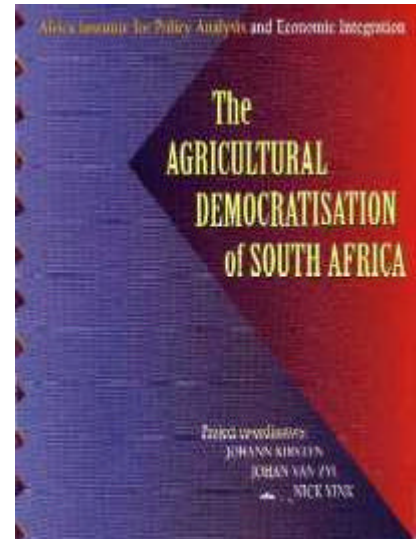


Agricultural Democratisation of South Africa

Available at Tuks Bookshop

Foreword

This book is a product of AIPA's ongoing research concerning the economic democratisation of South Africa through the programmed integration of black South Africans into the mainstream sectors of the South African economy. In addition to agriculture, AIPA's research covers manufacturing, mining and the labour market, urban development processes and the integration of blacks into urban economies, and supportive infrastructure and services. An important key feature of the programme is the development, in response to market requirements, of skills in disadvantaged communities. The implementation of the integration process could thus be facilitated by drawing on these skills to bring black people into the economy, encourage economic growth and consequently expand employment opportunities. The aim is to establish a non-racial society, and the economic empowerment of black people is a means to do this.



Agricultural Democratisation of South Africa identifies and appraises historical perspectives of the origins of racial segregation and white domination in the South African economy with particular reference to the agricultural/rural sector and the problems arising therefrom. The appraisal shows that the dispossession and proletarianisation of black farmers originated around the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to eliminate competition against high-cost white farmers from low-cost black farmers/peasants and to provide increasing supplies of low-wage black workers to the expanding mining industry. To protect their interests, the white commercial farmers and gold producers formed 'the gold and maize alliance', which negotiated and reached agreement on the maintenance of white political and economic domination over blacks. This alliance was preceded by and built on the Glen Grey Act of 1894, which created large-scale white-owned farms and manorial white settler estates that were developed and sustained by cheap black labour and/or black tenant farmers, and was followed by a series of anti-black farmer restrictive legislation and other measures, all of which led to the destruction of black, and particularly African, farming. Legislative measures included the Natives' Land Act of 1913 - consolidated by the 1936 Land Act - which limited the areas where blacks could live and own small-holdings to around 8 per cent of the total land surface of agricultural land; the Native Authorities Act of 1951; and the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act of 1959, which artificially created 'black states' delineated on a tribal basis. While black farmers were subjected to debilitating legislation and regulations, white farmers were being assisted through such instruments as the Land and Agricultural Bank - established in 1912 to provide concessionary credit to whites; the Cooperative Societies Act of 1922; and the Marketing Act of 1937. Between 1910 and 1935 there were 87 acts passed to protect and support white farmers.

The authors conclude their overview of the history of disempowerment by focusing on the developments from the 1960s to the early 1990s when the essence of the macro-economic strategy formulated and implemented by the white authorities was the promotion across sectors - agriculture, manufacturing, services, etc. - of capital-intensive technology rather than labour-intensive and job-creating schemes. The objective was to lessen dependence on black labour and entrepreneurs in all sectors of the formal mainstream economy.

Through keeping the exchange rate artificially high, importation of capital was made relatively cheap; hence, there was an increase in capital:labour ratios and capital intensive mega-corporations. Consequently, it was unnecessary to invest in the development of black skilled workers and in the building of the capacities of black entrepreneurs, managers and administrators. The results of this strategy are apparent in the South African economy today: rising black unemployment and underemployment in the Informal urban sectors and in the rural subsistence sector; the paucity of black skills; the paucity of competitive independent black farmers and business people in modern production and distribution; and inadequate rates of economic growth.

The agenda proposed in the book is, *par excellence*, a comprehensive programme of action for the economic democratisation of the agricultural sector, which together with similar programmes being formulated for other sectors will have positive multiplier effects throughout the economy. The book focuses on the following subject areas:

Land reform and the development of water rights to achieve equality in the agricultural and rural sectors.

- Improved access for blacks, and particularly Africans, to support services and extension facilities.
- The provision of agricultural finance to blacks.
- Improved access for blacks to adequate and relevant agricultural inputs.
- Ensuring that the facilities and results of agricultural research are available to Africans.
- Increased investment in black agricultural skills at the levels of farmers, workers, managers and administrators.

It is commendable reading.

BAX D. NOMVETE

Executive Director AIPA

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