

THE FORUM

ON THE

ADVERSE EFFECTS OF MIGRATORY LABOUR

ON AFRICAN FAMILY LIFE

THE TWO-DAY FORUM arranged by the Black Sash to consider the effects of the migratory labour system in South Africa on African family life was held in Johannesburg early in June. For many years the Black Sash has been deeply concerned about the effects of apartheid legislation on the African family, and at our Annual National Conference last year it was decided that we should organize a campaign to inquire into the break-up of African family life.

Contributors

The Forum was convened by Mrs. Jeanette Davidoff, National Vice-President of the Black Sash, who received much valuable advice and assistance from Dr. Ellen Hellmann, Mr. John Blacking and Professor Julius Lewin. There are so many factors besides the migratory labour system that affect the stability of African family life, that it was decided to make the meeting a fact-finding forum instead of a conference. It was felt that all aspects of the problem should be investigated and examined, and information co-ordinated.

As well as the main speakers, all experts in their own particular fields, a number of other prominent citizens contributed to the Forum as Guest Chairmen. They were Mr. Henry Kuiper, until recently Managing Director of S.A. Associated Newspapers, still a member of the Board of Directors and now Managing Director of the City Merchant Bank; Mr. Richard Hacking, a leader of commerce and Managing Director of a large engineering concern; the Very Reverend P. H. F. Barron, the Dean of Johannesburg; Mr. W. P. Graham, Assistant Editor of the "Financial Mail" and a former Financial Editor of the "Star"; and Mr. Francis Hill, Technical Director of one of the largest mining groups, and a world authority on pressure bursts and rock movements.

Black Sash Advice Offices

In her opening address, Mrs. Jean Sinclair, National President of the Black Sash, outlined the background to our decision to investigate the effects of the migratory labour system. After giving a brief account of the establishment and

work of the Black Sash Advice Offices, she continued:

"Through our work in our Advice Offices, we come into contact with many Africans whose homes and families have been broken up through laws which restrict their right to be in the urban areas. We find that men who live and work in these areas as 'migrant' labourers are unable to have their wives and families living with them, although in many cases they have been so long in the urban area that they are really town dwellers. It is true that Africans who were born in an urban area, or who have lived there continuously for from 10 to 15 years, have the right to remain in the area and to have their wives

MR. W. P. GRAHAM

It is with deep regret that we record the sudden death on July 17th of Mr. William Peter (Ossie) Graham at the early age of 46. Mr. Graham was a good and valued friend of the Black Sash, and Guest Chairman of the economic section of this Forum.

He was a financial expert, a former Financial Editor of the "Star", the Assistant Editor at the time of his death of the "Financial Mail", and author of a best-selling book on the Stock Exchange. He was deeply interested in public affairs and a leader of the Progressive Party in North West Rand.

To Mrs. Graham and her family we extend our sincere sympathy.