

MINUTES OF BLACK SASH NATIONAL CONFERENCE HELD FROM 15TH to 18TH MARCH 1984  
in JOHANNESBURG.

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The opening meeting of Conference took place on the evening of 15th March at St. Martin's Church, Rosebank, and was addressed by the National President, Mrs. Sheena Duncan, and by Mrs. Mana Slabbert of the University of Cape Town. Mrs. Jill Wentzel, Chairman of the Transvaal Region, was in the Chair. (The National President's address is Conference Document No. 1).

FRIDAY 16TH MARCH

The first business session began at Khotso House at 9 a.m on Friday 16th March.

PRESENT : Jean Sinclair, Honorary Life President of the Black Sash

In the Chair	Sheena Duncan	National President
	Joyce Harris	National Vice-President
	Ethel Walt	National Vice-President

DELEGATES.

<u>Headquarters</u>	Jill Wentzel	Magazine Editor
	Audrey Coleman	Treasurer
	Julia Heaney	Secretary

<u>Transvaal</u>	Josie Adler	
	Merle Beetge	
	Gill De Vlieg	
	Glenda Glover	
	Judith Hawarden	
	Dawn Ingle	
	Laura Pollecutt	
	Beulah Rollnick	
	Beryl Stanton	
	Joanne Yawitch	
	Mary Harrop Allin - alternating with Annica Van Gylswyk	Pretoria.

<u>Pretoria Observers</u>	Verna Brown,	
	Hilde Collenbrander	
	Elaine Eyre	
	Monica Wilson	

<u>Cape Western</u>	Mary Burton	
	Jenny de Tolley	
	Lyn Jackson	
	Sue Joynt	
	Margaret Nash	
	Noel Robb	
	Beverley Runciman	

<u>Cape Town Observers</u>	Di Bishop	
	Joan Grover	

Natal Coastal/---

DELEGATES CONT/---

		<u>Alternates</u>
<u>Natal Coastal</u>	Ann Colvin Jill Nicholson Solvoig Piper Irna Senekal	Libby Collins Ann Evans Caroline Shaw Georgina Stevens.
<u>Natal Midlands</u>	Marie Dyer Beth Franklin Pessa Weinberg	
<u>Cape Eastern</u>	Tessa Branch Molly Blackburn	
<u>Border</u>	Ronal Scheffers	
<u>Albany</u>	Betty Davenport Sarah Christie	

Many observers from Johannesburg attend conference sessions.

APOLOGIES : Bobby Melunaky (Cape Eastern).

Conference stood in silence in memory of those who have died in detention.

THE DEDICATION was read by the National President

WELCOME Jill Wentzel, Chairman of Transvaal welcomed all delegates to Johannesburg.

THANKS were expressed by Mary Burton, Chairman of Cape Western.

MESSAGES of greeting from S.A.C.C., U.D.F., Ulrike Johans and Mr. -Richard Thoms were received

PHOTOGRAPHS Jill Wentzel announced that Gill De Vlieg would be taking photographs during conference.

PRESS COMMITTEE WAS APPOINTED AS FOLLOWS :

Joyce Harris as convenor, Josie Adler, Di Bishop, Irna Senekal, Beth Franklin, Sarah Christie, Tessa Branch.

THE RULES OF PROCEDURE were noted but not adhered to.

THE MINUTES OF THE 1983 National Conference, which had been circulated to all Regions were adopted and signed as correct.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES. It was agreed that those would be dealt with in the Headquarters report and as they arose on the agenda.

A brief free discussion took place on matters not on the agenda.  
The following concerns were raised :

The Black Sash is weak in its understanding of economic issues and systems ; the class struggle and electronic media ; the uniform tax system - a need was expressed for the Black Sash to produce informative material ; reform euphoria is hiding the fact that there are more detentions, not less ; three accused appearing in the Pietermaritzburg Supreme Court in leg irons and the atmosphere of fear and hysteria in and around the Court ; SADF members in a Cape Flats creche ; inequality of incomes, exploitation and repression ; the fact that overseas visitors to South Africa are ill informed and shielded from the evidence of apartheid ; the threatened removal of Mgwali ; the inevitable explosive of violence in communities.

THE HEADQUARTERS REPORTS.

The Headquarters report was presented by Joyce Harris (Conference Document No. 2)

Sheena Duncan pointed out that the work which the Black Sash does is not the work of any individual but the product of the whole organisation working as a team. High profile office bearers would not have anything whatsoever to say if it were not for the work done by all the active members, in the fund raising activities, the advice offices, resettlement areas etc., She thanked Joyce for compiling and presenting the report.

Mary Burton congratulated Joyce and said the section in the report on matters arising from the minutes was very useful indeed.

Headquarters was thanked for information sent out during the year.

Noel Robb asked whether the Headquarters committee was separate from the Regional committee. It was explained that there is only one committee for both but agendas and minutes are divided into Regional concerns and National concerns.

The Treasurers Report was presented by Audrey Coleman (Conference Document No. 3.)

She proposed an increase in the price of the magazine to R1.90 per copy.

An amendment that the price should be R2.00 was proposed by Laura Pollecutt, seconded by Judith Hawarden and was passed unanimously.

The Treasurer said that there is no need to increase the levy on Regional members at the moment.

The adoption of the report was proposed by Joyce Harris, seconded by Ethel Walt, and carried.

The Magazine Report was presented by Jill Wentzel (Conference Document No. 4.)

She requested delegates to decide whether the conference booklet "Law without Justice" which Cape Western had produced after the 1983 conference had been useful and whether such a document should be produced this year, and if so whether it should replace the May 1984 issue of the magazine or be published as well as the magazine.

Delegates reported that the booklet had been most useful in the Regions. Discussion centred around the means of distribution and who would do the work required to produce it this year.

It was decided that a publication summarising the 1984 conference should be produced, that it should not replace the magazine but should be ready in time to be mailed out with the May issue of the magazine.

A sub-committee was formed with the following regional representatives to prepare the material which will be co-ordinated and printed in Cape Town. Headquarters will pay the costs involved.

Josie Adler, Jilian Nicholson, Beth Franklin, Tessa Branch, Joyce Brown, Margaret Nash, Sue Joynt, Ronel Scheffers, Betty Davenport.

The magazine report was adopted ; proposed by Solveig Piper, seconded by Mary Burton, with warm congratulations to Jill Wentzel and to Joyce Brown on the excellence of SASH.

REGIONAL REPORTS

Written reports had been circulated to delegates. Regions were asked to speak to them briefly.

Border. Renal Scheffers reported that Border had not submitted a written report. They have only 6 active members, most of them have full time jobs. All they can do is to try to maintain the Black Sash presence in a very volatile and politically sensitive region.

The Black Sash had been the only "white" organisation in East London to be invited to the launching of the UDF.

Cape Eastern (Conference Document No. 5.) was presented by Molly Blackburn.

Albany (Conference Document No. 6.) was presented by Betty Davenport.

Natal Midlands (Conference Document No. 7.) was presented by Pessa Weinberg who said the membership figure should read 75, not 70.

Beth Franklin drew attention to the dumping of milk which took place in Pietermaritzburg in 1983.

Natal Coastal (Conference Document No. 8.) was presented by Solveig Piper.

Ann Colvin mentioned the ripple effects of protests on issues. Sarah Burns presented the report of the Highway Branch which intends to concentrate on Court Monitoring and removals in the coming year.

The essay prize project for school children continues to be successful.

Cape Western (Conference Document No. 9.) was presented by Mary Burton.

Transvaal (Conference Document No. 10.) was presented by Jill Wentzel.

The Pretoria Branch report (Conference Document No. 11.) was presented by Mary Harrop-Allin who said the branch was now ten years old with 24 members and is needing new members urgently, particularly people who would work in the advice office. A membership drive is being conducted.

In the discussion which followed these reports Di Bishop asked if the Department of Foreign Affairs brought overseas visitors to advice offices in other regions. Some have been to the Cape Town office. It has been the experience in Johannesburg that visitors brought to South Africa by the Department or by the S.A. Foundation or S.A. Forum only arrange to come to the Black Sash if they themselves insist that we be included in their programmes.

Margaret Nash reminded Conference that 1984 will see the 100th Anniversary of the Conference of Berlin which set the Colonial boundaries for Africa.

Mila Zille undertook to obtain information on this for possible action in the Regions later in the year.

Joyce Harris congratulated all the Regions on the impressive work they had done during the year.

Greetings Messages were sent by Conference to Gita Dyzenhaus and Marian Lacey, both of whom were much missed.

Fellow workers in Khotso House joined delegates for an informal lunch.

ADVICE OFFICE REPORTS/—



ADVICE OFFICE REPORTS.

East London. There was no written report from Border. Their advice office closed down in June 1983 when they were given notice to vacate the premises they had been using by the Trinity Methodist Church. This development co-incident with the establishment of an advice centre at the Masazane Open School in East London. The Border Region is not strong enough to maintain an advice office at the moment.

Port Elizabeth. (Conference Document No. 12.) The work done in this office is growing rapidly. It is now open on Thursdays and Saturdays. Molly Blackburn reported on the case of a young man who was refused permission to live in Port Elizabeth with his aged mother who is dependent upon him. He had asked as an after thought if it made any difference that he holds Springbok colours for boxing.

Grahamstown. (Conference Document No. 13.) This office is receiving many queries related to poverty, U.I.F. and pension complaints. They work in close co-operation with the Rhodes University Law Clinic.

A proclamation of 1970 which removes the jurisdiction of Industrial Council Agreements from black areas and townships means that workers in those areas may be paid pitifully low wages. It is not uncommon in Grahamstown to find women working in the townships who are paid only 35 cents an hour.

Pietermaritzburg. (Conference Document No. 14.) This office has had to extend its hours and is in urgent need of more voluntary workers. U.I.F. is the greatest problem due to the fact that there have been many retrenchments in the area.

Durban. (Conference Document No. 15.) There has been an enormous increase in the number of people who have no work.

U.I.F. and pensions in Kwa Zulu are the greatest problems and are dealt with in separate papers as well as in the advice office report.

Only 5% of Durban's black population lives in the prescribed area. The rest are in Kwa Zulu townships. No Transkeian citizen is permitted to work in the Durban area unless they were already there before 1976 or unless they become citizens of Kwa Zulu. The granting of such citizenship has to be agreed to by the S.A. government and is very limited.

Lamontville is due to be incorporated into Kwa Zulu and residents are being misled as to their Section 10 rights and future status as contract workers.

Section 10 rights cease to exist once a person is resident in a homeland area or outside a proscribed area. Officials are beginning to talk about "administrative" Section 10 people, which means those people who fall within the commuter group and have no legal rights but enjoy preferential access to jobs in the nearby urban areas.

Pretoria's report on Sechanguve illustrates this process which should be highlighted in the Conference booklet.

Durban's advice office report has been translated into Zulu and this has been a most successful venture.

Jill Nicholson was congratulated on the magnificent work she has done.

Cape Town. (Conference Document Nos. 16, 17, 18, 19.) The office has had large numbers of visitors during the year and many press interviews have been given.

Crossroads, KTC and Khayelitsha have all been matters of great concern. Many domestic workers come to the office with problems. Many are people from Transkei with no qualifications in Cape Town.

22 law firms in Cape Town give time in the Commissioner's Courts to provide pro amico defence to people accused under the pass laws. Di Bishop reported on the growth/  
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Di Bishop reported on the growth of the Worcester Advice Office which is operated by a community organisation. The Black Sash in Cape Town has been assisting them.

Pretoria (Conference Document No. 20.) This office is very busy and can no longer cope with the work load in three mornings a week. Bophuthatswana independence has led to insoluble problems for many people particularly in regard to U.I.F.

Johannesburg (Conference Document No. 21.) The report draws attention to the problems of black people in S.A. who were born in neighbouring countries or whose parents were born in a neighbouring country. This group will be very seriously affected by the Aliens and Immigration Laws Amendment Bill now before Parliament (see working paper Conference Document No. 22.) The Bill also introduces provisions similar to those of the Orderly Movement Bill and could be used against the citizens of independent homelands who are now "aliens" in South Africa.

The report also mentions the introduction of a contract within a contract which SEIFSA negotiated with government to enable them to give migrants one day's notice in spite of the annual contract entered into in terms of the 1968 Labour Bureau Regulations. Sheena reported that since the advice office report had been written it had been reported in the press that the Civil Engineering Industry is planning to introduce a two hour notice period for migrant workers.

In discussion of the reports it was suggested that renewed efforts need to be made to produce educational material not only for the victims of the pass laws but also for the white community, particularly for the young. Videos should be considered.

#### COURT MONITORING

The report from Cape Western is Conference Document No. 23. That from Natal Coastal Conference Document No. 24.

The number of cases heard in the Commissioner's Court in Cape Town has dropped from over 9000 to 3209 in one year. This may be the effect of daily monitoring and arranging for lawyers to defend.

The Durban Black Sash has been told that R600 000 per year is spent on rail tickets for the deportation of people from the Durban area.

Margo McWhirter reported that Transvaal had no written report as we are in the process of restructuring of the monitoring system in consultation with lawyers. Johannesburg is a very large city with a number of Commissioner's Courts and it is a difficult problem to try to cover them all.

In the discussion which followed the point was raised that police conducting pass law raids often do not wear numbers or uniform. It was agreed that we ask the opposition to raise the question in Statement No. 1.

The following statement was unanimously accepted by Conference :-

S T A T E M E N T /---

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S T A T E M E N T.

In 1983 142,067 people were convicted in the main urban areas of offences under the pass laws and 10,855 prosecuted under the curfew laws. It is not known how many more people were arrested but not prosecuted.

The Black Sash condemns the pass laws and their crude administration which entail

1. Innocent persons being wrongfully arrested and imprisoned.
2. People not being informed of their rights at the time of arrest.
3. People not being given reasonable time to produce a reference book or proof of urban rights.
4. Rough, degrading and inhumane treatment.
5. Appalling overcrowding of people in vans where they may spend up to 7 hours without food, water or toilet facilities.
6. Arresting officers and administration officials carrying out their jobs out of uniform.
7. Arresting officers usually not being present at the trials.
8. People usually not being informed of the option of bail and when bail is granted it is often inappropriately high compared with the offence, potential fine and accused's ability to pay

The Black Sash is committed to the abolition of the pass laws and believes that to require people to produce a reference book on demand and forbid them to be in an urban area for more than 72 hours is to make criminals of innocent people.

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CLOSED SESSION.

The Black Sash relationship with the U.D.F.

Two resolutions were on the agenda relating to this :-

1. "That the Black Sash work actively towards affiliation with the U.D.F" -  
Cape Western.
2. "The Natal Coastal Region requests that Conference ratify its decision to affiliate with the United Democratic Front under the circumstances which prevailed at the time of the affiliation". -  
Natal Coastal.

Joyce Harris introduced the discussion with extracts relating to the U.D.F. from the Headquarters Report and her paper on the post-referendum political situation.

Mary Burton reported that Cape Western's last Regional Conference had requested that the wording of the resolution be changed to

"That this Conference or the Black Sash should discuss the pros and cons of affiliation to the U.D.F". However, she agreed to let the resolution on the Agenda in Cape Western's name to stand to facilitate the debate.

The Regions reported on discussions they had had with their members and on their existing relationship with the U.D.F.



The Black Sash relationship with the U.D.F. Cont/---

Cape Eastern attends UDF meetings but has had no formal discussions with Black Sash members in Port Elizabeth.

Albany has had little contact with the UDF and no formal discussion with members.

Natal Midlands works closely with the UDF in Pietermaritzburg and feels itself to be part and parcel with them but has not affiliated.

Natal Coastal affiliated at the time of the formation of the UDF and works with the UDF regional council. They have not experienced any difficulty whatsoever in maintaining their independence and no pressures of any kind have been exerted on the Black Sash by the U.D.F. However, at the last Black Sash regional meeting members were divided about the Cape Western resolution.

Transvaal reported that at their last Regional Conference 24 members had voted against affiliation, 10 for with 10 abstentions.

At Cape Western's Conference 15 delegates had voted against and 9 for. A vote taken of members present resulted in 30 against and 13 for.

A lengthy discussion took place in which strong arguments for and against affiliation took place.

A straw vote taken on the resolution showed 14 delegates for affiliation, 14 against with 5 abstentions.

As it was clear that there was no possible two thirds majority for the resolution Cape Western withdrew the resolution and the following statement was adopted with 9 abstentions and no one voting against. Statement No. 2.

S T A T E M E N T.

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The Black Sash wholeheartedly endorses the declaration of the UDF and its opposition to the New Constitution and the Koornhof Bills, and welcomes its formation as an event of great political significance.

The 1984 National Conference of the Black Sash has decided not to seek affiliation with the UDF but to seek full co-operation with it, observer status for its general councils, and participation in its campaigns wherever and whenever possible.

Sheena Duncan congratulated delegates on the way in which the debate had been conducted with restraint and reason and tolerance.

The following day Ann Colvin read a statement to Conference expressing her anger and her feeling that we had made an ignoble decision and had nothing whatsoever to be proud about.

Delegates expressed their admiration for her courage in saying so and their regret that the Black Sash had not been able to take a decision to affiliate.

The Natal Coastal resolution was then discussed. Solveig Piper explained that the Region asked Conference to ratify their decision to affiliate taken at the time and in the circumstances in which the decision was taken but that they would now act in accordance with the decision taken by the National Conference.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

SATURDAY 17TH MARCH, 1984.



SATURDAY 17TH MARCH 1984.

THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FUND. (Conference Document No. 25.)

This paper was presented by Jill Nicholson of Natal Coastal. An additional paper (No. 26) was presented by Solveig Piper outlining work she has been doing on the history of Unemployment Insurance in South Africa.

Beulah Röllnick reported on the situation in the Transvaal (No. 27.)

In the discussion it became clear that there is gross inefficiency and maladministration in the payment of benefits to black contributors, all over the country particularly, but not exclusively, in bantustan areas. More information is needed about the administration of the Fund in Transvaal bantustans.

There is no point in having an Insurance Fund at all for the relief of the unemployed if payment of benefits is long delayed and frequently they are not paid at all.

It was agreed that the manuscript of the booklet U.I.F. and You will be revised and an additional section on the history will be added.

PENSIONS. (Conference Document No. 28.)

This paper was written by Jill Nicholson of Natal Coastal based on work in the Durban advice office.

No new pension applications have been paid in Kwa Zulu for the whole of 1983.

It is increasingly difficult to design strategies to achieve the prompt payment of pensions to all who are entitled to them.

Pietermaritzburg experiences identical problems to Durban.

Josie Adler of Transvaal reported on payment of pensions at Driefontein. (Document No. 29) and Merle Beetge of Transvaal on the situation in Grasmere (Document No. 30).

It was agreed that we should come out strongly for the equalisation of pensions and means tests for all race groups.

The time is ripe to do this now that the uniform income tax structure has been introduced for all races.

Sheena reported that the Human Awareness Programme and the Black Sash are organising a workshop to design strategies on the pensions issue in May 1984. Black Sash, Church and other field workers from the Transvaal and Natal had been invited.

It was agreed that Black Sash advice office workers from the Cape Regions be invited. It is intended that full scale workshops will be held in all Regions following the initial one.

The following statement (No. 7.) was unanimously adopted by conference :

S T A T E M E N T /---

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S T A T E M E N T.

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Conference notes that :

- A.
1. every disabled or aged person has a legal right to a pension.
  2. in spite of this right, because of injustice and maladministration, people are starving and dying as a result of not receiving their pensions due to :
    - i) purported shortage of funds
    - ii) excessive delays (of sometimes more than a year) in the processing of applications
    - iii) no automatic payment of due arrears in some areas
    - iv) no retrospective payment to the date of application in some areas
    - v) refusal of applications because of "wrong citizenship".
    - vi) different maximum pensions in some areas
    - vii) infringement of regulations in payment of disabled grants by requiring absurdly high percentage disablement (i.e. 100%) before qualifying
- B. INSISTS THAT implicit in a system of equal taxation is
- i) Centralisation of the administration of pensions in a unified system of welfare in a unitary state
  - ii) equal social pensions and grants
  - iii) an equal means test
  - iv) equal facilities for receiving pensions
  - v) equal application of rules and regulations
  - vi) efficient and effective discharging of society's just debt to its aged.

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LAMONTVILLE (Conference Document No. 31).

This paper was presented by Ann Colvin for Natal Coastal and raised the whole question of the situation in Kwa Zulu and the attitudes and actions of the Kwa Zulu government and administration on a wide variety of issues.

Erna Senekal from Durban reported that the Black Sash there finds itself more and more against the Kwa Zulu government on issues such as Lamontville, pensions, the breakdown of health services, exploitation of workers in Kwa Zulu industries.

She listed the many actions taken by Inkatha against communities and organisations. The pledges which Kwa Zulu requires new teachers qualifying at the University of Zululand to sign was tabled.

The following statement was unanimously adopted :-

S T A T E M E N T /---  
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S T A T E M E N T.

On Kwa Zulu. (Statement No. 10.)

The Black Sash is disturbed by recent evidence of severe maladministration and repression in Kwa Zulu.

There is a dire shortage of money available for social pensions.

Welfare and education services are underfunded and maladministered.

Where there are shortages of funds or administrative failures, the people who live in Kwa Zulu no longer have recourse to appeal to the S.A. Government.

The Kwa Zulu Government is manifesting alarming signs of repression and violence which have become familiar in the independent bantustans, most notably in the Ciskei.

The Black Sash condemns the recent violence at Ngoye and the Kwa Zulu government's demand for unquestioning allegiance from students who hold bursaries as well as new teachers.

CISKEI.

Civil War in the Border Bantustan (Conference Document No. 32).

This paper was presented by Barbara Creasey of the Transvaal region.

Sarah Christie reported on the actions of the Ciskei security police at Ngwali which is in S.A. Conversely the SAAWU offices in Ciskei have been raided by the S.A. Security Police.

People released from Robben Island and living in Mdantsane are being harassed.

Molly Blackburn spoke of a young boy of eleven years who had mysteriously disappeared from official custody. She will follow this up and action will be taken by the Black Sash if he is not discovered to be safe and sound.

The following statement proposed by Cape Eastern was passed unanimously :  
(Statement No. 5).

S T A T E M E N T.

Noting that :-

- (a) The policy embracing the creation of independent Homelands and Black National States was introduced by the South African Government without any consultation with the people concerned ;
- (b) As a result of this policy people have been alienated and have lost their South African citizenship in exchange for citizenship of fragmented, non-viable states governed by rulers also not of their choosing ;
- (c) The continued existence of the national states and the 'independent' bantustans totally is dependent upon the South African government for financial support and for military, administrative and police assistance ;
- (d) There have been deaths in detention in the bantustans, trade unions have been banned, students have died, bus boycotters have been harassed and the civil rights of South Africans (and these include those who have been arbitrarily denied their South African citizenship) have been whittled away and assaulted ;
- (e) There was co-operation between the South African and Ciskeian Security Police during the Mdantsane bus boycott.

The Black Sash condemns the repression/—  
Page Twelve/—

The Black Sash condemns the repression by Bantustan Governments of South Africans forced into taking Bantustan Citizenship.

It further condemns the attempts by the South African Government to absolve themselves of responsibility for these atrocities by hiding behind the facade of so-called "Independent States".

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REMOVALS.

Low Cost Removals : the continuing process. (Conference Document No. 33).

This paper was presented by Marie Dyer of Natal Midlands.

When Legal is not good enough. (Conference Document No. 34).

Josie Adler reported on the attempted pushing out, but to nowhere, of people from the urban fringes south of Johannesburg.

The following papers all reported on different kinds of removals including the pattern developing in housing policies which are now being successful in removing people from urban areas to the commuter belt. In most cases such removals involve the loss of urban rights. The actual number of black people with urban rights will be fixed in the future by limiting the land and housing available in existing urban townships and making urban rights dependent upon having "approved accommodation".

Khayelitsha. (Conference Document No. 35). presented by Margaret Nash (Cape Western with slides

Soshanguve (Conference Document No. 37). presented by Mary Harrop-Allin of the Pretoria branch.

Huhudi - This report prepared by Marj Brown of the Transvaal Region was tabled and not read due to her indisposition (Conference Document No. 39).

The Transvaal Regional report of the Removals Sub-committee (Conference Document No. 38) was tabled by Ethel Walt and a full report of the forced removal of Magopa was given by her and Aninka Claassens.

Regret was expressed by delegates that the agenda did not allow proper discussion of these very important issues.

The following statement on Khayelitsha proposed by Cape Western was adopted.  
(Statement No. 6)

S T A T E M E N T.

Revised Resolution on Khayelitsha.

The Black Sash National Conference resolves :

1. To endorse the Declaration of Rights of Africans in the Western Cape, which states :
  - (a) South Africa is one, undivided country : all people born within its borders are entitled to full and equal citizenship rights throughout the land
  - (b) All citizens have the right to freedom of movement - to live, work and retire where they choose.
  - (c) All citizens have the right to Family life and proper housing.
2. To condemn the intended forced removal of all African citizens in the Cape Metropolitan Area to Khayelitsha ;
3. To call for a halt to squatter/---



Revised Resolution on Khayelitsha Cont/---

3. To call for a halt to squatter camp demolitions and an end to influx control ;
4. To demand the development of phases 2 and 3 of New Crossroads as promised by Dr. Koornhof in April 1979 ;
5. To advocate the inclusion of Khayelitsha and the existing Black Townships in the overall planning and development of the Cape Metropolitan Area as a first step towards reshaping the metropolis along non-racial lines.

CLOSED SESSION.

The Johannesburg discussion group. Joyce Harris reported on the effects of the Labour Party decision to participate and the results of the Referendum on this group which was brought together by her in 1978.

Conference expressed warm appreciation to Joyce for the work she had done over the last six years.

NAMIBIA. Di Bishop introduced this discussion and reported on the many facts which are now known about the disaster of the S.A. Government's attempts to impose ethnic rule and the activities of Koevoet. Koevoet, a special police unit, came into existence in 1978 and it is important to note that it will still be in situ if the SADF withdraws eventually from Ovamboland.

The following statement was adopted unanimously. (Statement No. 11).

S T A T E M E N T.

The Black Sash National Conference welcomes the release of Mr. H. Toivo Ja Toivo and affirms its deep desire for justice and peace in Namibia and throughout Southern Africa.

We object to the loss of civil liberty occasioned by the lie of the "Total Onslaught", which is of the Government's own making. This is propaganda of the most dishonest, insidious and dangerous kind. It is deliberately creating a psychosis throughout the region and is leading to disastrous civil war.

Therefore The Black Sash says : -.

In the interest of achieving a just peace in Southern Africa -

- X Release all Namibian Political Prisoners and Detainees.
- X Disband the notorious paramilitary POLICE TASK FORCE KOEVOET.
- X Abolish the terrorism Act and all AG Proclamations relating to "security" in Namibia.
- X End the illegal occupation of Namibia by implementing UN Resolution 435 without further delay.
- X Recognise the truth in the following statements from Mr. Ja Toivo's speech from the dock :

(The World is divided)/---

(The world is Divided) but it is a matter of hope for us that it at least agrees about one thing -

That we are entitled to justice and freedom. Violence is truly fearsome, but who would not defend his property and himself against a robber? And we believe that South Africa has robbed us of our country.

Only when we are granted our independence will the struggle stop. Only when our human dignity is restored to us as the equals of the whites will there be peace between us.

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The discussion moved on to questions of militarisation in general, and in schools in particular.

Molly Blackburn reported on a disturbing slide show which had been shown by the S.A.D.F. to schools in the Cape and the action she had taken to have it withdrawn.

Horrifying reports were given by delegates of the indoctrination of school children in nursery schools as well as in primary and secondary schools. Reports were given about veld schools and the consequences of parents refusing to allow their children to attend. The consequences vary according to the attitude of principals.

Pretoria reported on school boys being seen in shopping centres on Saturday morning in camouflage dress carrying batons.

The following statement, proposed by the Pretoria Branch was unanimously adopted. (Statement No. 17).

S T A T E M E N T.

The Black Sash Conference is horrified by the insidious indoctrination in schools. Instead of goodwill and tolerance being encouraged between racial groups by the authorities, aggressive behaviour is actively promoted such as the introduction of schoolboys in camouflage uniform armed with batons, patrolling certain shopping centres.

It was further agreed that all delegates who had reported on different facets of militarisation should write them out in detail, check on their facts, and send them to Jill Wentzel for inclusion in the magazine.

STRATEGIES OF PROTEST AND PRESSURE.

Natal Coastal reported that there had been some criticism from members of the action they had taken during the Referendum campaign. Sheena pointed out that what they had done was firmly in line with the early traditions of the Black Sash.

Conference wholeheartedly endorsed their actions and expressed admiration for their determination and courage.

Delegates agreed with Netty Davidoff that whenever possible, protests should be co-ordinated in all Regions.

SUNDAY 18TH MARCH.

Miriam Hepner of Transvaal Region urged the Black Sash to seek a wider membership, particularly from the Trade Unions as there is a real gap in our representativeness. Regions were urged by her to make contacts in the home areas and to actively seek such representation.

The following statements arising out of the previous day's discussions were unanimously adopted :-

S T A T E M E N T.

Curfew Laws (No. 12).

In 1983 there were 10'755 prosecutions under the Curfew Regulations which the Riekert Commission recommended should be abolished 4 years ago, a recommendation which the Government accepted without qualification.

While not all Black people are subjected to Curfew Laws, in 309 regions there is a threat of further State Legislation controlling their movements, and the Black Sash strongly demands the repeal of such arbitrary and archaic laws.

NATAL MIDLANDS.

ALIENS AND IMMIGRATION LAWS AMENDMENT BILL (No. 13).

The Black Sash views certain clauses in the Aliens and Immigrations Laws Amendment Bill with considerable alarm. We feel that the sinister shadow of the worst provisions of the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill now fall on this piece of legislation as well.

We find it ominous that the R5,000 fine for employing or even harbouring an alien which appears in the original Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill, should now have materialised in this Aliens Bill.

All Tswana, Xhosa and Venda-speaking South Africans are now legally foreigners i.e. aliens.

The government says it is not its intention to use this legislation against these so-called aliens. However, past experience does not encourage us to rely on government assurances.

Our fears are compounded by the fact that in 1981 Transkeians were deported from Cape Town under Section 40 para 4 of the Admission of Persons to the Republic Act of 1972 and furthermore the Bill provides the government with the precise legal machinery required to act against these people.

Events which have flown in the face of the Government assurances include the following

1. In August 1983, and two months after the Government agreed to accept the Appeal Court ruling on the Rikhotso Case, a vital aspect of this ruling was negated.  
An amendment was promulgated removing the right of men to have their families live in the Urban areas with them, unless they have a house permit, an almost impossible attainment.
2. In Natal, Administration Boards persistently promise that people living in areas due to be annexed to Kwa Zulu will not lose their Section 10 rights. But immediately the transfer has taken place (e.g., in Umlasi and Kwa Mashu) people do lose these rights.
3. The same assurances have been given to people due to be incorporated into Kwa Ngwane. We suspect that they will be equally meaningless.
4. The government has in the past successfully used the strategy of withdrawing unpopular measures in the face of public outcry only to re-introduce them later on, relying on a lack of opposition energy the second time round.

In the light of the above, the Black Sash alerts all South Africans to expect the worst when the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill is re-introduced by Parliament in the near future.

Proposed J. Wentzel

Seconded M. Harrop-Allin



S T A T E M E N T.Urbanisation (No. 14).

The Conference notes that the current economic recession and the devastating drought have hit hard at the poorest people of our land. Unemployment and rising living costs have made it almost impossible for many to make ends meet. In the bantustans there is widespread starvation and fears that many will not survive the coming winter.

In 'white' rural areas the situation is also bad. Recent newspaper reports have stated that in the areas hardest hit by drought more than 40 000 farmworkers are likely to be laid off and lose both their jobs and their homes.

In this context there are disturbing indications that the government is intent on pressing ahead with its plans both to stop any movement of african people into urban areas, as well as removing urban rights from people who at present live in prescribed areas. Since 1948 this policy has been more rigorously applied. In effect it has meant that the process of urbanisation of african people has been reversed, and that with each year there are proportionately fewer african people in urban areas. There are now ominous signs that this process will be speeded up. Some of these are :

- 1) The intention to press ahead with the Orderly Movement Bill, as well as more recent legislation such as the proposed 'Aliens Bill' are indications of this. Such legislation will make influx control, as well as restrictions on people's mobility and ability to find work far stricter than ever before.
- 2) The policy of forced removals is set to intensify. In areas like Leandra, Huhudi, and Valspan people will lose their urban rights as their townships are demolished and they are moved into the bantustans.
- 3) The chronic housing shortage in urban townships is yet another pressure forcing people to seek accommodation outside the urban areas and so forfeit urban rights. In addition increased rents, service charges, transport and living costs, do the same.

The attempts to incorporate townships like Lamontville and Hambanathi into Kwa Zulu will have the same effect.

- 4) Mass unemployment has meant a drastic cut-back on recruitment of workers from bantustans to jobs in urban areas. This, combined with a tightening up of influx control regulations and administration traps people in situations of desperation and poverty.

The effect of these policies will be to force increasing numbers of people into poverty-stricken and overcrowded bantustans. This robs people of the little chance they might have to find a job, or somehow survive in urban areas where resources are greater. Attempts by the government to create a false sense of ease in urban areas by forcing africans out of them has grave dangers for all our people. It can only entrench poverty and inequality and foster division

The Black Sash believes that freedom of mobility, residence and work are fundamental human rights that should be guaranteed to all people in our country. The present government policy of stopping african urbanisation by all means possible removes these freedoms from millions. Accordingly the Black Sash will continue to fight against influx control, forced removals and any other aspects of government policy that prevent people from living and working in the areas they choose.

The Myth of Voluntary Removals. (Conference Document No. 40)

was presented by Aninka Claassens of Transvaal. Annica Van Gylswyk of Pretoria reported on the situation in Winterveld and recent persecution at Klipgat in Bophuthatswana.



The Myth of Voluntary Removals Cont/---

The importance of working for the rehabilitation of communities who have to be resettled was raised as well as the importance of putting threatened and resettled communities in touch with one another.

The following statement was unanimously adopted. (Statement No. 15).

S T A T E M E N T.

The Black Sash National Conference records its appreciation of the five volumes on Removals in South Africa published by the Surplus People's Project since our last Conference.

It denies government propaganda that removals are mainly voluntary because Mogopa and other situations make it clear that institutional violence and brute force are more than ever in use, against communities and against countless individuals on white farms, and elsewhere

It believes that the analyses regarding the removals policy of the State contained in the Surplus People's Project volumes require study as a guide to response and action on a longterm basis.

It resolves to continue and strengthen Black Sash involvement with people threatened with removal and with those who have been uprooted and relegated to rural poverty in bantustans and S.A. Development Trust areas.

It endorses the report on Relocations : the Churches Response, and calls on members of the white community to recognise their complicity in this evil process of dispossession and to find ways of becoming part of the movement to resist removals and bring the policy to an end.

Preliminary report on Alexandra. (Conference Document No. 41)

This paper was presented by Glenda Glover of the Transvaal Region.

The question was posed ; is the upgraded Alexandra intended for the present population. High costs of living in black urban townships is beginning to exert a new form of efflux enforcement and this is becoming evident in townships all around the country.

P O L I T I C S.

South Africa Post-Referendum. (Conference Document No. 42).

Joyce Harris introduced the discussion by reading this paper.

Cape Western asked conference to reconsider the 1983 resolution advocating non-participation in any election called under the new Constitution.

There was lengthy debate.

The following resolution (Statement No. 8). was proposed by Noel Robb, Seconded by Judith Hawarden and passed by 24 votes in favour, 5 Against with 4 Abstentions.

"That the 1983 decision "The Black Sash urges its members and the public to a total boycott of any election which may be called in terms of the new Constitution" be replaced by the following :

"The Black Sash urges its members and the public to oppose the new Constitution in whatever way possible".

C O N S C R I P T I O N .

The development and formation of the End Conscription Campaign  
(Conference Document No. 43).

This paper was read by Beverley Runciman of Cape Western. Gill De Vlieg from Johannesburg and Georgina Stevens from Durban reported on Black Sash involvement in the Transvaal and Natal.

The following resolution (No. 9) was passed unanimously :

"That the Black Sash actively support and take forward the End Conscription Campaign, and co-operate in its Regions with the End Conscription Committees".

(Proposed by Beverley Runciman, Seconded by Sheena Duncan).

J U S T I C E .

Detentions - the changing scene (Conference Document No. 44).

This paper was presented by Audrey Coleman.

Great concern was expressed that the public no longer really knows the total number of detentions. The Protection of Information Act causes the press to impose an undesirable self-censorship.

In Namibia and in the bantustans there is a great lack of information.

Abel Dube has been in preventative detention since April 1982 and his detention order has been extended to the end of 1984. He is the only person known to be held under this particular clause.

It was agreed that the Black Sash mount a campaign for his release and that the Transvaal will design the campaign and produce the material for all Regions.

It was agreed that a booklet be produced on the rights of people vis a vis detention. This will also be done in the Transvaal.

Di Bishop raised the question of security police involvement in certain pass law arrests.

Joanne Yawitch reported on a series of attacks and death threats which has taken place recently in Johannesburg against white people working in various opposition organisations.

Audrey Coleman expressed concern about official intimidation which takes place in public places and in Court rooms.

Joan Grover suggested we should make a point of remembering "the disappeared ones". when we remember those who have died in detention.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS.

The following amendments to the Black Sash Constitution, proposed by Sheena Duncan, seconded by Audrey Coleman were passed unanimously :

Clause 1. That a fourth paragraph be inserted as follows :

"The income and assets of the organisation shall be utilised in the Republic of South Africa".

Clause 16. (111)

Delete the quotation marks at the beginning and the end of the Clause.

Delete the full stop at the end of the clause and add

"and which are themselves exempt from donations tax".

VOTE OF THANKS.

Mary Burton thanked Joan Sinclair for the party the evening before on behalf of all the delegates.

Sheena reminded conference that Wednesday 21st March would mark the 24th anniversary of Sharpeville.

Conference agreed to send a telegram to welcome Peter Hathorn home on 21st March. He is a conscientious objector who has served a year in prison.

A message of support to SAC as it faces the challenge presented by the Elort Commission was unanimously agreed to by conference.

MARRIAGE LAWS.

Paper Concerning the Marriage Laws affecting Africans (Conference Document No. 45).

Noel Robb explained that since writing the paper and formulating the resolutions standing on the agenda she had discussed the question with a variety of reports and the matter is very much more complicated than it seems. Cape Western withdrew their resolutions. Headquarters withdrew the resolution in their name.

It was agreed that the Cape Western paper be referred to all Regions as a study paper with the request that they discuss it with black women's organisations.

There are very serious disabilities suffered by black women in customary unions but the solutions cannot be simplistic.

EDUCATION.

Memorandum on the white paper on the provision of education in the Republic of South Africa 1983. (Conference Document No. 46).

This paper was tabled by Cape Western.

The following statements were adopted unanimously :

One central education authority (Statement No. 16)

'The Black Sash deplores the Government decision to set aside the De Lange Report recommendation that there be one central body to control education. Through this rejection we believe that education will continue to be unequal in our country'.

S T A T E M E N T.

Literacy (Statement No. 18).

According to official sources (E. French, Human Sciences Research Council, 1982) 3 million black workers employed in "white" areas of South Africa lack basic skills needed for the ordinary conduct of life in a society highly reliant on literacy and numeracy (figures for non-black illiterates are not available).

Only 0.4% of the national education budget was spent on adult education in 1980. The proportion of illiterate workers is in fact increasing yearly (E. French, H.S.R.C., 1982).

"Functional illiteracy" i.e., inability to communicate effectively in a dominant language, lack of knowledge of procedures and goals of institutions, as well as not being able to read, write and count, is truly crippling. It cuts people off from access to vital information, closes the way to further training and isolates them from the wider community. It leads therefore to apathy, low self regard, despairing anger and aggravated exploitation.

This conference considers that to deny workers access to functional literacy constitutes a violation of basic human rights.

E L E C T I O N S.

SHEENA DUNCAN Proposed by Mary Burton Seconded by Noel Robb was elected  
as NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JOYCE HARRIS Proposed by Beth Franklin Seconded by Noel Robb  
and

ETHEL WALT Proposed by Beulah Rollnick Seconded by Joanne Yawitch were elected  
as NATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENTS.

Following the elections it was clear that there is no need to elect a Headquarters Region which must be where the National Office Bearers are.

DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT CONFERENCE.

Tessa Branch invited regions to come to Port Elizabeth next year subject to the agreement of the Cape Eastern Regional committee.

Conference expressed its enthusiasm and assured Cape Eastern of its willingness to help if the Regional committee feels that it can undertake such a major venture.

Sheena suggested that three days is no longer sufficient to cover all the work we have to do. Conference agreed that an extra half day would be valuable.

The next Conference will therefore begin at 11 A.M on THURSDAY 14TH MARCH, 1985 and end at 3.30 P.M on SUNDAY 17TH MARCH, 1985.

S T R A T E G I E S.

The last half hour of Conference was spent in discussion of Strategies and Sheena elaborated on the theme she had suggested at the opening meeting.

The Nkomati accord may turn out to be a good thing for South Africans. There can not be any false hopes of rescue from outside and liberation will only be won by our own work inside the country.

Liberation will not be won/---



Liberation will not be won easily.

Civil disobedience is a most serious matter and is not to be entered into merely as a gesture. It must always be a last resort and part of a strategy to achieve a particular goal on a specific issue.

It demands truth, love discipline and sacrifice and there needs to be much training and preparation. There are resource persons available to conduct workshops on non-violent direct action and Sheena will circulate names and addresses to Regions.

Miriam Hepner suggested that all Regions study the passive resistance campaign of the 1950's. AGREED.

Conference requested that more time be set aside next year for strategy planning.

One observer, Anne Evans expressed concern that all the statements we had made were not come to after sufficient consultation with the people concerned.

Regions requested that full lists be circulated of people in detention at regular intervals.

The President thanked all those many people who had worked so hard to make conference a success, the delegates, the minute secretaries, the members of Transvaal Region who had arranged the halls, Beryl Stanton and her father and Des Linbergh for the microphones and amplifier, the people who had made endless teas, coffees, meals, provided transport and accommodation and generally done so much to ensure the smooth running of the Conference.

CLOSURE : 3.30 P.M SUNDAY 18TH MARCH, 1984.

DATE.....SIGNATURE.....