



HISTORY OF BLACK WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA... Black Women Today...



DID THEY EXIST? YES, OF COURSE...

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF S.A. IS HIERARCHICAL



Black women are at the **BOTTOM** of the pile; oppressed both by **APARTHEID** and their traditionally **SUBSERVANT ROLES**

THE LAW OF APARTHEID STATES an african and/or plural, is not a citizen of South Africa. Africans are only allowed in white urban areas to sell their labour power. They must not be burdened with superficial appendages, such as wives, children and dependents who could not provide services...

.... So most Black women and children get sent to the "HOMELANDS" **BANTUSTAN** ...

WHERE MUCH OF THE SOIL IS ARID

... CHILDREN ARE OFTEN SENT TO WORK ON nearby white farms ...



HEALTH CARE IS MINIMAL ... AND MANY CHILDREN DIE FROM ILLNESS OR MALNUTRITION

.... SO THE MEN SEARCH FOR JOBS, BUT EMPLOYMENT IS SCARCE



AND IF THEY SUCCEED IN FINDING JOBS IN THE CITY, THEIR WIVES WILL ONLY SEE THEM FOR TWO WEEKS A YEAR!

WHEN THEY RETURN, THEY ARE VIRTUALLY STRANGERS



AND MAY STOP SENDING MONEY



THESE HARDSHIPS DRIVE MANY WOMEN TO THE TOWNS



BUT



SECTION 10:

NO AFRICAN may remain in 'white' areas unless he proves that:
 a) He/she has lived there continuously since birth; or
 b) He/she has worked continuously for one employer for at least ten years, or has lived there lawfully and continuously for 15 years, and has not been convicted of any serious offence or been employed elsewhere;
 c) He/she is the wife/child under 18 of someone in the above category;
 d) He/she has special permission.

FEW MEN QUALIFY UNDER SECTION 10 - AND EVEN FEWER WOMEN ...

BLACK	BLACK
51%	40%
HOMELANDS	
23%	25%
WHITE RURAL AREAS	
24%	33%
WHITE URBAN AREAS	

MOST BLACK WOMEN ARE EMPLOYED AS DOMESTIC SERVANTS - THESE JOBS ARE INSECURE, AND THEY ARE LIKELY TO CHANGE EMPLOYERS FREQUENTLY - TO GET HIGHER WAGES BECAUSE OF PREGNANCY OR FOR OTHER REASONS.



IF WOMEN DO, TECHNICALLY, QUALIFY UNDER SECTION 10, THEY MAY NOT BE ABLE TO FIND PROOF



EMPLOYMENT IS SCARCE and having obtained a residence permit, women may be expelled if deemed 'UNDESIRABLE' or IDLE



"IDLE BANTU": ANY potentially economically active person who is unemployed, fired too often, REFUSES ALLOCATED JOBS FROM LABOUR OFFICE



BECAUSE OF THE HOUSING SHORTAGE ACCOMMODATION IS DIFFICULT TO FIND. A WOMAN MAY NOT BE A REGISTERED TENANT, AND IF HER HUSBAND DIVORCES HER OR DIES, SHE WILL BE THROWN OUT OF THE HOUSE THAT THEY HAD OCCUPIED.



OR SHE MAY BE ALLOWED TO STAY, BUT HER CHILDREN ARE FORCED TO GO - SO MANY WOMEN TOLERATE UNHAPPY MARRIAGES



SOME BUILD THEIR OWN HOUSES, WHICH ARE USUALLY SOON DEMOLISHED



WOMEN NEED NOT ONLY RESIDENCE RIGHTS, BUT MONEY TO LIVE ON



UNEMPLOYMENT IS HIGH AND WAGES ARE LOW, SO MANY WOMEN ARE FORCED TO WORK, EITHER TO SUPPLEMENT THEIR HUSBANDS INCOME, OR AS THE SOLE BREADWINNER OF THE FAMILY

ON AVERAGE, OUT OF EVERY 100 WORKING BLACK WOMEN, 72 WILL BE DOMESTIC OR AGRICULTURAL WORKERS...



JOBS THAT ARE EXHAUSTING, INSECURE, DEGRADING AND BADLY PAID.

GOSH! YES, I SUPPOSE THEY DO, DAMN IT ALL...

THE AVERAGE WOMAN LEAVES FOR WORK AT ABOUT 5:00 AM



STASIE



AND SHE MAY RETURN AFTER DARK TO DANGEROUS TOWNSHIP STREETS



WHEN THEY FINALLY ARRIVE HOME, THEY HAVE TO ATTEND TO HOME AND FAMILY



TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS ARE OVERCROWDED AND CHILD CARE CENTRES ARE SCARCE - THE WORKING WOMAN FREQUENTLY HAS TO LEAVE HER CHILDREN TO THEIR OWN DEVICES



THE PRESENT
EXISTENCE OF BLACK WOMEN IN S.A. IS ONE OF HARDSHIP AND OPPRESSION. How has this situation developed historically? AND HOW HAVE THEY FOUGHT TO

RESIST



They have fought in many ways over the years, the most notable act of resistance being the **ANTI-PASS CAMPAIGN** in 1956
HOW THIS CAME ABOUT

IN 1955, MINISTER OF NATIVE AFFAIRS ANNOUNCED THAT THAT AFRICAN WOMEN WERE TO BE ISSUED WITH PASSES



..... THIS WAS THE IMPULS FOR THE FIRST MAJOR PROTEST IN OCTOBER 1955, WHEN 2000 WOMEN CONVERGED IN PRETORIA TO VOICE OPPOSITION AND SIGN PROTESTS.

IN 1954 THE FEDERATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN WAS FORMED - UNITING WOMEN OF ALL RACES AGAINST RACIAL AND SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION. (F.S.A.W.)

MEN WERE IN MOST CASES SHOCKED BY THIS



WELL-CO-ORDINATED AND BOLD STANID... THE CAMPAIGN INTENSIFIED IN 1956...

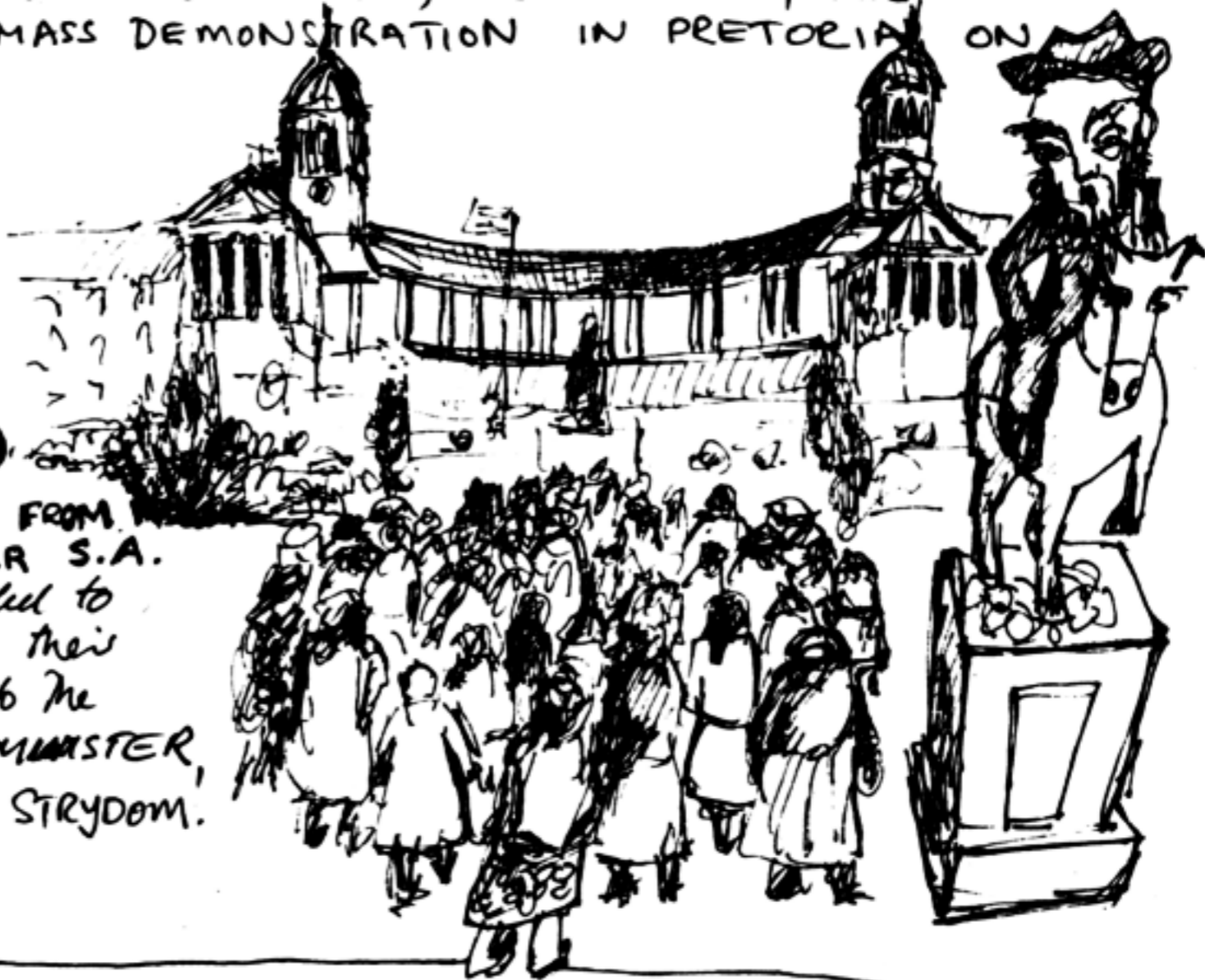
SPEARHEADED BY THE F.S.A.W, THE ANG. WOMENS LEAGUE, AND S.A.C.T.U, THE CAMPAIGN CULMINATED IN A MASS DEMONSTRATION IN PRETORIA ON

THE 9th August 1956

NATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

20000 WOMEN FROM ALL OVER S.A. assembled to present their protest to the PRIME MINISTER, JOHANNES STRYDOM.

"IF THE HUSBAND IS TO BE ARRESTED, AND THE MOTHER, WHAT ABOUT THE CHILD??"



Strydom you have struck a rock, you have touched the women



THE FOUR LEADERS, LILIAN NGOYI, RAHIMA MOOSA, SOPHIE WILLIAMS AND HELEN JOSEPH, LEFT THOUSANDS OF PETITION FORMS AT THE DOOR OF THE OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER, AND AFTER 30 MINUTES OF COMPLETE SILENCE, THE WOMEN SANG FREEDOM SONGS AND THEN DISPERSED, ENDING ONE OF THE MOST INCREDIBLY ORGANISED DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE HISTORY OF WOMEN'S STRUGGLES IN SOUTH AFRICA.

BUT - IT DIDN'T STOP HERE!

Despite intense state repression, women have once again been organising against oppression. Women workers played a leading role in the Sea Harvest strike in Cape Town, and in the 1980 Frame Strike in Durban. Women have also supported consumer boycotts, such as the Fatti's + Monis present Wilson-Rowntree boycott in 'homelands', as the Crossroads in Soweto, Thembisa and Durban, increases. AND WOMEN WILL CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN THE STRUGGLE FOR A MORE JUST AND DEMOCRATIC FUTURE.



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