

BLACK ORGANIZATIONS

Political Pressure Groups

BLACK PEOPLE'S CONVENTION

During the period under review there was a remarkable growth in membership and the extension propagation of the Black People's Convention (BPC) policy was undertaken. By and large the smooth operation of the organisation was disturbed by the endless blows suffered (by the BPC leadership) at the hands of the South African Government during the latter part of the period under review.

Re-organization after mass arrests

In an attempt to bring BPC back to a firm footing, the BPC working committee—a provisional structure holding the fort for the national executive members who were detained—called a National Council in Hammanskraal in July 1975. All branches were required to send representatives to this meeting where future plans for the organisation were to be approved. Members of the Working Committee were then mandated to proceed with BPC work as the Interim Executive, until the annual general conference was held.

It was also resolved that the structure of regionalization of branches be effected on a trial basis. Attempts were made to resuscitate all BPC branches which were either functioning on a low profile or reasonably active. The success of these attempts was manifested by the good attendance at the National Congress.¹ This annual National Congress, which was held in King Williams Town in December 1975, showed that BPC enjoyed a huge following within the black community.

The theme of the Conference, chosen for a specific purpose, was *Persistence and Fortitude*. According to the then BPC Secretary-General, Mr Hlaku Rachidi, black people need to live through the obstructions put up by the authorities, to a point where they have to look back and re-construct themselves in correcting what adversely hindered their progress "we need to clarify ourselves most explicitly for what we stand in a philosophical approach". He further said "Surely it required courage, boldness and persistence to follow this path; BPC has done that."² This Conference, therefore, took the form of a formative one where the policy was analysed and reconstructed.

The basic policy of the organisation was broken down into sections which were discussed by four commissions, namely, Black Consciousness, Black Communalism, Relations and Government Created Political Platforms. At this Congress BPC also projected what type of state the Black people wanted to live in.

The layout of the physical structure of BPC was drawn up. Motions on BPC attitude towards current issues were tabled and adopted at Congress.

With regard to Black Consciousness, BPC policy defined the term "Black" to include "all those who are discriminated against by law and tradition, that is, politically, economically and socially". BPC recognises the essence of Black Consciousness as:

- The realisation by Blacks of their liberation and to operate as a group to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude;
- The determination to expose the myth that *Black* is an alienation from the normal which is white;
- The reconstruction by Blacks of their own Black value system and the attempts by Blacks to see themselves as defined by themselves and not as defined by others;
- The rejection of value systems that seek to make the Black man a foreigner in the country of his birth and dehumanise him;
- The attempts by Blacks to rid themselves of negative notions resulting in an inferiority complex and to infuse within the Black community pride in themselves, their efforts, their value system, their culture, their religion and their outlook towards life.³

The Black People's Convention, as a black consciousness movement, strives to achieve the following goals:

- To inculcate amongst Blacks a pride in themselves and a desire and eagerness to analyse their problems and offer solutions;
- To break down the stranglehold that white society has on privileges, wealth opportunities, and to create a truly plural society in which all persons shall be equal before the law;
- To eradicate racial prejudice in all its forms and to promote proper understanding amongst the various peoples in the open society;

On the question of Black Communalism, Congress decided to mandate the Executive to make a further study into Black Communalism to arrive at a constructive economic policy for the future state. A Seminar was organised by the Executive at Mafeking in April 1976 where speakers from various regions presented detailed papers on aspects of economy like land, commerce, industry, etc.

It was at this Seminar that a 30-point programme was adopted in principle as the official economic policy of the organisation, still to be approved at the next Congress.

A motion on Transkei Independence re-iterated BPC policy on government-created political bodies. The independence of these homelands was seen by BPC as "a cunning manoeuvre to 'legalize' the alienation of the people of the Transkei from the rest of Azania which is their motherland so as to give the denial of their rights in Azania, a legal and constitutional backing".⁴

Other motions on Sonny Leon's participation on the CRC and subsequent sacking by the South African Government, the occupation of Namibia by South Africa and moves towards liberation of Namibia, and also a motion of internal participation in the Angolan war were discussed and a policy to be adopted by BPC on these topics was arrived at.

The general policy on current issues was tabled in the form of motions discussed and adopted unanimously by Congress. Noting the motives behind the detente policy by the South African Prime Minister, Mr B. J. Vorster, BPC resolved to reject it as "... a move calculated to entrench the position of the oppressors in South Africa at the expense of the oppressed majority".⁵

On the question of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and the deadlock reached by participants in the constitutional talks, BPC noted that the breakdown was a result of "... the reluctance depicted by Smith to allow the talks to reach a logical conclusion of majority rule". The Congress, therefore, resolved to "... encourage Bishop Muzorewa and the ANC to maintain the principled stand which represented the true wishes and aspirations of the majority of people in Zimbabwe; and to urge the ANC to continually make overtures to the White Rhodesia minority government for resumption of legitimate constitutional talks until it became absolutely clear that the latter was not interested in talks."⁶

BPC rejected government-created platforms, "recognizing them as safety valves created for the express purpose of diverting the energy of the black people from the true struggle for national liberation to racialist, tribalist and generally divisive political undertakings which at best keep the real and true goal of total liberation out of immediate sight and attention by black people and at worst to bolster the white racist regime of those who created them". The creation of these platforms is

seen by BPC "as designed to cheat the black man into participation in his own oppression because of built-in safeguards that make it impossible for any black man using them to liberate himself".

Meanwhile there were reports that Inkatha had made attempts to have talks with the leadership of BPC. BPC was surprised at this, but, however laid down conditions Inkatha had to meet if it was interested in 'talking liberation' with BPC. Some of the conditions were:

- to publicly withdraw from participating in tribal politics;
- to denounce its (Inkatha's) present constitution that binds its president to candidacy for the position of KwaZulu Chief Minister;
- to dissociate itself from leadership by government-paid political servants who live off the monies extracted from the masses through several taxes.

Failure to comply with these conditions would mean that Inkatha is part of "a grand design devised by their oppressor-master and also propelled by an ambitious leadership in their ranks to circumvent the inevitable option of dealing directly with authentic bantustans, and also those languishing in jail or restricted through the arsenal of South African Security Laws to various parts of the country."⁷

Detention of BPC Leaders

Most of the Executive members were detained during the latter part of 1976.

The National Chairman, Hlaku Rachidi, was detained in July 1976; shortly after that Thandisizwe Mazibuko, Secretary-General, was detained.

Mxolisi Mvovo, National Vice-Chairman was detained in August, just before Mapetla's funeral. Tamsanqa Qambata, Mzwandile Mbilini, Ray Magida, Dr A. C. S. Solombela—all executive members of BPC, King William's Town branch—were all detained.

BPC's Economic Policy

- BPC adopts black communalism as its economic policy, noting:
- that black communalism is a modified version of the traditional African economic life style which is geared to meet the demands of a highly industrialized and modern economy;
 - that the sharing envisaged will not be necessarily monitored by the state for the benefit of the state itself, but many will be either between groups of individuals or specific communities within the state or all the communities comprising the state;
 - that sharing shall imply sharing of property, wealth, services and labour.

Black Communalism implies that:

1. Land is a God-given gift to the people, therefore it shall be owned by all the people with the State being entrusted with its control.
2. All industry which involves direct exploitation of the land shall be owned by the state.
3. Family units shall be allocated land for dwelling.
4. Plots allocated to family units may neither be bequeathed, transferred or otherwise disposed of without prior consultation with the state, provided that the state will however consistently protect the interest of the family units concerned and their future generations.
5. Land allocated for private agriculture, commerce and industry shall be rented by the people concerned from the state.
6. Organised societal and religious groups, eg. churches, sports groups, shall be allocated land according to their reasonable needs and shall rent such land from the state.
7. Agricultural activity shall centre around the formation of co-operatives which shall be entrusted with the responsibility of spear-heading agriculture in consultation with the department.
8. Rural life shall be recognised such that more economically manageable villages shall be established whereby basic essential services can be made available to the village and in turn the people's agricultural activity can be jointly organised.
9. It shall be the duty of the state to assist such villages and co-operatives in marketing their agricultural products for both internal and external consumption.
10. The state may play a leading role in the planning and development of industry and commerce.
11. Industries whose products are of strategic importance to the nation shall be owned by the state, e.g. manufacture of arms and armaments.
12. Also industries of vital importance to the economy of the nation, e.g. major corporations shall be owned by the state.
13. Community initiation and ownership of industry shall be encouraged where this can be easily productively organised.
14. Private owned industry and commercial undertakings shall be allowed to operate without state assistance and within the framework drawn up by the state department responsible for commerce, industry and trade.
15. The level of foreign participation in industry and commerce shall be kept to a minimum as defined by the department responsible for commerce, industry and trade.
16. Salaries paid by employers to their employees in private industries and commerce as well as in co-operative, community and

state-owned enterprises shall be carefully supervised by the state to lay specific minimum for specific categories of undertakings.

17. In all cases the state shall specifically protect the interest of worker against exploitation and unsatisfactory working conditions.

18. Trade unions comprising the workers within certain crafts shall be encouraged and recognised and shall enjoy a particularly privileged relationship with the department controlling labour.

19. Wages and salaries assessments shall be periodically reviewed by a special tribunal consisting of representatives of trade unions and the department controlling labour.

20. Village stores shall be owned by the communities they are intended to serve.

21. Organisation of small time commerce, eg. grocery stores, shall vest in the hands of district commercial councils operating on behalf of specific geographic communities in consultation with the department controlling commerce.

22. Such commercial councils shall seek to generate profits for the development of the communities they serve.

23. The state will on its own participate in finance institutions in competition with private enterprise through the formation of a National financial corporation which shall run a National Bank with branches and an insurance house with branches.

24. The state financial institutions shall operate a developmental loan policy for the assistance of co-operative, community and individual enterprise provided that there shall be a differential interest charge for private and community enterprise.

25. The state through its department controlling commerce and industry shall at all times restrict importation of goods only to those categories and levels that are essential for complete existence and shall encourage local production of goods which can be sustained from natural resources and industry within the country.

26. The state shall operate its own importation programme through a National corporation in competition with privately owned import houses so that imported goods can reach the people at minimal and acceptable prices.

27. The state shall control the marketing of local products and goods intended for both internal and external marketing so that such products and goods can be available for internal consumption at minimal prices, and external consumption at advantageous prices.

28. All public transport shall be controlled by the department responsible for transport such that the state through its various organs participates maximally in intra-inter-town, inter-provincial as well as national and international transport.

29. There shall be no provision for private ownership of public transportation except by special licence, provided that all railways, harbours, and airways transportation shall be owned completely by the state.

30. The state shall allow a fair competition between privately owned and state owned mass media enterprises except that all radio and television stations will be owned either wholly or jointly by either the state or the communities and provided that all postal and telegraphic services shall be in the hands of the state.

NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

According to the *Sunday Times* Extra of 28 March 1976, "The Natal Indian Congress . . . shied away from participating in the SA Indian Council elections." Members who had put forward the motion calling for participation backed down when they sensed the mood of delegates.

It however emerged that certain key Congress Members had had discussions on forming another organisation to contest SAIC elections. The members backing participation felt that a great deal more could be achieved by working within a government-created body.

Mr Naidoo himself touched on the question of participation in government-created institutions in his presidential address . . . Mr Naidoo subtly made all the arguments in favour of joining the SAIC, without actually stating his own position. He said people should not waste their energies trying to expose and condemn Blacks working within the system "whether or not they do so for their own private gain or in a forlorn endeavour to obtain some crumbs for the people they purport to represent."

Mr Naidoo also pushed the argument that government-created organisations got more space in newspapers than so-called 'Left-Wing' bodies. He said that "all this indicated the extent to which Left-Wing elements were being cowed down to 'toe-the-line'."

He then called for an urgent convention of all Black leaders who would unite Blacks under one banner and prepare a constitution for all South Africans.

In March Mr Naidoo denied that he was planning to leave the Congress after the Annual Conference. He said he was going to stay and try to change it to his way of thinking, which is joining the government-created bodies like SAIC and LAC and demand rights as enjoyed by whites.⁸

In a statement released by Mr A. H. Randeree (executive member

of NIC) on 29 August 1976, the Natal Indian Congress "totally rejected separate development as well as the South African Indian Council and its elections." The Congress has decided that plans be formulated to inform people of the futility of separate development. Mr Randeree further said that "while separate development may be palatable in certain quarters it is far from a solution as it is a policy based on racism. It is a tragedy that the hand of friendship extended by the Blacks has been rejected by white South Africa."⁹

Meanwhile a new Indian Political Party, the Peoples' Party of South Africa was born in the last week of August. Mr M. G. H. Mayat, the convener, said that the party would work for a non-racial South Africa and co-operate with any group which has similar aim. So far we have have not been able to establish whether any Congress members took part in the formation of this party.¹⁰

SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENTS' ORGANISATION

The 8th General Students' Council Meeting¹¹

The theme of the GSC was "The role of Black students in the changing Southern African situation". The meeting condemned the phasing out of black students from the University of Natal (black section) as an attempt to fulfill the apartheid policy of 'divide and rule'. a policy which "can only be only be seen in the light of the forces of oppression working hand in hand with the imperialist forces." The meeting expressed its belief that the universities were never meant to satisfy black needs and aspirations. The move to phase out black students was strongly condemned as "naked discrimination".

The meeting condemned the All-Blacks tour as "the highest degree of racist collaboration aimed at entrenching the status quo for capitalistic purposes". SASO further resolved to align itself with the OAU resolution urging all OAU states to boycott the Montreal olympic games meeting if New Zealand participated.

The meeting condemned the proposed introduction of a Bantu TV in 1980 as it is geared at eroding the black man's cultural values.

The meeting resolved to mandate the executive and regional directors to conduct leadership training services to counter the bannings and detentions of SASO leadership.

The meeting condemned the manner in which the police and government handled the Soweto demonstration.

SASO resolved to send its condolences to the Ugandan victims of

the Israeli raid and denounced the Kenyan government for its involvement therein.

Attack on SASO

Following Mr J. H. Snyman's assertion that "extreme and alarming hostility to Whites by a large section of students at the University of the North was being developed and fostered by SASO's subversive activities on the campus," and that SASO's main aim was promotion of hatred of the Whites, destruction of universities for Blacks and incitement to armed revolution, and furthermore that SASO was engaged in subversive activities throughout the country. Mr M. C. Botha threatening a clamp-down on SASO said "We simply cannot afford to spend money and keep hostile black campuses going" and that there were serious doubts whether SASO could any longer claim to be a students' organisation.¹²

Daily News of 18 May 1976 reported that KwaZulu's Councillor for Agriculture and Forestry, Chief Sotile, demanded that SASO and BPC must come out in their true colours and state clearly what they stand for. He said the objects of SASO and BPC, as he understood them, were the achievement of liberation for black people; that KwaZulu's leader, Gatsha, was working towards the same goal but SASO and BPC's opposition to him (Gatsha) was alarming, so they "must come out in their true colours. Why should we be placed in a position of not being clear as to what their stand is."¹³

Banning of SASO Newsletter

The banning of the March-April issue of SASO newsletter "and all subsequent issues of this journal" was announced in Pretoria on the 23 July 1976 in a special one-page *Government Gazette*.¹⁴

Detentions of SASO Members

The latter half of 1976 saw a series of arrests of SASO members.

Approximately 20 members of SASO are in detention under either Section 10 (Internal Security Act) or Section 6 of Terrorism Act.

The executive members in Durban have all been taken in including the Secretary in the SASO office, Sibongile Kubeka.

The SASO car which was used by the Permanent Organiser is believed to be in the hands of the Police in King William's Town. Silumko Sokupa, the Permanent Organiser, was arrested on 13 August 1976 and about two days later the car was found at the Police offices. It is claimed that police found the car deserted on the road between Alice and King William's Town.

Death of SASO Members

Mapetla Mohapi, a former SASO Permanent Organiser, died in detention on 5 August 1976 at Kei Road near East London. It was alleged that he had committed suicide by hanging.

He was previously detained under the Terrorism Act on 11 October 1974 and released 173 days later without any charges laid against him. He was then banned for three years under Suppression of Communism Act (now Internal Security Act) on 23 September 1975 and then redetained on 15 July 1976.

Luke Mazwembe

Luke Mazwembe, a SASO member, died in detention on 3 September 1976 in Cape Town. He was detained under General Law Amendment Act and died about two hours after he had been detained, allegedly by hanging himself with a blanket he had torn into strips.

Self-help and Religious Organisations

BLACK COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES (BCP)

Remarkable growth has been reported in the work of BCP during the period under review, despite the detention of several of its staff in the Eastern Cape branch and one in the Transvaal branch.

Health Programmes

This programme continued to receive tremendous support from the black community. Success of this health centre at Zinyoka was evident in the improvement of health conditions and disease rate at the surrounding villages. Milk schemes introduced in 1975 have seen a number of babies gaining the necessary weight and health level.

Due to increase in clinic demands an additional doctor and nurses were added at Tyusha, Ntsikizini, Ginsberg and Tsholomqa.

Plans are underway to establish a similar project in Natal, Adams Mission.

Women's Division

These include training in leadership skills for interested people in community development. An active sewing and knitting project was started in Umtata in 1975.

Leadership Training

Since the beginning of 1975 a strong core leadership was instituted. Each month women from various areas got together to learn skills in nutrition and health education so that they could go back to teach others in the home situation.

Another Centre will be set up as a base for all Women's Division training programmes. The key pilot programmes in nutrition, home economics and agricultural demonstrations will be tried out.

Home Industries

(a) Njwaxa Leather Home Industry—Eastern Cape

This is a leather industry which has made a steady growth during the year under review. The home industry produces leather goods and provides training to local tribesmen in leatherwork.

The marketing of products which includes belts, purses, hand-bags, seating cushions and mocassins is done by a specially created Sales Promotion department of BCP.

(b) Artefacts Home Industry, Transvaal

This industry concentrates on:

SEWING: Women who would ordinarily be unemployed are brought together and taught sewing skills and encouraged to produce articles for which they are paid according to their production. Those women who can sew act as teachers to others. BCP subsidizes the purchase of material and machines for use by the group.

SCULPTURE AND WEAVING: Members of the community who possess skills or potential in this field are encouraged to design and produce items which are then collected for sale and preservation. Skilled people are also organised to teach those who show potential.

(c) Creative Designs: Anniversary Card Project

BCP embarked on a programme of producing Anniversary Cards with a more relevant appearance and content for black people. Black artists were organised to contribute designs that are in expensive and relevant. The result was beautiful Christmas Cards which were enthusiastically received by the community.

Communications, Research and Publications

This research and publishing department continues to provide a useful service in the black community and the country as a whole through programmes intended at encouraging dialogue amongst members of the black community, exploring areas of community and national concern.¹⁵

- Black Review* is an annual publication which reports events, issues and concerns in the black community in the country of that particular year under review.
- Black Viewpoint* is published every three months and it is hoped that it will help encourage debate on some of the crucial subjects facing the country as a whole and the black community in particular. Topic covered in 1975/76 was Transkei Independence.
- Black Perspectives* is a publication in which writers are invited to contribute in-depth discussion on any one of the major areas of national life, like education, theology, etc. An examination of their contribution is made by an invited audience which gives further insights and criticisms.

Symposia

One of the important functions of this department is to organise symposia at which important issues in South Africa are debated fully and seriously. Out of this a publication is made which spreads the debate further as people read the publication. One such symposium in January 1976, made possible the publication of 'Apartheid'.

Resource Centres

The Research and Publications Department also has the responsibility for developing resource centres around the country. One such resource centre is to be opened in Umlazi at the end of 1976. After that another one at King William's Town will be opened.

General Programmes

- (a) **Welfare Activities.** In a very limited number of cases welfare activities are encouraged to tide people over difficult periods. In the health programme BCP has sometimes to provide free soups and other relief work.
- (b) **Ginsberg Creche.** This is another effort where BCP has helped in reviving a community creche that had ceased operation because of poor leadership. BCP contributed towards staff salaries, gave advice to the controlling committee and made the Medical Officer available free of charge to examine the children. The Home Industries also donated overalls for children.
- (c) **Bulk Buying Scheme**
This was launched to counter the effects of inflation. It started operating successfully until the wholesale dealer concerned refused to co-operate.

(d) **Self-tax Trust Fund**

The self-tax fund is money received from concerned individuals in South Africa who would like to contribute towards the development of the less privileged people in the country. These impose a taxation upon themselves and contribute towards this cause without putting conditions on how money should be used. This money is held in trust for the benefit of the black community.

ZIMELE TRUST FUND

Zimele was established in 1975 to satisfy the need for an organisation that caters for the interests of all former political prisoners and their families. This is mainly in the form of economic, social and educational restabilisation.

Zimele is solely run by black people who have "first hand information regarding the ills that afflict black society".

Zimele has decided to concern itself with former political prisoners because "firstly other types of prisoners have welfare bodies that take care of them during and after their imprisonment whereas political prisoners are often shunned by society as a result of extensive intimidation of their families and them personally.

"Secondly, political prisoners find it hard to readjust to present social trends after long periods of imprisonment. Work opportunities are scarce for them and even for those who do manage to secure jobs, their chances of survival are often slim because employers are often pressurised to dismiss them from work. This means they have to find some form of subsistence outside the sphere of formal employment resulting in dependence on meagre handouts that are hardly enough to cater for the basic day to day needs of the concerned individuals let alone their families. This state of affairs almost reduces them to beggars and destitution: this is an affront to the dignity and integrity of these men."

Aims, Goals and Principles of Zimele

1. Economic Restabilisation

This is in the form of projects that are initiated with a view to provide the essential economic needs of all ex-political prisoners and their family. These projects are in the form of small home industries and small

factories which are to be run by Zimele until qualified personnel are found.

2. Educational Fund

Bursaries and scholarships are provided for children of former political prisoners.

3. Relief Fund

This fund provides assistance to people on their release from prison. Funeral expenses, furniture, clothing, etc., are paid for by Zimele where necessary, whilst the person is looking for a place of employment.

How Zimele is Run

Zimele is run by Board of Trustees consisting of seven members, an administrator and a field worker. Ways and means of nationalising the organisation so that it has 12 trustees are being explored. The following people are members of the Board of Trustees:—

Mr S. M. Tembeni, Mr B. S. Biko, Mr S. Baqwa, Rev T. Moletsane, Dr M. A. Ramphela, Mr F. Bam and Dr L. Msauli. The Administrator was Mr Mapetla Mohapi who died in detention in August and the field worker is Mr Pumzile Mahlakatha.

The Board of Trustees has the following duties:

- To look into all legal matters relating to the organisation;
- To administer all financial matters;
- To administer the property of the organisation;
- To enter into such transactions as necessary for the promotion of the affairs of Zimele.

Members of Zimele intend making this a viable project that will ease the grim economic realities of the black people. It is hoped that this scheme will be nationalised in due course.

Recent Developments

Zimele suffered the pinch of bannings and detentions with the banning of its first field worker, Pumzile Majeke. The administrator of Zimele, Mapetla Mohapi, was detained and he later died in detention. The police said that he hanged himself with jeans. (See Chapter on Detentions).

All the other members of the Board of Trustees except Rev. Moletsane and S. Baqwa were subsequently detained in a national swoop on leaders of black organisations in August 1976.

ASSOCIATION FOR SELF-HELP (ASH)

This Association continued its work and established contact with groups and organisations within as well as outside the community in which it works. Notable is the fact that ASH succeeded in sharing its experience over the Communal Buying Schemes with other communities interested in the scheme.

By 1975 the Association had proved its strength and ability to survive. The fact that the Association had established contact with the people of the community placed its field workers in a position to communicate effectively with the groups in the surrounding communities.

Projects

The normal projects of ASH are:

- Communal Buying
- Children's Playgroup
- Literacy Classes
- Educational Training Programmes.

Progress during the year under review

The Annual Report of the Association 1975 states:

“To evaluate the success of the ASH Programme one has to look beyond structures created to the level of consciousness attained by the groups involved. The projects initiated have led to a creative environment for objective reflection and form a basis for communal action. ASH has successfully set itself up as a relevant resource agency for the community. Thus the movement towards development in the community has just begun.

A major task of ASH in this movement towards development will be to increase its efforts in motivating the community groups and to find all available resources that will assist the efforts of the community.”¹⁶

BLACK WOMEN'S FEDERATION OF SOUTH AFRICA

In 1975 over 200 women from 58 black townships throughout the country met in Durban and committed themselves to work together as women to attain self-reliance and independence as black people.

At the first National Conference in Durban forty-one organisations were presented. Seventy-four women were members of women's groups, thirty were members of mixed organisations and one hundred and six indicated no organisational affiliations.

The Black Womens' Federation of SA was founded at the same

Conference in December 1975 and had the following as office bearers:

Mrs Fatima Meer	—	<i>President</i>
Mrs D. Mabiletsa	—	<i>Vice-President</i>
Mrs V. Gcabashe	—	<i>Secretary</i>
Mrs J. Noel	—	<i>Assistant Secretary</i>
Mrs V. Moloto	—	<i>Treasurer</i>

The preamble to the Constitution of the BWF states that “. . . . realising that:

1. Black women are basically responsible for the survival and maintenance of their families and largely the socialization of the youth for the transmission of the Black cultural heritage;
2. The need to present a united front and to re-direct the status of motherhood towards the fulfilment of the Black people's social, cultural, economic and political aspirations;
3. The urgent need to coordinate and consolidate the efforts and activities of Black womens' organisations in our country, do hereby resolve to adopt this document as our constitution.”¹⁷

The aims and objects of the Federation of Black Women

1. To establish contact and unity and practical co-operation amongst Black Women and Black Women's organisations;
2. To define common problems and to lay out priorities necessary for effective community action;
3. To determine strategies and draw up programmes with a view to heightening the social, cultural, economic and political awareness of Black Communities and thereby establish self-reliant communities;
4. To co-ordinate and consolidate Black Women and Black Women Women's organisations throughout South Africa with aims and objects similar to that of BWF;
5. To co-operate with other black organisations with similar aims and objects;
6. To conscientise the people towards a sense of self-realisation;
7. To raise funds to pursue the aims and objects of the BWF.”¹⁸

Membership

Membership is open to all Black Women and Black Women's Organisations in South Africa. Organised groups can apply for affiliation. Branches of ten or more Black women can apply for affiliation. Black Women may apply for affiliation in their individual capacity.

Structure

The highest of the BWF is the general council which is made up of affiliated Black Women, delegates from affiliated bodies and branches, and members of the executive committee.

During its first meeting the Black Womens' Federation resolved to motivate Black Women's Organisations to undertake projects of self-help to meet the needs of deprived communities. It was further resolved to "establish a committee on education to disseminate factual material and work out programmes for an alternative and positive system of education relevant to the needs of the people. A call for more technical schools and open universities was made".

The meeting called for the restoration of family life of people imprisoned in terms of 'racial laws' and all laws that curb freedom of expression of South Africans in order to entrench racial domination as conceived by the Nationalist Government.¹⁹

INSTITUTE FOR BLACK RESEARCH

The objects of the Institute are:

- to train researchers, to stimulate writers particularly in the black community;
- to encourage and undertake fact-finding surveys, to examine and report upon matters that concern the black people of South Africa;
- to compile, publish and distribute books, monographs, journals, calculated to promote the objects of the Institute.

The Officials of the Institute

Mr D. Zondi	<i>President</i>	Mr G. Reddy	<i>Secretary</i>
Mrs F. Meer	<i>Vice-President</i>	Mr Randree	<i>Treasurer</i>

Two members of the Executive Committee and an employee have been detained under the preventive detention clause of the Internal Security Act.

INSTITUTE OF BLACK STUDIES

The Institute of Black Studies was formed in November 1975 to provide a forum where the Black man can express himself. It was intended as a platform where issues facing the country can be analysed and interpreted.²⁰

Objectives

- "The objectives of the Association are:
- To provide a forum for the articulation of black viewpoints and exchange of ideas and opinions;

- To examine, assess and evaluate the standards, values and prejudices by which we live and to rewrite them in terms which accord with black dignity;
- To undertake studies in relevant areas and to disseminate such information;
- To encourage the development of specialist associations within or outside the main body and collaborate with organisations of similar objectives.”²¹

First Conference

The first conference of the Institute was to be held in July at Dube (Soweto). Prior to the day of the conference the organiser, Mr Mkele was interrogated by the Security Police who asked for copies of all the speeches that were to be presented. Mr Mkele was unable to do this as he did not have the copies then.

The Chief Magistrate of Johannesburg later banned the meeting in Johannesburg in terms of the Riotous Assemblies Act. Alternative venue was found at Wilgerspruit.

A number of people who delivered papers at the conference were later detained under the Internal Security Act.

EDENDALE LAY ECUMENICAL CENTRE

The Federal Theological Seminary

On the 16th of September 1975, an undertaking was entered into with the Federal Theological Seminary to occupy the Centre for two years while negotiations for the acquisition of a suitable place were under way.

Mobile Programmes

In view of the presence of the Federal Theological Seminary and the fact that they were using most of the buildings at the Centre, the ELC decided to embark upon mobile programmes. These were to be conducted outside the Centre itself.

Promoters of these programmes were to go out into the community and work from there. These programmes started at Edendale and spread from there to other communities. An arrangement had been reached with the Federal Theological Seminary to enable the Centre to conduct internal programmes during winter and summer holidays.

The mobile programmes were launched on the 8th of March 1976.

The priorities chosen for the mobile programmes were Idamasa and Women's Organisation, with Idamasa as priority number one, and Women's Organisation as the second priority. These groups were considered as a basis of all community enterprise and were also influential. It was felt that many groups could be reached through these two groups.

INTER-DENOMINATIONAL AFRICAN MINISTERS' ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA (IDAMASA)

At the 30th Annual Conference held at Gugulethu in Cape Town it was noted that:²²

- the time had changed, people must be prepared to go along with the change;
- worshipping God must involve the whole man;
- the Black man is in dialogue with God;
- Education is expensive, parents must sacrifice for their children. Education must be education that can liberate the people, and not make them better slaves. Education must help the people to harness the powers of nature. Bursaries must be provided;
- The poor must be helped by the better privileged.

Youth Programme

Parents and youth were invited to attend an awareness course organised by the Youth Committee. Parent-Youth relationship was cited as the major cause to dissipate what was summed up as the fear of the parents, first for themselves and then for the youth. This was done through agencies directly involved in these areas.

The youth project helped the young people in the following respects²²:

- advised them of bodies offering bursaries;
- helped them seek employment;
- advised them of what their rights and duties as young people and as students and workers are.

REFERENCES

- ¹BPC Conference Report
- ²Ibid
- ³Ibid
- ⁴Ibid
- ⁵Ibid
- ⁶Ibid
- ⁷BPC Press Statement
- ⁸*Leader* 26.3.76
- ⁹*Natal Mercury* 30.8.76
- ¹⁰*Mercury Extra* 28.8.76
- ¹¹SASO Report
- ¹²*Natal Mercury* 10.2.76

- ¹³*Daily News* 18.5.76
- ¹⁴*Government Gazette*
- ¹⁵BCP 1975 Annual Report
- ¹⁶ASH Report
- ¹⁷Black Women's Federation Constitution
- ¹⁸Ibid
- ¹⁹BWF Report
- ²⁰IBS Brochure
- ²¹IBS Conference Report
- ²²IDAMASA Annual Report.