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Social and Demographic Characteristics of Rural Areas

by

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The subject to be dealt with covers a very wide field and it will not be possible to cover all points. In this paper only certain aspects will be reviewed, to indicate the perspectives which the sociologist can offer on the place and function of the rural areas and agriculture in balanced planning for the future. Besides an explanation of a few important demographic characteristics and tendencies, attention will be devoted to social changes, land ownership, types of settlement and agricultural labour.

1.2. Although I was asked to prepare a paper on the social and demographic characteristics of the rural areas, I considered it proper, seeing that this is a gathering of agricultural economists, to concentrate on agriculture as such rather than on the country districts in general. Traditionally sociologists distinguished between rural and urban, and they frequently approached the subject in terms of a contrast between the two conceptions. During recent years the question arose frequently, whether in the light of changes in the structure of the social life in the rural areas and the increasingly close interrelationship of the life of those in the cities and in the country districts respectively, this distinction cannot be maintained any longer in a significant sense. On this question there has as yet been no decision. Personally I have reached the conclusion that the time has come for a new approach in which the old distinction between rural and urban and thereby also between so-called rural and urban sociologists should be abolished and replaced by firstly the development of a specialised sociological study of agriculture as an industry, comparable with agricultural economics as a specialised economic study of agriculture and secondly to view urban and rural settlement within the frame of the location restraints of the human being. In this paper this approach will be used in the manner in which I will deal with the subject.

2. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND TENDENCIES

2.1. The Commission of Inquiry into European Occupancy of the Rural Areas, whose report was

completed nearly ten years ago, provided a detailed analysis of the demographic characteristics and tendencies of the rural population of the Republic. Since this report is available the details will not be considered, particularly because the tendencies established at that time have continued without change. The general pattern established by the Commission for the European population, was that the rural population increased at a slower rate during the early decades of the century; between 1930 and 1934 a turning point was reached and since then the numbers have declined. Regarding geographic distribution it was found that in all regions there was not the same growth or decline, and that the sheep grazing regions, the grazing regions of the eastern escarpment, the grain areas of the Winter Rainfall area, the dry-land grain areas of the plateau of the interior in that sequence were the areas in which the loss of population was the greatest, while the coastal areas, the cattle grazing and irrigation areas experienced increases in population. It was also found that rural areas in the vicinity of rapidly growing urban complexes experienced increases in population.

2.2. The pattern sketched in the preceding paragraph is clearly shown in the table. While the total population of the Republic increased by 209.1 per cent from 1904 to 1960, the rural population increased by only 115.6 per cent. The White rural population declined, however, by 2.1 per cent while the total White population increased by 175.1 per cent. For the other population groups the increases in the rural population are much slower than that of the country as a whole. The increases in the population of the Cape Province and Natal are less than those of the Transvaal and the Free State, both in total and rural. The rural White population of the Cape Province and the Free State is, however, in 1960 almost three-tenths less than in 1904, while Natal maintained its position and the rural population of the Transvaal nearly doubled. The rural Bantu population of Natal and the Transvaal increased more rapidly during the period than for the country in general.

The changes in the population composition during the period 1951 to 1960 show that the total population increase in the country districts is now less in all four provinces than the corresponding figure for the entire country, although the rural population of the Transvaal still shows

TABLE - Percentage changes in population, Republic and Provinces, 1904 to 1960 and 1951 to 1960

	Total population					Rural population				
	All races	Whites	Coloureds	Asiatics	Bantu	All races	Whites	Coloureds	Asiatics	Bantu
(a) 1904-1960										
Republic	+ 209.1	+ 175.1	+ 239.1	+ 291.0	+ 213.1	+ 115.6	- 2.1	+ 112.4	+ 2.6	+ 138.3
Cape	+ 122.5	+ 72.6	+ 236.7	+ 80.0	+ 111.4	+ 70.3	- 28.8	+ 121.6	-	+ 83.0
Natal	+ 168.4	+ 247.4	+ 542.9	+ 291.1	+ 143.4	+ 92.8	-	+ 100.0	-	+ 105.0
Transvaal	+ 393.8	+ 391.9	+ 350.0	+ 481.8	+ 394.5	+ 216.6	+ 82.1	+ 50.0	+ 300.0	+ 238.1
O. F. S.	+ 258.1	+ 93.0	+ 36.8	-	+ 381.8	+ 159.2	- 31.6	- 8.3	-	+ 267.2
(b) 1951-1960										
Republic	+ 26.2	+ 16.6	+ 36.8	+ 30.0	+ 27.7	+ 18.7	- 8.5	+ 28.5	- 2.4	+ 20.9
Cape	+ 21.1	+ 7.1	+ 35.4	-	+ 20.8	+ 15.2	- 13.5	+ 27.7	-	+ 16.2
Natal	+ 23.3	+ 23.0	+ 45.2	+ 32.1	+ 21.5	+ 15.4	- 2.6	-	- 2.6	+ 16.9
Transvaal	+ 30.3	+ 21.7	+ 44.0	+ 30.6	+ 33.0	+ 25.0	- 0.9	+ 12.5	-	+ 27.7
O. F. S.	+ 36.3	+ 21.1	+ 73.3	-	+ 40.1	+ 19.5	- 18.6	+ 120.0	-	+ 24.0

the most rapid increase. For Whites we now find an absolute decrease in numbers in rural areas in all four provinces, with the most rapid decline in the Free State followed by the Cape Province. In the Transvaal and Natal the rural Bantu population continues to increase at a rate which is equal to the rate of growth of the Bantu population of the entire country.

The general pattern is thus that the population of the rural areas continues to increase more slowly and for Whites and Asiatics there is in absolute numbers a marked decrease, while the rate of growth of Coloureds in the rural areas shows in general a marked decline and that the Bantu population tends in the same direction.

2.3. To determine the extent to which the finding that the rural areas in the vicinity of large urban centres in general also tend to show increases along with the urban centres is still valid, the changes during the period 1951-1960, in the rural population of the various economic regions were investigated. It was found that in only 11 out of 51 economic regions the rural White population increased during this period. Of these, five are in Natal, mainly the coastal areas; five in the Transvaal, namely in areas along the West Rand, Pretoria, the Vereniging/Van der Byl complex and the irrigation areas of the northern and eastern Transvaal. In the Free State there was only one area in which the rural White population increased, namely Sasolburg. These facts therefore confirm the tenet, that actually, except in the irrigation areas, it is not the true rural areas which grow, but only those parts which are involved in urban growth. In the remaining rural areas, namely those parts in which agriculture constitutes the major economic activity an absolute decline in the White population is taking place. The magnitude of the decreases in the White population in these regions naturally varies, but it is significant that there are no fewer than 11 out of the 51 regions in which the decrease in the White population represented a decline of 20 per cent or more during 1951 to 1960.

2.4. It must be accepted that this tendency will not continue indefinitely, and that we have now reached a period during which the rate at which the White rural population has decreased will gradually decline. Along with this there will naturally also be a growing tendency for the country districts to attract more Whites who are not concerned with agriculture, but who choose the country districts - particularly around the larger urban centres and in the coastal areas - as places of residence. Besides this a measure of diversification of economic activities in rural areas can be expected, particularly in providing services to the urban population which views the country districts more and more as places for recuperation, relaxation and as a playground.

2.5. Time does not permit of more attention being devoted to demographic tendencies. Possibly it would be useful to draw attention to the strong tendency towards aging in the life-span com-

position of the rural population - particularly the Whites. This pattern includes both a rapid decline in the proportion which persons in the younger age categories constitute of the total population and an increase in the proportion of persons in the upper life-span categories. This tendency is a function of various factors, namely the effect of factors which result in a low increase of urbanites in rural areas, the loss of persons in the prime of life and the inability of the agricultural industry to offer job opportunities to young people who enter the labour market.

Against the background of this brief demographic outline of the country districts attention will now be devoted to social change and agriculture in South Africa.

3. SOCIAL CHANGE AND AGRICULTURE IN SOUTH AFRICA

3.1. Sight is sometimes lost of the fact that the system and pattern of agriculture in any country is not determined solely by physical factors such as climatic and soil conditions etc. and economic marketing factors, but is also in large measure the result of cultural, social and political forces. The importance of the latter factors is usually understood generally in respect of societies which are organised on the basis of a rural self-supporting existence, but is sometimes disregarded in modern societies in which a money and market economy has developed.

3.2. South Africa, like many other parts of the modern world today witnesses a phase which is characteristic of extensive growth and revolution. In sociological terms these changes include a growing degree of functional differentiation in the social structure, which is concretely manifested in the form of the proliferation of a variety of roles and organizations with a growing and more clearly outlined area of autonomy, but which are nevertheless joined together by an increasing interdependence which is governed by an input-output relationship.

3.3. For agriculture a few of the implications of these changes are the following: (i) The development of qualifications which show a growing occupational nature for the role of the farmer and an accompanying loss of the special characteristics of the way of life which was traditionally associated with farm life. From this follows, as for other occupations, a requirement for greater and more specialised preparation to successfully fulfill the role of farmer; (ii) increasing functional differentiation within the field of agricultural undertakings with accompanying specification of roles, which means that the traditional distinction of only main roles, namely those of farmer and labourer are increasingly being replaced by a greater variety of more defined roles.

This creates a need not only for education and preparation for a greater variety of more specialised roles, but also for the development of a differentiated wage structure in the agricultural industry; and (iii) the coming into being of an increasing variety of organizations which are intended to serve specific agricultural needs and interests and which consequently not only create a need for a greater variety of leadership roles, but also demands a willingness on the part of the farmers to be included and work together in such organizations. This development is in contrast with the traditional individualism and independence which was characteristic of the farmer in pioneer times.

From the foregoing it follows that it is essential that far more special attention, than is the case today, must be given to the preparation and influencing of farmers for successful fulfilment of their roles under these changed circumstances.

3.4. In South Africa, as elsewhere the change in the social and economic structure of our times is moving in the direction of increasing industrialization and urbanisation. Apart from the universal implications which industrialization and urbanisation contain for agriculture, note must also be taken in the case of South Africa of the special implications of the particular pattern of industrial development which is being pursued here in view of (i) the international situation of South Africa and (ii) the internal race pattern. The latter in particular involves particular sociological implications for agriculture, since the policy of border-area development and industrial decentralization will have the effect of physically establishing industrial activities in regions where more direct competition for especially available man-power and resources like water with agriculture will result. It is essential to devote early attention to this.

3.5. Urbanisation not only entails that a growing percentage of the population will be placed in a market relationship to agriculture, but also has over time particular implications for the significance of the country districts in the life of the nation. It becomes increasingly important and essential that the rural areas should attain a new significance in the spatial arrangement of society. For an urban-orientated society there is a growing need for space (in the country) for relaxation and recreation for the urban population. Rural areas thus become much more than merely places of agricultural production but acquire both an economic and a cultural/social and psychological function and significance as living space. In the planning of agricultural development for the future increasing provision must thus be made for these needs of the urban population. While on the one hand the use of agricultural land with a high productivity and carrying capacity must be avoided in serving these needs, they must be taken into account on the other

hand and provision must be made, preferably on uneconomic agricultural units, which should be set aside and developed to meet these needs. Thus in the future consideration could for example be given to placing the present provisions regarding the subdivision of agricultural land on a new basis in terms of productivity, carrying capacity and alternative needs (e.g. rural living space and recreational facilities) rather than size.

3.6. Furthermore note must be taken of the implications of these changes for the involvement of the farmer in other social structures. For family life these changes result in a final disruption of the patriarchal and extensive grouping of relationships and the substitution of the so-called core or nuclear family consisting of spouses and dependent children. In addition it involves for the farmer an association with a bigger variety of formal organizations.

3.7. Of particular significance for agriculture is also the development of a fixed system and pattern which establish succession and continuity combined with security in professional life. In practically all occupational sections this is provided in modern society by fixed systems of conditions of employment which provide for sick, accident and pension benefits on the one hand and on the other compulsory retirement ages, retirement, etc. In agriculture which still largely depends upon individual self-support with succession by one or more children, there is only minimal institutional provision in this respect. The fact that farmers in general tend to continue their activities up to an advanced age, hampers for instance the process of succession.

3.8. Possibly the most remarkable change is the large increase in agricultural output per entrepreneur, accompanied by a decrease in the farm population (particularly Whites) as indicated in the review of demographic tendencies. Statistics for the U.S.A. where this feature has progressed greatly, show that the efficiency of agricultural output has, particularly since 1940, not only increased at a more rapid rate, but that the productivity of farm labourers has increased even more rapidly than that of employees in the private sector. These results were attained under circumstances where the number of farmers continue to decrease, the size of farms continue to increase and the owner/entrepreneur continues to oust more and more other classes of entrepreneurs like share croppers, tenants etc.¹⁾ In America it has already been found that "the character and quality of the human element in agriculture has improved greatly".²⁾

1) Latson, Olaff F. and Rogers, Everett M., "Rural Society in Transition. The American Setting" Copp, James H., Editor, Our Changing Rural Society, Perspective and Trends, 1964, pp. 42-47.

2. Ibid, p. 47.

Although factual data and research on these patterns in South Africa are by no means so comprehensive that we can identify the exact extent of these tendencies, it is clear that we in South Africa - at any rate for White farmers - are moving in the same direction. Thus the number of White male entrepreneurs in agriculture decreased from 125,020 in 1951 to 98,960 in 1960 - a decrease of 20.8 per cent; the number of farming units decreased during the same period from 118,186 to 105,859 and the average size of farms increased from 857.1 to 1,012.3 morgen.

4. LANDOWNERSHIP AND TYPES OF SETTLEMENT

It is self-evident that the types of settlement and the system of landownership has a determining influence on the nature, form, life pattern and possibilities of economic development of agriculture in any country. It is thus necessary to note briefly the situation in South Africa and consider the implications.

4.2. Regarding landownership a brief historical reference will suffice. The first defined lands were granted in 1657 to approved persons, the Free Burgers. Under the Commandership of Simon van der Stel, this system expanded rapidly and the spreading of farmers into the interior was accompanied by the development of a system of stock farming which soon led to trek-farming. This was also the beginning of a system of a self-supporting agricultural economy, which continued up to the time of the discovery of diamonds and gold during the second half of the previous century, when markets in the interior came into being and established the basis for commercial farming. Meanwhile in 1717 a system of loan-farms was created which was replaced a century later (1813) by the system of perpetual quitrent-tenure farms. At the outset the old Cape system was continued in the new states after the Great Trek (which was, in passing, partly due to a shortage of land for occupation in the old Colony) but subsequently conveyances and rights of ownership were granted. Only towards the end of the nineteenth century the process of occupation was completed and all available land was more or less occupied. Only science and technology could after that make available inaccessible regions for farming.

4.3. If this pattern is analysed it proves that the system of land tenure, on account of the method of occupation, followed a different pattern than in Europe, where farmers under the feudal lords, were mostly labourers, share-croppers or tenants, with no prospect of ultimate right of possession.

In South Africa every farmer obtained his own land and it has become a tradition to farm independently. It was thus possible for practically everyone who made South Africa his home country during the first 200 to 250 years to become a

landowner and to farm independently. In the Europe of those days from which most of the immigrants came, the landowners and independent farmers were the noblemen of the country. Since everyone in South Africa could become a landowner, they soon counted themselves to the rank of a local nobility. No wonder that even in 1957 Ryklof van Goens stated: "Because we could not become noblemen here before having been successful farmers" and the Rev. D. van der Hoff wrote from the Transvaal in 1858: "Here one can easily earn a living since there are in fact no working classes or ranks of people, where one works for another. They are all masters, all farmers, all lords; consequently it is very difficult to have anything made here They (the Transvaalers) are generally somewhat apathetic and prefer to leave everything to be done by the natives, and that does not always work" (Translations).

4.4. The important implications of this system of land tenure are clear. It led to the development of a strong tradition of a self-supporting agricultural economy, which was only directed to a minimal degree towards a market economy, with the result that even with the modern money and market economy in the country farmers remain inclined not to be market orientated in their production activities. The lack of interest in the marketing field of agricultural products, and related features must be understood in the light of these powerful traditions.

4.5. A further implication of this system was the development of a pattern of landownership which may be described as individual occupation of farms. Agricultural villages, line settlement patterns and closely knit agricultural communities are found in only a few places in South Africa and arose from special schemes, isolation, subdivision and other factors. The result is that the development of rational means of communication and transport, power supply networks and other services which constitute the infrastructure of an economy are under such circumstances impeded, and can only be provided and maintained at considerable expense.

Besides this, as reported nearly 30 years ago in the Carnegie investigation into the poor White problem, this system contributed to the difficulties in adapting the surplus farm population of the present century to the urban industrial economy. In so far as the crisis period in this transition phase is already past, this is no longer such a serious problem as a generation ago.

4.6. The particular race composition of the population of South Africa is closely linked with this traditional system of land tenure and White occupation. Even in the time of Jan van Riebeeck the need for labourers arose and non-Whites were imported from the East and elsewhere as slaves. Thus a tradition came into being in which non-White slaves provided the labour in

agriculture. Subsequently slave labourers were supplemented firstly by the inclusion of the surviving members of Hottentot tribes and subsequently the native Bantu. Thus an economic structure developed which depended wholly upon non-White labour.

4.7. The result of all this was that over the years agriculture in South Africa developed the characteristics of an industry rather than constituting a way of living. As a way of life agriculture is essentially a family undertaking. In South Africa agriculture stopped being a family undertaking more than three hundred years ago with the importation of the first slaves. Today our agriculture is, as every other branch of our industrial life, based on the use of a wage labour system. Specifically stated: in 1960 only about one-tenth of the total agricultural labour in our White economy consisted of family labour of the farm owners. Nine out of every ten persons involved in the industry are, like industrial workers, only attached to the industry through their labour. In addition the system is thereby characterised that the Whites act almost exclusively as farm owners, while labour (excluding the small amount of family labour of the owner) is provided almost entirely by non-Whites. The only important difference between the labour setup in agriculture and that in other branches of industry, is that while in other industries labourers are attached as individuals, the general pattern is that labourers are employed in agriculture along with their families and social provisions (housing etc.) frequently constitute part of the reward of the labourer.

A few figures will provide greater clarity. According to the agricultural census of 1960 there were in June of that year only 158,475 White, Coloured and Asiatic family workers and 5,640 managers in the Republic as against 750,757 regular employees and 591,882 seasonal employees in the agricultural industry. The further fact that of the more than 1,300,000 regular and seasonal employees only 9,185 were Whites bears further witness of the exceptional nature of the labour situation in the agricultural industry.

The farm population of the Republic consisted in 1960 of 2,955,105 persons. Of these only 396,728 were farm owners and members of their families of which the majority, namely 352,840 were Whites. Close on nine-tenths (88.9 per cent) of the farm owners and their families thus were Whites. Out of a total farm population of about three million people only 13.4 per cent were farm owners and members of their families. Further data show that Whites who were not farm owners or members of the families, constituted only 2.2 per cent of the total farm population (excluding farm owners) and only 0.6 per cent of the regular and seasonal farm workers were Whites.

The pattern is thus clear: in South Africa the labour force in the agricultural industry consists practically entirely of non-White employees, while Whites operate almost exclusively as farm holders and along with their dependents constitute only a tenth of the total labour force.

It must be remembered that the above observations do not apply to the country in general. It is true that the pattern differs from region to region. In the Western Cape for instance there are proportionately more White employees on farms than in any other region. The reason must be found in the fact that the fruit and wine areas are in the Western Cape where intensive and specialised farming with a consistent and fairly profitable level of income allows more room for the employment of reasonably skilled and specialised workers. The Western Cape is also fairly far removed from the mining and heavy industry centres which provide an important livelihood for Whites of rural origin in other parts of the country. The Western Cape also differs from other regions in that proportionately less use is made of Bantu labour and that this merely supplements Coloured labour. In other regions the Bantu provide practically the entire labour force.

5. ASPECTS OF LABOUR QUESTIONS IN AGRICULTURE

5.1. In the preceding section the general pattern of labour which developed in South Africa has been outlined. As indicated the existing pattern is that the labour force in agriculture consists practically entirely of non-White employees, while the Whites only function as farm occupiers.

5.2. One particular feature of the data provided in section 4, must still be stressed, namely the extent of casual and seasonal labour in agriculture. In official statistics there is not always a clear distinction, but it was shown that in 1960 there were 750,000 regular and 592,000 seasonal employees in agriculture. The agricultural industry thus makes use of temporary workers on a large scale - more than 45 per cent of the total. Unfortunately we dispose of no information from which it can be established where these large numbers of casual labourers come from. Many are probably members of the families of regular farm workers, while others are recruited as seasonal employees in the Bantu homelands and in certain regions (fruit areas of the Western Cape) increasing use is being made of town and city dwellers, particularly at harvesting time.

5.3. It is essential to note certain important factors which will influence the future labour situation in agriculture. A few are briefly considered here:

5.3.1. Expansion of and changes in the agricultural industry

It is not necessary to quote figures to describe the current expansion of the agricultural industry.

Obviously expansion results in changes in labour requirements. In certain branches expansion can be accompanied by increasing rationalization and mechanization and need not necessarily result in more labour being required. The important fact is that important branches of agriculture cannot be mechanised to the same extent as others, e.g. grain production. The fruit and wine industries are labour-intensive undertakings and extensive expansion here would require an expansion of the labour force.

5.3.2. Rural/urban population pattern

At about the beginning of the twentieth century the process of occupation of the country was practically completed, except for a few regions which could only be made accessible for White occupation with the assistance of science and technology. With this a period of more stabilized occupation and the intensive cultivation of the soil set in, while the surplus population resulting from natural increase was either unloaded on the towns and cities or accommodated through subdivision and more intensive cultivation of the land.

This phenomenon of increasing urbanisation is naturally not confined only to Whites in South Africa. International comparisons prove that the same happens in almost all parts of the world where a measure of industrial development takes place. Everywhere there is a decline in the percentage of the population in rural areas. In South Africa it is at present in particular the various non-White population groups which are increasingly involved in the process of urbanisation, and the fact that it has as yet not taken on the form of a great wave of non-White immigrants into the city and town areas is solely due to the application of a policy of influx control in the case of the Bantu and the lack of social facilities like housing for the Coloureds.

The whole pattern of internal population migration consists broadly of a population succession, in which the Bantu in particular act as successors to the White and Coloured occupants of the rural areas. Thus we find for example in the Western Cape that those districts in which a large loss of White rural inhabitants occurred experienced at the same time a large increase in rural Bantu.

We must expect that the Coloured population in particular will also in the near future, just like the Whites, increasingly become urbanised and at a rapidly growing rate. If the Government and the country furthermore make a serious effort to implement the declared policy and program for the future uplifting of the Coloured population, we must accept and expect that their urbanisation will in future take place at a still more rapid rate. As an example the state of housing for Coloureds can be mentioned. The

Coloured population is, like the Bantu, dependent upon employers, local authorities and the State for their housing. In the past the provision of housing for Coloureds in our towns and cities lagged behind that for Whites and Bantu. Lately a large-scale program has, however, been commenced to build houses for Coloureds and since the Coloured, like the White, is more often a family migrant rather than an unattached itinerant worker, it can be anticipated that this program will result in an increase in the attraction of the towns and cities. This is particularly true as long as we experience sustained economic growth and revival.

The conclusion to be drawn from the foregoing, is that, if the existing and anticipated tendencies of population migration should continue, the agricultural industry will have an ever smaller established White and Coloured labour force at its disposal. This brings us to the consideration of the place of the Bantu as agricultural worker.

5.3.3. The future of Bantu farm labour

In large parts of the country the Bantu has thus far been practically the sole source of farm labour. At the time of the 1961 agricultural census all together 1,344,899 Bantu were active as regular and seasonal farm workers (85.3 per cent of all farm workers). Even in the Western Cape, where the Coloured population traditionally provided the labour force for agriculture, the Bantu represented 18.5 per cent of the regular and 13.3 per cent of the casual labour force in 1960. The engagement of the Bantu in the agriculture of this region is not only linked to the urbanisation of the White and Coloured population, but also to the nature of the development of the agricultural industry in the Western Cape. The extension of a balanced system of mixed farming, in which more attention is given to livestock in particular, the development of modernised large-scale specialised branches like milk production and poultry farming etc. set certain demands upon the labour force, with which, according to the findings of farmers, the Bantu comply better than the Coloured worker.

The existing race pattern and policy in the Republic compel us, however, to raise the question of the future availability of Bantu labour for the agricultural industry. In the past there was in most parts of the country, with the exception of the western part of the Cape Province, a reasonably freely available source of unskilled Bantu labour for the agricultural industry. Lately the first restrictions were imposed on this labour in the Western Cape as part of the prevailing policy of separate development. Viewed logically

it might be expected that this system will be extended to other parts of the country. While on the one hand urbanization of Whites, Coloureds and Asiatics is increasing, and on the other fewer of the free flow of Bantu from the homelands will become available as replacements, greater use will have to be made of controlled Bantu itinerant labour. For seasonal requirements itinerant labour can be usefully employed. Regarding regular labour the problem is more difficult since the nature of the needs in many branches of agriculture are such that it will be very difficult to make use of itinerant labour. This applies in particular where knowledge and experience is essential.

5.3.4. Seasonal labour

As stated previously, casual labour is already being used on a large scale in agriculture. This also applies to manufacturing and processing industries which use agricultural products as raw materials. These industries are frequently located in the areas where the agricultural products are produced, e.g. the canning industries in the Western Cape. It would thus appear that this system ultimately leads to the development of a social/economic structure in which such a system is accommodated in the form of partial employment. In so far as economic activities show marked seasonal fluctuations, it results in minimum requirements in respect of the necessities of life being supplemented from time to time, by taking up casual employment which ultimately becomes an economic and social institution in the living pattern of the population. In due course the labour class thus develops a pattern of living and attitudes which amounts to physically fit persons accepting it as normal that during certain times of the year they will not be fully economically active.

This attitude and pattern of life is naturally directly in contrast with the demands which the modern industrial economy sets for the labour force. Here a stable and regular labour force is aimed at, which will continue day by day to provide man-power. The money economy of the city also demands that the income of the worker will remain stable, since so many of the necessities of life must be purchased regularly - food, house rent etc.

It is therefore not strange that the Whites who previously moved in large numbers from agriculture to the towns and cities as well as the Coloureds who are today under similar circumstances becoming industrial workers, are so frequently criticised and described as unsatisfactory. The important conclusion is, however, that the explanation for this instability must not necessarily be sought in inherent qualities of the particular population groups, but is rather a function of the social/economic system in which they were raised.

It may be expected, however, that this situation will change with the greater demand for labour in our growing industries which will lead to more full-time employment particularly of the indigenous population consisting of Whites, Coloureds, Asiatics and Bantu who live there permanently, and with stricter control over the influx of Bantu labour. By this greater economic stability for the population will be attained, but exceptional labour problems will at the same time arise for those industries like agriculture and food processing which are dependent upon casual labour. To prevent these industries from being influenced detrimentally, Bantu and other migrant labour will have to be available to provide for the casual labour requirements. The removal of the Bantu from White areas, will thus, if it is strictly enforced, have to be accompanied by an entire shifting of the labour force. The practical outcome for the foreseeable future will probably be that established and full-time Bantu workers will be replaced by indigenous White and Coloured labourers, and that Coloured and other casual labour will be replaced by Bantu migrant labour. The implication for agriculture is however, that Bantu migrant labour will have to be employed more extensively than at present and that far less casual labour will be available, than at present. In future the farmer will to a greater extent have to organise his activities in such a way that he will be less dependent upon casual labour. Like the industrialist he will in future have to endeavour to rationalise his production processes in such a way that he will as far as possible be able to manage with a minimum number of workers who are employed on a permanent basis.

5.3.5. Industrial development

Industrial development is everywhere accompanied by a growing urbanisation of the population. In South Africa we are at present experiencing a period of rapid economic growth and it is universally accepted that everything should be done to promote this development as far as possible. It is thus accepted that we must endeavour to become a powerful industrial country. Thus far industrial development tended to be concentrated in and around certain large urban complexes. Lately it has, however, been accepted that we should strive toward industrial decentralization and in South Africa this is accepted policy. The authorities and other interests have taken concrete measures to promote industrial decentralization. The transfer of existing industries to rural areas and the establishment of new industrial undertakings in rural areas, undoubtedly offer great economic advantages, also for agriculture, but entails over time more direct competition for available labour.

Furthermore an analysis of industrial employment and that of other branches of the economy

show that everywhere a growing diversification of work opportunities is taking place. More and more opportunities for work which is more specialised than that for unskilled labour and which offer better remuneration are becoming available for non-White workers. This means that workers in all these sectors of the economy find greater opportunities for progress and better living.

Since wage rates in industry and commerce for unskilled labour are on average already higher than those in agriculture, this development increases the attractiveness of the former. This, along with the anticipated decentralization of industrial development, means that competition for available labour will become greater. This creates great challenges for the agricultural industry to meet the growing attraction of development in other sectors of the economy.

5.3.6. Conclusion and recommendation

It would appear that there is justification for the following deductions arising from this review of labour problems:

1. As distinct from many other countries the agricultural industry in South Africa is much more than a family undertaking and family labour is relatively unimportant in agriculture; for nine-tenths it is dependent upon paid labour. The growing diversification of the economy, particularly through industrialization, implies therefore that the agricultural industry must increasingly compete with other sources of employment. In the past, when the population pattern was such that there was an oversupply particularly of unskilled labour, no special labour problems existed. This situation is however changing and this change is furthered by political developments. This means that both agriculture as well as the other industrial branches in the country are becoming increasingly dependent upon its own indigenous population for the labour supply. Since the Whites are no longer a source of labour for agriculture, it means in practice that the agricultural industry is dependent upon the Coloured population and the established Bantu population, which are increasingly, like the Whites, also finding a livelihood in other branches of the industrial society.

2. In South Africa the labour pattern in agriculture is characterised by the large-scale employment of casual labour which is also true of those secondary industries which are linked to basic agricultural production. The high rate of economic growth and the policy of separate development result further in full-time employment and the reserve of casual labour is decreasing. Greater competition for labour and also for casual labour can be expected.

3. Although mechanisation and changed methods of production in certain respects have reduced the need for unskilled agricultural labour in particular, other changes in agriculture in certain regions, especially the introduction of a balanced system of mixed and specialised farming, have led to a greater demand for more skilled and regular labour.

From this and other deductions it is clear that in the future an entirely new approach to the labour situation in agriculture will have to develop if these needs have to be provided for. As a long-term policy efforts can be made to substantially change the agricultural system into a family undertaking which would depend on a minimum of outside labour. In practice such a development could only take place in areas like the Orange River Scheme, the proposed Berg River Scheme and other irrigation areas. The development of such a system of small farmers would naturally in the long run make possible the accommodation of a larger population - something which might become an important consideration because of the potential growth of population. At the same time such a development would lead to a complete reappraisal of the position of the agriculturist in the social, economic and political structure of our society.

Apart from this alternative and next to it, it is also realistic to foresee that the agricultural industry will increasingly in its setup, organization and functioning adopt the pattern which applies in other industrial sectors, namely the development of large-scale corporative undertakings, which are almost entirely dependent upon a diversified corps of wage labour, which is recruited in equal competition with other industries. Certain positive measures will therefore have to be adopted to provide for the labour required. In conclusion I mention a few of the most important measures which in my view must be adopted in this respect, particularly in regard to Coloured labour:

1. Socio/economic provision, which would include proper housing; provision of educational opportunities and facilities in the country districts or for the rural child; the expansion and decentralization of medical and social services, etc.;

2. the raising of the productivity of farm labour through the uplifting, training and planned use of available labour and through rationalising and mechanising the production process;

3. increasing the wage levels in agriculture and by the introduction of a differential wage system, so as to compete more equally with industry for available labour;

4. the development of a more differentiated labour structure in agriculture;

5. the decentralization of industries, so as to counteract an unbalanced concentration in large industrial centres and so that large rural towns could also serve as sources of supplementary labour - casual labour in particular - for surrounding farms; and

6. systematic scientific research into the subject, which can serve as a basis for rational planning in future. Here the combined efforts of the agricultural scientist, the agricultural economist and the social scientist would be required. Like the industrialist the agriculturist would also have to take into account the human factor in the production process.

In the modern economy the existence and development of any industry is dependent upon the availability of entrepreneurs, means of production, markets and labour. In the scientific approach to the agricultural industry, so it would appear, attention has thus far been given mainly to the first three requirements mentioned. Our universities, agricultural colleges and schools are re-

nouned for the standard of training of future farmers. Agricultural science is highly developed and concentrates on the study of and research into the means of production of agriculture. Lately in particular, both through research and organization there are concerted endeavours to exploit new markets for agricultural products. The State itself has created a powerful machine of agricultural technical services, agricultural economics and marketing to pay attention to the first three requirements mentioned. The fourth and most important requirement has up to now mostly been accepted as given. At the utmost the authorities were from time to time approached to ensure that sufficient labour would be available. As a matter of fact, the appeal to the authorities to solve the labour problems of the agriculturist date back to the early days of the settlement at the Cape. It is time that agriculture, like industry will purposively pay attention to this to ensure the maintenance of an ample and productive labour force. If we are not prepared to do this, we will increasingly have to revert to family labour only, and in this we will have to change the character of the industry into a system of small farmers.