## Farm Labour in South Africa

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INTRODUCTION

Until the discovery of diamonds in the Cape in 1867 and gold on the Rand in 1884, agriculture was for 200 years the sole economic activity of importance in South Africa. It remains the largest employer of labour, in 1960 employing over one-third of the total economically active African population. It has therefore fundamentally conditioned the relationships between the employer and the employed, between white and black, the relationships on which present-day South Africa has been built.

As the Transvaal Indigency Commission remarked in 1908: "The whole South African-born white population up to nearly the middle of the nineteenth century had grown to maturity in the belief that the normal and proper relationship of White to Coloured (i.e. non-white) was the relationship of master to slave or serf. They regarded it as the natural
province of the White man to supervise the native and direct his energies, and the duty of the native to perform for the White man the rough manual labour which was required for cultivating his land and tending his stock. Despite the abolition of slavery this tradition has remained and has continued to govern the relations between White and Coloured races to this day." 2/

Today the rural economy remains labour-intensive, keeping black living standards artificially low, alongside a capital-intensive industrial economy which is prevented by legislation from openly competing for labour on the basis of better wages and conditions. The demands for cheap labour are still met by the traditional two-pronged policy of (a) denying Africans land rights (13 per cent of the total land area of the country is reserved for Africans, who constitute 70 per cent of the population), thus forcing them to work in the white economy; and (b) controlling their movements, employment, wages, and so on, once they are outside the reserves.

Over the past 20 years, the ties that bound African agricultural labourers to the land - poor wages and conditions, long working hours, cash advances from traders and farmers that mortgaged much of what they earned, lack of education and training, the right of farmers to demand labour from women and children, and the laws against desertion, on the one hand, and the pass laws which controlled entry into the towns on the other - have been reinforced by legislation._1

1 Agriculture, forestry and fishing employed 1,438,835 of a total of 3,890,012 economically active Africans in South Africa. Bulletin of Statistics, June 1968.


In 1953, the Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Labour of the United Nations and the International Labour Organization stated: "(It was) convinced of the existence of a legislative system applied only to the indigenous population and designed to maintain an insuperable barrier between these people and the inhabitants of European origin. The indirect effect of this legislation is to channel the bulk of the indigenous inhabitants into agriculture and manual work and thus to create a permanent, abundant and cheap labour force... The ultimate consequence of the system is to compel the native population to contribute, by their labour, to the implementation of the economic policies of the country, but the compulsory and involuntary nature of this contribution res-ul ts from the peculiar status and situation created by the special legislation applicable to the indigenous inhabitants alone, rather than from direct coercive measures designed to compel them to work, although such measures, which are the
inevitable consequence of this status, were also found to exist. It is in this indirect sense, therefore, that in the Committee's view, a system of forced labour of significance to the national economy appears to exist in the Union of South Africa." 2/
The measures of coercion have been multiplied and intensified since then. Vast removals of populations both from towns and farms have resulted in the dumping of thousands of families in undeveloped and already overcrowded reserves, where the prospects of earning a living are negligible; or in barren, remote "resettlement" areas where the most elementary facilities are absent, and where work is seldom obtainable. Breadwinners are thus not only forced to return to white areas to work; they are directed where, and for how long, they may work. Entry into the towns for manual labourers is severely restricted, and the mass of workers are forced into the least popular, lowest paid and most oppressive forms of labour on the farms. Denied any opportunity of alternative employment, and any opportunity to organize to improve his conditions, the farm labourer finds himself imprisoned at the very bottom of the exploitative system of apartheid, condemned to permanent poverty, insecurity and separation from his family.
31 Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Labour (1953), P. 80, para.

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I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
The pattern of compulsion and control to meet the demands for labour in preference to improving wages and conditions was set in the early years of Cape settlement. White settlers, employing the indigenous coastal peoples, the IEhoi and Nama, came to see themselves as plantation landlords rather than working farmers. When local labour ran dry, the settlers imported slaves from est Africa, Iozambique, Madagascar and the Dutch East Indies. When these were emancipated in 1834, they trekked north, displaced the African peoples by conquest, and employed the landless on their huge farms as squatters or labour tenants. In Natal, where the Zulus continued to resist subjugation, indentured labour was imported from India. Competition for labour from the diamond and gold mining industries in the late nineteenth century induced Governments to intervene with coercive measures. A pass system was introduced to regulate African entry into the new urban areas L/. Squatters laws 5/ were passed to limit the number of squatters per farm and thus redistribute the labour supply. Poll taxes / and labour taxes 7/ were imposed on Africans to force them to work for cash.
A Native Affairs Commission of 1903-1905 calculated a shortfall of 400,000 African labourers on the land, but concluded almost without argument that "any recommendation as to higher wages is quite out of place". It recommended instead a ban on further purchases of land by Africans except in "certain areas to be defined by legislative enactment". The Commission proposed the implementation of existing laws against squatting and against vagrancy; the imposition of rents on Africans on Crown lands; and a programme of education and training of Africans to raise the level of their material "needs" P/.
Accordingly, soon after Union in 1910, the 1913 Land Act froze the proportion of land available for African use. It made it illegal for an African to buy land from a: white, or to rent it from a white farmer, thus putting an end both to the growing tendency for Africans to buy their own farms and compete with white farmers in supplying the new urban markets, and to the practice of farming-on-the-half, whereby an African tenant farmed a part of his landlord’s farm and paid the farmer a proportion of his crop in rent.

h./ The pass system was introduced in the Transvaal, for example, in 1895.
5/ For example, the Plackers Uet of 1895 in the Transvaal and Orange Free State.
6/ For example, in the Transvaal in 1905.
7/ See, for example, the Glen Grey Act in the Cape in 1894.

Thousands of families were made landless, forced to sell their stock, and return to the overcrowded reserves or seek work as labourers. Francis Wilson has called this Act "an Act of collusion amongst the hirers of farm labour not to give remuneration above a certain level." The provisions of the Act were to be consolidated in the Native Trust and Land Act of 1936, which made a "permanent" land settlement, setting up a trust for the purchase of land in areas "released" for African use, and adding another 7-1/4 million morgen to the 10 million morgen scheduled in 1913. But by 1967 purchase of this land was not yet complete.

After the Doer War of 1899-1902, many white farmers were ruined and a new class of landless and illiterate whites was created who poured into the towns. After the First World War, which brought the beginning of industrial development, new pressures arose for measures to keep African workers on the land, and to prevent their influx into the towns to compete with whites for unskilled work. The Government adopted a so-called "civilized labour" policy (i.e. white labour) for the towns. The Native (Urban Areas) Acts of 1924 and 1930 banned African men from entering any urban area without a pass. The Native Services Contract Act of 1932 provided for three-year service contracts for farm labourers, who were specifically excluded from all industrial legislation. Their employment remained governed by the Cape Masters and Servants Acts, dating back to 1856, under which desertion was a criminal offence. Thus by the beginning of orld Wfair II, which was to be followed by a period of phenomenal growth in the South African manufacturing industry, a network of laws and regulations already existed to force Africans into the white economy, to regulate their access to the better paid work, in the towns, divert them into agricultural labour, and tie them to white farms under conditions over which they had little control.

II. AGRICULTURE IN THE ECONOMY

The importance of agriculture in the South African economy has declined during the present century. While it represented 17.4 per cent of the gross national produce in 1911, second in importance only to mining, in 1968 it represented only 9.8 per cent, after manufacturing and mining. But the total value of agricultural produce has increased from P58 million (81.2 million) in 1911-1912 to E940 million ($1,316 million) in 1968. The main expansion took place after World War II, when a traditionally backward sector of the economy, sustained by a series of Government loans and supports, became for the first time effectively market-integrated, and began to accept technical innovations, including the use of machinery, more widely. The number of whites economically active in agriculture dropped after the War, as did the proportion of non-whites, in relation to those active in other sectors but the actual numbers of non-white workers rose from 831,000 in 1947 to 953,000 in 1957, since agriculture has remained a labour-intensive rather than capital-intensive activity. The 1960 ratio of non-white to white labour in agriculture was approximately 13:1, compared with ratios of approximately 9:1 in mining, and 2:1 in manufacturing.

South Africa's most important agricultural products in order of importance are maize, wool, fruit and wine products, slaughter cattle, dairy products, slaughter sheep, wheat and sugar. In 1966, they contributed some 20 per cent of the country's exports compared with 57.8 per cent contributed by manufactured products, and 23.9 per cent by the products of mining and quarrying.

1/ There are in fact two agricultural economies in South Africa - the subsistence farming of the Africans (mainly maize-growing and cattle-raising); and white market-oriented agriculture, which, as the employer of farm labour, is the subject of this paper.


16/ Illorwitz, op. cit., p. 280.


III. TYPES OF FARM LABOUR

Farm labourers may be divided into the following categories:

Labour tenants: labourers given the use of a certain amount of the farmer's arable and grazing land, in return for an agreed number of months of labour for the landlord per year (usually six months). This system originated in the early years of settlement, when Africans were forced to become tenants on land seized from them by conquest.
*§quatters: families settled on white land without formal agreement, but permitted use of land in return for the labour of any members of the family when required by the landlord. Like the labour tenants, squatters were often persons originally dispossessed of their land by white conquest. Successive administrations since the mid-nineteenth century have tried vainly to regulate this system.

*Registered labourers: labourers employed by contract, either directly by the farmer through one of the licensed recruiting agents, or (more recently) through a Government labour bureau. Registered labourers are either migrant workers, whose families remain in an African reserve, or members of squatter or tenant families directly contracted to the landlord.

*Casual labourers: labourers registered with a Government labour bureau as casual or seasonal workers, who move from farm to farm doing special jobs, such as harvesting and fruit-picking.

In addition to these categories, the shortage of farm labour has increasingly been met by the use of prison labour. This system dates back to 1889, when the Cape Government began hiring out convicts to wine-farmers. In 1932 the so-called "6d a day" scheme was introduced, under which prisoners sentenced to less than three months might serve their terms on farms. By 1957-1958, 199,312 convicts were being hired out to farmers annually, at a wage of 9d per day; and in February 1959 the Director of Prisons, speaking at Riversdale, was able to claim:

"The department of Prisons has become the focal point for the farmer, from the Limpopo to the Cape. They all want labour from us, but we cannot supply it all, but we are doing everything in our power to meet the emergency". 20/ Since 1947, long-term prisoners have also been integrated into the farm labour scheme. Selected farmers are permitted to build jails on their land, to Government specification, and the Department of Prisons supplies guards. By 1963 there were 25 farm jails, 10 in the Transvaal, 1 in the Orange Free State, 14 in the Cape, housing more than 9,000 long-term convicts 21/. The right to employ prison
labour has now become a saleable asset to the farmer - valued at R1,000 (71,400) per convict in 1965 22/.

The June 1961 census showed that 86% of all farm workers were Africans. All but 14 farm managers were white. Farm labour accounted for more than one-third of the economically active African population which was 3,890,012 in 1960, 23/as is indicated below:

SOUTH AFRICAN FARM WORKERS
Whites Africans Coloured Asians people
Managers 3,324 1 2 11
Registered Employees 11,208 731,424 104,981 5,457
Casual Employees 996 583,475 103,635 750
Domestic Servants 66 126,570 24,456 503
Total 15,596 1,441,470 232,635 6,721 24/

The total of nearly 1.5 million African farmworkers, however, represents a total African population on white farms of nearly 2.5 times that figure : 3,410,640, according to the detailed agricultural census of June 1960, that is 31.2%; of a total African population of 10,927,922. 25/ Non-contract

24/ Ibid.

labourers and their dependants made up the large majority of the African population on white farms, as is indicated in following table: Coloured Whites Africans people Asians
Registered Employees Domestic Servants Other Employees Squatters and Dependents Casual, seasonal workers
Total
7,695 637,646
83 130,018
55,837 2,144,085
1,490 63,105
498,898
3,410,647
99,111 26,382 334,572
90,765
550,830
6,305 465 23,883
728
31,382 26/

It has been the policy of the Nationalist Government to reduce the
number of dependant, non-productive farm population from the rural, as from all "white" areas; and though no up-to-date figures are published, the labourtenant and squatter population has been substantially reduced.

26/ Agricultural Census, June 1960.

IV. WAGES AND WORKING CONDITIONS

Farm workers are on average the lowest paid of all employee and their working conditions among the harshest. This is in a country where African wages are already notoriously low, and African working conditions notoriously harsh. Resistance by white farmers to wage increases persists, based on a deep-rooted mythology which has been argued before every Government inquiry into farm labour in the past century, namely that African needs are few, and that higher wages will simply enable workers to take more leisure, or dissuade additional members of a family from working at all. The custom of paying part of agricultural wages in kind both cuts the cost to the farmer and tends to keep cash wages to a minimum, thereby preventing the worker from saving. The effect of this is to tie him the more firmly to his master.

Increases in wages have borne little relation to the rising cost of living. In the Eastern Cape, for instance, wages of farm labourers rose from approximately los. per month plus rations in the 1870s, to only 10/6d per month plus rations in 1932.28/ Thus in real:terms,wages actually diminished in value. By 1958, wages had risen to 31/lcd per month, and the average wages in cash and kind for a family, of six or seven was calculated at h107 pinyannum.29/ The fact that agricultural wages are paid partly in kind (including food, particularly maize meal, housing, clothing, and the use of grazing or arable land) makes the "real" value of the farm worker's income difficult to calculate.

However the 1962 agricultural census shows that 1,397,096 African regular and casual employees received R59,881,021 (V03,833,429) in cash wages in the year ending June 30 1962, that is, less than R43 (060,23) per annum, or approximately R3.50 (4.90) per month. And 127,000 African farm domestic servants received R4,96c .765 ($6,956,271) just under _R39 (V54.60) per annum and R3.25 (4.55) per month. Together, a total of 1,524,796 employees and servants received an estimated extra total of R29,773,475 (%41,682,865) in bonuses, payments in kind, grazing rights and use of arable land on approximately R19.50 ($31.30) per annum, or R1.60 (%2.24) per month. The total average income in cash and kind for agricultural workers therefore emerges as between R4 ($5.60) and R6 (08.40) per month. These figures of course include the wages of women and children. In 1969, the Managing Director of iarket Research Africa estimated the average wage for an adult male farmworker as no more than R7 (%9.88) per month.

It should in addition be remembered that the 1.5 million African agricultural workers referred to above represented a total population, including dependants, of 2.5 million persons, plus in the case of migrant workers, dependent families living in the reserves.
The place of African agricultural workers in the economy, in relation to white agricultural workers on the one hand, and African workers in other sectors is brought out by the following figures from the South African Bureau of Statistics, 1960.

**AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS**

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<th>Africans</th>
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<td>1958</td>
<td>1895.0</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>1293.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>3668.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>1963-1964</td>
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In return for these wages, the farmer enjoys rights over his labourers not unlike those of a feudal landowner over his serfs, including the "right" to punish his employees by withdrawal of so-called privileges, fines or beatings. This "right" arises from the fact that desertion and "disobedience" are offences under the Masters and Servants Laws.

Farm labourers may work 14 hours a day or more. Wives of squatters and children as young as eight years of age may be called upon to work, and parents may contract their children without their consent though they may not contract them to another farmer without the consent of their landlord. Farmers may cancel a contract with a labourer should any member of his family fail in his obligations. The employee has no right of cancellation, however, and desertion under the Masters and Servants Laws is a criminal, not a civil, offence. Beer brewing, visiting on other farms or entertaining visitors, education for children, are all regarded as privileges.

Miss Roberts found in her survey that there were more literate women among the farmworkers than men, since children are often permitted to go to school only when not required for farm work. She also found that, of the 73 farms she studied, only 4 had schools on their farms, 33 had schools within 3 miles and 19 were more than 3 miles away: 17 farms had no school available. Although the number of farm schools increased since that time, there were still only 2,857 farm schools in 1968 serving 223,417 children in lower primary classes, and 30,110 in higher primary classes.

In the Eastern Cape, they work from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. in the summer months and from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. in the winter months. See Labour in the Farm Economy by Margaret Roberts, p.6C.

Ibid.
There is virtually no provision for secondary education, which under Government policy is being concentrated in boarding schools in African reserves, through some secondary schools remain in urban areas. Since 1963, rural children have been banned from attending schools in urban areas. In addition, far from being encouraged to provide schooling for African children farmers have to pay or raise the cost of buildings for lower primary schools on their property; only 50% of capital costs for higher primary schools are met by public funds. Schools are actually refused registration (i.e. prohibited) on farms of less than 200 morgen.

Education, in short, is not to be a means of escape from agricultural labour. On the contrary, should a farmer wish it, the Minister of Bantu Education made the following ruling in 1959 (Part of the curriculum on farm schools) must be in the normal activities on the farm, in order to encourage a feeling of industriousness on the part of those children, and particularly, to sharpen in their minds the fact that education does not mean that you must not work with your hands, but to point out to them specifically that manual labour and also manual labour on a farm is just as good a formulative and development level as any other subject is.

Farm workers are not defined as employees under the Industrial Conciliation Acts, nor are they covered by the Unemployment Insurance Act or the Workmen's Compensation Act. There is no minimum wage, and though conditions of work, minimum standards of accommodation and feeding are laid down under Government Notice 63 of 1959, and Government Notice 2197 of 1953, no statistical records on the observance of these standards are kept. Only one full-time inspector of agricultural labour had been appointed by 1970, who, with members of labour liaison offices, had inspected 8,329 farms and 5,300 smallholdings in 1969.

As long ago as 1937-1939, Africans complained to an official Committee on Farm Labour that wages were too low, and that farm workers had insufficient opportunity to earn cash. They complained further that food, housing and personal treatment were poor; that education and medical facilities were lacking and that they were given insufficient land or time for their own farming. They complained that a kraal (farm) head could bind all members of his kraal to work for a farmer, with or without their consent. In 1958, Margaret Roberts registered similar complaints in the Eastern Cape: low wages, not enough schools or churches, and no freedom to change their jobs. She also found a marked tendency to malnutrition among farm workers, and a high incidence of tuberculosis.

33/ 1963 Survey, p. 224 *
Indeed, so marked is the resistance of white farmers to improving working conditions, and so reliant are they on Government coercive measures to remedy chronic labour shortages, that the Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration and Development was himself constrained in 1967 to protest:

"No wonder these workers looked for other avenues of employment. I make bold to say that if the farmer would revise archaic conditions of service, especially in the light of the increased cost of living, he would find that even though the wage structure might still not be competitive with industry, he could nevertheless still attract the black farm labourer. Eventually the farmer will have to do so." 37/

No Government steps have been taken, however, to compel or even encourage such improvements, except for the provision of the Agricultural Credit Amendment Act, 1968, which offers farmers loans for building housing for non-white labourers. Similarly, little encouragement is given to farmers to train their African workers in the use of agricultural machinery. Short training courses for Coloured farmworkers are held at the Kromme Rhee Training Centre, Cape, for example, but no similar facilities exist for African workers. An official of the Department of Agricultural Credits told the Boland Agricultural Union in 1968 38/ that only one in every 16 non-white farm workers had been formally instructed in the use of agricultural machinery, causing very high maintenance costs and a high accident rate.


V. ABUSIVE CONDITIONS

Since the 1920s, there have been periodic scandals involving the prosecution of farmers for assault and murder usually arising out of beatings for disobeying orders, or attempted desertion; exposures of brutality by indunas (African overseers, or bossboys) and cases of workers imprisoned in locked compounds and guarded in the fields by bossboys with sjamboks (leather whips) and dogs. Conditions in the potato-growing districts of the Transvaal were so bad that the African National Congress organised a nationwide boycott of potatoes in 1959. 39/

One of the most notorious scandals emerged in the 1950s, when a Johannesburg attorney, Mr. Joel Carlson, was able to bring habeas corpus actions to free a number of workers forced to work in Transvaal and Orange Free State farms under the so-called volunteer scheme. 40/ Under this scheme, "petty offenders" who were arrested under the pass laws were given the option of prosecution or 6 or 12 month farm labour. (The maximum fine for most of these offences was in any case only £1 or £-2).

In practice, however, the alleged offenders were given no choice. They were lined up and ordered on to the farms, their thumbprints summarily attached to contracts they had not read, and hustled onto lorries for despatch. It later emerged that some
of them had been in regular employment in Johannesburg at the time, and were not pass offenders at all.

A typical account of what happened was that of George Dube in the case of James i,3'abela in 1959, who stated:

"(I was) taken to a brick building with only one entrance, consisting of a door constructed from iron bars, and all the windows were barred with iron. That first evening all my clothes except my trousers were taken back by one of the bossboys, who gave me a sack and told me to wear it. I soon found that the living conditions were of the most primitive kind and worse than anything I have ever heard of. We were only allowed water to drink on our return from the fields in the evenings and before we started work in the morning...During the whole time that I was on the farm I was not able to wash or shower, and I never saw any other worker wash or bath himself.

The building in which we slept was in a filthy condition. There were two half drums provided as a lavatory and those two half drums remained inside the building where we slept. This was the only sanitary arrangement for approximately 60 workers employed on this farm. During the whole period I was there, the delapidated blankets and sacks given to us were never washed or aired. There were bloodstains and they were infested with insects and smelled; the walls crawled with bugs and other insects, and

39/ Ruth First, op. cit. In 1947, a farmer speaking at a meeting addressed by the then Linister of Justice, hr. Lawrence, estimated that desertion by African workers was between 25 and 5Q despite the severe penalties.

40/ The scheme was agreed to in 1947 by the Department of Native (now Bantu) Affairs, the Secretary of Justice and the Commissioner of Police, but it was never officially publicised. After a public outcry at the scandal, the scheme was suspended.

they were never cleaned when I was there ... During the day, whilst we worked in the fields we were continuously guarded by bossboys who carried knobkerries (clubs). They were 9 in number to guard 60 workers. The bossboys continuously assaulted the workers, more especially when they wanted the workers to do their work more hurriedly. On some occasions there appeared to be no reason whatsoever for the assaults other than to initiate newly arrived workers into a general pattern." 41/

Other allegations made in court included deliberate injuring of workers, feet with hoes to make escape more difficult; food of mealiepap (maize porridge) eaten off sacks; and deliberate underfeeding so that workers would spend their meagre earnings in the farm store.

Over 3,000 labourers were supplied to farmers in 1947-1948, the first year of the "volunteer" scheme, and by 1953 this figure had risen to 32,582. The scheme has been replaced subsequently by other methods of recruitment, including the increased use of convict labour. But cases of ill-treatment of labourers by farmers continue to be reported, and some cases of assault reach the courts. In a recent case in Ilerksdorp ihagistrate's Court, one Schalk van Staden of Hartebeesfontein
was found guilty of putting a castration ring (used on rams) around the testicles of a 14-year-old African shepherd boy, alleged to have "become too much of a gentleman." 42/

Jiz

Ire

41/ Quoted in Ruth First, op.cit.


VI. POLICIES OF THE NATIONALIST GOVERNMENT

The policy of the present Government has been to intensify and institutionalise an inherited system of compulsion and control. The dream of apartheid is "territorial segregation", a total separation of the races in all spheres except that of labour, the better to ensure perpetual white domination. Accordingly, Africans are to be denied any "permanent home in "white South Africa", and are to be confined to"African homelands", from which they are to be permitted to enter the white economy only as migrants, on a contract basis. Lr. Froneman, then Deputy Chairman of the Bantu Affairs Commission, told Parliament in February 1968 43/:

"We are trying to introduce (the) migratory labour pattern as far as possible in every sphere. That is in fact the entire basis of our policy as far as the white economy is concerned, namely a system of migratory labour." 44/

According, Government measures have been directed to the following aims:

(a) Abolishing the labour-tenant and squatter systems on the farms and replacing these with migrant labourers on the basis of annual contracts. The families of these labourers are to be deported to the "homelands" (i.e. the established reserves, or to the new resettlement areas.)

(b) Intensifying influx control into the cities, deporting superfluous Africans (i.e. Africans) and centralising the recruitment of labour so as to direct it into the least attractive sectors of the economy, i.e., mainly, agriculture.

Transfer to full-time labour

During the 1950s, Labour Tenant Control Boards were set up under the Native Trust and Land Act of 1936 to determine the number of labour tenants allowed to each farm 45/ and to redistribute the surplus. By 1959, the minister of Bantu Administration had appointed an inter-departmental committee to investigate the possibility or desirability of abolishing or amending the labour tenant system. In 1964, the Bantu Laws Amendment Act replaced the Labour Tenant Control Boards with Bantu Labour Control Boards. These new boards have jurisdiction over all farm labourers, domestic servants and labour tenants, and are empowered to decide the number of Africans to be employed on any farm.

Further, they have required all squatters to be registered, and have imposed progressively rising fees on farmers for every member of a squatter family on his land not employed as a full-time worker.

43/ House of Assembly, Debates, February 6, 1966, col. 90.

44/ Act. No. 16 of 1936.
Normally five labour tenants are allowed on each farm.

Farmers' resistance made the process slow, however, and by the end of 1969 there were still 24,957 labour tenants registered. The deadline of the end of 1970 for the total elimination of the system was abandoned partly because displaced families were found to be swelling squatter townships around the towns, and partly because farmers complained of a labour crisis as the tenants refused to enter into full-time contracts on the terms offered.

Resettlement of squatters, however, has been pushed through more rapidly. A total of 704,465 squatters at the end of 1965 had been reduced to 2,629 by the end of 1966.

The personal experiences behind these figures were documented by a number of reports in Natal newspapers in 1969. The Natal Mercury estimated that some 150,000 African families would have to be evicted from Natal farms, if a switch to full-time labour was to be complete. On October 10, 1969, it reported that the majority of labour tenants were refusing the R12 ($16.80) per month being offered to full-time workers and that they were then being evicted. Their kraals were sometimes burned, and they were forced to sell their stock at prices made low by the existence of a farmers' "buying ring". Those who refused to leave were being charged with illegal squatting. Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, then Chief Executive Officer of the Zulu Territorial Authority, said that the workers wanted permanent homes in the African areas, if they were to return to the farms as migrant labourers. A member of Parliament (Lt. U.T. Webber) pointed out that the workers were justified in fearing that if they became full-time labourers, they would be tied to farmwork for the rest of their lives.

The Deputy Chairman of the Bantu Affairs Commission, Mr. B.H. Torlage, confirmed that that was indeed the policy of the Government in June 1969, when he warned that full-time African farm-workers would not be allowed to change their jobs, nor would they be allowed to settle in the homelands, unless there was no shortage of farm labour anywhere in the country.

Families who were displaced were being moved to resettlement areas at Tugela Estates and Keates Drift, described as "a barren area" by the Natal Mercury; and to Trust land in the Ladysmith and Nkandhla districts, where they were supposed to be provided with tents, building materials, sanitary conveniences, drinking water and rations of maize meal.

The recruitment of farm labour, which in the past was largely undertaken by farmers themselves or by licensed agents who operated in the African reserve, and supplied labourers to farmers for a fee, has been increasingly centralised.

Direction of Labour

L966 Survey, p. 21
Natal Mercury, Durban, April 10, 1969.
52/ For real conditions in the resettlement areas, see Cosmas Desmond, The Discarded People (The Christian Institute of South Africa, Braamfontein, 1970) and resettlement - The New Violence to Africans (International Defence and Aid Fund, London, 1969).

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in Government labour bureaux.

During 1951-1952, under the Native Labour Regulation Act of 1911, 53/ District Labour Bureaux were set up in each Lagisterial District (white areas) and Native Commissionerts District (African area), together with local bureaux under local iunicipal authorities, "to regulate the supply of labour with a view to correlating it with the demand." Any workseeker was to register with the bureau, which then kept a record of his employment, and details of any contract made with a farmer. The farmer was required to sign the book monthly, and to record the labourer's discharge. Without this signature, the man would be unable to register for further employment. 54/

The regulations were still further tightened under a Bantu Labour Regulations (Bantu Areas) proclamation which came into effect in April 196L. The proclamation extended the system of labour bureaux to cover every Bantu territorial district, tribal or community authority area (i.e. including urban African townships). It made it an offence for an African to leave a tribal area except through a bureau and compelled every African to register as a workseeker within one month of becoming unemployed or reaching the age of 15, and ceasing full-time studies. Further, it compelled employers to notify any vacancy within 14 days, and to register all contracts with the bureau. Penalties for failure to comply with these regulations are a fine up to R25 (\$35) or 14 days' imprisonment. The bureaux provide temporary accommodation for workseekers for up to 3 nights, and charge employers R1 ($1.40) for every labourer employed. Contracts must not be for longer than one year or 360 shifts, whichever is the shorter, 55/ after which the worker must return to his "homeland" before returning under a new contract. Women and boys under 16 need their guardian's consent for any contract, and they cannot be employed in prescribed areas (i.e. they may do only agricultural work). Contracts must be written unless entered into by the employer in a tribal area, and must be attested to before an officer in the presence of the employer or his representative, and the worker. The worker receives no copy of the contract.

Parallel with these moves to supervise recruitment of African labour, further measures have been taken to reinforce influx control into urban or prescribed areas. The Bantu Urban Areas Consolidation Act of 1945 56/ prohibits any African from being in an urban area for more than 72 hours unless he has lived there for 15 years, worked for the same employer for 10 years, has a discretionary permit, or is a dependant of someone with the necessary qualifications. In 195%, passes were extended to women and to boys over 16, thus enabling the Government to "endorse" them out of towns in the same way as the men.
In 1964, the notorious Bantu Lairs Amendment Act empowered the Minister to proclaim any area outside a scheduled African or released area to be a "prescribed" area (i.e. one in which the laws relating to African in urban areas apply). It provided for the setting up of "urban aid centres" and "homeland rehabilitation centres", to which Africans found illegally in a prescribed area would be sent, and then directed, to employment elsewhere probably in agriculture. Thus, the law provides for the sidestepping of the courts and legalising of the "volunteer" scheme which was officially discontinued in 1959 under which pass offenders were given the "option" of farm labour.

Host recently, the Bantu Affairs Administration Act, passed in June 1971, provides for the centralisation of all African administration, both in the African and urban areas, by Bantu Administration Boards. The Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, Dr. Koornhof, stated in Parliament on 21 March 1971 that one of the aims of the Act was "to provide greater mobility of Bantu labour." He went on to say that the composition of the administration boards will include an expert on agriculture, thus lending credence to the fear that the boards will provide yet another vehicle for the "conscription" of migrant workers as farm labourers.

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