

stand. The Torch Commando said that "what was morally wrong can never be politically expedient," but itself yielded to expedient timidity, as many feared you were about to do. You are surely wise to extend your operations to the whole field of government, central, provincial and municipal.

As you enter this new and wider political life, you will, of course, shed some members, who were prepared to fight for an all-white constitution (with token non-white representation) but not to incur the odium of standing up for non-white rights as such. You will encounter not only obloquy and abuse from expected quarters, but distrust from those with whom you now want to fight but who are not yet certain of your bona fides. You will also meet a number of new problems about which many of you will have, at best, very confused views. You will have to straighten out your ideas gradually. There will be new friends to help you, who have passed this way before, and who will be content to let you find your own pace, once they know you are travelling the same road. There is no need to fear the taunt of "fellow-travelling." You are returning to the main stream of Western, Christian civilisation, which South Africa has deserted.

Above all considerations, you will find in your own consciences a new freedom from all the tangles of

the past. It will not come at once, because new confusions will replace our "traditional" compromises with principle. But as these are resolved, it will come beyond doubt. I can best illustrate it by asking some of you to read the Hansard report of the debate on the Banishment Bill last session. There you will see not only the presumptuous and arrogant prevarications that served the Government for arguments, but also the split-mind of the official Opposition, even in one of its best performances. With these you can contrast the ease with which the tiny Labour and Liberal parties rebutted the Government's case, because their own basic assumptions were morally sound.

I would commend to you especially Mr. Hepple's calm acceptance of the term "agitator," on the grounds that all the rights and freedoms for which we fight today were won for us by the agitators of the past among our own ancestors. Now leaders of our non-white peoples are seeking those same liberties and rights, status and opportunities for their descendants. They, and we, are all "agitators" today. Let us accept the title in the hope that we shall prove worthy of it in the fight for the soul of South Africa.

C. W. M. GELL

THREADS FROM THE SASH

A writer from **Port Elizabeth** says: "I met a pro-Government gentleman yesterday, who said after quite some discussion, "Well now, I understand better. Why do you not put these aims of yours into the Afrikaans papers?" I said that no letter of ours had been accepted by "Die Oosterlig." He said his father worked in "Die Burger" and was sure that he would publish them. How to get our aims across to them is hard. He actually asked, "Why don't we wear a white sash for white unity!"

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WRITING of a Black Sash tour of the **Transkei** recently, my correspondent says of a well-attended meeting at one town: "My friend and I had never in our lives spoken in public before, and we had not anticipated meeting more than three or four for an informal talk, so it was something of an ordeal. . . The response almost overwhelmed us . . ." Later, in a larger town, they were introduced to an audience thrice that number, but having gained courage at their first encounter they spoke out bravely! My correspondent says, "It was wonderful to see the interest in our audiences' faces—it brought out something unexpected in oneself, for normally I would have gibbered with nerves at having only my own voice sounding among all those strangers."

We of the Black Sash know well this metamorphosis from timid shyness to courageous public avowal—whether it be the wearing of a Black Sash or the public statement of our beliefs. South Africa will one day be as proud of our women, as we are proud of them now.

The **Cape Eastern Region** continues to forge ahead. We hear that new branches have now been formed at Plettenburg Bay and Redhouse, and that great hopes are being entertained about Jefferies Bay, Mossel Bay, and Oudtshoorn.

If you glance at a map and see the extent of the spread of the Black Sash from Mossel Bay to Grahamstown, you will realise why we so admire the dynamic group which controls this region!

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ON one of our haunts an elderly lady from **Holland** said that she and her husband had immigrated out here, only to return to Holland after three years. Whilst they were there, they read about the Black Sash movement, and were very impressed with the cinema newsreel of their demonstrations. They became so enthusiastic that she said to her husband, "There is something that we can do. We will go back to South Africa, and I will join the Sashers!" And she did.

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A MOST successful haunt, composed of members of **Estcourt, Mooi River, Ladysmith and Pietermaritzburg** Sashers, was held in Weenen when Mr. Sauer paid that historic little place a visit last month. It had to be seen to be believed to what lengths a Minister will go to avoid walking past the accusing eyes of Black Sash women. He not only avoided them by using the back entrance of the hotel, but even jumped into another car, and made the occupants of that car get out and get into his car from which the pennant was flying!