



EFF STATEMENT ON THE 111 YEARS OF THE NATIVES LAND ACT OF 1913

Wednesday, 19 June 2024

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) remembers that today, the 19th of June 2024, marks One Hundred and Eleven (111) years since the passing of the Natives Land Act 27 of 1913. This piece of legislation solidified land dispossession and led to forced removals at a scale not seen anywhere in the world before. It confined African people to a mere 7% of the land, and reserved over 90% of the land to European land invaders and the State. This was a culmination of a series of other pieces of law passed since the British took over control of the 'Cape' in 1806.

The first Governor of the Cape after the British took over control in 1806 was Earl Caledon, and one of the very first pieces of legislation passed under him was the Caledon Code, widely known as the Hottentot Code of 1809. This code sought to restrict freedom of movement for the Khoe and forced them into indentured labour on white-owned farms, acquired through violent expropriation of the land from the Khoe. It required the Khoe to have a fixed address, and to carry passes wherever they went, and empowered white farmers to demand passes from the Khoe at any given time.

The code was further strengthened by another proclamation made in 1812, the Apprenticeship and Servants Proclamation. This compelled children of the Khoe to be indentured to white farmers without pay if these children were born on the farms, or if they were orphaned, which happened frequently. Most importantly, in 1813, John Cradock, through another proclamation, abolished the system of loan farms that had been introduced by the Dutch, and introduced a system of freehold title to land through a system of quitrent system. This system also excluded the native population and was designed for European land invaders to accumulate.

A whole range of other laws were introduced in the British colonies of the Cape and Natal, as well as in the Boer Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, whose core element was to keep African people on the periphery of land ownership in the territories. The two Boer Republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal granted franchise to adult whites without any qualification, and granted none to African people. In the Cape, franchise was granted to Africans on the basis of land ownership, while the colony did everything in their power to limit land ownership by Africans. The Transvaal Constitution of 1858 specifically excluded African people from citizenship, cementing their role as mere providers of cheap labour. Other laws prior to the enactment of the 1913 Natives Land Act included;

- The 1849 Grondwet of the South African Republic provided that Africans were not allowed to reside near town lands except with Volksraad permission.
- Volksraad Resolution 159 of 1855 provided that non-burghers could not own fixed property and coloured persons could not become burghers.
- Volksraad Resolution 104 of 1871 provided that no erf-holder in any new village shall be entitled to allow the congregating of coloured persons on his erf except for employees.
- Free State Ordinance 5 of 1876 dealing with the right of coloureds, precluded them from owning property unless one parent of the person was white.

These laws were followed by other laws relating to regulating or, banishing Africans from voting, such as the Franchise and Ballot Act of 1892, the Squatters Law Act of 1895 in the then Orange Free State, the Glen Grey Act of 1894, the Natives Reserves Location Act of 1902, the Crown Land Disposal Ordinance of 1903, and many other pieces of legislation. All these legislations from across the four territories shared in their common contempt and debasement of Africans as human-beings that are worthy of land rights. This dispels the notion cemented in Section 25(7) of the Constitution that recognises land dispossession only from 1913.

The Natives Land Act of 1913 was a consolidation of all these laws, and cemented the status of African people as ‘not only slaves, but pariahs in the land of their own birth’. The Act effectively banned Africans from buying and owning land anywhere other than in their designated reserves which in time became degraded as a result of overcrowding. Moreover, the Act banned squatting which had been used by dispossessed natives to sustain themselves by using land which was previously theirs, but not officially owned by white land invaders.

The Act further abolished sharecropping between Africans and the now white settler ‘owners’ of the land. In terms of this Act, Africans could be present in white farms only if they were wage labourers, and all those who fell outside the prescripts of this Act were evicted from the farms.

The government of the African National Congress (ANC) has done very little to reverse the devastating impacts of these laws over the past 30-years. To add to the disastrous aftermath of African land dispossession, the ANC has now colluded with the white beneficiaries of African land disposition. The Grand Coalition between the ANC and the Democratic Alliance (DA) will now prolong African landlessness. South Africa’s historical injustices will never be addressed until the people stand up and kick the representatives of colonialism out of government.

The EFF remains steadfast as the only party of land and the revolution, and will spare no effort to ensure that African people reclaim their land from the land thieves who have swallowed the ANC and become part of government. This day is a glaring reminder that the former liberation movement has betrayed the people of South Africa. We are now left with no other option but to intensify the fight for land, economic emancipation and the true liberation of our people.

ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Leigh-Ann Mathys (National Spokesperson) 082 304 7572

Thato Lebyane (Media Inquiries) 078 563 1581

✉ communications@effonline.org
🌐 <http://www.effonline.org>

✖ @EFFSouthAfrica
📷 @EFFSouthAfrica

📘 Economic Freedom Fighters
🎵 @EFFSouthAfrica