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Suid-Afrikaanse Arbeidsparty

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TELEGRAMME "SALPO"

Alle korrespondensie
moet aan die Algemene
Sekretaris gerig word

NON-EUROPEAN POLICY

Adopted at the forty-second Annual Conference, January, 1953.

NON-EUROPEAN POLICY.

AN APPEAL TO COMMON SENSE AND HUMANITY.

The South African Labour Party makes an earnest appeal to the European electorate of South Africa to discard prejudices and fears in dealing with the non-European. What is needed is the adoption of an enlightened outlook towards the non-European population and a recognition that co-operation between the races is the only policy that can further the mutual interests of the entire South African community.

Peaceful co-operation between white and black in South Africa is of such vital importance to every European and non-European in South Africa, that no effort should be spared to understand what prevents it, and to remove all obstacles to its achievement.

ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION.

The Labour Party believes that one of the roots of racial friction is economic exploitation. A social system has been created in the Union, fortified by a network of repressive laws, so as to provide native labour at the cheapest rate, and so as to keep it cheap and docile.

This system has the most shocking social effects. It accounts for lack of proper housing, under-nourishment, and a high infant mortality rate, a low standard of education, a growing prison population and other social evils. It also accounts for a deep sense of discontent and frustration among our non-European population and because this system has hitherto been supported by the mass of the European electorate, the discontent is in danger of being channelled against Europeans in general instead of merely against European groups of exploiters. Working people can have no real interest or profit in supporting such a system, and only do so because they are blinded by dangerous racial propaganda from understanding the real motives.

The following program is intended to diminish the evils of economic exploitation and to create the basis for goodwill and co-operation.

HELP THEM TO HELP THEMSELVES.

The traditional methods adopted by workers to improve their conditions of work and wages is through the institution known as the trade union. Trade Unions, by establishing the right of collective bargaining and the right to strike, have cut down the shocking exploitation of European workers which used to be prevalent. Our industrial laws exclude most non-Europeans from these rights.

1. The Labour Party advocates the inclusion of all workers in the definition of "employee" in the Industrial Act.

Existing Trades Unions shall have the unfettered right to decide whether to admit non-Europeans to membership or to leave them to form their own trades unions in any industry or trade.

INCREASE NATIONAL WEALTH.

If the total wealth produced by all workers in South Africa remains the same, the share of one group cannot be increased

without taking away something from other groups.

But if the total is increased, then there can be a larger slice for everyone.

There is only one way to raise the present low over-all national wealth, and that is to increase the productivity of all workers and ensure the continued expansion of industry, agriculture and mining.

2. The Labour Party, therefore, advocates the training of non-Europeans to carry their work according to each man's ability in factory, farm and mine, with the following safeguards
 - (a) To ensure that European workers need not fear ousting from their jobs - security of employment at standard rates of pay shall be guaranteed by law.
 - (b) To ensure that employers do not exploit non-European labour - no employer shall be permitted to pay a lower rate for the same work on the ground of colour.

FREE LABOUR.

Irish Laws, Master and Servant Laws, the Native Labour Regulation Act, and other measures prevent natives from selling their labour in the best market. If they try to do so they are gaoled. These laws are motivated by economic greed and serve to breed discontent and violence.

3. The Labour Party advocates the abolition of all criminal penalties presently attaching to natives in relation to their right to obtain the best employment and to their free movement to do so.

HOUSES.

No housing and bad housing are one of the scandals of our urban areas. Disease, crime and disorder are the social symptoms.

4. The Labour Party advocates a plan to provide decent houses at reasonable rentals in all urban areas over a five year period as priority No. 1 in Municipal Budgets. Government funds shall be allocated accordingly.

LOCAL RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION.

The emphasis placed by the main political parties on the negative aspect of housing, namely, segregation, results in slums and slummy towns for our Africans. The Labour Party places the emphasis on the positive aspect - the building of such needed houses.

Local residential segregation can be achieved by the erection of townships for non-Europeans without the necessity of tyrannical legislation of a negative kind. The facts of the situation are the key to this problem. Such of our natives in urban areas who have houses live in their own areas. Those who have no houses would gladly occupy houses in townships created for them.

5. To implement a policy of local residential segregation one has the choice of using the policeman or the builder. The Labour Party prefers to use the builder.

REHABILITATION OF THE NATIVE RESERVES.

A little over a third of the native population live in the reserves, which constitute about 10% of the land of the Union.

Every official report speaks of these areas as congested, denuded, overstocked and crooked. The poverty and stagnation of the reserves compel its inhabitants to seek a livelihood in the towns, where, despite bad housing and other evils, they are comparatively much better off.

It is futile, therefore, to talk of returning the rest of the native population to the reserves which cannot support even the present numbers who live there - apart from the reason that the economy of the rest of South Africa would be completely disrupted. The disciplines of "Apartheid" are in this respect indulging in idle and misleading dog-drecks.

6. The Labour Party advocates a planned policy, adequately financed, of irrigation, soil conservation, training in modern and mechanised farming, establishment of small industries and model villages, not in order to bring back millions to the reserves, but to improve the condition of the present population and to make them efficient producers of food for themselves, as well as for the needs of the rest of the country.

NATIVES ON FARMS.

European farmers complain about the shortage of native labour. This complaint is not new. Mention of it is made in official reports over the last hundred years. The mining industry also complains of a shortage of native labour. This need for native labour on farm, mine, and forestry, has drawn millions of natives from their reserves. Why is the shortage felt most on farms? All economic surveys are clear that natives on farms receive the lowest wages and the least amenities compared to natives employed in mines and factories. In order to offset these disadvantages, the traditional method has been to pass laws to make it more difficult for natives to get employment in mining and industry. Master and Servant laws bind the native to the farm. Farm goals are set up for this purpose, but none of these restrictive laws really help because none of them tackle the real cause of the difficulty.

The answer lies in more efficient farming - more mechanised farms, and better trained native agricultural labourers who could demand better wages and better amenities.

7. The Labour Party advocates:
- (a) That the proper training of native agricultural labourers be a state responsibility going hand in hand with the encouragement of improved farming methods.
 - (b) That farm goals be free agricultural training centres.
 - (c) Fix a minimum wage for farm labourers.
 - (d) Abolish the present provisions of the Master and Servant Ordinances.

EDUCATION.

The Labour Party accepts the recommendations made by the Social and Economic Planning Council on this subject in its report No. 13.

8. The Labour Party advocates the following policy in regard to non-European education:
- (a) Primary education should be made free and compulsory in the large urban centres for the great majority of non-European children from the age of 7 to 11 as part of a long-term plan of development, particularly with a view to curtailing juvenile delinquency;
 - (b) The school curricula should be revised to meet changing needs;
 - (c) The closer integration of general vocational instruction into the curriculum of the ordinary schools should receive early consideration.

This programme implies inter alia:

- (i) greatly increased funds for non-Europeans, especially native education, an indispensable investment in the economic future of the country as a whole;
- (ii) greatly expanded educational building programmes;
- (iii) early provision for training more teachers and for attracting larger numbers to the profession by an improvement of working conditions.

Finally, care must be taken to ensure that the extension of education does not merely result in the erection of a class with a smattering of knowledge, a dislike for manual work, and a lack of suitable employment. To avoid this, it is necessary not only that curricula should be carefully planned, but also that avenues of employment should be provided which are adapted to the rising educational level of the non-Europeans, so that suitable jobs are available in which the best use may be made of their enhanced productive powers, to the benefit of the nation as a whole.

POLITICAL REPRESENTATION.

The question of the right of representation of the non-Europeans in South Africa can no longer be evaded. It is futile for one section of the population to attempt to legislate for the whole population without giving the other section some voice in the formulation of measures designed for the order and good government of the whole of South African society. To extend the vote indiscriminately to vast numbers of persons who are lacking in education and who are inexperienced in the workings of democratic institutions would be unwise. To withhold it permanently from all persons, even those fitted to exercise it, merely on the ground of differences in skin colour, is unjust.

9. The Labour Party advocates the following:
- (a) The retention of the present franchise rights of non-Europeans in the Cape Province;
 - (b) the right to vote to be given to all adult male non-Europeans in other provinces on the basis of a literacy test - qualification Std. VI.
 - (c) representation should consist of three European representatives each from the Cape and the Transvaal, and two each from Natal and the O.F.S. to Parliament, with the same number of representatives on each Provincial Council, and a qualified direct representation on town and village councils, as in the Cape Province.

CONCLUSION.

It is one thing for a political party to recognise colour prejudice as a social fact. It is quite another to use it as a pretext for extending injustice and inhumanity as has been the case with the old policies as practised in the past. The Labour Party sets its face resolutely against these practices. Policies based upon fear and hostility merely create fear and hostility.

Our Programme is not intended to remain permanent or static. As socialists, we recognise the continuous and progressive development of human society. On this basis, we accept that our policy will be subject to such revision which the progress of the African in the cultural and industrial spheres will influence.



- That on 28th October 1968 the non-Eurocomm Policy of the South African Labour Party adopted and published by the National Executive Council with the sanction of the Conference held in Durban at the end of November, 1968.

1968

- As to resolution no. 13:
 - (d) ... and regarding the threats of the Minister of Native Affairs and his spokesman that measures will be brought to bear upon the Housing and Land Commission not to provide funds to local authorities who will not collaborate with the Minister in the implementation of the Group Areas Act.

Such a vindictive act would be an abuse of power and a gross interference with an instrument of government and would in effect deprive the tax payers of a right to services to which they are entitled and which must not be withheld on the ground of opposition to the Government's policy.

- In addition to the foregoing, the Conference decided to send a telegram of protest as follows to the Prime Minister:
"THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO BRING TO BEAR UPON THE HOUSING AND LAND COMMISSION WHICH IS AN INSTRUMENT OF GOVERNMENT AND WHICH MUST NOT BE WITHHELD ON THE GROUND OF OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY. SUCH A VINDICTIVE ACT WOULD BE AN ABUSE OF POWER AND A GROSS INTERFERENCE WITH AN INSTRUMENT OF GOVERNMENT AND WOULD IN EFFECT DEPRIVE THE TAXPAYERS OF A RIGHT TO SERVICES TO WHICH THEY ARE ENTITLED AND WHICH MUST NOT BE WITHHELD ON THE GROUND OF OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY."