

Basuta Born Africans to be Returned to Remote Mountain Area

Editor's note: In racially-burdened South Africa, a vast resettlement of "foreign" black residents is in the planning stage. This is the story of how it is expected to work and the impact it will have on hundreds of thousands of black Africans.

By NEIL SMITH
United Press International
 Johannesburg—Timothy M. lives in one of the vast, sprawling African townships on the outskirts of Johannesburg. He works as a messenger in the city and carries home a weekly pay of 9 rands (\$12.60) to his wife and two small children.

He is cheerful and thoroughly content with the bustling, brittle big city life. It is the only life he has known since he arrived in this golden city during the war years as a shy child fresh from his tribal village.

Now it seems the world is coming to an end for Timothy and hundreds of thousands of others like him. Within five years, if the recommendations of a government-appointed commission on foreign Bantu are accepted, he could find himself and his family forcibly returned to the remote

mountain valley where he grew up so many years ago. For Timothy, although he looks and speaks just like any other Johannesburg-bred African, is a foreigner. He is a Basuto, born in Basutoland, the overcrowded hutten of British territory in the heart of South Africa's mountain spine. His father had worked in the Witwatersrand gold mines in the 1930's and gained a taste for the neon-lit glass and chromium life of Johannesburg. When war broke out he returned to Johannesburg to seek work in a few years later his wife and children crossed the unfenced, largely unpoliced frontier between Basutoland and South Africa and joined him.

Timothy would never return to Basutoland voluntarily. His homeland is poor and under-developed. Unless he became a peasant farmer scratching out a living from the infertile mountain soil, he probably would remain unemployed.

When the axe falls Timothy will be only one of a vast company. Estimates of the number of foreign Africans in the republic run from 830,000 to more than 1 million from various areas.

Some of them have lived in South Africa for up to 40 years, many have married local African women and carry the full range of South African identification documents.

Few to Remain
 But the commission is adamant. Only those required urgently to balance the country's economy will be allowed to remain. This will include the 312,000 foreign Africans working in the mines and a much smaller number employed as agricultural laborers in border areas.

Men such as Timothy face a bleak future. The commission sets a five-year target for repatriation. Women and children dependents of foreign Africans will be the first to be deported. They will be followed by the unemployed and, finally, by all foreign blacks holding jobs that can be filled by local non-whites.

If the commission's recommendations are adopted, and there is little doubt they will be, Timothy will be allowed to remain in South Africa only as long as he holds his present job. The moment he loses it he will be classified as unemployed and deported.

Detention Camps
 Detention camps will be opened at various points along the country's frontiers. Any African caught trying to sneak into the country to look for work will be punished by

being sent to one of these camps.

Considering South Africa's reputation in the field of race relations, these measures to keep out eager would-be black immigrants seem incredible.

One may well ask what stubborn impulse has beckoned 1 million people from all parts of the continent to the one African state that is an anathema to all black nationalists.

The answer is simple. South Africa may offer pinpricks and humiliations gal-

ore to the race-proud Africa, but it also offers the highest paid and greatest variety of jobs, as well as the most sophisticated urban life in Africa. Over the years, economic lures have outweighed political and personal disadvantages.

Any mass removal of foreign Africans from the republic will send ripples of apprehension far to the north. Basutoland, a ready hard-pressed to provide employment for its 900,000 inhabitants, the addition of more

than 350,000 able-bodied men, women and children could prove a major catastrophe leading to mass misery and hunger.

Immigrants Costly
 The government commission emphasized the financial aspect of South Africa's 1 million unofficial black settlers. According to the report the illegal immigrants cost the government more than 4 million rands (\$5.6 million) a year in educational, medical services and pensions.

But apart from the obvi-

ous financial arguments in favor of the mass deportation of unwanted blacks, there are other unstated, political reasons.

As African nationalism eliminates the last vestiges of the colonial era in Africa, the republic will find that more and more of its huge foreign black population are citizens of independent black states bitterly hostile to any South African government dedicated to white supremacy.

Stronger Pressures
 Foreign Africans in South

Africa will be subject to more and stronger anti-South African pressure from their homelands. In sending them all back from where they came South Africa is not only saving a few million rands. It is also eliminating a potentially dangerous fifth column in the midst of its own restless black population.

Timothy M. doesn't think of himself as a threat to anyone. The big picture eludes him. He is just worried about Timothy M. and the family he loves and works for.

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FORGOT THE CRACKERS

Houston, Tex.—UPI—A man took \$100 Tuesday night from a grocery and left only to return a few minutes later when he grabbed a box of crackers. "For my parrot," he explained to the startled store manager.



ACTION QUESTIONED—Assistant Defense Secretary Arthur Sylvester, right, is shown with members of the Senate Investigations subcommittee in Washington prior to his appearance before the group. Sylvester was called before the subcommittee to explain why he questioned the fairness of its hearings on the disputed TFX warplane contract. From left, they are Sens. Karl Mundt (R-S.D.), John McClellan (D-Ark.), chairman, Edmund Muskie (D-Maine) and Sylvester. (UPI)

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