THE SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS INSTITUUT VIR RASSEVERHOUDINGS serves SOUTH AFRICA SUID-AFRIKA

by

I. - Investigations on all problems arising out of race contacts in Southern Africa.
II. - Publications giving the results of scientific investigations, accounts of conferences and special articles.
III. - Information Bureau & Reference Library - free service for research workers, students, speakers and writers, social workers, etc.
IV. - Secretariat for several scientific societies and welfare bodies.
V. - Organisation of Joint Councils among the various racial groups in South Africa: European-African; European-Coloured; European-Indian.
VI. - Social Welfare activities - planning and initiation of schemes, and co-ordination of agencies.
VII. - Conferences - regional and national - on problems of race relations.
VIII. - Lectures on race problems and allied topics, and assistance to study groups.

THE INSTITUTE NEEDS -

1. Annual Grants from Public Bodies - £10 or more entitles the granting body to two representatives on the Council (present granting bodies: 33).
2. Donations from Firms and Individuals - Donors of £10 p.a. (or £100 gift) vote for five representatives on the Council (present Donors: 35).
3. Annual Subscriptions from Firms or Individuals - Subscribers of £1, or over, vote for six representatives on the Council (present Subscribers nearly 700).

S. A. Institute of Race Relations,
P. O. Box 97,
JOHANNESBURG

DIE SUID-AFRIKAANSE INSTITUUT VIR RASSEVERHOUDINGS dien SUID-AFRIKA

by

I. - Navorsings in verband met rasseverhoudings-vragstukke.
II. - Publikasies, waarin resultate van wetenskaplike navorsing, konferensie-verale, en spesiale artikels gedrukg word.
III. - Inligtingsbureau en Naslaanbiblioteek - kosteloos diens vir navorsers, studente, sprekers en skrywers, maatskaplikwerkers, en.
IV. - Sekretariaat vir verskillende wetenskaplike liggname en versorgingsligname.
V. - Organisasie van Gesamentlike Rade, vir die verskillende rassegroep in Suid-Afrika — blankes en naturelle; blankes en kleurlinge, blankes en Indiërs.
VI. - Bedrywigheid op gebied van Maatskaplike Welvaart — veral inlewing van nuwe ondernemings, en die bevoering van die samewerking van welvaartsondernemings.
VII. - Konferensies — gewestelik en nasionaal — oor rasseverhoudings-probleme.
VIII. - Lesings oor rasse — en aanverwante vraagstukke en hulp aan studiegroep.

DIE INSTITUUT HET NODIG —

1. Jaarlike Toelaes van Openbare Liggname — £10 of meer maak 'n liggname geregtig op twee verteenwoordigers op die Raad (Antal liggname wat op die ombliek toelaes skenk : 33).
2. Donasies van Firms en Individu — Persone wat £10 per jaar (of 'n enkele donasie van £100) skenk, mag stem vir een verteenwoordiger op die Raad. (Antal skenkere op die ombliek : 35).
3. Jaarlike Subskripties van Firms of Individu — Intekenaars wat of meer betaal, mag vir een verteenwoordiger op die Raad stem ( aantal intekenaars op die ombliek oor die 700).

S. A. Instituut vir Rassehoudings,
Postbus 97,
JOHANNESBURG
Regulations

Section 23. The comprehensive character of the Act, as it now stands, in relation to the control and administration of the urban Native population has necessitated the extension of the powers of the Governor-General, the Minister and urban local authorities to make regulations. The drastic nature of the machinery now available to control the entry of Natives into urban areas and to remove them therefrom prompts the hope that the following item from among the powers of the Minister of Native Affairs to make regulations will be fully utilised to the benefit of the Native population and the economic organisation of the Union:

"(b) the dissemination of information regarding the demand for, and the available supply of Native labour; the proper distribution of Native labour; the establishment of Native labour exchanges; and the charges to be paid for any service rendered by such exchange".

THE POSITION OF INDIANS IN INDUSTRY IN SOUTH AFRICA*

By

SYED SIR RAZA ALI, Agent-General for India

While it is satisfactory to notice that keen interest has of late been evinced in the political condition of Indians in this country, we hear very little about their economic position. Up to a point this is natural. Political and social disabilities can be seen by every observer. But the working of economic laws in modern society is so complex that their effect cannot be readily realised without making a special study. And yet it is the economic factor that plays a most vital part in the life of an average man. I should not be understood to mean that any Government can afford to be indifferent to the political rights and political disabilities of its people. The point is that, unless the earning capacity of the people or any section of them is sufficient to provide for necessary of life, it inevitably retards their political growth. Therefore, while it is the bounden duty of Indians to do all they can to acquire those political rights which are withheld from them, it is equally obligatory on them to march shoulder to shoulder with other sections of the population in an effort to improve their material condition.

I wish it were possible for me to deal with the economic position of the Indian community as a whole. This however would involve elaborate inquiries which can only be undertaken by the Government. The South African Indian Congress has for some time been pressing the Union Government to appoint a Fact-Finding Commission. But no such Commission has unfortunately been appointed hitherto. I sincerely hope that it will be possible for the Institute of Race Relations to conduct an inquiry into the economic, or, at any rate, the agricultural, position of Indians in certain areas in Natal. The work is of the highest importance and, if the endeavour to persuade the Government to undertake it evokes no response, it is in the interest of Indians to make a modest beginning. The best way to make a start would be for the Congress to approach the Institute of Race Relations, and I am sure the joint efforts of the two bodies will succeed in initiating a limited inquiry in typically Indian areas in Natal, which would be a safe guide for forming an estimate of the present position as a whole.

In the absence of reliable data, I must resist the temptation of dealing with the economic position of the Indian community as a whole and would confine my self to an examination of its position in industries. Fortunately the figures published by Government from time to time are helpful in this direction. The Indian population of the Union was 165,731 in 1921. The census figures for May 1936 put the total figure at 219,928, or an increase of 32.7 per cent. In fact the increase since 1917 has been about 35 per cent. The latest year for which the figures relating to industrial employment are available is 1934/35. The total number of Asians employed in industry in the Union was 12,308 in 1917/18. Having regard to the increase of population since that year, one would expect an increase of 35 per cent in that figure. And what are the facts as disclosed by the Census of Industrial Establishments for 1934/35, recently published by the Office of Census and Statistics, Pretoria? One is alarmed to find that, instead of the total number of Asians employed in 1917/18 rising to something like 16,616, as one would expect, there was a large decrease in 1934/35. The figure was actually 10,215. The same tale is unfolded when we examine the figures for the branch of the industry known as food and drink. In 1917-18 the number of Indians employed in this branch of the industry was 7,884 which in 1934-35 fell to 4,433—a decrease of 3,451. This would largely seem to represent a set-back in the number of Indians employed in the sugar industry in Natal.

The position is even more unsatisfactory when we turn to the railways. Against 1,936 Asians employed in July 1925, there are only 506 employed at present, according to the Monthly Bulletin of Union Statistics for July 1937. It is to

* Address delivered by Syed Sir Raza Ali, Agent-General for India, at a meeting of the Indo-European Joint Council, Durban, on September 16th, 1937.
be noted that here again it is the Indian who has suffered as from July 1925 to July 1937. The number of Coloured employees has increased by 5 per cent and the number of Natives by 16 per cent.

An analysis of mining figures would show that the deterioration in the Indian position has been alarming. A comparison of the figures for four years reveals the following position:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number Employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>3,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>1,927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>790</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This shows a decrease of 74.9 per cent in the number of Indians employed in 1920. It would be interesting to note that, as against 790 Indians, 44,902 Europeans and 383,025 Natives are at present employed by the mining industry. The steady decline in the employment of Indians in various branches of industry can largely be traced to the Government's Civilised Labour Policy, generally known as the White Labour Policy. I am glad to notice that, on representations made by Sir Maharaj Singh, the Minister in charge gave the assurance some years ago that what was known as the White Labour Policy did not have reference to colour, but was based on the standard of living of the employees and that Indian workers were not excluded from the term 'Civilised Labour'. As I have, however, shown, the effect of the application of this policy has unfortunately been most disastrous to Indian interests. Indians are being displaced by the poor white, not only in those concerns which are directly run by Government, but Municipal Corporations and all the bodies over which the Government exercises any influence are showing extraordinary zeal in employing as few Indians as possible. I would in passing refer to the effect of a number of Acts which aggravate the Indian position. Take for instance the Apprenticeship Act, about the working of which the Industrial Commission of 1934 had a good deal to say. In addition to the fact that apprenticeship involves heavy expenditure, the opportunities of training open to Indians are extremely limited. Among the Acts and Ordinances imposing racial disabilities on Indians or administered in a racial spirit, to which strong objection has rightly been taken by the Indian community, may be mentioned the following:

(a) The Land Settlement Act
(b) The Slum Act
(c) The Provincial Licensing Ordinances
(d) The Transvaal Gold Law

An analysis of mining figures would show that the deterioration in the Indian position has been alarming. A comparison of the figures for four years reveals the following position:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number Employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>3,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>1,927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>790</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This shows a decrease of 74.9 per cent in the number of Indians employed in 1920. It would be interesting to note that, as against 790 Indians, 44,902 Europeans and 383,025 Natives are at present employed by the mining industry. The steady decline in the employment of Indians in various branches of industry can largely be traced to the Government's Civilised Labour Policy, generally known as the White Labour Policy. I am glad to notice that, on representations made by Sir Maharaj Singh, the Minister in charge gave the assurance some years ago that what was known as the White Labour Policy did not have reference to colour, but was based on the standard of living of the employees and that Indian workers were not excluded from the term 'Civilised Labour'. As I have, however, shown, the effect of the application of this policy has unfortunately been most disastrous to Indian interests. Indians are being displaced by the poor white, not only in those concerns which are directly run by Government, but Municipal Corporations and all the bodies over which the Government exercises any influence are showing extraordinary zeal in employing as few Indians as possible. I would in passing refer to the effect of a number of Acts which aggravate the Indian position. Take for instance the Apprenticeship Act, about the working of which the Industrial Commission of 1934 had a good deal to say. In addition to the fact that apprenticeship involves heavy expenditure, the opportunities of training open to Indians are extremely limited. Among the Acts and Ordinances imposing racial disabilities on Indians or administered in a racial spirit, to which strong objection has rightly been taken by the Indian community, may be mentioned the following:

(a) The Land Settlement Act
(b) The Slum Act
(c) The Provincial Licensing Ordinances
(d) The Transvaal Gold Law

**CORRECTION**

Owing to a misunderstanding, the name of Mrs. Ballinger, M.P., elected by the Natives in the Eastern Cape Districts, was omitted from that list. The Editors of Race Relations take this opportunity to rectify the omission. The inclusion of Mrs. Ballinger makes the list of Institute members who will represent African interests in Parliament even more impressive than it was already.