

Community Development

in the

Republic

of

South Africa



Policy Statement

**Edited version
of policy statement**

by the Honourable
the Minister of
Community Development,
Mr. P. W. Botha,
during the 1962
Parliamentary session.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

GROUP AREAS

THE policy of their own urban areas for the White, Coloured, Indian and Chinese communities in the Republic was accepted by Parliament with the passing of the Group Areas Act. That policy envisages the following practical results:—

- First, the creation and maintenance of occupational and ownership rights for each racial group in its own area;
- Secondly, the opportunity for individual and community development;
- Thirdly, the right of self-expression and opportunities for new outlets in the economic and other fields;
- Fourthly, the right of the group concerned to exercise control over local government.

Great progress has been made with the proclamation and development of areas for the various racial groups as well as with the application of the general principles arising from Group Areas legislation, and matters incidental thereto. In the execution of the task of establishing and developing communities, the Group Areas Board and the Group Areas Development Board operate within the framework of the Department of Community Development which is organized for all purposes into two major divisions, namely Planning and Development. The provision of residential accommodation for persons who have to move elsewhere in consequence of the proclamation of group areas and who are not in a position to provide for themselves, has been entrusted to the Department of Housing.

PLANNING OF DEVELOPMENT

It, however, remains the responsibility of the Department of Community Development to plan and develop areas with a view to its important task of developing the various social units in such a way that members of the respective population groups live together in their own areas, progressively developing as socio-economic units in the social, educational and cultural fields where, as far as possible, all the various vocations and professions are practised by the members of the particular group and where they undertake their own local government.

The material and social needs of every community are of major importance in establishing communities. Vocational fields such as commerce, medicine, pharmacy, home industries, the hotel industry, restaurants, the provision of entertainment facilities, various trades, industries and so forth, must be developed in the respective areas by and in the interests of the communities concerned, and these are matters in which the Department of Community Development must play an active rôle. In many cases it will have to take the initiative in collaboration with the other specialized departments concerned.

THE IDEA OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A report appeared recently under the title "The Report of the Mission to Survey Community Development" and it was issued by the Secretariat of UNO. The following passage from that report sums up the idea of community development very well:—

"The term 'community development' has come into international usage to connote the processes by which the efforts of the peoples themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the social, economic and cultural conditions of communities. This complex of processes is made up of two essential elements, the participation by the peoples themselves in efforts to improve their standard of living, with as much reliance as possible on their own initiative, and the provision of technical and other services which encourage initiative, self-help and mutual help and make these more effective. It is expressed in programmes designed to achieve a large variety of specific improvements. A cumulative process of improvement requires that assistance be given from outside the communities by way of services which promote changes in attitudes, awaken technical consciousness, make additional technical knowledge available, and help the people to apply it."

The whole idea of community development has become a modern trend throughout the world and numerous other countries are giving attention thereto. South Africa is actually in the lead as regards the creation of machinery in this field.

RESETTLEMENT

In regard to the achievement of the aims of the development of communities, it will be necessary to resettle persons in their own areas. In this connection the Minister of Community Development made the following observations:—

"In order to achieve clarity, . . . on how the Government will act, . . . and that includes our policy in respect of the Indians for whom a department has now been created, and

who have now been accepted as a permanent group of inhabitants of the Republic of South Africa, . . . I want to repeat an assurance already given by my predecessor when he said that no person who cannot look after himself will be forced to leave his home in consequence of group areas legislation, unless alternative accommodation is available. I can do no more than repeat that assurance which is consistently carried out by the Government."

The ideal should as far as possible be to protect each racial group in its own proclaimed area against infiltration by other groups. That is what is expected of the Government. The Whites expect it and the other racial groups also expect it. The policy is not only to build residential areas, however, but also to develop townships and urban communities. That is why the Department of Community Development, together with the Department of Housing, is now by means of its programmes making possible for the other racial groups what it is doing for the Whites, namely to enable the White community to live in its own climate. So far as the Indians who are in White areas are concerned, the emphasis will for the time being and as a transition stage, be on the separation of residential areas. This is receiving priority.

The scattered Indian traders in White towns will gradually be removed. Where practicable, Indian residential areas will extend from a corner in the original town concerned where the Indians have been settled for a long time, because the Government has already said repeatedly that Group Areas legislation will not be used, and is not intended, to deprive the Indians of their livelihood. A wrong impression is therefore being spread about, namely that people are summarily deprived of their livelihood and then thrown upon the State as paupers. That is not the policy. Where, under certain circumstances, it is not practicable to implement this policy of extensions, the Indian trade will, in course of time, have to move to the Indians' own townships. As a rule it should be possible to do this by issuing permits for which the Group Areas Act makes provision. In large urban complexes provision will be made for Indian traders in special specified areas. It is not, however, possible for the Government to pursue exactly the same policy everywhere since conditions vary, and that is why provision has been made in all these different directions in order to be able to achieve the principal object of community development.

It must be pointed out that the Bantu areas in towns and cities will not be specially singled out as a source of possible customers for Indians, and that is why Indians will, as far as

possible, not be placed next to Bantu, but, on the other hand, in placing the Indian trader, the attitude must not be taken up that the poorer section of the White population or the Coloured people will simply have to take responsibility for his existence. The Whites and the Coloureds are equally entitled to protection in their own areas. So far as is practicable, non-White residential areas should not be situated in such a way that they surround White towns, thus hampering expansion. In placing non-White group areas, regard should be had to the provision of services such as water, lights, etc., and areas should be placed in a practical manner within reach of such services, except in the case of regional planning.

It must be borne in mind that it is not possible to establish a small community that will not be able to support itself at every town and at every city and every suburb, and that is why there are certain areas where regional planning will have to be applied.

The various racial groups will enjoy protection in their own areas in respect of commerce and the professions within the framework of this policy, but it is not possible to control customers, nor is it the intention of the Government to do so. But, as this policy is applied by the Department in consultation with the Departments of Indian Affairs, Coloured Affairs and Bantu Administration and Development as well as in consultation with city councils, it will be possible to demonstrate on a larger scale that such a policy can bear fruit, and that South Africa will eventually give the world an example of community development and good race relations.

It is not possible for the Department of Community Development, and it is not possible for the Department of Housing to operate simultaneously at all places. This difficulty has to be faced and that is why a list of priorities is now being drawn up by these two Departments in respect of planning, proclamations, development and the implementation of the housing programme. After this list of priorities has been disposed of in the main, the next list of priorities will be tackled.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FOR NON-WHITES

Provision was made for local government by non-Whites in amending legislation during the 1962 Parliamentary Session. The development of the non-White groups to a stage where they can take over responsibility for local government in their own areas is contemplated in this legislation. Consultative and management

committees may be established in group areas for non-Whites other than Bantu and it is intended to do so. These committees are a preparatory step towards the establishment of local authorities and open up opportunities for development in that direction. The establishment of these committees is therefore a very important and active step in the direction of developing the non-White groups to a stage where full responsibility for local government in their own areas may be entrusted to them. The Department of Community Development can therefore, by means of the machinery now provided, take the initiative in co-operation with local authorities in acquainting the non-White groups with the involved and intricate machinery of local government.

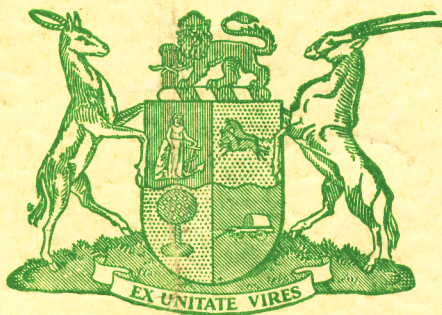
The consultative committee or management committee must consist exclusively of members of the group for which such group area or areas have been established.

As far as the consultative committee is concerned, a local authority which exercises jurisdiction in an area for which such committee has been established may not take any decision in regard to any matter in respect of which such committee is to be consulted in terms of regulations which will be issued by the State President, unless it has consulted such committee and has given due consideration to any suggestion or comments which such committee may wish to make. This provision is an indication of the earnest desire to ensure that local authorities will give serious consideration to the consultative committees' proposals.

The management committee shall within the area for which it has been established have such powers, functions and duties of the local authority which has jurisdiction in respect of such area as may be conferred or imposed upon it by or under regulation. Such management committee shall furthermore, exercise its powers, carry out its functions and perform its duties under the supervision and control of the local authority and subject to such conditions as the Administrator concerned may determine. These provisions make it clear that the powers of the management committee are strictly limited to those of the local authority having jurisdiction, and that these committees will function as a full committee of the controlling local authority.

It is the earnest desire of the Government not to encroach upon the acknowledged sphere of activity of the Provincial Administrations.

If the Provinces are prepared to amend their ordinances and regulations in order to create separate forms of local government for non-Whites in accordance with the provisions of the Act which has been accepted by Parliament in connection therewith, the opportunity will be afforded to them. In the interim the necessary co-ordination between the Department of Community Development and the Provincial Administrations is ensured.



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