

SURVEY ON BLACK WOMEN IN EMPLOYMENT  
IN A NUMBER OF PINETOWN FACTORIES.

1. Regina (Carpet) Pty. Ltd. (Romatex)	Employs	40 approx
2. Bata Shoes	"	206 "
3. Adorable Footwear	"	25 "
4. Frame Group Companies	"	4,295 "
5. Natal Overall	"	1,000 "
6. Nelba Textiles	"	65 "
7. Pinotex	"	1,800 "
8. Pinetown Clothing	"	156 "
9. Dano Textiles	"	380 "
10. Smith & nephew	"	193 "
11. Protea Knitting Mills	"	no figures

(Figures given those of Black women employed).

QUESTION 1

HOW MANY BLACK WOMEN EMPLOYED?

- a) Source of labour (contract?)
- b) Methods of recruiting.

Conclusion:

Large numbers: from 25 employed by Adorable Footwear - to "1,800 altogether, mostly African" by Pinotex which is a Frame concern. Blacks appear to outnumber whites but no evidence that the majority is one of black women.

(N.B. The Frame complex consisting of Nortex, Seltex, Frametex, Consolidated Frame Cotton Corp., Natal Knitting Mills, Consolidated Woolwashing & Processing Mills, Pinotex - is not prepared to answer questions.)

- a) Source: Whole Durban, Pinetown areas - Transkei?
- b) Method: Firm informs the Labour Office for Bantu Affairs. Adorable Footwear informs the National Union of Leather Workers for higher grade post.

Dano Textiles & Protea Knitting Mills advertise. Applicants maybe referred to an employer by a Trade Union. The most usual method seems to depend on work of mouth information. Applicants also come to the factory gates in the hope of being taken on.

80% of Dano Textiles employees are women.

QUESTION 2

WAGES - DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN BLACK & WHITE, MEN & WOMEN.

The Industrial Council lays down rate of pay for all workers except domestic and most of the factories here referred to quote this. Black women get less than black men. Individual firms say that pay depends on ability, skill and experience.

Protea Knitting Mills admitted discrimination between black and white sometimes "depending on the job".

Regina states that as black women do not perform black men's jobs nor do they perform a white employee's job, there is therefore no question of discrimination.

Bata says all men (black or white) get "rate for the job".  
" " " women " " " " " " " " " " " "

Smith & Nephew say that language is a "big problem". One interviewer gained the impression that women are discriminated against with lower wages and not being eligible for pensions etc. This did not refer specifically to one firm, but was rather an overall impression gathered as enquiries were generally pursued.

### QUESTION 3

#### IN-SERVICE TRAINING SCHEMES:

##### Chances of promotion.

Protea Knitting Mills sometimes sends black & white employees on courses for some jobs. They say black women may be promoted, while Regina say not much chance of promotion for black women who work on mostly sewing machines, packing. Bata have no in-service training but promote and train through potential & interest.

Adorable Footwear the same. Learners are promoted to become machinists, which position Natal Overalls say is top-post for women. No particular training. Dano promotes machinists to supervisor or receptionists and stress importance of education and of English.

Smith & Nephew have own training school for Bantu. They stress that promotion depends on education.

There is a Pinetown In-service training centre to which interested firms send men for courses of varying length at firm's expense. There do not appear to be any courses for women as yet.

#### QUESTION 4. BENEFITS.

- a) Pensions. Discrimination between black/white.
- b) Medical Aid.
- c) Housing Loans.
- d) Education Loans.
- e) Child care, creches, clinics.
- f) Transport.
- g) Feeding - canteens.
- h) Literacy training.

a) Pensions. The National Industrial Council - the observance of which is compulsory, makes provision for pensions for black & white. Protea Knitting Mills are not members. Contributions are made by company and by employee. Bata & Adorable Footwear operate a Provident Fund, to which company contributes, whereby employees get a lump sum. There is discrimination between men and women, black & white pensions. Natal Overalls have pension scheme for salaried staff & men only. They have Provident Fund for factory staff.

Nelba Textiles apparently have no pension or provident fund. Sano also have pension scheme for "monthly paid", none for weekly paid workers.

Smith & Nephew pay pensions according to salary, service age. There is no discrimination beyond the fact that salary of claimant must not be below R200 a month. However, the Company's own Group Life Scheme covers all employees 24 hours a day. Protea Knitting Mills have pension schemes for all. No discrimination beyond the fact that men get higher death benefit than women.

b) Medical Aid. 2 firms have medical aid for whites only, Dano & Natal Overall. Natal Overalls have medical aid for white married men & white divorcees, not for married women. Employees of Protea Knitting and Adorable Footwear fall under provisions of National Council Benefit Fund. Nelba Textiles offer not aid. Pinetown Clothing help through Trade Union Provident Fund membership which is compulsory. Bata employees and their families can go to a Union panel doctor for free medical treatment. They can have optical and dental care within limits. There is a resident doctor & clinic in both their factories, fully qualified nursing sister and first aid assistants. Smith & Nephew have a Clinic, a full-time sister and free medicines. Regina have a Medical Aid Fund in case of sickness or accident. It is independently subsidised and pays on average 90% of weekly wage during illness, depending on length of service etc. In case of accident on the premises employees claim Workmen's Compensation. Regina employs a full-time resident doctor. Employees immediate families may attend the Clinic, where medicine and medical attendance are free. For hospitalisation however, employees are required to pay. Frame factories do have Clinics apparently.

THERE ARE NO CRACHE FACILITIES - Only 1 Registered Creche in Clermont Township - the nearest Township to Pinetown. There are 100,000 people in Clermont.

- c) Housing Loans None by any firm except:
- i. Natal Overalls who loan money through the Industrial Council & then deduct a sum from the Provident Fund.
  - ii. Protea - to senior employees of all races.
  - iii. Smith & Nephew help with house repairs etc. & are going into possibility of housing loans.
  - iv. Regina themselves do not make loans but other large companies & Head Office in Romatex Group, to which Regina belongs, make housing loans.

THERE IS NO SPECIFIC MENTION HERE OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES.

- d) Education Loans. Adorable Footwear make education loans. Bata none, but worker can borrow from his pension due from Provident Fund. This is permitted for house deposit only. Regina There is also a Welfare Fund operated by the staff. The Company makes contribution, canteen profit goes into it. Loans are made on merit for education or other financial needs, each case considered individually. Protea makes loans only if training or education course will benefit the company.

Smith & Nephew will help with part-time courses and refund 80% to employee on completion of course.

HERE AGAIN WOMEN ARE NOT MENTIONED.

e) Child care, croches, clinics. Regina - see 4b, nothing else. Dano - First Aid only.

Other firms make no provision according to this.

f) Transport. All workers use public transport. At Regina the bus stop is at the factory gates. Protea provides company transport for 10% who need it. The remaining 90% use public bus. Smith & Nephew supply company transport when public is impossible (e.g. factory break-down).

g) Feeding - Canteens. With the apparent exception of Nelba Textiles and Dano which sells cigarettes etc. in a shop, the firms have canteens (cold drinks, meat pies, sandwiches). Bata states there are 2, one for whites, one for blacks and that these are non-profit making. Protea has besides the canteen a dining-room for Senior Blacks. There is no eating facility for whites. Smith & Nephew have canteens for 3 races.

h) Literacy training. On the whole none. Pinetown Clothing say it is not so necessary (as what?) Dano had lunch time course 4 years ago which proved unpopular, and was presumably dropped. Smith & Nephew are seriously concerned over the poor quality of spoken English among employees and would like to see literacy training and training in skills becoming available.

#### QUESTION 5

##### INTERRUPTION OF SERVICE OWING TO PREGNANCY.

Treated as sick leave? Will firm re-employ?

Nelba Textiles approach is governed by U.I.F. Regina terminate a woman's service but will re-employ. Protea's employees in Durban area fall under the provisions of the Industrial Council. Their mill employees fall under the Company's jurisdiction. They state that they condone the break in service arising from pregnancy and will re-employ. Bata give preference when application for re-employment is made. They refer to maternity benefit through the Trade Union. Adorable refer to benefits which come from Dept. of Labour and National Industrial Council. They are prepared to re-employ. Dano does not guarantee re-employment but generally speaking firms will re-employ, other things being equal.

QUESTION 6

WORKER ORGANISATION AND REPRESENTATION.

Nelba Testiles have no such organisation or plans for representation. Natal Overalls have Works Committees in which Indians And Africans are separate.

Pinetown Clothing say this matter is organised by the Trade Unions. Smith & Nephew have a Works Council and multi-racial meetings weekly. Dano have a Works Committee for Africans where there is no discrimination as to sex. Their Asiatic Committee prefers to be separate. Protea Knitting Mills have no such organisation. They employ blacks in many senior positions who attend regular management meetings, contact is thus successfully maintained. In the clothing part of the organisation, employees belong to a Trade Union and they have Works Committees etc.

Regina has been visited by Trade Union members but their employees have no wish to join. There is a Black Representative Council which brings forward any grievance to company management who say that all grievances are thoroughly investigated by them. Black employees elect black representative Council members.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

Workmen's Compensation applies by law to everyone, men & women, blacks and whites.

The Industrial Conciliation Acts lay down minimum wages for all types of industry (Domestic workers are not included). As certain skills belong mostly to either men or women, discrimination can hardly be applied.