition of the 7½ million morgen to be purchased under the Native Land and Trust Act of 1936, the total area available for Natives would still be "utterly inadequate" since the "bulk of the land acquired by the Trust was by 1942 already fully occupied by Natives . . ." (Statement by Secretary of Native Affairs to the Minister of Native Affairs. Quoted by [1].) Since 1913 the Native population increased by roughly 60 per cent while Native areas were enlarged by some 28.7 per cent. When the full purchase of the Trust land shall have been made, the Africans will still occupy less than 18 per cent of the total land in South Africa (3).

In the Transkei alone 45,000 families, roughly 200,000 individuals, are landless. (Mr. C. K. Hemming, M.P. *The Star*, 29 June 1943.)

Reserve and Trust lands are overstocked, eroded, and subject to periodic drought and other disasters; authoritative figures are quoted showing the low productivity of the land. Thus Mr. Molteno states that round Mafeking, "the best district of Bechuanaland", the production per head of the population is estimated as 0.07 bags of maize and 0.07 of kaffir corn, 0.012 of beans and cow peas together, per annum. The livestock figures disclose 0.9 head of cattle, 0.7 sheep, and 1.03 goats per Native. "When it is borne in mind that neither the land allotments nor the livestock are equally distributed, the "subsidy" for the majority of the population reaches vanishing point" (6). The Communist Party illustrates the "devastation" of the rural territories with quotations and budgets from the Native Economic Commission 1930-32. The Native Representative Councillors substantiate these points and give the Native Affairs Commission estimate of £30 per annum as the average income of a Native family of five living in the reserves and deriving its income therefrom. The report from the High Commission Territories shows a similar situation. "The population has been approximately doubled since 1904 and the consequent pressure upon the land, particularly in Basutoland and Swaziland, has forced the

labourer to rely more and more on his mine earnings" (7).

The conclusions drawn from this evidence are that rural areas in the Union and High Commission Territories cannot be considered to subsidize wages on the mines, but that on the contrary wages from the mines are the sole support for many Natives in the reserves, and that the people are driven from the poverty-stricken lands to work for cash wages.

The Rand gold mines employed 356,695 Natives in 1942—147,458 from the Union, 52,336 from the High Commission Territories, and a further contingent of 110,552 from other areas outside the Union. The majority of Union and High Commission Territories Natives are recruited for contracts of 270 shifts, which take nine to eleven months to complete. The absence of roughly 50 per cent of the adult able-bodied men throws the burden of arduous agricultural work on the women, the children, and the aged, and stultifies improvements in the reserves (3, 1, 5, and 6). The memorandum of the High Commission Territories refers to the investigation by the Belgian Government in which it reported that a maximum of 10 per cent of adult males could be absent without detriment to tribal life (7).

The Gold Producers' Committee considers that it is not necessary to give a cost-of-living allowance because the families are in rural areas, but all the evidence shows that very little is produced from the land, and the cost of buying in the reserves is higher than in the towns (6). The figures of family budgets reveal that even an amount of £7 10s. per month "would barely meet the needs of a rural community". Mr. Molteno submits that "probably under present conditions a monthly amount of £8 or £9 is not above what is required to sustain a reasonably healthy life for an African rural family". He further states that the exemption of the mines from the "cost-of-living" allowance regulations is one of the most glaring industrial injustices that at present exists (6). Other witnesses also urged that *mine Natives immediately receive a cost-of-*

living allowance, which is quite independent of any increase in basic rates of pay.

Apart from economic disorganization, the memoranda indicate the "disastrous social effects" of the present policy (1, 4, 5, 3). The ratio of the sexes is distorted and "conditions of maximum marital and sexual instability are set up" (1). In the reserves the long separations of man and wife lead to broken homes, adultery, and lack of parental control over children, and in the mines the men are seduced into unnatural practices and temporary liaisons. Many of these practices were unknown in the reserves, and there is a general opinion that both morality and health are declining through "the bleeding of the rural communities of their able-bodied manpower" (6). "The men bring home with them, not civilization, but disease—tuberculosis contracted on the mines, venereal diseases from the towns . . ." (4). There are very few hospitals in the Native areas to cure and check the spread of these diseases.

Planned Urbanization

Various recommendations are made to deal with the evils of this situation. All memoranda urge that the necessity of a permanent urban population must be faced and that some form of planned urbanization be evolved. It is argued that the only way to relieve the congestion in the country and to have a self-sufficient flourishing peasantry is to place industrial occupation on a permanent basis and at a wage adequate to support a family under urban conditions. It cannot be argued that because the mines are a wasting asset it is useless to establish the African mine workers on a permanent basis. "Only by increasing the productivity of the peasants while there is still time, and at the same time building up a flourishing manufacturing industry, can we survive the economic dislocation that the decline of gold mining must cause" (1). The building of a permanent industrial population must go hand in hand with the building up of the soil. To overcome the peasants' reluctance to lose all claim to the land the Institute

proposes that a system of family allowances be granted to those renouncing all claim to land in the reserves. An increase in wages alone would not meet the situation because the dislocation caused by compound life and the congestion in the reserves would continue.

In the interests of white and black it is essential to concentrate on the development of secondary industries which could absorb the African mine workers if and when the mines declined (1, 3, 8, and 6).

Members of the Chamber stated that to provide permanent married quarters on a scale similar to that of Orlando would require 75 square miles and would cost £29 million, excluding roads and railways. "That amount represents the monetary sacrifice alone that has been made by the dependants of the mine workers in order to keep the mining industry going" (3).

The representative of the High Commission Territories did not advocate complete urbanization of mine workers, as that would deprive the Territories of some 50 per cent of its population. He suggested, however, that accommodation be provided for wives on temporary visits to their men; that very strict control of labour and emigration be introduced to obviate the detrimental effects of absenteeism; that the maximum period of 21 months' service be stipulated and that returned labourers should not be re-engaged until six months have elapsed after the expiry of a previous contract.

The Institute suggests that an intermediate stage might be evolved, whereby families of mine workers were concentrated in rural villages, where they would live entirely on the men (1).

Wages

All memoranda condemned the inadequacy of the wages of African mine workers. "By no known scientific or human criteria can it be contended that the Mines pay a wage adequate for the needs of the African family" (6). "The payment of an uneconomic wage by the mines on the grounds that the labourer is only supplementing his income, which is

mainly derived from agriculture, is unsound and will lead to disaster" (7). "Native wages on the Mines are in fact not unlike an appetizer in the realm of diet . . . something to sharpen the desire for food, but not to take the place of food" (3).

The figures provided by the Gold Producers' Committee gave the average cash wage of the African miner as 2s. 3d. per shift for the underground worker, and 2s. 1d. per shift for the surface worker, or £2 19s. 6d. and £2 14s. 2d. per month respectively, on the basis of 26 shifts. The value of accommodation, food, and other services was estimated at £2 16s. 4d. per month. Mr. Molteno pointed out that approximately 40 per cent of the value of the remuneration in kind is apparently attributable to the inflated cost of living due to war conditions, since in 1939 the value was estimated at 1s. 6d. or £1 19s. per month.

The cash wage of Native mine workers is moreover considerably reduced by essential expenditure on repatriation, mine boots, food to relieve a monotonous diet, and on relaxation from compound life. Mr. Ballinger estimated the amount at £7 10s. per annum. The Native Representative Councillors and others pointed out that all countries which were signatories to the conventions of the International Labour Office agreed that employers should bear the costs to and from the place of employment. South Africa dissented. A single rail ticket costs from £2 to £3, or approximately one to two months' wages. The Commission was urged to recommend South Africa's adherence to the labour policy of other countries (2, 3, 1).

According to the High Commission Territories report, Mr. Molteno, and others, Native *real* wages are to-day less than in 1914. "Despite increases in the price of gold, despite expansion of the mining industry, and despite the enormous increase in the productivity of labour, described by the Chamber of Mines in a statement submitted to the Commission, African *money* wages since 1914 have only risen by 3s. 3d. per shift. In the face of

the rising cost of living, this represents an actual fall in real wages" (6).

Comparing Native with European wages, Mr. Ballinger, quoting figures from the Gold Producers' Committee, stated that in 1942, while the total wages paid to the 356,696 Natives were £12,643,768, the wages and other cash considerations received by the 40,555 Europeans totalled £19,535,578, to which must be added bonuses for efficiency, holiday leave, and provident fund benefits (2). The contrast between European and African wages was also drawn. In 1940 European mine employees averaged £1 11s. 10d. per shift plus benefits amounting to 3s. 6d. per shift plus paid leave, provision for long leave, cost-of-living allowance and a yearly contribution of £30,000 from the Chamber to the Mines Benefit Fund, and contributions by the mines to unemployment insurance. The African average wage was 2s. 3½d. per shift plus "cost of keep" and nothing else. The Native Representative Council discusses the rates of compensation under the Miners' Phthisis Act, and the exclusion of Natives under the Unemployment Benefit Act. Mr. Molteno illustrated how the Chamber succeeded in excluding Africans from certain benefits accruing to all other workers under the workmen's compensation legislation. While the price of gold has risen by over 97 per cent between 1931 and 1940, the wages (cash and kind) of African miners, according to the figures of the Gold Producers' Committee, have increased by some 8 per cent, and of European miners, according to the Union Year Book 1941, by less than 15 per cent. "The benefit accruing from the rise in price of gold has not been passed on to the mine workers to any appreciable extent" (5).

African wages on the mines are shown to be lower than in other industries, but the wages of European workers are higher because of the dangerous and arduous nature of the work (5, 8, 6). Wages for Africans are kept low through the system of recruiting monopolized by the Native Recruiting Corporation and the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association, which

eliminate competition in the purchase of Native labour. Recruiting labour from outside the Union depresses the wages of Union Natives and makes it less attractive for them to leave the reserves. Shortage of labour, Mr. Guénault and Dr. Reedman pointed out, is a shortage at a particular wage-rate, and might not exist if a higher wage-rate were offered. These economists state that there is "chronic underemployment" and a shortage of Native labour at the price offered by the mines, farms, and other industries influenced by the low level set by mine wages. The system of migrant labour offers no inducement to improve the quality of labour and keeps the workers in a permanently weak bargaining position. It takes no account of long service and militates against effective organization of industry by necessitating a high labour turnover and heavy recruiting expenses (8).

The Natives Representative Council states that "the policy of the Government is designed by racial and restrictive legislation to create conditions which make for a sufficiency of cheap native labour". The Mines and Works Act debars Natives from certain skilled and unskilled occupations. Cheap labour is unskilled labour, and unskilled labour is the result of illiteracy and lack of training. Recruiting and statutory enactments which force the Natives to accept any conditions place a premium on illiteracy and ignorance. They are also economically unsound because human resources are wastefully used; the employer is inclined to use cheap manual labour instead of introducing mechanical improvements which would in the long run add to efficiency and economical production (3, 1).

"Of all the industries in the country the mines are unique in demanding exemption from the necessity of paying a living family wage" (3); yet "the mines set the standard of prevailing wages throughout the country as a whole" (3). It has been precisely the low level thus set which has necessitated the intervention of the Wage Board in other industries. In doing so, the Board has not necessarily taken into account

"assumed" rural subsidies on wages, but the ceiling has still been affected by the wages paid on the mines. Three representatives of the African Gas and Power Workers' Union employed by the Victoria Falls Power Co. stated that, when a strike to raise wages for their members was imminent, the authorities stated that they could not pay increased wages, lest it create disorganization in the mining industry. (*The Star*, 9 June 1943.) Mr. Molteno further attributes the "extraordinary gap" between the low rates on the Rand and the higher rates in the Cape to the depressing influence of mine rates.

The economists, Dr. Reedman and Mr. Guénault, point out that it is often assumed that the interests of the mining industry are identical with the interests of the country as a whole. But this is based on two further assumptions, namely, that the gold mining industry will continue indefinitely to play a major part in the economic development of South Africa, and, secondly, that the part it does play is automatically beneficial because it has been a mainspring of industrial development in the Union. But the gold mines are a wasting asset and there may be a tendency to use resources, such as labour, to maximize profits during the life-time of the mines while at the same time exhausting these other resources (8).

While gold is a wasting asset, labour as seen in terms of human needs is a permanent resource which must be adequately maintained and improved (8). The Communist Party urge the necessity, in view of the decline of gold and conditions of workers, of considering curtailment of gold mines according to a plan, worked out so as to restrict the activities primarily of low-grade mines. This, in turn, will increase the rate of profit in the industry as a whole and will enable the remaining mines to carry what is regarded to-day as an impossible burden—the provision of civilized living standards for their employees. The Government should plan, moreover, to develop other South African resources to absorb manpower, capital, and materials released from the gold mining industry.

The probable effects of an increase in wages would be two-fold; firstly, gross profits might decline and, secondly, there might be a decrease in employment. Mr. Molteno points out that, unless the increased costs involve the restrictions of mining operations by more than half, the employment of Union Africans need not be affected, since more than half the Native labour is recruited from outside. All the memoranda emphasize the necessity for a wage increase and various recommendations are made. Mr. Ballinger urges an immediate increase of 6d. per shift; the Natives Representative Council considers that between 1s. 6d. and 2s. per shift increase should be aimed at. Mr. Molteno contends that the increase of the minimum wage up to a figure of over 6s. per shift, payable in cash only, should be an objective, and the Communist Party recommends a minimum wage of £2 per week. The memoranda draw attention to "the immense and unhealthy gaps that exist between skilled and unskilled mining labourers"; but at the same time most of the memoranda avoid any suggestion of reducing the wages of European mine labourers. Mr. Molteno suggests that the best contribution would be "abolition" of the arbitrary colour bar embodied in the Mines and Works Regulations". Mr. Ballinger considers that a living wage could be paid if dividends were reduced, the Government were to forego a portion of the monies received in taxation from the mines, and European labour had salaries and wages adjusted to provide for an increase in Native wages.

Representation

The memoranda considered the development of trade unions.

The Administration of the High Commission Territories "noted with misgivings the recommendations of the 1942 Inter-departmental Commission on Social Health and Economic Conditions of Urban Natives to exclude the mining industry from the administrative recognition of Trade Unions". It "urged the right of the Native mine labourers to have their

grievances legally represented through a recognized trade union". Attention was drawn to the present policy in all British dependencies to encourage the formation of Native trade unions. It is a condition of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, 1940, that no assistance be given to a colony which does not recognize trade unions.

Mr. Molteno stated that the "essential aim" of trade unions is to substitute the method of disciplined negotiation through the accredited representatives of the parties concerned for the opposite method of sporadic, undisciplined, and sometimes violent manifestations of workers' discontent. This is borne out not only by trade union history in the older industrial countries, and by that of the European unions in South Africa, but also by the history of such African unions as do exist. It would be impossible to know the real grievance of the Natives until they had their own people speaking for them.

It was alleged that under the existing system there was no real avenue for redress of grievances.

Conclusion

The memoranda here summarized were

AN INQUIRY INTO LITERACY AMONG ADULT AFRICANS¹

Rae Bernstein

WHAT proportion of adult Africans can read and write? On this main question was based an investigation into certain social, economic, and cultural aspects of urban African life, which was conducted during the course of 1942. The survey was originally planned in connection with a study which aimed at isolating environ-

¹ This survey is part of a larger investigation which was generously financed by the Bureau of Educational and Social Research, whose assistance the writer gratefully acknowledges.

presented by independent groups and individuals whose opinions diverge on many matters; but the outstanding feature of the evidence submitted to the Commission was the common outlook, supported by a weight of evidence for each major argument, and the similarity, if not identity, of the recommendations of these bodies.

The substance of the evidence can be summarized as an indictment of the present labour policy of the mines, sanctioned by the Government. The gold mining industry depends on and induces impoverishment in the rural areas; pays a wage inadequate for the minimum requirements of a healthy rural family; creates social as well as economic hardships; depresses wages throughout the country; and excludes Africans from the benefits of the protected and privileged Europeans.

All the witnesses recommended some degree of stabilization of labour in order to secure better standards of living, both in the country and in the town; and increase in wage-rates, and freer competition than is possible under the system of recruited labour.

mental factors affecting the performance of specific learning tests. It was therefore designed to throw into relief complexes of factors which might serve to distinguish one group of African families from another.

A portion of this inquiry related to the literacy and educational standards of the head of the household and his wife. Since modern statistics on literacy are available for little more than half the population of the world, and since one of the gaps in South Africa, it is believed that the

data presented here are of some public interest. The inquiry was not specifically designed as a literacy survey, and consequently avoided the intricacies of accurately defining, and devising means of measuring, various levels of literacy. For this reason the results presented here reveal obvious limitations, but if the deficiencies in this investigation stimulate others to devise more refined and adequate measures of assessing the degree of African literacy, some useful purpose would have been served.

SAMPLING

The original plan of this inquiry aimed at securing information from 500 urban African households. For this purpose, five distinct areas were chosen which were believed to differ sufficiently in the composition of their populations to yield a representative sample of Africans resident in the Johannesburg area. The five areas selected were: Sophiatown, Alexandra Township, and three areas under the control of the municipal Native Affairs Department. After the survey had begun, however, the municipality refused the writer permission to enter, for the purpose of *this* investigation, the three areas under their control, and work had therefore to be confined to Sophiatown and Alexandra. In which ways, if any, the composition of the populations in these two areas differs from that in the three township areas is purely a matter of conjecture, for until the municipality either extends the field of its own research to include areas outside the control of its Department, or otherwise gives freer access to investigators to enter its townships, we will have no facts upon which to base our statements.

The sampling rate was calculated according to the original scheme which aimed at investigating 500 households. The number to be investigated in each area was directly proportional to the total number of stands in each area. A final sampling rate was established in which one out of every 52 stands, and one out of every 54 stands, were visited in Sophiatown and Alexandra respectively. This yielded

a total number of 70 households in Sophiatown, comprising 61 males and 61 females; and 105 households in Alexandra, comprising 97 males and 98 females. The information collected from this total of 122 persons in Sophiatown and 195 persons in Alexandra forms the substance of this article.

PROCEDURE

The unit of investigation was the household, and the literacy and educational data relate in the case of a normal household to the male head of the household and his wife, or in other cases to a widow, widower, unmarried person living alone, etc. Miss B. Selebi, an African assistant, who had been trained in the technique and difficulties of the questionnaire method, visited each household and elicited and recorded the required information. The majority of interviews took place with women who supplied the desired facts about themselves and their husbands. Wherever possible, both the head and his wife were separately interviewed. There were extremely few cases of non-co-operation.

SCOPE OF INQUIRY

The portion of the questionnaire dealt with in this paper consisted of the following questions:—

1. Can the father read and write (Yes or No)
If so, what languages
2. Can the mother read and write (Yes or No)
If so, what languages
3. Did the father ever attend school (Yes or No)
If so, which was the last standard he passed
4. Did the mother ever attend school (Yes or No)
If so, which was the last standard she passed
5. Does the father *regularly* read the newspapers (Yes or No)
Which newspapers
6. Does the mother *regularly* read the newspapers (Yes or No)
Which newspapers

Literacy can be defined as the ability to communicate through the medium of