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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

A F R I C A N S T U D I E S I N S T I T U T E

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Title: From Coffee Cart to Industrial Feeding Canteen: Feeding Johannesburg's Black Workers 1945-1965.

by: Chris Rogerson

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A F R I C A N S T U D I E S I N S T I T U T E

African Studies Seminar Paper to be presented at Seminar in RW 319 at 4,00 pm on Monday, March 25, 1985.

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FROM COFFEE CART TO INDUSTRIAL FEEDING CANTEEN: FEEDING JOHANNESBURG'S BLACK WORKERS 1945-1965

by Chris Rogerson

A little tin shack on wheels,
Jars a Jo'burg pavement,
Like a busy ant the roadwife peels
Potatoes, Stirs porridge, blind to enslavement.

It is the blackman's Coffee Cart,
Simpler, cheaper, nourisher,
And, oddly, so near to the heart
Of this Metropolis' chestnut worker.

(Can Themba, Ballad to the Coffee Cart, 1959.)

The third day the law came. It stepped up the street in goose-march fashion. The steel on its heels clanged on the pavement with the ominous echo. It gave commands and everything came to an end at once. Black man's coffee-cart was not to operate any more in the city. "... Makes the city look ugly," the city fathers said.

(Eskia Mphahlele, The Coffe-Cart Girl, 1967.)

Ready accesss to suppliers of basic food snacks and sources of daily refreshment is part of the 'taken-for-granted' world of most White workers in Johannesburg. Even for those employees whose labour situates them in areas of the city devoid of restaurants or take-away food facilities, the requirement for sustenance during the working day is readily met by the factory canteen or industrial caterer. By contrast, the adequate provision of daily feeding facilities for Johannesburg's Black industrial workforce emerged as a matter of considerable controversy and public debate, particularly after 1945. Observers of urban Johannesburg drew attention to the daily ritual of "thousands of Africans lunching on the pavements and in the gutters of the city".[2] In the wake of racial colour bars that precluded the consumption by Blacks of food purchases in White cafes, a virtual monopoly was held by Native eating houses in the immediate post-war years on the provision of refreshment services. Nevertheless, from 1945 it became progressively apparent that the existing food supply outlets available to Black workers were insufficient to match the rising demands generated by a

burgeoning industrial workforce compelled, as a product of urban racial segregation, to commute increasing distances to their daily place of work. Accordingly, the need to provide an adequate network of food supply sources for urban Black consumers prompted one writer to go so far as to describe it as "the most serious" of all South Africa's urban problems.[3]

The woeful state of food services for Black consumers underpinned the emergence and strengthening of coffee-cart trading[4] as an unofficial 'solution' to this unatisfactory situation. Initially the coffee-carts or "cafes-de-move-on" were small mobile stalls which were trundled daily through the streets of Johannesburg from areas such as Sophiatown to trading sites geographically concentrated in the industrial zones of the city. By the mid-1950s, however, the carts had become transformed, as a curious by-product of urban apartheid, into permanent pavement kiosks, often styled as "cafes-de-won't move-on". Typically, carts would be constructed of the detritus of an industrializing city, using three-ply wood from discarded tea-chests, short lengths of galvanized iron from scraps of roofing material and odd pieces of former sacking and packing cases. When they first appeared, the carts were concerned largely with the sale of only hot drinks - tea and coffee - and the ubiquitous "one penny bun". But, progressively the fare offered at the coffee-carts widened to encompass the sale of bread, vetkoek, sour milk, meat stew and mealie meal porridge. From numbering only two hundred carts in 1946, the coffee-cart trade grew rapidly to 662 carts by 1950 and to 1,000 carts by 1955. The peak of the trade was reached in 1962 when an estimated 2,000 coffee-carts located throughout the commercial and industrial zones of Johannesburg furnished a much-needed source of supply of basic refreshments to Black workers.

In the view of municipal officials the dilemma of providing adequate food services for the Black consumer in Johannesburg could not be resolved by an informal sector or unregulated trade, such as existed with the coffee-carts. Against the rôle of coffee-carts as part of the solution to the wider issue of feeding Black workers in the apartheid city, the attitude of municipal authorities was that the carts themselves constituted a major 'problem'. The resolution of this problem was to necessitate the excision of the trade from the streets of Johannesburg, an event which sharply focussed municipal attention upon their former vital position in the supply of refreshment services. It is the objective in this paper to chart the transition which occurred in the feeding of Black industrial workers between 1945 and 1965 from the unofficial solution of the coffee-carts to the official blessing and promotion of factory canteens. This task will be pursued through three major sections of analysis. First, the trajectory of the twenty year struggle waged by municipal authorities against the coffee-carts will be traced. In the second section, an examination is undertaken of the several sources of objection to the activities of the coffee-cart traders, identifying the key forces and agents behind their removal. Finally, in the third section, the focus broadens to illuminate debates surrounding suggested and implemented official solutions to the question of feeding Black workers in the apartheid city.

THE WAR OF THE COFFEE-CARTS

The 'war of the coffee-carts',[5] as Johannesburg newspapers styled it, spanned a period of twenty years. Major actors in the struggle were the several arms of the municipality seeking an end to the trade and the coffee-cart traders who sought to preserve their precarious livelihood for as long a period of time as possible. Essentially the course of the struggle is punctuated by a series of offensives launched by the Johannesburg city authorities against the traders. Following on these offensives was a series of retreats by the municipal authority in the wake of successful collective action brought by the traders. This ebb and flow pattern continued until 1963 when the final defeat of the traders was sealed by a critical legal decision which sounded the deathknell for coffee-carts in the city.

The struggle against coffee-cart trading in Johannesburg commenced in 1943 with the Council's refusal to continue the former practice of licensing 43 stands for the use by traders in tea, coffee and cakes. Concerted action to eliminate coffee-cart trading was precluded by the combined distractions of the Second World War and the protests by traders against their impending removal. In terms of the overall history of the demise of coffee-cart trading the period 1943-1950 is best described as quiescent. On the part of the traders the period is notably only for the ineffectual representations of two[6] different associations, the Street Pedlars Non-European Association[7] and the Industria Helping Hand Coffee Cart Association[8] who both sought to reverse the Council's decision in favour of the renewed issuance of licences, albeit exclusively to their membership. On behalf of Council the major actions were twofold: first, to ignore such pleas for the issuance of licences and second, to refrain from undertaking any major assault against the traders.[9] The declaration of war against the coffee-cart traders was stayed by recommendations of the Licensing Committee that no action be taken for a period of six months in 1943 in order to afford traders an opportunity to secure alternative means of livelihood. As a result of representations specifically made by the Non-European Affairs Committee this six month armistice was periodically renewed through to 1950.[10] Nevertheless, some successful prosecutions against the coffee-cart traders were instituted under the Public Health By-Laws which prohibited the sale of any foodstuffs (other than uncooked fruit, vegetables, eggs and producer-wrapped ice cream) from other than fixed licensed premises.

The growth of unlicensed coffee-cart trading during the successive armistice periods was met with disapproval by city authorities. In 1947 the Licensing Committee recommended for the first time "that immediate steps be taken to stop this illegal tea and coffee trade".[11] More critical, however, was the adoption of a similar recommendation in 1950 by both the Health and Social Welfare Committee and the Non-European Affairs Committee" that all reasonable steps be taken after a warning period of sixty days to prevent tea and coffee vendors who are trading illegally from continuing to trade".[12] Sixty day notices of impending "firm action" were published in the press and posted on all operating carts during September 1950. The warning period expired on 28 November 1950 but action was postponed until after the Christmas period. The chosen tactics of the City Council were to concentrate

police action against coffee-carts operating in an area of the city in which "adequate" alternative feeding facilities existed for Black workers.[13] Because of the unfortunate proximity of many carts to the Jeppe Police Station and the existence of five alternative food outlets in the form of fish and chip shops, the Wolhuter area was selected in January 1951 as the ideal location to begin a series of prosecutions.[14] The battle against coffee-cart trading in Johannesburg was now firmly under way.

Prosecutions of coffee-cart traders were brought initially under the Public health By-Laws by charging individuals with trading in restricted foodstuffs without the requisite licence. An appeal was instituted against a conviction under such regulations in the case of Council v Slambe. Lodged in 1949, the case was not brought before the Supreme Court for two years and, pending the appeal, local magistrates refused to hear similar cases. In the interim period prosecutions were initiated against traders under Traffic Department By-laws. When these particular by-laws had been drafted, however, the issue of coffee-carts had not arisen and they were not framed to cope with this phenomenon. Unsuccessful prosecutions were initiated under the section of the by-laws dealing with obstructions. Magistrates, however, frequently held that the section was contravened only if the coffee-carts completely obstructed a street; on this legal technicality, the coffee-carts escaped conviction. The major hope of the Council in dealing with the coffee-carts thus rested with the outcome of the Supreme Court judgment in the Slambe appeal.[15] But, in 1951 the appeal against conviction under the Public Health By-Laws was successful on the grounds that the Johannesburg City Council only possessed powers to 'regulate' this type of trade and did not have the power to 'prohibit' it entirely.[16] The effect of this judgment was to declare invalid (ultra vires) the sections of municipal by-laws under which the war against the coffee-cart traders was presently being waged.[17] The Council had no powers to remove carts from the streets and could now only institute legal proceedings under alternative public health regulations for offences such as dirty carts or overalls, exposing food to contamination and like charges.

In retreat from the blow of the Supreme Court decision, the municipal authority adopted a twofold strategy. First, continued prosecution of traders was pursued on the basis of contraventions of aspects of public health legislation. Associated with these prosecutions, more refined tactics of police raiding were evolved. Tuesday was recognized as the most appropriate day for undertaking raids on traders because Wednesday was set aside for all municipal cases to be heard in Johannesburg magistrate courts.[17] Not surprisingly, the morning period, the most active time of the day for trading, was also the preferred time for police raids.[18] Nonetheless it became evident that this strategy of independent prosecution of coffee-cart operators would not meet the objective of eliminating the trade. Although fines imposed on traders between 1950 and 1954 totalled £629.0.0.[19] made up of amounts varying between £1.0.0. and £10.0.0. (Table 1), the numbers of coffee-cart vendors still continued to expand.

Table 1: Prosecutions Instituted Against Coffee-Cart Traders in Johannesburg under Public Health By-Laws, 1950-1954.

Year	No. of Vendors Charged	No. of Charges	No. Found Guilty	No of Cases where summons could not be served due to fictitious names and addresses	Total Fines Imposed
*1950	3	3	3	-	£ 16.00.0.
*1951	3	3	2	1	£ 10.00.0.
1952	24	36	18	6	£ 67.10.0.
1953	63	155	52	11	£372.10.0.
1954 (To 30 June 1954)	56	89	50	6	£163.00.0.
TOTALS	149	289	125	24	£629.00.0.

* Note: Prosecutions withheld pending considerations of Appeal Case.

Source: CJHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodtstuffs Volume 8', 'Draft Report of Medical Officer of Health to Health and Social Affairs Committee'.

Repeated prosecution of coffee-cart traders was viewed as necessary to stem the rise of the trade. But, disenchantment mounted with the meagre impact of the campaign because of congested conditions in the magistrates courts, traders giving fictitious names and 'subletting' temporarily their carts to others after a prosecution. In 1954 frustrated by their lack of success against the traders, the police were no longer prepared to continue raids without more stringent action in terms of the actual removal of carts.[21] A successful application to the courts for the removal of carts was only a remote possibility because of the difficulty of obtaining continuity in the prosecution of the traders.

Trapped in a legal impasse and under increasing criticism for its actions of prosecuting traders from the press[22] and such bodies as the South African Institute of Race Relations, the Rotary Club and local chambers of commerce and industry,[23] the City Council sought an escape-route to deal with the intractable issue of coffee-cart trading. The second strategy of the Council was that of approaching the Provincial Administration requesting a Commission of Enquiry be appointed to investigate the whole matter of street trading in the Transvaal.[24] This approach was made after the Supreme Court ruling in 1951 on the Slambe case.[25] The rationale for seeking such a Commission was that, in the view of the public health department, the 'problem' of coffee-cart trading "ceased to be a straight forward health reform and is rapidly

becoming a first class political issue".[26] Such a Commission, it was felt, would remove the debate over coffee-cart trading out of the political arena to be decided instead on a judicial basis.[27] In terms of the awkward situation of the municipal authority regarding coffee-cart trading a Commission of Enquiry was clearly perceived as the ideal vehicle for solving the matter. Considerable insight into the attitude and tactics of the health department concerning the proposed commission is revealed in the following statement of position:

> The matter will be fought out in one big action instead of a series of independent actions leading nowhere. Even if the commission takes six months or as long as a year to report, this will still shorten the time for remedying matters as compared with action in the courts.
>
> Evidence will be brought before the Commission by all interested parties, the matter will be given full publicity in the press and all the facts will be brought to light. Even if public opinion does not change, the findings of the Commission must condemn the trade in its present form ...
>
> It may be policy, in spite of a decision of adverse hygienic conditions, to make concessions because of unrest among natives and of the possible political and other repercussions therefrom. Such concessions can only be considered if it is clearly established that unrest is of such an extent as to override all other considerations, particularly those of public health.[28]

Notwithstanding the stance of Johannesburg authorities "that nothing short of a Commission of Enquiry into the whole matter will lead to a satisfactory conclusion",[29] hopes were dashed in July 1953 when it was announced by the Administrator of the Transvaal that no such commission would be appointed. The reason given for this decision was that "he regarded the coffee cart problem as being Johannesburg's domestic problem and not a matter for his interference".[30]

The response of coffee-cart traders to these mounting attacks by the City authorities upon their livelihood was the formation of a new association to defend their cause. What was first termed the Johannesburg Coffee-Stall Association and later the Transvaal Coffee Cart Association had been born in the early 1950s.[31] But, like the fate of earlier associations which had existed to represent special interests of coffee-cart traders, this organization initially made little impress upon the actions of the municipal authorities. This situation began to change in 1956 when under the chairmanship of the "Queen of the Coffee Carts", Regina Gqiba, the association began an impressive involvement in terms of organizing the legal defence of the trade. From 1956 the organization was advised by a Johannesburg attorney who took on the role of legal defender of the interests of the coffee-cart traders.[32] The genesis of this grouping of traders was in the Industria area, the zone of heaviest concentration of carts.[33] With an initial membership from this area of 200-300 traders the organization rapidly expanded such that by the early 1960s there were over 1,000 members, an estimated 90 per cent of all traders being ultimately drawn into its membership.[34] Organizationally, the association operated on an ad hoc

basis. There was no formal constitution and no minutes ever taken of its meetings.[35] The organization did, however, issue a membership card for which an administrative fee was paid. Membership of the organization guaranteed traders, if arrested, the protection of a legal counsel who would seek to secure their release form the police. More critical was the role of the Association in terms of funding the legal expenses of court cases. By the early 1950s it had become evident that the fight to clear Johannesburg of coffee-cart trading would be decided through a series of 'test' cases in the higher courts. Whenever these important test cases were forthcoming a meeting of the Association was called and the legal position explained to the traders.[36] The expenses to be incurred in the impending cases would be split amongst the membership on a pro rata basis.[37] As is shown below the existence of the association and its organization for legal defence were vital factors in prolonging the survival of the trade in the face of increasing repression by city authorities.

A serious threat to the continuation of coffee-cart trading emerged during 1956 when the municipal authorities began a series of prosecutions against traders in terms of the Licences Control Ordinances Despite applications made through the Coffee-Cart Association for the issue of licences to trade as coffee-cart operators, no such licences were ever made available because of persistent opposition by the health department.[38] During the early 1950s many coffee-cart traders obtained a "two-wheel" or "pushcart" licence at a cost of £1.10.0 per year and were under the impression that this was sufficient for their trade.[39] But, in 1956 the municipal authorities instituted a spate of persecutions in terms of which traders were charged for not being in possession of a hawker's licence. Regular fines were imposed by magistrates until a test case of appeal was brought before the Transvaal Provincial Division of the Supreme Court. In the interim period between the lodging of the appeal and the hearing of the case a successful interdict was obtained by the Coffee-Cart Association against the police to restrain them from a campaign of harassment of traders.[40] The police were stopped in their ongoing efforts to arrest vendors in terrorem in order to force them out of business.[41] The success of the Coffee-Cart Association in securing this interdict was followed by a further success in the Supreme Court. In the case of Regina v Tshingila it was held that a person trading from a coffee-cart was neither a hawker nor a pedlar and therefore not required to obtain a hawker's licence.[42] The Supreme Court Judge, however, held that such traders should obtain tea room, restaurant or fresh produce dealers licences in order to conduct their business.[43] This particular decision set in motion a further wave of prosecutions against coffee-cart traders for their failure to hold fresh produce dealers licences. Again, the Coffee-Cart Association mobilized their membership to support a further test case.[44] In December, 1956 the case of Lettie Molefe was brought before Johannesburg magistrates and she was convicted for trading as a restaurant without a licence.[45] The appeal did not come before the Pretoria Supreme Court until March 1958. In view of the critical nature of the case, two buses were hired to transport 140 members of the Coffee-Cart Association to the hearing.[46] The effort of making the trek to Pretoria from Johannesburg was rewarded with the appeal being upheld. The presiding judge maintained that a coffee-cart could not be regarded

as a restaurant or cafe because tables, chairs and utensils were deemed necessary for the pursuit of such a business.[47] Accordingly, coffee-cart traders could no longer be prosecuted on the grounds of non-possession of tea room, restaurant or fresh produce dealers' licences. Again, another skirmish in the war of the coffee-carts had been won by the traders as a result of their collective endeavours.

The victory of the coffee-cart traders was to be short-lived, however. A renewed offensive on the traders began almost immediately with prosecutions brought under both by-laws governing public health and traffic. In 1959 a new line of attack was mounted as a result of a legal decision concerning a coffee-cart in the adjoining municipality of Germiston. A small number of coffee-carts had become established in Germiston concentrated in the industrial areas of the town where the city authorities had been waging a parallel campaign to that in Johannesburg for their removal. The Germiston authorities in 1959 cleared from the streets one of the coffee-carts which was 'immobile', not being fitted with axles or wheels. It was argued that for the purposes of the Building By-Laws the cart was a "structure" and, classed as such, the plans for this "structure" had not been approved by the city council and nor had permission been granted for it to remain on the pavement overnight.[48] The decision of the Transvaal Provincial Division of the Supreme Court in the case of Makoka v City Council of Germiston represented a serious threat to the coffee-cart community of Johannesburg as the building by-laws of Johannesburg were virtually identical to those of Germiston.[49] Defeated by this judgment, the Coffee-Cart Association organized for an appeal to be made to a higher court.[50] The verdict on the appeal was critical because defeat in the higher court would have permitted the removal of all carts without wheels. The appeal to the Appellate Division was successful in reversing the earlier judgment by holding that the coffee-cart seized by the Germiston authority was a "movable structure", the removal of which could not be authorized in terms of the Building By-Laws.[51]

A temporary lull appeared in the war of the coffee-carts in Johannesburg at the opening of the new decade. The lack of hostilities was the consequence of a period of reassessment of the Council's position on the matter. This was reflected in the appointment of a senior official in the health department to undertake a major study on the current situtation of street trading.[52] The combined effects of the legal decisions of the previous five years was that the coffee-cart traders were not hawkers, restaurant or fresh produce dealers and nor did their vehicles fall under the category of "structures".[53] The view of the Assistant Medical Officer of Health of Johannesburg was that the coffee-carts:

> ... are in a class of their own not provided for in the existing licensing legislation. It is contended that this trade is most closely akin to hawking and to bring it indisputably within the law, our licensing laws will have to be amended.[54]

Action was soon forthcoming in terms of the modification of existing by-laws and a further test case was brought in 1961 against a coffee-cart trader for operating without a hawker's licence.[55] The case of

Agnes Rantoi was a milestone in the history of coffee-cart trading. In terms of newly promulgated legislation aimed specifically at the coffee-cart trade, this middle-aged mother of four children was found guilty and fined R10 (or 20 days) for hawking without a licence. Once more the energies of the Coffee-Cart Association were galvanized to fund a legal appeal.[56] The appeal judgment was handed down in the case of The State v Agnes Rantoi on 9 November 1963. The decision to uphold the earlier sentence was a crushing blow to the coffee-cart trade, allowing the prosecution of all traders for not being in possession of a hawker's licence.[57] The grounds for this new opinion on the classification of coffee-carts as hawkers were laid down in the judgment:

> ... someone who trades in this country in everyday consumer goods, such as refreshments, would have to fall under at least one of the 21 types of trading licences (author's translation).[58]

The effect of this judgment was that the coffee-cart traders had to be covered by the possession of a hawker's licence. Commenting on this vital decision the Clerk of the Johannesburg City Council wrote:

> I think it can safely be accepted that this judgment brings to an end the long era of doubt there has been about the correct way of charging a coffee-cart dealer for trading without a licence.[59]

For the coffee-cart traders the decision marked the beginning of the end of the trade. More especially, it signalled the end of the influence of the Coffee-Cart Association which now virtually ceased to function.[60]

Although the Rantoi decision gave the Council authority to prosecute traders, the problem of the removal of coffee-carts from the streets remained a difficult issue. The solution was found in a clutch of changes to existing traffic by-laws in order to permit the seizure and removal of "abandoned" carts as "vehicles" or "structures" which were on the city streets without the requisite licences.[61] The failure of owners to "forthwith remove such vehicle, structure or object" allowed the police or any council officials to remove and impound the carts.[62] The process of clearing the carts was punctuated by a series of police blitzes upon coffee-cart traders. The tactics of the police in conducting raids on occupied carts were not without reproach. The procedure was described by one police officer in April, 1964 as follows:

> His men would on arrival cause a panic in regard to the hawkers, who would on seeing the police, abandon their activities. Legally the 'stalls' or 'coffee carts' would be regarded as 'abandoned' -- he would then arrange to turn the coffee carts on their sides and the Traffic Department would have to move them immediately.[63]

Newspaper reports of the period lend credence to this picture of the methods of police raiding:

> GEORGE GOCH - A big blitz on coffee carts was carried out by a squad of policemen at Benrose industrial sites here yesterday afternoon. Women scattered all around the industrial area as police ripped down their coffee carts. Vans and lorries streamed in one after the other to load scores of coffee carts. In each was a police officer who ordered other police to break down the carts or to load them on to vans.[64]

The conclusion of the war of the coffee-carts clearly was a messy and undistinguished affair.

SLOPS, CHIPPED MUGS AND UNFAIR TRADING

As compared to the complex legal manoeuvres surrounding how the coffee-carts were actually cleared from the pavements of Johannesburg, the basic question of why they should be so removed is a more straightforward issue. The factors behind the clearance of the coffee-carts were broadly threefold. In ascending order of significance these were: first, pressures emanating from the central government to clear Black traders from the nominally 'White' city; second, the vehement protests of 'unfair trading' from licensed food establishments and especially the representatives of 'Native' eating houses; and third, the powerful imprint on the official mind of the sanitation syndrome, which was reflected in objections on public health grounds to several aspects of the daily functioning of the coffee-carts including the disposal of slops and their frequent use of chipped mugs.

The Role of Central Government

Although it must be recognized that the issue of coffee-cart trading was first and foremost a domestic problem of the Johannesburg municipality authority, it would be an error not to draw attention to the 'hidden' role of central government. After 1948 the framework for local administrative policy was moulded by the central government's attitudes that "Natives must trade in Native areas only, and that trading in non-Native areas must be reserved for members of the other races".[65] The guidelines for evolving policies for dealing with the coffee-cart traders thus were set by the apartheid-inspired goal of eliminating Black traders from White areas. Although the activities of hawkers generally and coffee-cart traders in particular were not covered by the Native (Urban Areas) legislation, city officials clearly saw that "it is certainly contrary to the policy of the Native Affairs Department to allow Native hawkers and pedlars to trade indiscriminately in non-Native areas".[66] It was against such a backdrop that the war of the coffee-carts was waged.

The direct influence of central government on the downfall of coffee-cart trading was of minor significance. Indeed, the only direct intervention occurred in October 1960 when a meeting was held between Johannesburg officials and representatives of the Department of Bantu Administration and Development.[67] In this meeting the national government's wish to see the disappearance of the coffee-cart trade was conveyed to representatives of Johannesburg municipal authority. The meeting occurred during the lull in hostilities whilst the Medical

Officer of health was awaiting an assessment on the whole matter of street trading in Johannesburg. In re-emphasizing that Blacks could only trade within their own residential areas and that coffee-carts had to be removed, the officials of central government merely confirmed the death sentence which already had been passed on the trade.

Unfair Trading

A critical factor in the downfall of coffee-cart trading was the complaints and pressures from licensed food establishments concerning the alleged 'unfair trading' practices of the coffee-carts. Over a period of two decades representations were made on behalf of the native eating house keepers that the carts were "competing unfairly" with their trade. The agencies pressing this view upon the municipal authority were the Witwatersrand Chamber of Reef Trade and the Industrial Council for the Native Trade. Meeting with City officials in 1960 the Chairman of both of these organizations stated that "his members were up in arms about the unfair competition by Native coffee cart traders and were in a militant mood about it"[68] threatening to send a deputation to the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development to discuss the matter.

Behind the cry of unfair trading was the worsening plight of the eating house keepers during the 1950s. Officials of the trade opined in 1950 that "the Eating House Trade has gone to the dogs during recent years".[69] Underlying the worsening position of eating houses was a series of factors, amongst which the "unfair practices" of coffee-cart traders was only one. Eating houses tended to be relatively high priced and "too expensive to cater regularly for any except a small section of better-paid Native workers".[70] While keepers of eating houses complained of their inability to compete with the coffee-carts because of the cost burden of complying with official regulations, their Black patrons commonly levelled allegations of "over-charging" and "exploitation" by unscrupulous keepers.[71] More damaging than the cost burden of official regulations was that eating houses were only permitted to trade between the hours of 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. and thus were not functioning at the peak early hours for Black workers entering the city. A further factor in the trade's stagnating situation was the insalubrious conditions of many eating houses, which garnered the unflattering acronym, Shisha Nyama - scorched or burned meat[72]

> For three pennies one got a piece of meat swilling in a thin, oily soup, and a large hunk of bread. The place itself belonged to the flies. Almost we, the humans, were there on sufferance. Flies walked over the resin-covere floor, copulated on the long benches and tables where the humans sat, blackening the ceiling, and made the windows opaque. They walked over the counter on which cooked meat was displayed. They fought and did their business on the meat. And their impudent drone filled the room and made it necessary for the humans to raise their voices when speaking. I, and all the others, often had to pick out dead and dying bodies that had fallen into our soup. Sometimes, if a person opened his mouth to put in food, a fly would shoot in. Really, 'The

> Burning Meat' belonged to the flies. But we had nowhere else to eat so the flies tolerated us.[73]

Surveys undertaken of eating houses by the city council underscore this graphic picture of the unattractiveness of Native eating houses to the Black urban worker: "Generally, the conditions under which food is stored, displayed, sold and consumed in eating houses is deplorable and the worst eating houses are filthy and revolting beyond description."[74]

The Native eating house trade of the 1950s was under threat from not only coffee-carts but also from the emergence of the fish and chip shop as an alternative licensed food outlet from which Blacks could obtain refreshments. A further threat to the trade of the eating houses appeared by 1960 with the beginnings of a trend towards the acceptance of the works canteen as a vehicle for the supply of foods to Black employees. Nevertheless eating house keepers placed the major blame for their weakening market situation upon the coffee-carts. The survey of the food purchasing habits of Black workers in Johannesburg, undertaken in 1960 by the city council, reveals the poor position of the Native eating houses in terms of the overall provision of food to Blacks[75] (Table 2). It is clear from the findings of the study that Native eating houses were threatened from many quarters and that their share of the potentially lucrative market for the supply of refreshments to Blacks had fallen to less than 12 per cent. As the coffee-carts constituted the major source of food to Black workers, they were an obvious target for grievance, particularly as their operators and patrons were largely voiceless in the halls of municipal power.

The arguments against the 'unlawful competition' of the coffee-carts were rehearsed regularly in both letters to and interviews with the City Council as well as statements made in the local press.[76] The Secretary of the association representing the eating-houses argued their case thus:

> The keepers of these establishments are subject to supervision by the health and licence inspectors and they are obliged to maintain their premises in a condition of scrupulous cleanliness; they have to pay licence fees and assessment rates as well as Union and Provincial taxes; they provide employment to a considerable number of persons, both White and non-White, and they pay wages on scales that are regulated by industrial agreement. The "coffee cart" trader, on the other hand, provides no such employment; his overhead expenses are negligible and his contribution to the State and city revenues is very small.[77]

The case against the coffee-cart traders was further strengthened in the view of the licensed food establishments by the legislation which prohibited blacks from trading in White areas. An editorial appearing in the 1963 issue of The National Tea Room and Caterer took the stance that:

> There is another question in mind: "Can a White person trade in a Black area?" The answer is NO. So on what grounds can the position be reversed?[78]

By the early 1960s another influential voice was added to the chorus of complaints of 'unfair trading' against the coffee-carts, viz., the voice of industry.[79] The opposition of industry to the coffee-carts grew with the gradual introduction of works canteens and the frequent boycotting of these canteens and patronage of coffee-carts by their Black workforce.[80] Behind this apparently paradoxical situation lay the practice of initiating works canteens primarily to improve the productivity of Black employees who were forced to accept subsidized feeding instead of wage increments.[81] Massive resentment at this situation prompted boycotts of works canteens. Moreover, dissatisfaction with factory working conditions in general, often was expressed in boycotts of feeding schemes.[82] Industrial management thus supported the removal of the coffee-carts in the belief that their clearance would reduce the potential for successful resistance to their schemes for introducing factory canteens. It was against this background that industry began to join hands with the licensed eating establishments in pressuring the municipal authority to undertake war on the coffee-carts on the grounds of unlawful competition.

Public Health and the Coffee-Carts

The saga of the demise of the coffee-carts bears witness to the continuing strength of public health administration - and more particularly, the significance of the sanitation syndrome - as a force shaping the fabric of the South African city. Notwithstanding the pressures from central government, industry and licensed food establishments for action to be taken against the coffee-cart traders, in the final analysis considerations of public health outweigh all other factors in accounting for the protracted war on the coffee-carts in Johannesburg.

The theme of the coffee-carts as a danger to public health is the one constant thread which runs through the war on the traders. From the beginnings of the campaign against the trade with the withdrawal of licences in 1943, issues of public health have been of paramount importance. In 1951 the stand of the health department was once more reiterated as: "This Department has consistently held to the view that the conditions under which street trading in foodstuffs is carried on are primitive and unhygienic."[83] Adamant in their stance that the high standards which they had introduced into the Public Health By-Laws of Johannesburg be met by all groups in the city, it was stated firmly that:

> ... we, as a health department, can have no convincing and logical reply as to why a lesser standard of food trading premises is acceptable for each of the two sections of the population or differentiating between established premises and any elementary expedients provided merely to meet a particular demand for Natives.[84]

This attitude reflects the official mind-set that in planning the development of Johannesburg, the public health norms of the First World provide the model which city administrators strived to attain. In refusing to compromise on the health regulations by introducing certain minimum standards of control with which the coffee-carts might have

complied, credence is given to the view that the local administration of Blacks was largely a matter of 'regulating' rather than stimulating the social development of the community. At a more fundamental level, the refusal to alter the health control regulations reflected also that "Johannesburg municipal councillors do not know how the Native workers live, and do not apply their minds to the problems of the Native communities."[85]

The charges brought forth against the coffee-cart trade ranged from the barely justifiable to the totally absurd. The pervasive impress of the sanitation syndrome upon the official mind is apparent in the claims that the coffee-carts were responsible for and threatened to cause outbreaks of the following epidemics: food poisoning, tuberculosis, plague, typhoid, and syphilis.[86] However, the only outbreak of disease substantiated in terms of being directly linked to the coffee-carts was some cases of food poisoning. Other claimed hazardous aspects of the coffee-cart trade included that carts were ideal breeding grounds for rats as well as being a fire risk, that dog meat occasionally was used to supplement the daily fare and that chipped or badly stained mugs used by traders were dried (if at all) with dirty cloths.[87] The health department (in 1950) was further aggrieved that:

> Water for cleaning purposes is seldom changed and it was observed in a survey which was undertaken that only two vendors used hot water. The carts are not cleaned out after the day's business, and inspections made before the pedlars arrive in the morning revealed that floors and cupboards were dirty and littered with scraps of food and paper. Some of the carts remain in the same place from one day to another and consequently dirt accumulates underneath and is only cleared when Municipal sweepers remove it. Two out of every three customers after drinking their tea throw the dregs in the mug on the pavement or into the gutter before putting it back on the cart. These dregs contain a certain amount of sugar, and consequently flies are attracted to the vicinity. Pieces of bread, cake and paper are dropped and waste paper is invariably thrown into the street or into the nearest stormwater drain.[88]

A decade later the objections of the health department to the coffee-carts were little changed:

> Why are we as health officials so averse to the continued activity of the coffee cart keepers? Let us enumerate some of the objections: the lack of adequate facilities for the washing of hands and utensils: the absence of facilities for the storage of clean water; the contamination of foodstuffs by dust and dirt from the streets and pavements; the absence of facilities for the disposal of waste water; the absence of water closet facilities for the stall-holders; the nuisance created by litter indiscriminately disposed of; the attraction of flies to exposed foodstuffs; the general insanitary conditions of the "carts"; the obstruction of pavements and alleged illegal activities, to some extent substantiated, of

> of liquor and dagga selling and the disposal of stolen goods.[89]

Against this array of objections on public health grounds the Queen of the Coffee Carts responded that:

> They say our carts are dirty and unhygienic. It is not true. No coffee cart owner keeps leftovers - we have no fridges. We make food only for one day and take our dishes home with us when we close up ... We have our own regulations for cleanliness.[90]

In reflecting upon the fall of coffee-cart trading it would be impossible to evaluate the truth of the myriad charges and counter-charges which were made concerning the health standards of the coffee-cart traders. What is significant, however, is that the theme of a public health danger overlay all other factors in accounting for the ultimate removal of the trade. The history of the demise of coffee-cart trading is a classic chapter in how the metaphor of the sanitation syndrome is imprinted upon the official mind and concomitantly is a vital factor moulding life in the South African city. What might be deemed almost as a 'colonial' attitude towards urban public health administration precluded the operation and further survival of coffee-cart trading in Johannesburg.

REPLACING THE COFFEE-CARTS

The 'problem' of the coffee-carts was not simply a question of their removal from the streets of Johannesburg. From the outset of its declared war on the coffee-carts municipal officialdom clearly acknowledged the essential role performed by the coffee-carts in the provision of vital foodstuffs and the necessity to search for some adequate replacement source of supply. The search for an acceptable substitute to the coffee-carts troubled the chambers of municipal authority in Johannesburg for over fifteen years. Between 1950 and 1965 a host of 'solutions' were proposed for the nutritious feeding of urban Black workers within the framework of apartheid policies. In surveying the array of suggested alternatives to the coffee-carts two themes stand out, however. The first concerns a racial shift in the operation of food supply alternatives, from some initial haltering efforts to involve Blacks to a situation of turning exclusively to White-run facilities. The second concerns an organizational shift, from reliance upon a combination of private enterprise and temporary Council initiatives to the encouragement of schemes for industrial catering by industry and commerce.

Black-Operated Facilities : From Mobile Carts to Fixed Stalls

The debates on replacing the coffee-carts were invariably dominated by proposals for White- rather than Black- operated substitute food supply ventures. Nonetheless, throughout the 1950s concern was vented for the need to offer alternative employment avenues to, at least, some of the soon-to-be-displaced traders.[91] In addition, it was felt that

Black involvement in the provision of food to their own people would gain support for the accompanying programme of excising the coffee-carts.[92] During the 1950s two sets of proposals crystallized for Black involvement in replacing the existing carts: first, as operators of an improved standard cart or mobile stall and second, as lessee of Council-owned food kiosks. Hopes of Black participation in any alternative food supply arrangement however were ended with the complete refusal of central government to sanction Black trading of any genre within the confines of the 'White' city.

The earliest plans for Black involvement in food supply alternatives heralded a return to the system operating between 1936 and 1943 when the Council approved a 'standard cart' for use by licensed traders at a limited number of fixed stands. But the unhappy experience of the public health department with the first approved standard carts caused this suggestion to be viewed "with much misgiving".[93] Specifically, it was held that difficulties would arise in maintaining standards, the cart might deteriorate rapidly, standards of cleansing decline and ultimately a renewed health hazard eventuate. In addition, it was considered that the standard cart would be "a bar to progressive development and improvement of food premises in this class of trade and a deterrent to private enterprise entering the field".[94] No further serious discussion occurred on this proposal after 1950. Nonetheless, suggestions for a modified system of mobile stalls surfaced again in the mid-1950s explicitly to accommodate the Black trader. Proposals were mooted for the development of a simple type of hand-propelled mobile stall, akin to the existing carts, but to be owned by the Council and licensed to selected Black traders.[95] To overcome objections on the grounds of lack of storage and adequate washing facilities, suggestions were put forth for the Council to erect communal storage depots.[96] At these communal depots storage would be available for both carts and foodstuffs and controlled facilities provided for the washing of mugs and utensils. In terms of the spatial distribution of coffee-cart trading in 1960, eleven communal depots, geographically dispersed throughout the industrial/commercial zones (fig. 1), were planned.[97] Notwithstanding the preparation of one report costing the scheme,[98] nothing further emerged from this proposal. The reason is, perhaps, not surprising in view of the admission that the main reason for the suggested communal depots was "a concession to public opinion".[99] Ultimately the scheme for mobile carts operating from communal depots met the same fate as that for fixed stalls in that it foundered on the rocks of central government disapproval.

The Council looked upon with greater favour several suggested schemes for the construction of special refreshment kiosks, built to its own specifications, for leasing to Black operators. This kind of proposal was always regarded as an interim measure to be implemented only until such time as 'private enterprise' could supply the necessary food outlets.[100] Nevertheless, proposals of this nature were first set down in 1950 and only finally discarded more than a decade later. The suggestion was for construction of a "telephone type" booth stall to comply with the minimal public health standards.[101] Kiosks would be linked both to the city's water and sewage networks and waste disposal effected by the city's rubbish collection service on normal rounds. Lessees of these kiosks would pay an economic monthly rental to the

Council with "preference to be given to eligible elderly Natives or incapacitated Natives now operating carts".[102] The location of the proposed kiosks would be underpinned by the principle that they should not 'compete unfairly' with existing private enterprise.[103]

Considerable attention and support was given to the scheme for leasing refreshment kiosks to Blacks at designated points in Johannesburg. However, the fact that Blacks were to be the trading principals meant that the permission of central government had to be obtained before the scheme could be operationalized.[104] The municipal authority approached the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development to seek the necessary approval. But in 1961 the following response was received from the Private Secretary to the Minister:

> I am directed by the Honourable the Minister, to inform you that, as explained to your Council's officials on the 6th October, 1960, it is firm policy in regard to the European areas that Bantu should not be permitted to trade outside their residential areas. Consequently the proposed kiosks could not be let to Bantu ... The fact that the letting of these kiosks to Europeans may lead to organised opposition and boycotts on the part of the present coffee-cart owners, cannot be permitted to influence the Minister's Department into agreeing to a departure from policy.[105]

The final deathknell for any proposal involving Blacks in the role of operators of kiosks sounded two years later when a crucial set of controls upon Black trading was issued in a circular[106] by the Department of Bantu Administration and Development. In the 'logic' of apartheid the refusal to permit Blacks to operate such refreshment kiosks was justified thus:

> ... the fact that Bantu have a monopoly of the trading in urban Bantu residential areas, not to mention the unlimited opportunities offered them in the Bantu homelands to the exclusion of all other racial groups, the refusal to alow Bantu to trade in the areas of other racial groups can be fully justified to any Bantu who may complain about this state of affairs.[107]

The 1963 circular on trading thus finally ended all proposals for Black-operated schemes to solve the wider feeding issues relating to the coffee-carts.

White-Operated Schemes : The Progressive Shift Towards Industrial Feeding

As the war of the coffee-carts began in earnest in 1950 the first thoughts of the municipal authority on the question of replacement facilities centred on the creation of a suitable environment for the operation of private enterprise.[108] The City Council would step in to provide temporary food supply services only in the event of private enterprise not entering the market. Progressively, however, there occurred a shift in the Council's position on food supply services with

more direct participation envisioned. Finally, the 'solution' to the wider issues of food supply to Johannesburg's Black workers was found in the encouragement of schemes of industrial catering. The story of the White-operated schemes is thus of the Council's progressive change in attitude from favouring private enterprise to direct participation to dependence upon industry and commerce to feed the city's Black workforce.

Reliance upon private enterprise meant principally that the Council looked towards the Native eating-house trade to expand and provide additional facilities to compensate for the loss of the coffee-carts.[109] In addition, the Council would encourage the further growth of the fish and chip shop and corner cafe as alternative food outlets for Blacks. To encourage the Native eating-house trade negotiations were set in motion to amend the necessary ordinances and permit longer opening hours for the trade.[110] But the major tool in encouraging private enterprise would be the ending of 'unfair trading' through the elimination of the coffee-carts.[111] The enthusiasm of the Council for supporting the growth of private enterprise was tempered by its concern for the unsatisfactory situation of most existing eating-houses in the city. It was recognized that the health standards in many establishments were equally as objectionable as those of the coffee-carts.[112] The claims of the eating-house trade that it could adequately meet the needs of the city's Black populace, if only the coffee-carts were cleared, were viewed with great suspicion.[113] It was apparent to municipal officials that many complaints were lodged concerning short change given to customers by eating-house keepers and that generally "the type of person operating the business was not always the best".[114] Finally, one further major impediment to the eating-houses as 'solution' to the problem of Black feeding was the simple lack of available sites for new establishments in the industrial areas of the city.[115] Although the encouragement of sufficient eating-houses was the preferred policy of central government, the municipal authority of Johannesburg considered several other options in terms of Black feeding.

That the Council should intervene directly itself in the food supply situation was always a considered, if not a preferred, option. Since at least the early 1940s the Council had been involved in the provision of refreshment services to Blacks through its restaurants in hostels and at the terminus of a Black bus service.[116] Efforts were made to establish similar facilities but militated against by the lack of suitable premises and high cost of land in the city. One area in which the Council did extend its food supply activities was in setting aside areas within municipal beer halls for leasing to private traders.[117] Suggestions by the Tea Bureau that the Council permit the construction of giant tea brewing plants within municipal beer halls were considered as offering a useful supplement to existing feeding facilities but ultimately exerting "no overall effect on the general question of the removal of the tea and coffee-carts from the streets".[118]

The impetus for Council involvement now became directed towards schemes for leasing kiosks to Black traders. However, with the growing realization of central government disapproval of this scheme, the emphasis changed to the planned leasing of kiosks first to a welfare organization and later to Whites as the trading principals. The pro-

posal for a welfare organization to operate the kiosks was put forward in order to circumvent government objections concerning Blacks as trading principals.[119] It was felt that an organization such as the YMCA would be admirably suited to operating this scheme. The advantages of this proposal were explained thus:

> A welfare organisation, not concerned with profit motives, would ensure prices being maintained at the lowest possible level, hence allegations of exploitation would be countered. Adequate and approved storage accommodation would be available at the organisation's headquarters. Bulk buying could take place for the large number of stalls envisaged, thereby also ensuring economy. Efficient hygienic supervision could be maintained by European personnel. The approved kiosks could be staffed by natives and pressure brought to bear on the welfare organisation to employ, wherever possible, those native women who as a pre-requisite to any controlled venture, would be compelled to abandon the existing coffee-carts.[120]

The likely objections of the existing eating houses to such a proposal would be met by ensuring that kiosks would not be located in areas where fixed food premises were available. Nevertheless, the proposal for the welfare organization to operate refeshment kiosks met with objections from the Department of Bantu Administration in 1960.[121] At this point, it was apparent that if the refreshment kiosks were ever to be established, the operators would have to be "Whites, possibly Coloureds, but certainly not Bantu".[122] The scheme for these refreshment kiosks was now re-moulded on the assumption of Whites only as principals. The planning of this scheme took shape with over 100 kiosks to be established in areas of the city in which licensed food establishments were not already in existence[123] (Fig. 2). But throughout the discussions which surrounded the kiosk scheme, opposition was mounted by both the Traffic Department and the City Engineer's Department objecting on the need to provide adequate water and drainage connections.[124] Despite several investigations into their potential operations, nothing ever came of the refreshment kiosk proposal. After nearly sixteen years under discussion the kiosk plan was finally abandoned in 1966 for two major reasons. First, that it was felt that the kiosks could never fully comply with the city's strict public health regulations. Second, and more important, that "the establishment of pavement kiosks would destroy the interests developed by commerce and industry in industrial feeding".[125] Indeed, the encouragement of employee food services was to be the Council's chosen 'solution' to the question of the coffee-carts and Black feeding.

Industrial Canteens and Industrial Feeding

The drive to catalyze Johannesburg industry and commerce into introducing employee food services was slow in gaining any momentum in the immediate post-war period. Although many firms began industrial canteens or other feeding schemes for their White workforce, few firms initiated parallel schemes for their Black employees. Indeed, only a

few large industries accepted the findings of those studies which suggested that the introduction of nutritious feeding arrangements might increase worker productivity. Considerable opposition towards the costs of initiating such feeding schemes was voiced particularly by small firms in Johannesburg as shown by a sample of opinion undertaken by the Council during 1950.[126] It was concluded from this study that if employee food services were ever to contribute towards a solution to the issue of Black food supplies, the obligation to provide such services would have to be made statutory. A further assessment on the question of canteen services for Blacks was undertaken in 1956. Again, it was felt that "employers should be encouraged to provide canteens for their Native employees and the latter should be encouraged to patronise them".[127] But, some of the difficulties of introducing factory canteens were clearly foreseen by this study, in which a a warning was issued that their establishment would "require careful planning and propaganda and the abolition of coffee carts in the vicinity, otherwise the natives are liable to boycott the canteen in favour of the carts".[128]

It was evident by 1960 that the Council's hope that a combination of more eating houses, fish and chip shops and the proposed kiosks would not adequately fulfil the demands of the city's ever-expanding Black workforce. It was against this backdrop that increasingly the Council began to favour a sustained campaign to encourage local industry and commerce to accept the concept of employee food services. The first formal approach made by the Council to local industrialists occurred in September 1960.[129] Shortly thereafter follow-up discussions were held with the Transvaal Chamber of Industries in which Council officials "pleaded" for the Chamber to initiate a propaganda effort among its Johannesburg membership on the advantages of industrial catering schemes.[130] There began an intensive campaign in which local businessmen were pressed to accept the viewpoint that feeding their Black workers could be profitable, in terms of raising productivity levels and reducing accidents and absenteeism, and yet, also relatively inexpensive.[131] The advantages of using cheap fortified soups, puza-mandhla (a fortified maheu) and meat concentrates (such as vigolene and rissolene) made from whale-meat, were much publicised. It appears by 1961 that there was some evidence of the success of this campaign. A contemporary report in the local newspaper noted that:

> The day of the bun and raspberry fizz lunch for Native workers is passing. The Non-European works canteen is appearing in more and more South African factories. Businessmen are being urged from several sides to counter the "11 a.m. sag" among non-white workers by feeding them in the early morning.[132]

By the mid-1960s the advantages of industrial feeding schemes were being stressed widely in articles appearing in the major trade journals of industry and commerce.[133] In addition, a number of firms had become established as specialist producers of high protein, low-cost foods and adding their weight to the propaganda message that industrial feeding raised production. In 1964 a further campaign was launched by the Council to encourage factories either to introduce works canteens on

their premises or otherwise participate in an industrial feeding scheme through the use of an outside contractor.[134] The fruits of this intensive drive were manifest by 1966 when the Council finally dropped its proposal for refreshment kiosks. In 1966 it could be reported that:

> Commerce and industry have taken an increasing interest in providing facilities for their own staff as evidence by:
> (i) The majority of plans for new factories submitted to the Council for approval have made provision for Non-European Canteens.
> (ii) A private concern has established a central kitchen in Braamfontein and a consortium of firms in Robertsham has established a kitchen to supply meals to the Bantu in industry. At present 1000 meals are being supplied through these channels and it is hoped that this number will be increased to 5000 in the future.[135]

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Beyond 1962 coffee-cart trading in Johannesburg began a precipitate decline as the municipal authority triumphed in its long struggle to remove a perceived health hazard from the city. Still unresolved at the death of the coffee-carts was the 'problem' of supplying adequate feeding sources for Black workers in the apartheid city.[136] Although the municipal fathers thought a final solution had been found in encouraging industrial canteens and catering for Black employees, the pace of development of these facilities was slow and geographically uneven throughout the city. Even as late as 1964 it could be averred that: "it is a staggering fact that in the industrial metropolis of Johannesburg there are few proper eating places for the people who constitute its main labour force".[137] In many industrial and commercial zones of Johannesburg the void left by the coffee-carts was filled by the cafe, the fish and chip frier or even the new 'institution' of the sandwich hawker rather than by the industrial canteen.[138] In other parts of the city, large groups of industrial workers simply went without refreshment in the aftermath of the coffee-cart's removal.[139] The Native eating house trade of the city experienced a minor, albeit a temporary, improvement but qualitative shortcomings militated against their assuming a position of major significance in the long-term supply of food to Johannesburg's Black workers. With the glacial rate of expansion of canteens and industrial catering systems the question of adequate arrangements for the supply of refreshments to the mass of the city's labour force continued into the 1970s as a thorny issue. Indeed, even to the present-day in certain areas of industrial Johannesburg, satisfactory facilities for the purchase of simple items of refreshment, formerly vended at coffee-carts, remain unavailable.

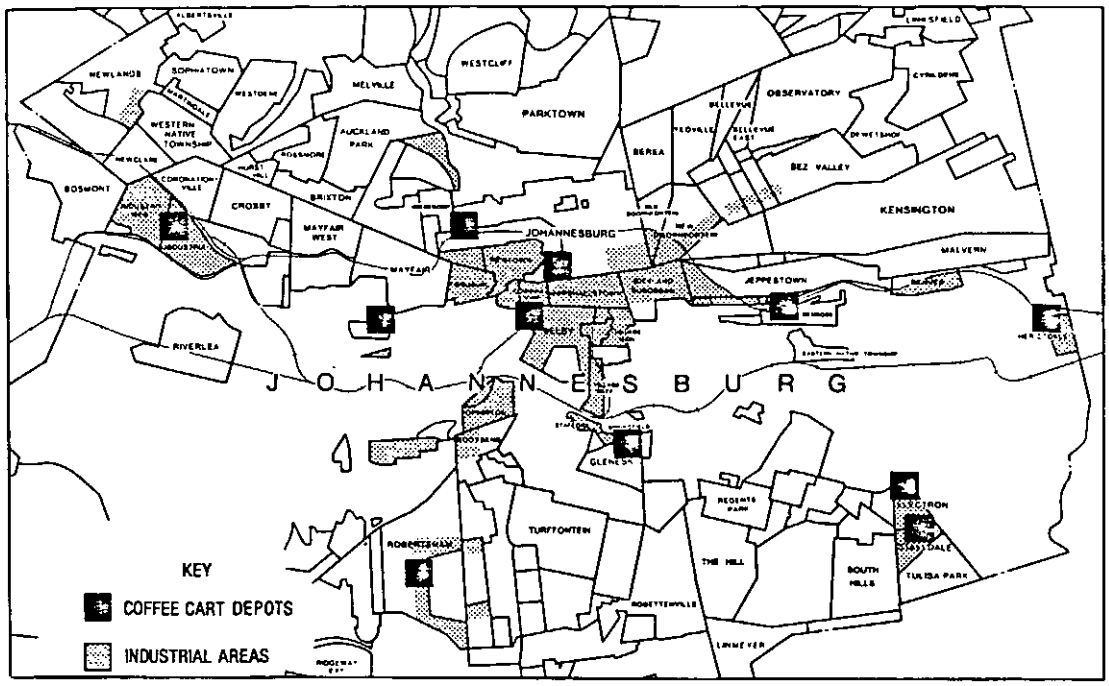


Fig. 1: The Location of Planned Communal Depots for Mobile Coffee-Carts in Johannesburg, 1960 (Source: CJPHD File 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts, Vol. 12 January, 1960 - August 1960').

Table 5.2: Patterns of Food Purchases of Johannesburg Black Workers by Place of Supply and Time of Day, 1960.

	Time of Purchase*												Total Purchases	
	Before Work No.	%	Tea Break No.	%	Lunch Break No.	%	Afternoon Tea No.	%	Way Home No.	%	Unknown		No.	%
From home	25	9.3	61	7.8	117	10.0	22	5.6	1	0.6	28		254	8.7
From employer	18	6.8	201	25.6	95	8.0	149	38.1	-	-	24		487	16.6
Canteen	23	8.6	72	9.2	75	6.4	39	10.0	1	0.6	6		216	7.4
Coffee cart	87	32.7	156	19.9	259	22.0	50	12.8	2	1.1	24		578	19.7
Native Eating House	37	13.9	68	8.7	174	14.8	40	10.2	6	3.4	14		339	11.5
Café	37	13.9	167	21.3	220	18.7	56	14.3	11	6.3	21		512	17.4
Fish and Chips shop	18	6.8	32	4.1	128	10.9	17	4.3	2	1.1	6		203	6.9
Beer hall	1	0.4	-	-	34	2.9	4	1.0	95	54.3	7		141	4.8
Street vendor	4	1.5	5	0.6	17	1.4	1	0.2	25	14.3	4		56	1.9
Backyard	6	2.3	1	0.1	8	0.7	2	0.5	22	12.6	1		40	1.4
Other	10	3.8	19	2.4	42	3.6	10	2.6	9	5.1	4		94	3.2
Unknown	-	-	2	0.2	6	0.5	1	0.2	1	0.6	6		16	0.5
Total	266		784		1,175		391		175		145		2,936	

*Note: Percentages do not always add up to 100 because of rounding.

Source: CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 16', 'Health Education and Nutrition of Bantu Employees'.

NOTES

1. This paper draws extensively from material contained in C M Rogerson, The Casual Poor of Johannesburg, South Africa: The Rise and Fall of Coffee-Cart Trading (Ph.D. thesis, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, 1983). The major archival source used in this study is the records and files of the City of Johannesburg Public Health Department (henceforth CJPHD). Grateful acknowledgement is due to Dr. C Richards, City Medical Officer of Health for Johannesburg, who granted permission for me to delve into these records.

2. Rand Daily Mail, 12/4/1964.

3. Libertas, November 1946, 48. Thanks are due to Professor A. Stadler for drawing my attention to this reference.

4. A full account of the operations of coffee-cart trading and their growth in the food supply system of Johannesburg is provided in Rogerson, The Causal Poor of Johannesburg especially 215-323, upon which this paragraph is based.

5. See for example, The Star, 16/1/1951.

6. The earlier success of this organization in terms of the demonstration of street traders in 1943 must, however, be noted. The organization stemmed from the years of licensing the coffee-carts and sought to regain the status of those early years. The association appears to have existed until 1950 after which it seems to have folded. See CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs, Vol. 2, 1/7/1950 - December 1950' which contains scattered information on this organization. The Association claimed to be registered under the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1937 but no record of such registration could be traced.

7. Little is known of the history of this particular grouping of coffee-cart traders except that it approached the city authorities to hire out tables and cooking conveniences within municipal premises for the preparation of foodstuffs for coffee-cart trading. See CJPHD 8/3/1 'Tea and Coffee Vendors 21/6/46 - 29/5/48, 'Memorandum of the Industria Helping Hand Coffee Cart Association on the Need of Municipal Premises at Industria to Meet the Present Requirements of Those Who Cater for the Large Masses Employed in This Area', 3/11/1949.

8. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers, and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs, Vol. 5, August 1951 - December 1952', Chief Health Inspector to Medical Officer of Health, 3/12/1951.

9. Ibid.

10. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs, Vol. 1, 9/9/48 - 1/7/50'. Joint Report by Medical Officer of Health and Acting Manager, Non-European Affairs Department to Health and Social Welfare Committee', 30/5/1950.

11. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs, Vol. 5, August 1951- December 1952', Chief Health Inspector to Medical Officer of Health, 3/12/1951.

12. CJPHD 8/3/5 'Hawkers and Pedlars Vol. 1, January 1951 - (1962?)', Memorandum of Acting Medical Officer of Health, January 1951.

13. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs, Vol. 3, January 1951 - April 1951', 'Notes on the Discussion which took place with Representatives of the South African Police at Jeppe Police Station at 10.30 a.m. on Friday 26th January, 1951'.

14. Ibid.

15. CJPHD 8/3/1 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 14, 1 May 1961 - 30 June 1962', M L Freedman 'Street Trading' 4/1/1961.

16. Ibid. and Rand Daily Mail, 15/8/1951.

17. Rand Daily Mail, 20/9/1951.

18. Information derived from CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and other Foodstuffs Vol. 7, August 1953 - May 1954'.

19. Ibid.

20. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs Vol. 8, 15/5/1954 - May 1955', 'Draft Report of Medical Officer of Health to Health and Social Affairs Committee'.

21. Information from a memorandum of the South Africa Police dated July 1954 contained in CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs Vol. 8, 15/5/1954 - May 1955'.

22. Examples of critical press comment include, inter alia, The Star, 17/7/1950, 16/1/1951 and 19/1/1951; Umteteli Wa Bantu, 27/1/1951.

23. Critical comments from these organizations were reported in CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs, Vol. 2, 1/7/1950 - December, 1950'.

24. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 14, 1 May 1961 to 30 June 1962', M L Freedman 'Street Trading'.

25. The Star, 5/3/1953.

26. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs, Vol. 2, 1/7/1950 - December 1950', Report by Medical Officer of Health 'Tea and Coffee vendors' (no date).

27. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs, Vol. 4, May 1951 - July 1951'. Memorandum titled 'Advantages of Commission', 25/5/1951.

28. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs, Vol. 3 January 1951 - April 1951', Report by Public Health Department 'Tea and Coffee Vendors' 3/4/1951, emphasis is mine.

29. CJPHD 8/3/1 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs, Vol. 2, 1/7/1950 - December 1950' Report by Medical Officer of Health 'Tea and Coffee Vendors' (no date).

30. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 1, 1 May 1961 - 30 June 1962', M L Freedman 'Street Trading' quote on p. 21.

31. The profusion of names makes the precise genesis of the organization difficult to determine. Vundla (1973, p. 25) writes that in 1950 Regina Gqiba "became first president of the Coffee Cart Association".

32 Interview, Attorney A Siritzky, Johannesburg, 3/3/1983.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid. Great sympathy towards the issuance of licences to the coffee cart traders was, however, shown by the department of the Receiver of Revenue.

39. The Star, 30/5/1956 and Rand Daily Mail, 31/10/1956.

40. Rand Daily Mail, 31/7/1956.

41. Ibid. The tactics of police included the confinement of traders not at the closest police station to make problematic their release after arrest. Interview, Attorney A Siritzky, Johannesburg, 3/3/1983.

42. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 14, 1 May 1961 to 30 June 1962', M L Freedman 'Street Trading' p 22.

43. Ibid.

44. Interview, Attorney A Siritzky, Johannesburg, 3/3/1983.

45. The World, 12/12/1956.

46. Rand Daily Mail, 1/4/1958.

47. The Star, 31/3/1958.

48. The Star, 22/12/1959.

49. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 14, 1 May 1961 to 30 June 1962', M L Freedman 'Street Trading' p. 23.

50. Interview, Attorney A Siritzky, Johannesburg, 3/3/1983.

51. Minutes, Johannesburg City Council, 29/1/1963.

52. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 14, 1 May 1961 - 30 June 1962', M L Freedman 'Street Trading'.

53. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 13, November 1960 - April 1961', 'Control of Coffee Carts: Legal Aspects' (no date).

54. M L Freedman, 'The problem of prohibition and control of illegal street trading in the urban areas of the Transvaal' Public Health 61 (December 1961) 13.

55. The World, 29/1/1963.

56. Interview, Attorney A Siritzky, Johannesburg, 3/3/1983.

57. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 15, July 1962 - June 1964', 'Coffee Carts: The State versus Agnes Rantoi'.

58. Ibid. "... dat iemand wat in hierdie land handel drywe in alledaagse verbruiksgoedere soos verversings onder minstens een van die 21 soorte handelslisensies tuisgebring moet kan word." Thanks are due to Mike Proctor and Gordon Pirie for assistance in the translation.

59. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 15 July 1962 - June 1964', Clerk of the Council to Medical Officer of Health 27/2/1964.

60. Interview, Attorney A Siritzky, Johannesburg, 3/3/1983.

61. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 15, July 1962 - June 1964', 'Street Trading: Coffee Carts', 1963.

62. Ibid.

63. CJPHD 8/3/1 'Hawkers and Pedlars - General Vol. 2, June 1962 - February 1967', Minutes of a meeting on street trading, 14/4/1964.

64. The World, 31/7/1964.

65. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs Vol. 9, June 1955 - April 1957', Acting Town Clerk to Medical Officer of Health 'Native Traders and Native Trading in European Areas', 10/2/1956 and attached circular 513/313 Secretary of Native Affairs to all local authorities in Union 'Use of Native Employees in Urban Areas', 8/6/1954.

66. Ibid.

67. CJPHD 8/3/8 'Tea and Coffee Carts: Survey 1960 Vol. 1', Minutes of Council Deputation to the Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Held at Pretoria on the 6th October, 1960, to Discuss Coffee-Carts.

68. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts, Vol. 12, January 1960 - August 1960', Memorandum titled 'Coffee Carts' (no date).

69. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs Vol. 2, 1/7/1950 - December 1950', Memorandum re: Tea and Coffee Vendors, 5/12/1950.

70. Letter, Senator H Basner, The Star 17/7/1950.

71. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 14, 1 May 1961 - 30 June 1962', M L Freedman 'Street Trading'.

72. Libertas, November 1946, 48.

73. P. Abrahams, Tell Freedom (London, 1964) 186.

74. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Tea and Coffee Vendors: 21/6/46 - 29/5/48', 'Survey of Coffee Carts and Refreshment Facilities for Native Workers', 1948, 3. p. 11.

75. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 16, July 1964 - June 1968', 'Health Education and Nutrition of Bantu Employees'.

76. On the pressures exerted by organizations acting on behalf of the eating house keepers see the following examples, The Star, 4/3/1960 and 20/12/1960 Rand Daily Mail, 7/3/1961. Letters from the Witwatersrand Chamber of Reef Trade and the Industrial Council for the Native Trade appear several of the CJPHD 8/3/2 series.

77. Letter, H Austin, Secretary, Witwatersrand Chamber of Reef Trade, The Star, 20/12/1960.

78. The National Tea Room and Caterer, August 1963, p. 1.

79. The complaints of industry are to be found in the files of the CJPHD series 8/3/2 especially Vols. 15 and 16.

80. C Keyter, Industrial Feeding of African Workers (Johannesburg, 1962)

81. E Wix, 'Industrial Feeding', Race Relations Journal 20 (2), 1-22, 1953; C Keyter, Industrial Feeding and J P O'Connel Employee Food Services in South Africa (Pretoria, 1967). p. 13.

82. J P O'Connell, Employee Food Services in South Africa, Department of Agricultural Economics and Marketing Economic Series No. 62, 1967, especially pp. 4-5.

83. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs Vol. 5, August 1951 - December 1952,' Chief Health Inspector Report to Medical Officer of Health 'Tea and Coffee Vendors' 3/12/1951.

84. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs Vol. 3, January 1951 - April 1951', Chief Health Inspector to Medical Officer of health 24/4/1951.

85. Letter, H M Basner, The Star, 17/7/1950.

86. The list of diseases has been compiled from scattered material contained in CJPHD 8/3/2 series.

87. The list of hazards again draws on various material in the CJPHD files; also Rand Daily Mail, 27/6/1959 for the charge that dogs were used in pies.

88. Minutes, Johannesburg City Council, 25/7/1950.

89. Freedman, 'The problem of prohibition and control' op cit, 13.

90. Rand Daily Mail, 15/2/1963.

91. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs, Vol. 1, 9/9/48 - 1/7/50'. Joint Report by Medical Officer of Health and Acting Manager, Non-European Affairs Department 30/5/1950.

92. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts, Vol. 12 January 1960 - August 1960', Report on Street Trading, 21/1/1960.

93. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs Vol. 5, August 1951 - December 1952', Chief Health Inspector to Medical Officer of Health, 3/12/1951.

94. Ibid.

95. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 12 January 1960 - August 1960', Report on Street Trading, 21/1/1960.

96. CJPHD 8/3/8 'Tea and Coffee Carts: Survey 1960 Vol. 1' Proposed Report of Medical Officer of Health to City Health Committee on Street Trading (no date, 1960/).

97. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 12, January 1960 - August 1960', Chief Health Inspector to Medical Officer of Health, 1/2/1960.

98. Ibid.

99. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 12 January 1960 - August, 1960', Minutes from City Health Committee Meeting 27/7/1960.

100. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs Vol. 3, January 1951 - April 1951', Chief Health Inspector to Medical Officer of Health 24/4/1951.

101. Ibid.

102. Ibid.

103. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 14, 1 May 1961 - 30 June 1962', Report titled 'Street Trading: Coffee Carts' (no date).

104. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 14, 1 May 1961 - 30 June 1962', Extract from Report of Town Clerk's Department Management Committee Meeting 26/9/1961.

105. Ibid.

106. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 15, July 1962 - June 1964', Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Pretoria, Circular Minute No. A12/1-A8/1 'Allocation of Trading Rights to Bantu and the Provision of Cinema Facilities in Urban Bantu Residential Areas', 14/2/1963.

107. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 15 July 1962 - June 1964', Secretary for Bantu Administration and Development to the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Johannesburg 24/6/1963.

108. See for example, Minutes, Johannesburg City Council, 25/7/1950.

109. Rand Daily Mail, 17/7/1950.

110. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs Vol. 1, 9/9/48 - 1/7/50', Joint Report by Medical Officer of Health and Acting Manager, Non-European Affairs Department, 30/5/1950.

111. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs Vol. 9, June 1955 - April 1957', Report by Medical Officer of Health 'Tea and Coffee Carts', May 1956.

112. CJPHD 8/3/8 'Tea and Coffee Carts: Survey 1960 Vol. 1', Non-European Affairs Department 'Memorandum on the Problems Surrounding the Operation and Elimination of Native Coffee Carts in the European Areas of the City', 9/12/1960.

113. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 12, January 1960 - August 1960', Extract from Minutes of City Health Committee, 27/7/1960.

114. Ibid.

115. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs Vol. 1, 9/9/48 - 1/7/50', Manager Non-European Affairs Department to Town Clerk, 5/8/1949.

116. Ibid.

117. CJPHD 8/3/8 'Tea and Coffee Carts: Survey 1960 Vol. 1', Proposed Report of Medical Officer of Health to City Health Committee on Street Trading (no date 1960?).

118. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs Vol. 5, August 1951 - December 1952', Chief Health Inspector to Medical Officer of Health 3/12/1951.

119. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 14, 1 May 1961 to 30 June 1962', M L Freedman 'Street Trading'.

120. Ibid., quote on p. 13.

121. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Tea and Coffee Carts: Survey 1960 Vol. 1', Council Deputation to the Department of Bantu Administration and Development, Held at Pretoria on the 6th October 1960 to Discuss Coffee Carts.

122. Minutes, Johannesburg City Council, 29/1/1963.

123. Ibid.

124. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol., 16, July 1964 - June 1968', Medical Officer of Health to Manager, Non-European Affairs Department 3/1/1966.

125. Ibid.

126. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and other Foodstuffs Vol. 5, August 1951 - December 1952', Chief Health Inspector to Medical Officer of Health, 3/12/1951.

127. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers and Pedlars, Tea, Coffee and Other Foodstuffs Vol. 9, June 1955 - April 1957', Report by Medical Officer of Health 'Tea and Coffee Carts', May 1956.

128. Ibid.

129. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 14, 1 May 1961 - 30 June 1962', M L Freedman 'Street Trading'.

130. Ibid.

131. The Star, 30/11/1960 and Rand Daily Mail, 13/1/1961.

132. The Star, 14/1/1961.

133. See for example, The Manufacturer, August 1963; Commercial Opinion, September, 1965.

134. Rand Daily Mail, 12/4/1964 and The Star, 19/11/1965.

135. CJPHD 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts Vol. 16, July 1964 - June 1968', Medical Officer of Health to Manager, Non-European Affairs Department 3/1/1966.

136. See for example The Star 2/9/1964.

137. Rand Daily Mail, 12/4/1964.

138. J P O'Connell, Employee Food Services in South Africa (Pretoria, 1967) and CJPHD, 8/3/2 'Hawkers: Tea and Coffee Carts, Vol. 16 July 1964 - June 1968', especially 'Minutes of Non-European Affairs Committee, 24/11/1965.

139. Rand Daily Mail, 27/11/1965.