

President's Tour Of Natal Midlands

DURING her recent tour of the Natal Midlands, the National President, Mrs. Ruth Foley, emphasised repeatedly that the Black Sash would not go out of existence after the General Election next year, that the movement was out for moral victories, the seeds of which were now being sown, and that there was now a greater need than ever to maintain the Sash as an integral part of the political life of South Africa.

The tour can with justice be said to have been in the nature of a triumphal procession. Enthusiasm ran high everywhere, the very strenuous itinerary was completed without a hitch and members who met the President were left with a renewed determination to continue the fight until good government should have come to stay in South Africa. One member wrote after the tour: "If ever Mrs. Foley gets weary or dispirited, let her know that her visit has supplied the yeast to make our spirits rise again and filled us with enthusiasm to go forward, absolutely convinced that the Black Sash is more than ever necessary."

STRENUOUS ITINERARY

Regional meetings were held in twelve towns during the fortnight the tour lasted. Nine of these were private meetings for members only, and Mrs. Foley found all members in good heart. At the three public meetings, held at Underberg, Kokstad and Matatiele, keen interest was shown in the aims of the Black Sash. Many penetrating questions were asked by members of the public showing a widespread appreciation of the present political situation and deep concern at recent legislation. It seemed that all who attended these public meetings fully approved of all that the Black Sash stands for.

On the first day of the tour, Mrs. Foley visited Greytown in the morning and New Hanover in the afternoon. The second day she devoted to Howick and Eaton and on the third day attended an all-day meeting of the Natal Midlands regional executive committee in Pietermaritzburg. The chairmen of the following branches were present: Howick (Mrs. Johnston), Mooi River (Mrs. Richards), Kokstad (Mrs. Phillips), New Hanover (Mrs. Masters) and, of course, Mrs. M. Corrigall, Chair of Natal Midlands. Mrs. Foley was Mrs. Corrigall's guest during her stay in Pietermaritzburg.

Speakers at the all-day meeting included Dr. Betty Lund, the Parliamentary correspondent for the Region, who spoke on the Nursing Act, old and new, and Mrs. Russell, who gave a penetrating analysis of the Bantu Education Act.

FIRST DAY-SCHOOL

The Region had taken advantage of the President's visit to organise its first "day school." This was held on Friday, November 1st, and was a great success. The two distinguished lecturers, Professor G. H. Durrant, of Natal University, and Professor G. H. le May, of the Witwatersrand University, gave

all present "furiously to think." Professor Durrant spoke on "Politics and the Press," and Professor le May on "Techniques of Pressure Groups." Both speakers opened up many new avenues for investigation and analysis.

Members found the lectures so valuable that they are making plans to hold similar courses as soon as possible. Kokstad Branch plans to hold a "day-school" early next year.

FUTURE POLICY

In an interview given to the Press during her stay in Pietermaritzburg, Mrs. Foley explained how, in several Regions, pools had already been formed of workers ready to give active support to the Opposition political parties. When any particular party needed help, it contacted the local organiser, who delegated members supporting that party to take their turn in the party offices. No pools had at that stage been formed in Natal Midlands, but individual members were active in their respective political parties.

Mrs. Foley also said that between now and the General Election, the Black Sash in the Natal Midlands Region had decided not to haunt Cabinet Ministers, except where they appeared in public in their official capacity; there would be no demonstrations at election meetings, or meetings where Cabinet Ministers attended as party members or leaders. The Black Sash had long regarded its educational work as of enormous importance in its programme and this work would be maintained and even, probably, accelerated. It was through its educational programme that the Black Sash had succeeded in interesting women in politics in the first place.

Summing up her exhausting, but very rewarding fortnight, Mrs. Foley said: "My most vivid impression of the tour is that the people of Natal I met have a sincere wish to develop that true conception of all South Africans united in one Nation. I saw no signs whatever of the insularity which is supposed to be a feature of the political life of Natal."

BLACK SASH A.B.C.

(Continued)

Pampered Penelope hasn't a clue
How her servants spend Sundays, or what they may do.

Perfect Patricia strives hard to ensure
That life is made easier for them to endure.

Rubber-neck Rosie will never be found
Standing with "Sashers"—she must move around.

Radiant Ruth works from morning till night
Teaching the women that Protest is right

P. B.