

THE ORDERLY MOVEMENT AND SETTLEMENT OF BLACK PERSONS BILL.

COMMENT ADDRESSED TO THE CHURCHES.

The attached documents outline the provisions of the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill which was introduced in Parliament in 1982, was then referred to a Select Committee and is expected to be dealt with in the 1983 session of Parliament.

This legislation closes the door almost entirely to any further urbanisation.

If passed in its present form it will be the most efficient form of influx control this country has ever experienced.

People who live in the homelands are trapped in poverty. The only way in which they can legally obtain employment is by registering at a Labour Bureau within the homeland and waiting there to be recruited for work in the so-called "white" areas. They are not permitted to leave the homeland area to look for work. If they do so they are refused registration and cannot be legally employed.

Recruitment is being cut down. It is Government policy that black urban people must have preferential access to jobs so employers are now discouraged from recruiting rural workers and are often refused permission to do so. For example, the number of registered male migrants from Transkei dropped from 425 000 in 1978 to 345 000 in 1980. Those were boom years before the current recession took hold. 1980 was the year in which S.A. experienced its greatest growth rate ever. Mechanisation and western technology means that the pattern of contemporary economic development reinforces Government policy.

In 1980 Transkei had an "open" unemployment rate of 16% which means approximately 145 000 people of whom 40 000 were between 16 and 22 years.

"Open" unemployment figures do not include the underemployed. If the underemployed are included the figure rises to 230 000 people i.e. 25%.

These cold statistics of poverty can be duplicated for all the homelands.

In Kwa Zulu only 25% of the increase of the labour force between 1973 and 1975 could find paid employment within the homeland. Tribal agricultural land is already overpopulated and at least 830 000 people must be shed to urban areas even if all agricultural land were to be used productively.

In Bophuthatswana in 1981 "open" unemployment was 12,5% of the labour force.

In Venda at present 80% of the present population subsists on the land whereas only 17% can make a living on the land. The optimum number of families who can make a proper living from the land in Venda is 14 000. In 1980 the total number of families in Venda was 69 534, 24 739 of whom were struggling to survive on the land.

According to present development plans, by the year 2000 there will be 20 443 farming families and 118 464 landless families. (Institute of Development Studies RAU).

In Ciskei "open" unemployment overall is 25%. In Sada it is 29%, in Dimbaza 35%, in Kammaskraal 36%, in Glenmore 38%.

Between 1923 and 1965 real agricultural output per head in the homeland areas declined by 56,8% from £4,4 to £1,9 in constant 1946 prices.

54% of South Africa's black population now lives in the homelands (including the independent homelands). This figure has grown from 44 % in 1960.

The overall population of the homelands rose by 66% between 1970 and 1980.

KaNgwane, Qwa Qwa and Kwandebele experienced increases of between 200 and 500 per cent.



The average population density in the homelands rose from 60 per square mile in 1955 to 110 in 1969.

This has been aggravated by the Government's resettlement policy.

REMOVED 1960 to 1980

1 250 000 black people resettled from "white" rural areas

750 000 black people resettled from urban areas.

Resettlement is continuing

Absolute poverty forces people to leave the homelands and to come to town. It is officially estimated that 42% of the black population in the Cape Peninsula is "illegal". That percentage is probably the same in other large urban areas. People must come to town. They have no alternative.

In July 1979 Dr. Koornhof increased the fine which can be imposed on the employer of an unregistered worker from R100 to R500. This has meant that it is much more difficult for an "illegal" person to find a job but they have stayed in town. They manage somehow to survive.

It is estimated that up to 30% of survival income can be gained in the informal sector given a flourishing formal sector.

NOW THEY ARE TO BE FORCED OUT.

The penalties they - the illegals - will incur for being present in an urban area between 10 p.m and 5 a.m will be a fine of R500 or 6 months imprisonment but it is not this which will prevent them. They have no alternative. What will make influx control efficient is the penalties on those who give unauthorised people accommodation between 10 p.m and 5 a.m.

This penalty is also R500 or 6 months imprisonment plus R20 for every day during which the offence continues.

This will apply to householders in black and white suburbs.

We are to be the policemen. We will turn people out because we do not wish to incur the penalties. Once they have lost their shelter, they will be forced out of town.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH going to say about this?

CAN THE CHURCH DO ANYTHING OTHER than to say to Christians that we will be compelled to disobey the law if it becomes law?

IF WE ARE GOING TO SAY THIS we must say it NOW loudly and unequivocally both publicly and to those in authority.

South Africa is not an overpopulated country. We have land and resources enough for all the people who live here. Rapid urbanisation does present enormous problems but, given freedom, we could work creatively to resolve those problems. The estimated number of "squatters" in homeland areas near the metropolises is already 2 million people.

Our Lord was crucified outside

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Our Lord was crucified outside the walls of the city.

Are we now to go on taking an active part in his crucifixion.

SHEENA DUNCAN.

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FOOTNOTE :

1. All statistics, unless otherwise stated, are taken from the draft report of the workshop on Urban/Rural interaction in South Africa, Unit for Futures Research, University of Stellenbosch.
2. Evidence submitted to the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Constitution in regard to this Bill must be sent to the

Secretary of Parliament,  
P. O. Box 15,  
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by 31st August 1982 in twentyfold.