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SAMUEL TSHIMUDO . WILLIAM TSHWANE . JUNDEA BOLOWA
TUBAKWA . JAMES TYITA . UNKNOWN MAN . UNKNOWN PERSON.

sash

VOLUME 30

No 1

MAY 1987

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ISSUE

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Cover note

It is one thing to read, in bald statistics, that 90 people have died in detention since 1963. It is quite another to bear how long it takes to read out a list of their names - or to imagine the conditions in which they must have spent their final hours.

Our cover, designed by Sheila Nowers, reflects the ceremony at our public meeting, commemorating those who have died in detention. Di Bishop read out their names as Black Sash members laid a single white carnation in memory of each person. The flowers stretched from one end to the other, across the stage.

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SASH magazine

SASH magazine is the official organ of the Black Sash. While editorials and editorial policy adhere broadly to the policies of the Black Sash, the views and opinions expressed in other material do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Black Sash.

The contents of this magazine have been restricted in terms of the Emergency regulations.

All political comment in this issue, except where otherwise stated, is by H Zille, 5 Long Street, Mowbray 7700.

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Published by the Black Sash, 5 Long Street, Mowbray 7700

Printed by Fish Hoek Printing, Somerset House, Main Road, Fish Hoek 7975.

SA ISSN 0030-4843

Subscriptions

5 Long Street, Mowbray 7700

Local: R15,00 per year, including GST and postage. (Contact the above office for details of overseas subscriptions.)

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Producing the national conference issue was a little like trying to bring the proverbial mountain to Mohammed. Those of us who attended the national conference were deeply impressed by the scope of the information presented, the depth of analysis, the wider impact of the Black Sash's work and the commitment of its members.

We have tried to capture a sense of this for those who were not fortunate enough to be there. It is impossible, within the scope of one magazine, to do justice to 55 conference papers, 14 workshop groups, a panel discussion and a powerful public meeting. Instead of trying to present the whole mountain in miniature, we have sifted out what we consider to be the essence of the conference.

We selected only three conference papers for publication: the Court Monitoring Report, the paper on TB Huis in Port Elizabeth's Red Location, and the paper aptly titled 'Freedom to Move but No Freedom to Stop Moving'. They were chosen because they reflect new aspects of Black Sash work or convey topical information essential to on-going work.

We have also focussed on the five major themes of the conference: militarisation, urbanisation, the Black Sash advice offices, our work with other organisations, and the democratisation process taking place within the Black Sash. Nor have we simply reproduced what was said at conference on these topics. Rather, we have tried to take each issue further, making the magazine part of the on-going action-programme envisaged by conference.

Central both to the conference and this issue of the magazine is Mary Burton's presidential address, delivered to a capacity audience at our public meeting, where she urged us all to face the future creatively and courageously — and suggested practical ways of doing so.

There are always some things that are difficult to express in words. One such event was the moving ceremony at our public meeting commemorating the 89 people who have died in detention since 1963, when extended detention without trial was introduced. We have dedicated our cover to the symbolic flower-laying ceremony in their memory, and have added another name to this tragically long list: Benedict Mashoke, a 20-year-old Emergency detainee who has died in prison since the national conference.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the national conference is the annual incentive it provides Black Sash members to record at least some of the work in which the organisation is engaged. The conference papers provide a devastating chronicle of the effects of government policy, a powerful testimony to the work being done to resist it, and an invaluable resource for other organisations involved in different aspects of the same struggle.

But we are also aware that much is left unrecorded. We believe that the systematic documentation of our work should become a national Black Sash priority. This will probably demand additional human and material resources, and more work for many who are already over-extended in the field. But we believe that, as the scope of the Black Sash's work grows, it will become increasingly necessary to find more effective ways of recording, storing, and disseminating one of the most important resources we have: the knowledge, experience and insights of those Black Sash members working at the cutting edge of some of the most important issues facing our society.

Helen Zille

the creeping coup

Revelations of a 'creeping coup' that has quietly usurped many of the traditional functions of government have become the political talking point of the year. Considerable priority was given at the Black Sash national conference to a discussion of Joy Harnden's paper on the National Security Management System. Here we present a brief overview of the system drawn from various published sources.

Most of us picture a *coup d'etat* as a sudden military uprising, occurring amidst loud gunfire, with troops occupying government buildings and capturing radio stations. Ousted political leaders are lucky if they manage to escape into exile: more often they are brought before a military tribunal and, finally, the executioner. Then the generals take over.

In South Africa, the rise of the military in government structures has been a steady, silent process that has happened over the best part of a decade. Nor has it occurred as a military revolt against political institutions. Indeed, President P W Botha has consciously brought the military into government via a complex network of security committees that has fast established itself as a shadow administration.

It is clearly not a conventional coup. It has been called a 'creeping coup', heralding a transition to an even more authoritarian system of rule. At the helm is the executive state president, who presides over an elaborate structure of over 500 committees, comprising appointed bureaucrats and technocrats, and effectively controlled by the military and police.

This faceless state structure, whose members and activities are seldom known, exists alongside the conventional political system, and is rapidly usurping the functions of local government throughout the country. The committees are accountable to no one except the security structures above them, and deal with blacks only as co-opted agents at the lowest levels.

The network is known as the National Security Management System (NSMS), and has only recently come to public attention. But according to the most recent reports, it is already obsolete. Since the State of Emergency it has apparently been overhauled at the highest levels, and brought under tighter control, with its headquarters at the Tuynhuis, the state president's official residence. Its purpose is to deal with the day-to-day running of the Emergency.

This Emergency Management System has a

four-fold purpose:

- to counter what the state believes is a revolutionary onslaught against it. In practice this means crushing all popular organisations working for radical political and economic transformation outside official structures;
- to contain political resistance on an ongoing basis, granting the government the political reprieve it needs to implement and entrench its reformed constitutional structures — the tricameral parliament and the Regional Services Councils;
- to co-ordinate a far-reaching 'hearts and minds' strategy by improving social and material conditions in black areas. The purpose of this campaign is to win legitimacy for the reform process and undermine community support for organisations advocating more radical change;
- to act as an early-warning system, spotting potential problems and dealing with them on a military or material level, before they erupt in open revolt.

The government insists that the system is not unique to South Africa and that other countries have similar security networks. However, as A P Stemmet, a senior NSMS official has conceded, almost anything can count as a security-related issue in South Africa: 'If a community has genuine grievances, for example, poor roads or inadequate water supplies, these things are sources of irritation which can develop into security problems.'

The State Security Council stands at the pinnacle of the security management pyramid. It is the most important and influential of four specialist cabinet committees. In theory, the SSC is subordinate to the cabinet, but has more aptly been described as an 'inner cabinet', headed by the state president and including the most senior cabinet ministers as well as all the military, police and intelligence chiefs.

The State Security Council has a

'P W Botha has consciously brought the military into government via a complex network of security committees'

'Individuals often don't realise that they are being drawn into a national security and intelligence network.'

permanent secretariat, headed by Lieutenant-General Pieter van der Westhuizen, the former head of Military Intelligence. Next in the hierarchy is a working committee, drawing together all the government department heads who co-ordinate the activities of their departments on security-related matters.

Below this are 13 inter-departmental committees of the SSC, where representatives of all government departments co-operate to co-ordinate particular areas of the security strategy, such as political affairs, manpower, community services, national economy and civil defence.

At a regional level are 12 Joint Management Centres, which coincide approximately with the country's military command areas. Each JMC consists of about 60 officials and security force officers, usually with a defence force or police brigadier as chairman.

The JMCs in turn have specialist committees, one dealing with intelligence, another with communications and a third with constitutional, economic and social issues. These committees are usually referred to by their Afrikaans abbreviations as the Gikkom, the Komkom and the Semkom.

Beneath them are 60 sub-JMCs, roughly coinciding with the metropolitan regions due to be governed by the Regional Services Councils. These consist of civic officials and local military and police chiefs. At the lowest level are 448 mini-JMCs corresponding to municipal councils. They include people like civil defence officers, fire chiefs, postmasters and municipal officials.

Informal channels of contact have also been established with organisations like Rotary clubs, parent-teachers' associations, Red Cross workers and farmers' associations — often without their realising that they are being drawn into a national security and

intelligence network.

The system works as a two-way process. Directives are issued by the State Security Council, and work their way down the hierarchy for implementation at various levels. This process is complemented by a bottom-up line of communication, with the committees at the base of the security pyramid gathering intelligence and making policy recommendations that are sent up the line to NSMS headquarters. The intelligence is evaluated, and may result in new directives being issued down the hierarchy. If policy recommendations are accepted by the State Security Council, they must be approved by the full cabinet before implementation.

There is little doubt that the policy recommendations that emanate from the National Security Management System carry inordinate weight. The cabinet relies heavily on the research and recommendations of its 'experts' to take decisions. Furthermore, there are currently nine ministers serving on the State Security Council — and they constitute a majority in the cabinet. This overlapping membership makes it extremely unlikely that the SSC's policy recommendations will be rejected. Some analysts have argued that the cabinet is nothing but a rubber stamp for the State Security Council.

However, there have been occasions when the policy recommendations emanating from the bottom of the NSMS have been rejected by politicians in the top structures. One such example is recounted by James Selfe, a PFP researcher, who is writing an academic thesis on the NSMS. Selfe reports that the Cape Town sub-JMC recommended that District Six be returned to the 'coloured' people as a goodwill gesture in terms of the 'hearts and minds' campaign. This was, apparently, personally rejected by P W Botha at the top level.

The Black Sash national conference statement on the National Security Management System

The Black Sash is alarmed that behind the façade of 'parliamentary rule', the National Security Management System has taken over the real government of this country. The NSMS, which operates under a cloak of secrecy, is a profoundly undemocratic system. It is dominated by the military and police. Its tasks include the handling of security situations, gathering intelligence and co-ordinating the activities of all government departments in the implementation of 'total strategy' and 'national security'.

We are concerned that many individuals, sincerely opposed to apartheid, are unwittingly being co-opted into this system. The Black Sash condemns a system that further denies the right of all people to access to control over the way they are governed and blocks any possible evolution of a truly democratic system of government in South Africa.

THE NATIONAL SECURITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

PARALLEL POLITICAL STRUCTURES

CABINET

STATE SECURITY COUNCIL

WORKING COMMITTEE OF THE STATE SECURITY COUNCIL

SECRETARIAT OF THE STATE SECURITY COUNCIL

National Intelligence Interpretation Branch

Strategic Communication Branch

Strategy Branch

Administrative Branch

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEES

Manpower
 Security Services
 Civil Defence
 Transport
 Security
 National Supplies & Resources
 Government Funding
 National Economy
 Telecommunications & Electrical
 Power Supply
 Science & Technology
 Community Services
 Culture
 Political Affairs

JOINT MANAGEMENT CENTRES
 Executive: Chairs of Committees

Communications Committee (KOMKOM)

Joint Intelligence Committee (GIKKOM)

Constitutional, Economic & Social Committee (SEMKOM)

SUB-JOINT MANAGEMENT CENTRES
 MINI-JOINT MANAGEMENT CENTRES
 LOCAL MANAGEMENT CENTRES

CABINET COMMITTEES

DEPARTMENTAL HEADS

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

REGIONAL SERVICES COUNCILS

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

It is extremely difficult to obtain information on the operations of the National Security Management System. All participants must take an oath of secrecy which makes them subject to heavy penalties under the Official Secrets Act. Nevertheless, the extent and nature of their involvement in local administration sometimes emerges, despite all attempts at concealment. Black Sash members contribute their accounts of how they have encountered the operations of the Joint Management Centres ...

Jenny Boraine, Cape Western Region:

This account reflects an experience Alex Boraine had in Cathcart in the Eastern Cape last year. It took place against the background of an extended consumer boycott organised by the black residents in the town. It shows the direct involvement of the Joint Management Centres in attempting to crush the consumer boycott, undermine the community's organisation and remove its leadership.

'Sometime last year, Alex received a message from black community leaders in Cathcart, outlining their problems and asking to meet him. Their messages told of a highly successful consumer boycott and the attempts of the white residents to crush it. The first measure the white local authority apparently used to break the boycott was to send health inspectors to black-owned township shops, that were then closed down as alleged health hazards. This deprived the community of its alternative sources of supply. Determined not to break the boycott, the community organised collectively to buy groceries from neighbouring towns. As soon as they attempted to do so, the local commando (which included several white shopkeepers) set up roadblocks, stopped the cars transporting the groceries and confiscated the goods on the grounds that the people were 'trading without licences'.

A stalemate had been reached — the white commando was ensuring that blacks could not use alternative sources of supply and the blacks were determined not to break their boycott of locally-owned white stores. The black leaders asked Alex to mediate in the situation and requested an initial meeting to discuss the issue. Shortly before the meeting, they were detained. Some time later, Alex was asked to meet the white town council to discuss the matter. He agreed, primarily to make the point that nothing could be resolved in the town unless the black leaders were released and negotiations commenced. The town councillors insisted that there was nothing they could do about this. Then one of the councillors, who seemed to know a lot more than the rest, said he knew all about the

detained leaders. He said they were agitators and deserved to be in detention and would remain there until more moderate leadership had come to the fore who would be more amenable to working with whites. The man acknowledged that he was the chairman of the local Joint Management Centre and the head of the local commando. He made it very clear to Alex, in the presence of the mayor and the town council, that the real power over these decisions lay with the JMCs. This revealed just how powerful the JMCs are. Subsequent experience in other rural towns has shown just how widespread they are.

Somerset West Branch, Cape Western Region:

This account tells of the military intervention in the community of Lwandle, that lives in what were intended to be single-sex hostels between Somerset West and the Strand. The community of 5 000 people is currently struggling for the right to family accommodation in the area, and fears possible removal to Khayelitsha or Mfuleni near Bellville, both 25-30 km away.

'The Urban Foundation has undertaken a feasibility study on the development of Lwandle as a township, and is expected to make positive findings regarding the viability of family housing. It appears that the authorities are aware of the Urban Foundation's survey — and are wary of its anticipated findings. All the indications are that an alternative survey was conducted — and that the SADF was brought in to conduct it. Although there is no concrete proof, there is a strong likelihood that the exercise was co-ordinated by the mini-JMC in the Strand area. This would fit in with similar 'research projects' co-ordinated by mini-JMCs in other parts of the country, such as Alexandra.

On Monday, 23 March, Lwandle residents were awakened at 04h00 to find that their village had been surrounded by the police and army. No one was permitted to leave the laager until the survey was completed — about four hours later. Residents were handed pre-printed notes informing

*'... agitators
... deserved
to be in
detention ...
until more
moderate
leadership
had come to
the fore ...'*



MARGY MATTHEW

Jenny Boraine

employers that any employee who was late for work had been delayed as a result of 'necessary security force action'. This 'action' entailed a series of very illuminating questions, particularly those addressed to the women. They were asked where they were born, how many children they had in the homelands, how many children they had in Lwandle and for how long they had lived there. There are fears that the 'statistics' may be used to prepare a case against their permanent settlement in Lwandle and pave the way for their removal.'

Joy Harnden, Johannesburg:

'One of the clearest examples of the work of the Joint Management Centres is their involvement in Alexandra, the 484 ha estate where approximately 110 000 people live in appalling conditions on the border of Johannesburg's affluent white suburbs. Alexandra seems to have been a prime JMC target because of its advanced level of popular mobilisation.

The Alexandra project is directly under the control of the mini-JMC operating in the area, which is accountable to the sub-JMC of the East Rand, which in turn reports to the JMC covering the whole Witwatersrand area — and so on, up the hierarchy of the National Security Management System.

The Alexandra project is being conducted in two phases. The first has been an attempt to smash all popular community organisation and resistance in the area. This has been achieved jointly by the SADF and the SAP, through mass detentions and a strong military presence in the township. At the beginning of the national State of Emergency the township was cordoned off and block-by-block searches conducted. Activists who were not detained fled or went into hiding. Many were killed, allegedly by rival political organisations. A number have been charged with sedition, alternatively subversion.

The second phase, which began in August last year, involves the upgrading of the area in a R90-million project drawing on the resources of every government department under the direction of the mini-JMC. The purpose of this project, which includes the provision of a post office, public telephones and housing, is 'to win the hearts and minds' of the residents and further erode the popular support of community-based progressive organisations.

The existence of the Alexandra scheme and the extent of the National Security Management System's involvement, were exposed recently in a series of articles by David Braun in *The Star*.

Alexandra residents do not have representation on the mini-JMC controlling the planning of their area. The mini-JMC runs its Alexandra project with the assistance of five subordinate committees. These include the three traditional structures:

- the Joint Intelligence Committee, composed mainly of the security police, who are responsible for gathering information on activities in the township,
- the Constitutional, Economic and Social Committee, responsible for recommending initiatives in this field.
- the Communications Committee, responsible for communicating the philosophy of the mini-JMCs to the people of Alexandra.

There are two additional committees — a Security Committee, comprising police, the SADF and the municipal police to maintain 'law and order', and a so-called 'steering committee', which is said to include representatives from community organisations, although it is not clear whom.

The public face of the Alexandra scheme is projected by the Communications Committee (Komkom). It does this in a variety of ways, including the distribution of pamphlets publicising the installation of a sewerage system, the lack of which another sub-committee had identified as a grievance. The pamphlets were targetted at the youth and depict a young man named Alex extolling the merits of the new development, while 'Comrade Rat', representing the young activist, seeks to destroy it.'

A Black Sash member, who asked not to be identified in order to protect her source:

'Someone I know well, who is a conscientious objector and doing his alternative service in a government department, was asked by his department head to attend a mini-JMC meeting on the head's behalf, as he was due to be out of town. The meeting was attended mainly by representatives from local government departments. Much of the discussion seemed to be routine 'committee work'. But, during the course of the meeting, it was clearly stated that one of the purposes of the Joint Management Centres was to undermine the End Conscription Campaign.'

In terms of a national conference decision to disseminate information about the NSMS, we welcome information from readers on the functioning of the NSMS.

'The purpose of this project ... is to erode the popular support of community-based progressive organisations.'



Joy Harnden

• SADF • OUT OF THE TOWNSHIPS

IN ORDER THAT THERE CAN BE:
STONE THROWING!
PETROL BOMBS!
ARSON!

DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY!
SCHOOL BOYCOTTS THROUGH THREATS!
CONSUMER BOYCOTTS THROUGH THREATS!
BURNING OF MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN!

THE **SADF** IS THE PROTECTOR
OF PEACE LOVING PEOPLE. THOSE
AGAINST THE **SADF** PRESENCE IN
THE TOWNSHIPS ARE EITHER NOT
EXPOSED TO THE VIOLENCE OR ARE
THE ORGANIZERS OF IT !!

Issued by the Officer Commanding, Western Province Command, The Castle, Cape Town

SA



SO TH TH

Vitriolic 'disinformation' campaigns against opposition organisations have become a standard feature of South African politics.

Neil Ross, a PFP divisional councillor in Cape Town, believes the JMCs are responsible for co-ordinating some of the 'disinformation' media. Here are two examples of attempts to discredit the End Conscription Campaign and the United Democratic Front. The one on the left states that it was issued by the Officer Commanding, Western Province Command, The Castle, Cape Town; the person(s) responsible for the one on the right have not identified themselves.

DF GET OUT!



WHAT WE CAN TERRORIZE THE PEOPLE IN PEACE!

Why the Black Sash opposes the NSMS

For many who have worked long and hard for socio-economic improvements in black areas, it may seem difficult to understand why there is such stringent opposition to a system that is at last delivering some of the goods. It obviously makes little sense to resist the long-overdue construction of dwellings, the installation of telephones, and the upgrading of some areas. What the Black Sash rejects is the method and purpose behind this process.

During the discussion on the NSMS at the Black Sash national conference, the Black Sash made clear its opposition to the NSMS for the following reasons:

- It is a profoundly anti-democratic system. Far from moving South Africa in the direction of broader democratic participation, it is centralising control under the military and security establishments.
- It is consciously designed to undermine community organisations and their demands.
- Its purpose is to entrench the government's reform strategy — and to nullify any political alternatives.
- It operates in secret.
- It allows non-representative people to make decisions that should be made by elected bodies.
- It gives the military and security structures a major stake in government, ensuring that they are in a strong position to resist any diminishment of their power — particularly the fundamental change we believe South Africa requires.

How does the Black Sash oppose the NSMS?

The Black Sash national conference made the following proposals for Sash action to counter 'the creeping coup':

- educate ourselves and the wider public about the system and its implications,
- share any information we gather through the media, and our own publications,
- establish 'militarisation interest groups' in the different regions to take up campaigns around these issues,
- urge service organisations and elected local representatives to ensure that they are not unwittingly drawn into the militarisation web. □

mary
burton on

6 may election

The House of Assembly election results have dealt a severe blow to all who hoped that the transition to a new and representative system of government could take place through the existing parliamentary structures. We are all shaken at the extent to which the white electorate is manipulated and duped by the National Party government's control of TV, radio and much of the press. The propaganda which exploits fear and prejudice poses a grave danger for the future.

We are faced with the stark reality of a powerful, oppressive government. How do we continue to work for the changes we know to be right and necessary?

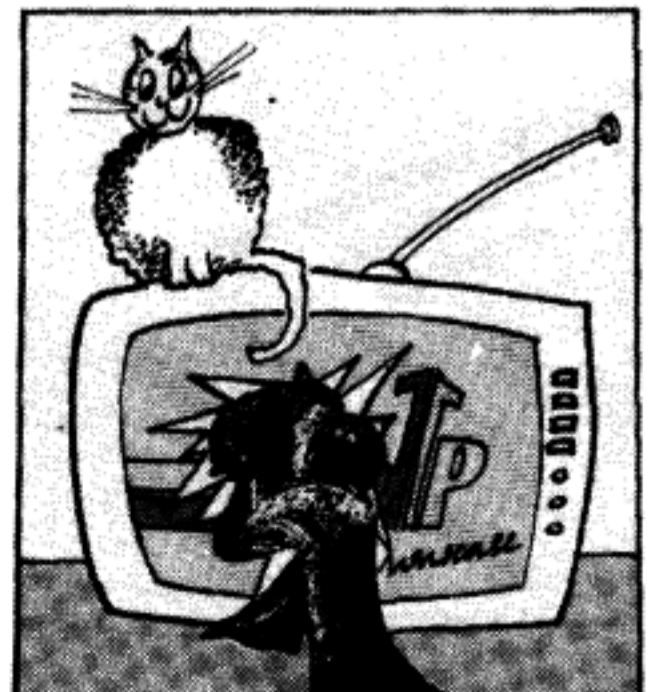
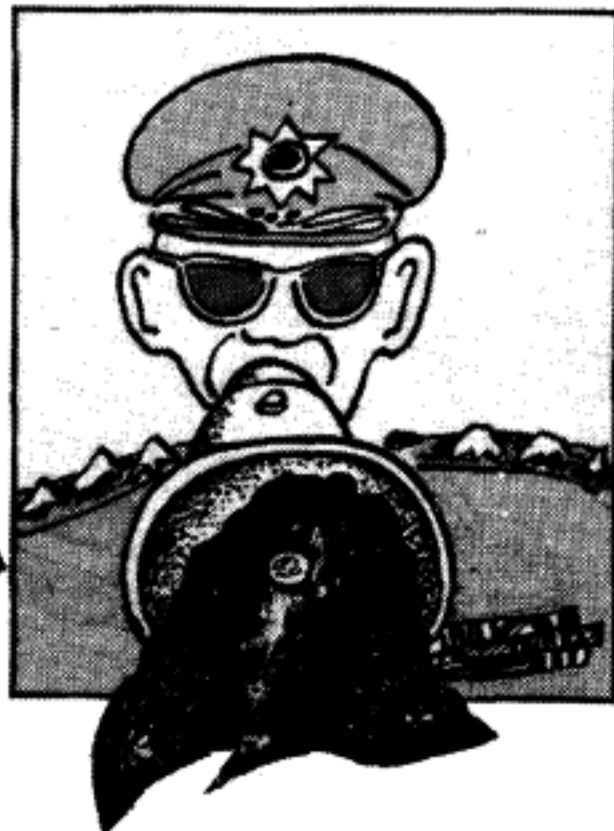
Our aim remains to strive for justice and peace. I believe we must hold up these ideals for all to pursue, and we must live and work in accordance with these values. We must continue to do all in our power to assist the victims of this apartheid society, through our advice offices and by seeking new ways to tackle problems of homelessness, impoverishment and the actions of security forces. We must continue to expose injustice and oppression, and seek behind the closed doors of the prisons, the police cells, the National Security Management System and the many arms of the government. Most of all, we must strengthen the links that bind us to the majority of our fellow citizens and forge new allegiances that will give us the courage and energy to carry forward our task. The fears of many white people can be dispelled if we can demonstrate that it is possible for South Africans to live and work together without racism or dictatorship.

If we do all these things we shall indeed be helping to lay down foundations for the future.

how the black sash is used ...

gill cowan

Stoffel van der Merwe, who succeeded Louis Nel as head of the Bureau for Information, has warned the Black Sash against being 'used'. SASH investigated Dr van der Merwe's charge, and discovered that it was not without substance. Today we can reveal the ways in which the Black Sash is being used ...



national conference resolution and statements

Statement on **Detentions**

Over the past nine months thousands of South Africans have been and are still being held in detention in police stations and prisons throughout the country without benefit of due process of law.

They are detained because they oppose the apartheid system. Such opposition is the duty of all people who are concerned about civil liberties and human rights in South Africa. The national conference of the Black Sash accepts that this is also our duty.

We commit ourselves to unrelenting opposition to apartheid. We commit ourselves to continuing exposure of the way in which the concept of 'reform' is being used to disguise the way power is consolidated in the hands of the state security council and the ruling party. We believe that the day will soon come when South Africa will discover the proud heritage of democratic nations which do not allow any person to be imprisoned without just cause and proper trial in terms of just law.

Resolution on **the State of Emergency**

The Black Sash national conference, meeting for the first time since the 12 June 1986 declaration of the national State of Emergency and its consequences (detentions, censorship, disruption of community organisations), resolves:

- 1** to condemn this resort to increased repression;
- 2** to call for an end to this repressive policy; and
- 3** to work more strenuously than ever against the system of injustice that is plunging our country into ever deeper conflict and for the achievement of a just, democratic, non-racial society in a re-united South Africa.

Statement on **forced removals**

Minister Heunis has stated that at least 21 973 people will be moved in 1987. We deplore the government's intention to continue its policy of forced removal.

The work of our advice offices and rural projects indicates clearly that the contentions that these removals are to the benefit of the communities concerned and 'not politically inspired' are totally fallacious.

This is especially apparent in the case of Oukasie (Brits) where the 55-year-old, 10 000-strong community has constantly reiterated and demonstrated that it is not prepared to move. It is clear that the basis for the removal is that the Oukasie community is too close to the white group area and that the removal is thus an attempt to satisfy the conservative white constituency in Brits, especially in this pre-election period. □

facing the future

mary burton

The State of Emergency, proclaimed on 12 June 1986, was exactly nine months old when Mary Burton delivered her presidential address to a capacity audience in the Claremont Civic Centre, marking the official opening of the Black Sash national conference. This is an edited and abridged version of her speech, in which she chronicles the effects of the State of Emergency and suggests practical ways that the Black Sash can contribute to the creation of a democratic and just society.



We are told that political violence is waning, after its having claimed at least 2 387 lives in the past two and a half years. Yet we hear from townships all over the country of the despair and distress and anger felt by people suffering under the repressive presence of the forces of the state. We know that thousands have been detained under security legislation and that many of them remain in detention. We know that detentions have not ceased. The difficulty of finding out very much about detainees, the widespread concern about the conditions in which they are held, and the impotence of the courts to secure their release, all compound the seriousness of the situation.

The impact on the lives of the majority of South Africans has been severe: daily life has been disrupted; many communities have lost their respected leaders, and experienced fragmentation and disorganisation; horrifying accounts have been received about the treatment of detainees; parents are profoundly disturbed at reports that ex-detainees under the age of 21 years have attended special courses at 'youth centres', about which little is known; young people coming to trial on charges of public violence have been given long prison sentences; and all this falls mainly on the backs of people who are already struggling to surmount increasing poverty and unemployment.

Where are we to look for solutions to South Africa's crisis?

It is painfully clear that the tricameral parliamentary system is not the answer. Nor will it miraculously become the answer through the addition of any further arrangements which might be made for black citizens as a group or groups to be represented. The present system, from the Houses of Parliament, through the Regional Services Councils and the Joint Management Centres, down to the local level in every town and village, is designed to maintain power in the hands of the ruling group while drawing in compliant partners to create an updated concept of apartheid — together but unequal.

The longer this system is in force and the more its structures become entrenched, the harder it will be to dismantle. We are convinced that along this road lies disaster.

The most logical, the most peaceful, the most just dispensation for South Africa can be reached only through a commitment to ending apartheid and building a non-racial democracy with full and equal adult suffrage. The negotiations which might get us there will have to be preceded by the release of political prisoners and the unbanning of organisations. Whatever new constitutional

'We need people's education too.'

arrangement is devised, it must ensure the recognition, the protection by law, of basic human rights and freedoms — of person, conscience, speech, information, movement, meeting and association. The laws of the country must provide for control over the power of the state, not for unfettered control by the state over the people.

That kind of society may seem a long way out of our reach, but as the might of the National Party government is eroded after nearly 40 years in power, it is not too early to plan and work for it. It is one of the straws of hope for the future that, in spite of everything, people are doing precisely this.

What do we, the Black Sash, do to hasten that future society? How can we contribute to the struggle for that liberation which will free us at the same time that it frees the oppressed and disenfranchised majority?

We can start by rejecting some of the options.

Firstly, we can resist the increasing militarisation of the country, and re-affirm with the End Conscription Campaign that 'War is no Solution'. In December I read with the most profound despair that farming families in the northern Transvaal are being armed and trained to fight off cross-border raids. Self-preservation and protection of one's family are natural instincts, but we should learn from the history of our neighbouring countries that working for a just peace is preferable to embracing war — especially a civil war which in the long run cannot be won.

Secondly, we can stay and work for our common future in South Africa. We do not blame those who decide they cannot bring up young children in this violent society, or who leave because they cannot in conscience serve in the South African Defence Force, or who cannot reconcile themselves to living with injustice. But we believe that people with skills to offer and the willingness to contribute to an open society are needed here. A total of 2 164 professionals and technical workers emigrated during 1986, among them 80 doctors, 50 lawyers, 263 teachers, 616 engineers ...

If, then, we reject the fight or flight responses, how do we face the future and contribute to it?

- We can appropriate our common history. We need 'people's education' too. Let me give an example. In 1979 a national conference of the Black Sash, meeting in Cape Town, spent a good deal of time and effort drawing up a Charter for Women. I was one of the delegates, and put considerable thought into rewording some of the clauses — it was an interesting and useful exercise. But it was only much later that I learned

that there already was a Women's Charter in South Africa, and that it had been in existence since 1955, when it was part of the thinking towards the Freedom Charter. I felt I had been deprived of a vital piece of information and of the shared experience of women working together for their rights. We must not cheat ourselves of this heritage.

- We can prepare ourselves to accept the inevitable growth of our cities into major urban centres, where the majority of our fellow city-dwellers will be black and will thus more accurately reflect the reality of the South African population. We need to think of what this means in terms of infrastructure, jobs, schools, housing and social security.
- Most of all we need to maintain an unrelenting pressure on whatever weak points we can find in the system that rules us, so as to hasten the day when the negotiations I have spoken of can take place at last.

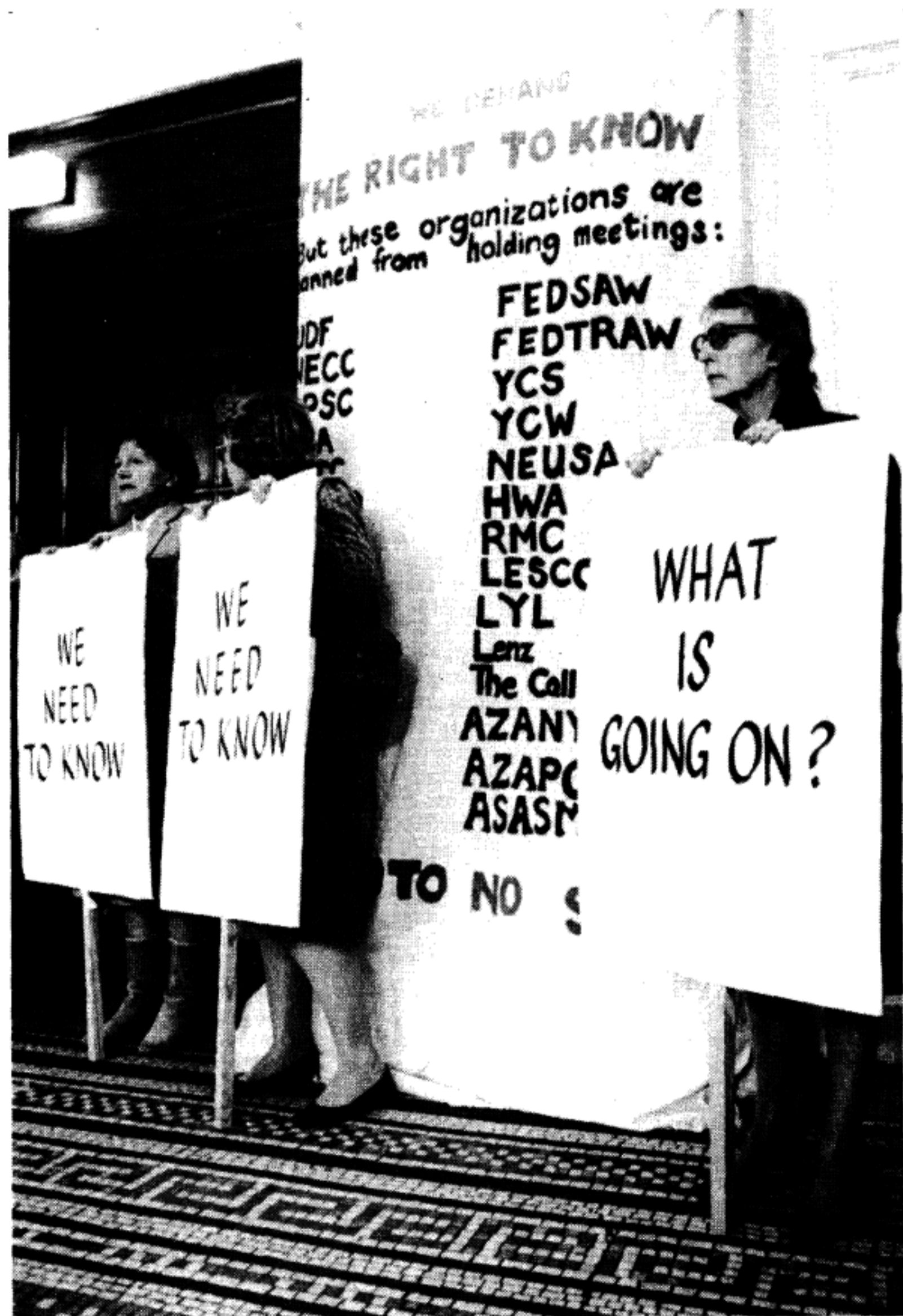
The State of Emergency regulations make this more difficult than ever. So many peaceful avenues are now denied to us and to communities which have sought to avoid violence in the past. No boycott action can be advocated; no reports of security force action if they seem to be 'unrest-related'; no civil disobedience; no bringing military service into disrepute; no making 'subversive statements'. There are many risks in giving information about detainees or the conditions of their detention, and this has prevented us from being as outspoken about the detention of our members and many others as we would otherwise have been.

In spite of all the restrictions on publishing information we must continue to try to expose the facts as we witness them. The truth is a powerful tool and we must use it with courage and confidence.

We commit ourselves to contributing now to the process of change, as we have tried to do in the past. At this conference and in the years ahead we plan to show that while we have carved a small niche for the Black Sash in specific areas of work, we are also rooted in the wider community of which we form a part. We do not want to be left behind to become tragic curiosities in the new South Africa, like fading pictures of the sad Afrikaners in Kenya, or 'expats' anywhere in Africa.

We can assure other white South Africans, from our own experience, that non-racialism is alive and well in this country, if not in its governing structure. The quality of the society we can look forward to in the future depends on the quality of the contribution we make to it now. □

communication: a photo essay



Protesters at a public meeting on 'Your Right to Know' at the Johannesburg City Hall on 15 August 1986. (Photograph: Sandy Smit Afrapix)



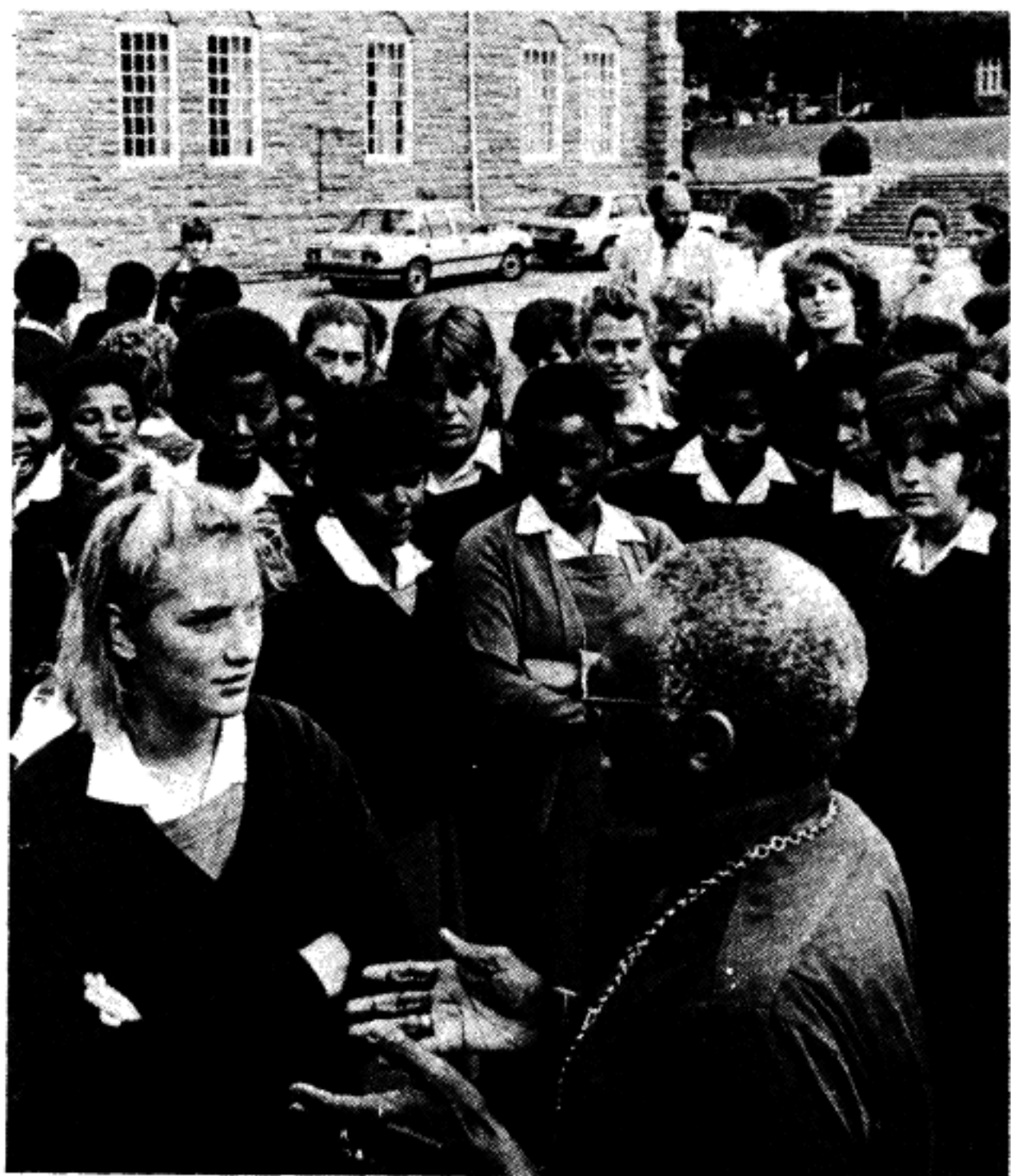
Witnessed by an old man (back to camera), student leaders confer with a police officer before a march to the Urban Bantu Council Chamber at Jabulani. The youngsters clinched a deal with the police not to interfere with their march. (Photograph: Peter Magubane)



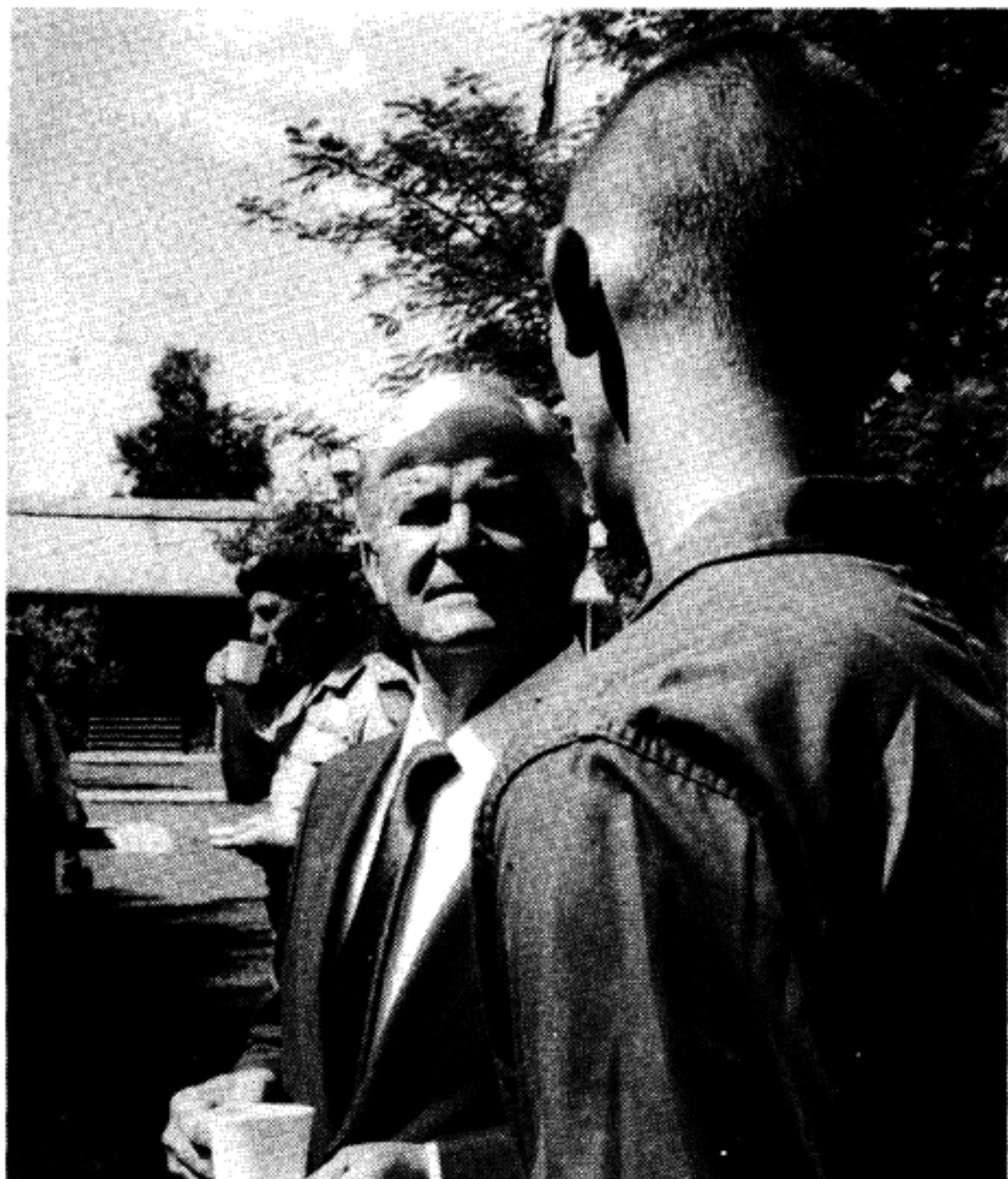
Pick 'n Pay strike - CCAWUSA, January 1984. (Photograph: Paul Weinberg/Afrapix)



Black and white scholars at Louwsberg. (Photograph: Cedric Nunn/Afrapix)



Archbishop Tutu talks to schoolgirls of the Diocesan School for Girls (DSG) in Grahamstown after conducting the morning assembly. (Photograph: Steve Hilton-Barber/Afrapix)



1987 January/February call-up.
(Photograph: Anna Zieminski)

Khotso House, May Day 1985.
(Photograph: Paul Weinberg/
Afrapix)

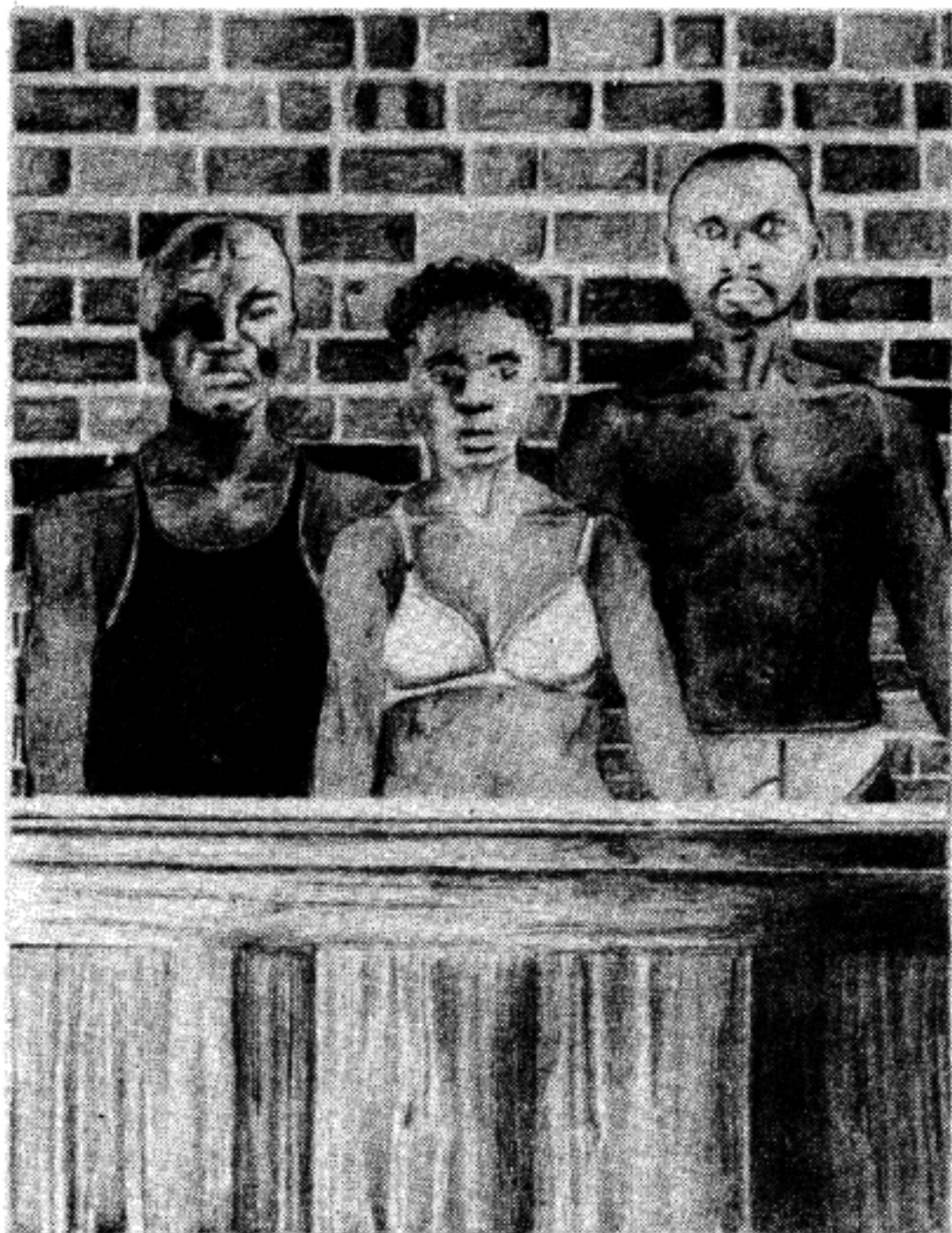




A National Party supporter (on right) punches a Herstigte Nasionale Party heckler (centre) at a National Party election meeting hosted by Magnus Malan, April 1987. (Photograph: Steve Hilton-Barber/Afrapix)



A scene from the Clover workers' play, April 1987. (Photograph: Eric Miller/Afrapix)



LUCINDA JOLLY

punishment by process:

muriel crewe

Since the demise of the pass laws, Black Sash court monitors no longer attend the pass courts. They attend cases arising from the mass arrests that began in 1985, and complain not about the inordinate speed of the trials, but about a new development of 'punishment by process'.

A new dimension has arisen in the art of 'punishment by process' since the massive arrests began in 1985 of those involved in the politics of overt opposition to the apartheid state.

The charges that followed, covered in most cases by the blanket designation 'public violence', have filled the courts for two years. But the cases brought to court represent only a fraction of the number of people detained.

Why 'public violence' rather than contravening security legislation? The deduction is that it is state strategy to criminalise political activity, presumably to disarm foreign and internal criticism.

The Cape Western Region of the Black Sash has monitored courts throughout the greater Cape Town area, the Boland, and southern Cape. The information that emerges from the records keeps us aware of situations which are less and less in the public eye because of media restrictions.

Violence

It is appalling to note the number of individuals who allege wanton destruction of property and brutal violence on arrest. They claim to have been assaulted in Casspirs and

in police cells — including incidents of torture. The assaults range from beating and kicking to teargassing and close-range shooting. In some cases doctors' certificates, photographs and slides were offered as evidence.

There are reports of inadequate food in police cells, rudeness and obstructiveness towards parents seeking their children, difficulties in the delivery of parcels. There are accounts of, at least, the fear of sodomy when juveniles were imprisoned with older men or common criminals. There are many claims that the statements made and used by the state as evidence, were signed under duress. We have seen accused brought into court manacled or in leg-irons. The Black Sash in Port Elizabeth also reports many substitute arrests — brother for brother, father for son, neighbour for neighbour. A further indication of what is happening is the continuing number of applications brought by Legal Resources Centres to restrain the police from assaulting detainees.

The contempt displayed to those arrested was highlighted in May 1986 when 120 residents of the Ashton township of Zolani filed into the dock in Montague — many of the women clad only in their bras and panties or nighties; some of the men only in their



Muriel Crewe

GILL COWAN

'... the family is too weary and disturbed to want to face any suit for wrongful arrest or further court proceedings: it is sufficient to be free.'

underpants. They had been arrested during a midnight raid two days earlier and had not been given a chance to dress before being taken away. It is worth noting that these people had also suffered severe assault by the vigilantes involved in their arrest. They were then detained and bail was opposed. Eventually bail was granted on appeal to the attorney-general, and 90 had the charges against them withdrawn. The remaining 30 were acquitted in January 1987 for want of evidence against them.

Remands

The duration of the above case was eight months. This protracted process is typical of many of the cases we have monitored, some dragging on for more than a year, through repeated remands. The worst we have recorded went through 12 remands. Many of these were requested because state witnesses, usually policemen, were not available. Frequently the charge sheet was not ready. Sometimes the defence lawyers saw the charge sheet for the first time when they arrived in court, and they then requested a remand in order to study the charges. Delays for many other reasons are possible, but the whole process smacks of purposeful delay, or suggests that there is a very real problem in framing charges against people arrested in random fashion.

The result is a prolonged, traumatic experience for the accused and their families. Much hardship is involved, in addition to the fundamental anxiety about the fate of the accused. There is the loss of schooling, possible loss of several days' salary when leave has to be taken to attend court, actual loss of employment when employers are unsympathetic, heavy travel expenses (especially serious in rural areas, where cases are often held in towns distant from the place of domicile). The Black Sash in the southern Cape has found that it seems to be a matter of policy to hear Oudtshoorn cases in George and vice versa, Plettenberg Bay cases in Knysna, and Knysna cases in George.

It is not surprising that psychological and physical strain is often reported — insomnia, headaches, shingles, rashes; and there was the case of an epileptic who had a fit during each appearance.

Related to the remands is the practice of misinformation. Attorneys have said that prosecutors in distant towns have been particularly unhelpful in providing information about whether a trial is going to run on a particular day or whether it will merely be remanded. The attorney does not need to be present for a remand, and a long journey may be undertaken — to no purpose.

Guilty or not guilty

The statistics taken from our records after nine months of monitoring show that 42% of those accused were juveniles, and that only 13% of adults and 17% of juveniles were found guilty. What is clear from these figures is that very large numbers of innocent people are arrested in random fashion and charged on flimsy evidence that cannot stand up to examination in court. They are thus made to endure a protracted period of punishment by process with little hope of redress, except possibly where there has been serious physical injury as well. When the accused are acquitted or discharged, the family is too weary and disturbed to want to face any suit for wrongful arrest or further court proceedings: it is sufficient to be free.

Legal defence

Our information is that many cases lack legal defence, especially in the rural towns. Present legislation overrides the principle that the accused is entitled to legal defence and should be made aware of this right.

We feel a particular concern for children, but lack of legal defence is obviously serious in all cases, and we need to devise means of countering the ignorance which allows this to happen. We realise only too clearly the awful consequences that follow upon the detention and imprisonment of the breadwinner, and the disruption of family life when any member is summarily removed.

Bail

The bail situation is confused, arbitrary and often excessive. It is true that young children are generally given free bail into the custody of their parents. But we have one case reported from Port Elizabeth of children (from 14 years old) charged with public violence and held in the awaiting trial section of the prison for 11 months to date, as their case has been repeatedly remanded and bail refused. In the Western Cape we have recorded similar cases, as well as many in which excessively high bail has been set: a 17 year-old was given bail of R200 on a charge of throwing a stone at a Casspir; three young men accused of being in the forefront of an unrest crowd had bail set at R1 000; a student accused of arson could not pay the bail of R2 500, and spent some time in Pollsmoor. All of them were acquitted.

It is due only to assistance from the Western Province Council of Churches that bail money could be paid in many of such cases, though it has also been raised by the community in many instances, at

'Bail should not be part of the punishment process.'

considerable sacrifice.

It is important to remember that the purpose of bail is merely to ensure the attendance at the trial of the accused, and to prevent interference with witnesses. It should not be part of a punishment process.

Sentences

When the accused are found guilty, the sentences often seem to be shockingly inappropriate and out of proportion to the act. This is especially so in the case of minors who are first offenders accused of stone-throwing, and who were given cuts or prison sentences. Much publicity has been given recently in Cape Town to the imposition of prison sentences on scholars involved in 'public violence' during the school boycott period in 1985. One of these was sentenced to three years, with 18 months suspended, while two others were sentenced to one year each. One instance which shocked the readers of *The Cape Times* in 1986 was the report of the imposition of sentences of seven years on four juveniles in a case arising from a community/vigilante confrontation, and in which they were accused of arson.

According to established legal procedure, punishment should fit the criminal as well as the crime, should be fair to society, and be blended with a measure of mercy according to the circumstances. The crime in most public violence cases involving children is stone-throwing. The criminal is a youth aged 15-17 years, who has not committed any previous misdemeanour. Which society is being considered, and which circumstances?

'Mercy'? The magistrate who sentenced the four youths to seven years in prison expressed sympathy with the accused and their kin, but added that 'justice has nothing in common with maudlin sympathy'.

We cannot forget, moreover, that all those sentenced for public violence offences (even when no property has been damaged or persons injured) will be treated in the same way as common criminals. In addition, we have the statement made in parliament recently by the Minister of Justice, that there would be no remission or parole for people convicted of unrest-related crimes.

It seems clear that these crimes are viewed as much more serious than even the most brutal actions against the public. Cases are reported weekly of rape and murder, where sentences are less severe than the one recorded above.

Approach to the Minister of Justice

One thing emerges clearly from our contacts. For most of these people there is no

distinction between the departments involved in the legal process: the courts are perceived as an extension of the police and prison systems.

In view of our awareness of this perception, we decided in November last year to approach the Minister of Justice and request an interview in order to bring our findings to his notice. We wrote a letter, and attached to it a memorandum outlining the problem areas. We received no acknowledgement of this communication. In early February, when parliament reconvened, we phoned the minister's office several times, but failed to get even as far as his secretary. On 10 February we wrote once more, enclosing a copy of the original memorandum. This letter was sent by registered post, but we have not yet received any acknowledgement from the minister. We shall try again when parliament reconvenes.

Conclusion

Our experience has not all been negative. We have met prosecutors who have been co-operative. We have listened to magistrates whose summing up has been fair and impartial. On two occasions magistrates have reprimanded the police for not framing the charges more expeditiously. We have established very cordial relationships with attorneys and advocates involved in these cases, and have learned to admire their dedication in often trying circumstances. They, in turn, have encouraged us.

For us, as monitors, the court experience is disturbing and depressing. But it can be inspiring too, and there have been those joyous moments when we have been able to share the relief and happiness of families suddenly released from months of fear and anxiety.

This is one of the few avenues still available to us for contact across the colour divide — a place for possible bridge-building. People in this beleaguered situation are encouraged by our presence and the practical help we are sometimes able to offer. It has been made clear, again and again, that it has mattered to them to know that there are those who care and are concerned for them. Warm associations have developed in several cases, and we have become keenly aware of the community solidarity that may be forged in the face of trouble, and of the courage that emerges among those who are put through the trauma of arrest, detention, court appearances and the threat of imprisonment. Even more importantly, while we have these opportunities for contact, we are kept continually aware of what it is like to live in communities that are constantly patrolled, constantly under surveillance, and constantly in fear of the midnight hammering on the door. □



MARGY MATTHEW

Di Bishop

advice offices — the new challenges

di bishop

For all those who wondered whether the Black Sash's advice offices would have any work to do after the demise of the pass laws, the answer is an unequivocal 'yes'. Changes in legislation and social conditions have presented our advice offices with new issues and challenges, says Di Bishop.



SHEILA NOWERS

'We have witnessed something that seems at first sight to defy understanding — the patience of people ... and above all the unbelievable goodwill and trust.'

We wish we could be cheerful about change. We wish we could discern a real movement towards justice and democracy in legislation and government policy. We have not seen this in the past year, and we do not see any prospect of advice offices becoming redundant in the foreseeable future.'

These are the concluding remarks made by Joy Harnden (researcher) and Sheena Duncan (director) of the Johannesburg Advice Office in the 1986 report of their work, based on 16 181 interviews.

Black Sash advice offices were first established in the late 1950s in response to a national conference resolution to fight the pass laws. Today there are seven established offices in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown, Durban,

Pietermaritzburg, Pretoria and Johannesburg. The East London office reconstituted itself in 1987 and Black Sash members in Somerset West, George and Knysna are helping to develop new offices in each of these centres.

'The repeal of the pass laws has not meant a decrease in the need for advice offices,' say Joy and Sheena in their report. Cheryl Walker, the Black Sash field and research worker in Grahamstown, states that 'it is time for regrouping, reorganising and reassessment'.

This brief summary is an attempt to draw together features of advice office work during the past year and to outline some of the concerns and challenges voiced at the national conference. It is hoped that this overview will serve to feed the debates and opportunities for creative thinking that members felt

the need to pursue in their regions.

All the reports drew attention to the increasing numbers of people coming to advice offices to share problems related to their basic struggle for survival. (Referrals to the Black Sash have occurred even from official quarters such as the Department of Manpower!) The few welfare organisations that do exist are not coping.

This raises the question: should the Black Sash be addressing 'welfare' and seeking ways of responding to the material (amongst other) needs of people? There has long been a concerted attempt in the Black Sash to avoid a welfare role, but particularly in the largely unresourced areas, the Black Sash has had to try to meet the problem boldly. Creative and dynamic partnerships between community organisations, such as

the women's and civic organisations, and Black Sash advice offices and their voluntary helpers have demonstrated one way forward. (The article on TB Huis, Red Location on page 32 is an example.) This co-ordination of effort has so clearly had mutual benefits for the organisations involved.

In 1987, the Cape Town Advice Office will continue to explore and assess its response to the problems people face in Khayelitsha, where Noël Robb pioneered 'taking the office to the people' once a week during much of 1986. Sue Joynt, Cape Town's Advice Office organiser, describes the majority of problems presented there as 'families with no visible means of support, living on the charity of their poverty-stricken neighbours, who are unable to put together the bus fare to come into town to look for work ... there are approximately 15 000 people living there and the rate of unemployment is estimated at 80%'.

The special conference session focussing on poverty and impoverishment at the conference was directly related to our concern about the growth of poverty-related problems presented in our advice offices in 1986. The session was addressed by Mamphela Ramphele, a medical doctor and development worker, Zora Meholmakulu, an experienced trade unionist, and Shahieda Issel (Advice Office Forum, Cape Town) and ably chaired by Francis Wilson (convenor of the Carnegie Conference on poverty). The panel discussion challenged us each to explore our individual as well as our collective response to the glaring inequalities in our society. It is a humbling experience to hear the views of those in the frontline of the battle against poverty. I feel sure that all advice office workers, indeed, all Black Sash members, share the sentiments Krystyna Smith (director of the Pretoria Advice Office) expresses in the conclusion of her report: 'In spite of the ever-increasing violence and hatred in our country, we have witnessed something that seems at first sight to defy understanding — the patience of people (often coming to us for the fifth or sixth time with the same problem) and

above all the unbelievable goodwill and trust. I think that some of us in the advice office have frequently expressed a feeling that we receive from these beautiful people more than we give.'

Rita Easton (Durban Advice Office supervisor) states that 'workplace disputes, wage problems and pension scheme settlements' dominated their work last year. This is largely true of many offices, all of which also recorded high numbers of clients with problems relating to the Unemployment Insurance Fund. Employer ignorance of their obligations and an understandable failure of many employees to follow the intricacies of the Fund and its rules brought many inquiries to the office.

Co-operation between the Black Sash and progressive organisations has grown where there is physical proximity, such as where there is joint accommodation in ecumenical centres. This, together with the development of advice office steering committees in some regions, is pointing towards a desire to explore opportunities for working more within communities to complement our office work.

The National Advice Office Workshop held in August 1986, together with internal workshoping and self-education in the regions, helped us evaluate and re-evaluate whether our advice offices 'oil the wheels of apartheid' by finding ways in which people can operate more effectively in the existing system. An awareness of how easy it is to fall into this trap has developed into a concerted effort to situate our work against ongoing political analysis, which is so well fed by advice office encounters and experiences.

Our Pietermaritzburg office pointed out the serious impediment posed by the failure of many of us to speak an African language. Our many loyal salaried workers continue to challenge us in the Black Sash to do our homework in this regard.

Advice office workers are constantly exposed to both the 'real compassion and concern' of many in our community as well as the 'ugly side of human nature', which is so clearly reflected in the awful

difficulties and human suffering caused by the States of Emergency. 'What are the long-term effects of detention going to be on a thirteen-year-old who spent three months in detention before his mother was able to trace him?' asks Shelagh Hurley of the Port Elizabeth Advice Office.

Betty Davenport of Grahams-town described how their office had spent several sessions helping and training a keen Fort Beaufort group to plan the establishment of an advice office, but the State of Emergency overtook this initiative and the team scattered. Port Alfred's Community Advice Office was bravely staffed until its members were so threatened that they were forced to suspend operations.

Community-based advice offices and their networks have an ability to deal with certain problems in a way that Black Sash offices cannot. As we remain conscious of not imposing 'our way' of working on those who approach us for advice office training, we need to continue to address the question of how the Black Sash can play a role in bridging the divide between resourced urban areas and unresourced rural areas, many of which have suffered devastating consequences under the State of Emergency.

In the years ahead, advice offices will increasingly face the challenges presented by extreme economic hardship and the effects of the National Security Management System's stranglehold on communities. The advice offices will also experience the workings of 'orderly urbanisation', which, Sheena Duncan has reminded us, has introduced an 'entirely new system of law but no real freedom of movement'. The bureaucratic obstruction which we have complained about so often in the past is continuing unabated, and must be monitored, analysed and acted upon.

Fighting the new system of influx control that is directed against the citizens of the TBVC homelands (who constitute one-third of the black population of South Africa), will continue to be a central issue for the Black Sash and a focus of advice office work in the future. □

freedom to move but no freedom to stop moving

josie adler



We all know that the pass laws have been abolished. But few of us have come to grips with the mechanics of 'orderly urbanisation'.

Josie Adler set them out in a paper presented to the Black Sash national conference. Here is an edited version.

The Abolition of Influx Control Act, No 68 of 1986 removed the pass system. But this did not automatically grant everyone living in South Africa freedom of movement.

Who has freedom of movement? Any person who is lawfully in South Africa, permanently resident here and who is entitled to an identity document, now has freedom of movement.

However, this definition excludes many people living in South Africa: they are citizens of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei who

- are contract workers in South Africa on temporary work permits. (They are not considered permanent residents.)
- have not been 'lawfully' resident in South Africa. (There is no clear definition of 'lawful' residence. It has been arbitrarily applied, but not yet tested in court.)

People living in the TBVC countries are obviously also not officially recognised as permanently resident in South Africa.

These stipulations mean that, according to Black Sash estimates, a total of 7,25 million people have not regained their right to freedom of movement. Through the device of denationalising about a third of the country's black (African) population, the government has ensured that it can continue to enforce influx control against them, albeit not on an overtly racial basis.

These people are obviously worst off. But that does not mean that the new system has made life rosy for everyone else. Freedom of movement is one thing. Freedom to stop moving and settle down somewhere is quite another, and this is the major problem people are facing under the government's 'orderly urbanisation' programme. The system has moved away from 'negative' sanctions (such as the *dompas*) that sought to prevent urbanisation. Instead it has introduced a 'positive' strategy to ensure that urbanisation occurs only where and how the authorities decree.

The restrictions on settlement are based on laws that forbid blacks



from owning or occupying land outside the 'homelands' except in designated townships. If black people settle anywhere outside their designated areas, they are dealt with in terms of squatting and trespass laws. If they settle inside their designated urban areas in conditions that are inevitably overcrowded or 'undesirable', they can be evicted under a host of other laws and regulations designed to combat potential 'health hazards'.

The 'Doomspray' equipment that the authorities use — or can use — to control and prevent informal urban settlement comprises:

1 *The Group Areas Act of 1966 and the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936*

These Acts prevent blacks from occupying and/or owning land anywhere outside the homelands and the black urban townships.

2 *The Physical Planning Act of 1967*

In terms of this Act, land is allocated for occupation by blacks in the urban areas. This allocation

The government describes the Stendahl removals as "voluntary", although the Stendahl people would deny they ever wanted to move, saying that they had no alternative.

From Waaiboek by Patricia Henderson, with photos by David Smylie and Cedric Nunn



is always hopelessly inadequate to meet the need. The draft guide plan for the central Witwatersrand, for example, allocated 10% of the land for occupation by 58% of the people — and even this was a considerable under-estimation of the number of people involved.

3 *The Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act of 1951*

This Act provides for summary eviction of persons unlawfully occupying land, and demolition of unlawful structures.

4 *The Trespass Act of 1959*

This is used against persons entering or remaining on property without the permission of the lawful occupier or person in charge. Thousands of people are arrested annually for trespassing. Sentence on conviction can be a fine of up to R2 000 or imprisonment of up to two years, or both.

5 *The Health Act of 1977*

This empowers local authorities to prohibit and prevent possible health risks. The government's white paper on urbanisation has recommended that health legislation should be revised 'to ensure satisfactory living conditions and to combat overcrowding'.

6 *The Slums Act of 1979*

In terms of this Act, the local authority is obliged to prevent and remedy a 'nuisance' within its area. A 'nuisance' exists if premises are unsafe or injurious to health, if there is an inadequate water supply or latrines, overcrowding or congestion. There is provision to order the demolition of dwellings, without compensation to the owner or occupant.

7 *Black Local Authorities Act of 1982*

A black town council and the minister may make by-laws relating

to the control of slums in black local authority areas.

8 *Black Communities Development Act of 1984*

The Minister of Constitutional Development and Planning is empowered to dis-establish a town or a portion of a town whenever it appears to him that the conditions under which the inhabitants are living are such that unless the area is altered or dis-established, the health or safety of the public or any group of persons may be endangered. The department may demolish any structure erected, without compensation.

9 *Public Health and Slum Control Regulations*

These apply in urban black residential areas and empower the superintendent to repair, rebuild or demolish structures that are unsightly, dilapidated, or do not comply with minimum standards of hygiene. Only authorised structures may be erected. □

focus on the land: the sash's new campaign

sheena duncan

The centrepiece of the 'orderly urbanisation' policy is the Land Acts and the Group Areas Act, which prevent blacks from occupying or owning all land outside the 'homelands' except in designated townships.

The urbanisation workshop at the national conference focussed on these laws as the target for a major Black Sash campaign in the year ahead.

I met a man last week in Ga Rankuwa, a place north of Pretoria now in the 'independent Republic of Bophuthatswana'. He worked for the Public Works Department from 1964 until he was retired in February 1985, when he was earning R163 per month.

He is now 71 years old. His wife left him some years ago and the divorce court gave him custody of their four minor children, one of whom is mentally retarded.

The sole income for this family is his pension from his years of work — R19 per month. He came to see us because he is trying to get the state old age pension as well. When he applied for it in January 1987 he was told that pension applications are taken only once a year in June. When and if he receives the pension it will be a maximum of R40 per month — because he lives in Bophuthatswana. Pensions for black people in 'white South Africa' are currently R97 per month.

Mr Mmope's story is not exceptional. He is just one of hundreds of thousands of South Africans who have been dispossessed, whose poverty is the result of the apartheid system, and whose chances of achieving an improvement in the circumstances of their lives are precisely nil.

At the national conference this year I don't think any of us had anticipated the overall national picture which would emerge as advice office reports, rural field worker reports, regional reports were considered. We have all known about poverty and have written and spoken about it often enough, but this year it was forcibly brought home to us that 'reform', 'population development', 'own affairs government', 'incorporations', 'orderly urbanisation' and 'deconcentration' are all words which serve to disguise the increasing impoverishment of the majority of South Africa's people.

Yes, some people are materially much better off than they were ten years ago. Their

wages and opportunities for advancement are greater. They can own their own homes in black urban townships, if they can afford to buy. They can use hotels, cinemas, theatres, public places without fear of racist rebuff. But for every one who benefits from reform there must be ten for whom life is worse than it has ever been before.

Operation Hunger is currently feeding 1 000 027 people every day with another 70 000 waiting until the money is found to provide them with the basic protein necessary to keep them alive.

It became clear during conference discussions that there can be no solution to poverty in South Africa until apartheid and all its laws have gone and until South Africa has a government which has to be responsive to the needs and desires of all the people. Governments are never responsive to those who have no vote. As Dr Mamphela Ramphele told us, 'Poverty is a consequence of powerlessness'.

The present government is responsive only to the desires of the white minority, so self-government for homelands, own affairs government for coloured and Indian people, increased powers for local authorities are the constitutional mechanisms whereby power is entrenched in white hands — power which ensures that the allocation of the national wealth is made in the interests of the white minority. That allocation is well illustrated by the inequitable distribution of the land. There can be no proper planning for the future while the Land Acts remain.

The national conference decided that we will focus on these issues during the coming year, starting with four regional workshops to help us to see the links between poverty, powerlessness, landlessness, homelessness and state control, and to try to find creative ways in which we can move forward and effectively work for radical change in the structures of this society. □



Sheena Duncan

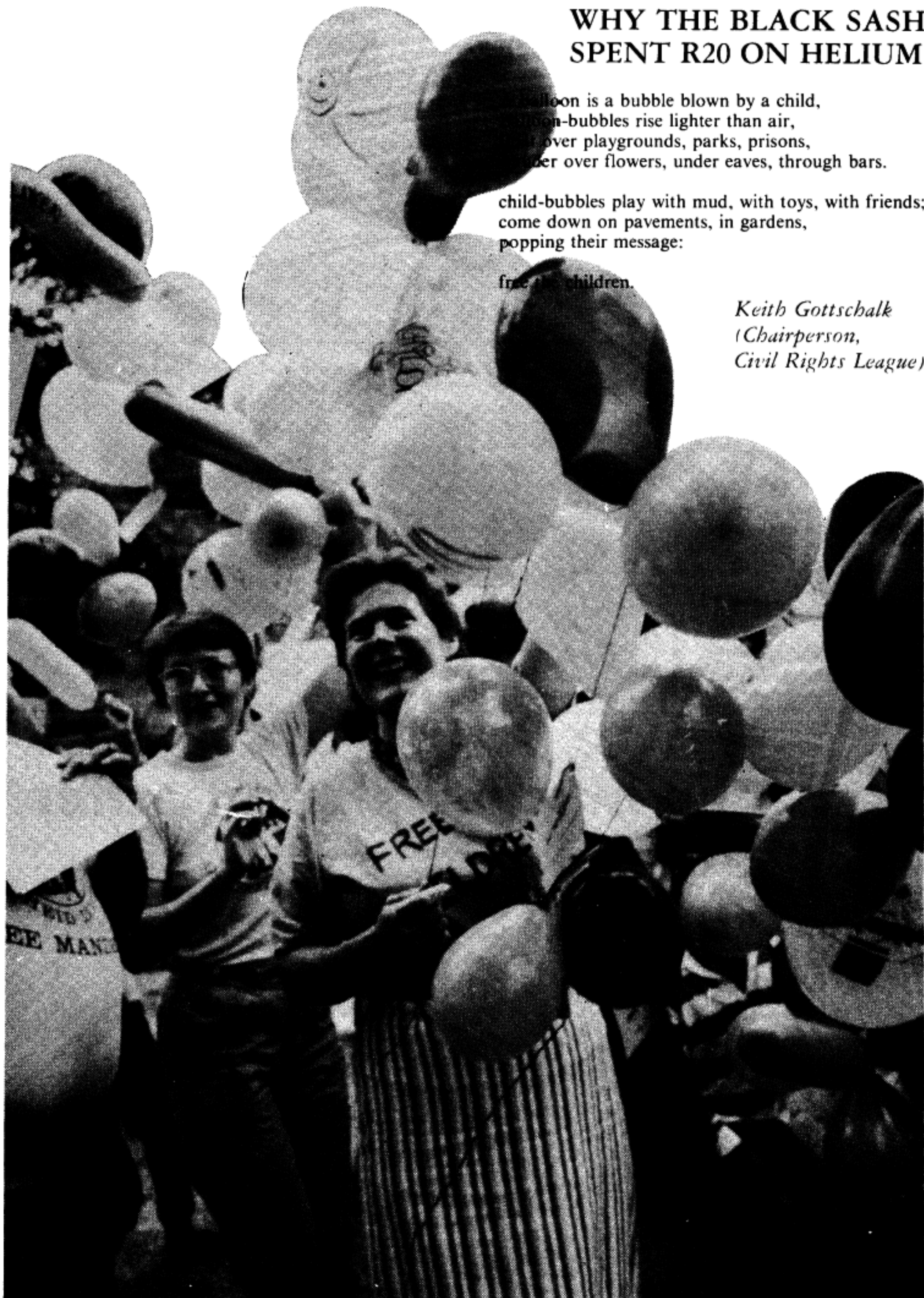
WHY THE BLACK SASH SPENT R20 ON HELIUM

A balloon is a bubble blown by a child,
and helium-bubbles rise lighter than air,
drifting over playgrounds, parks, prisons,
and under over flowers, under eaves, through bars.

And child-bubbles play with mud, with toys, with friends;
they come down on pavements, in gardens,
popping their message:

Free the children.

*Keith Gottschalk
(Chairperson,
Civil Rights League)*





the black sash and other organisations: the five freedoms forum

charlene smith

More and more, the Black Sash's resources and energy are being directed towards joint campaigns with other organisations. Our joint work is based on the belief that pooling our strength and resources with others who share our ideals, results in an overall effort that is greater than the sum of the parts. This process was endorsed by our national conference, on the clear understanding that the Black Sash should always retain its identity, that joint work should be directed towards a clear objective and be consistent with our aims and methods.

One of the Black Sash's latest co-operative ventures is within a Johannesburg-based alliance known as the Five Freedoms Forum.

Freedom

- *from want*
- *from fear*
- *of speech and association*
- *of conscience*
- *from discrimination*

The Five Freedoms Forum is an alliance of organisations that work, at least in part, within the white community. Its central goal is to harness the resources of these organisations in a series of on-going campaigns that will assist whites to become part of the transition to a democratic, non-racial society. Part of the Forum's motivation is to encourage whites to 'stay and contribute' rather than to leave South Africa.

'What we [the Forum alliance] have in common is a vision of the tremendously exciting future we could share with all South Africans if we can only trust enough and work hard enough for justice and democracy and peace,' said Sheena Duncan when the Forum was introduced to the press in March 1987.

The initial inspiration for the Forum came in September 1986, as a response to the national State of Emergency declared on 12 June. Zwelakhe Sisulu, editor of *New Nation*, Geoff Budlender of the Legal Resources Centre and Beyers Naude, general secretary of the South African Council of Churches, drafted a joint letter to a variety of organisations inviting them to consider ways in which they could work more effectively to prepare the white constituency for a democratic society.

Their initiative was taken up, and representatives of various organisations began meeting informally to evaluate the scope for joint action.

Before the Forum had even been officially constituted, it attracted hostile attention. After only two preparatory meetings, P W Botha referred to it as a 'dangerous coalition' during the no-confidence debate in the House of Assembly.

Despite obstacles, the work continued, and the group decided to constitute itself formally as the Five Freedoms Forum. Their name is an adaptation of President Theodore Roosevelt's 'Four Freedoms', a vision of human rights that emerged during the great depression. The four freedoms were: freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom of speech and association, and freedom of worship. The organisations coming together in the Forum decided that the concept of 'freedom of worship' should be modernised, and so became 'freedom of conscience'. They

also added a fifth freedom they believed essential in the South African context: freedom from discrimination.

The Forum's members include a wide range of organisations, such as the Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee (JODAC), the Detainees Parents Support Committee (DPSC), the Detainees Support Committee (Descom), Jews for Social Justice, the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS), the Young Christian Students, the Justice and Peace Commission of the Catholic Church, the Academic Staff Association of the University of the Witwatersrand, Women for Peace and the PFP.

The Forum decided to focus its first campaign on the immediate issue concentrating the collective mind of the white constituency: the House of Assembly election. Two member organisations withdrew from the Forum temporarily for the duration of the campaign. They were Women for Peace, which does not get involved in party politics, and the PFP — for obvious reasons. Both organisations plan to re-join the Forum after the election.

The Forum took great care not to adopt a particular stance on voting in the election as its members included people with different positions on the subjects. However, the purpose of the 'blindfold election' campaign is to ensure that the real issues facing South Africa are unambiguously and consistently raised.

The launch of the campaign, scheduled for Tuesday, 17 March, ran into trouble. It was to have begun at 20h00. At 19h30 the lights went out over half of Johannesburg, including the synagogue hall where the meeting was to be held — apparently due to a technical fault. But a more serious problem awaited the 200 press and Forum members gathered outside in the dark. A member of the synagogue's board had received a phone call — and the hall was no longer available for use by the Forum. A press conference was hastily convened for the following afternoon at Khotso House.

The election campaign will centre around a series of public meetings, culminating in a City Hall meeting.

A series of articles on the Five Freedoms is also being publicised. Sheena Duncan has written on 'Freedom from Want', Professor John Dugard has written on 'Freedom from Fear' and Dr Jacklin Cock has written on 'Freedom from Discrimination'.

The Forum will not set up its own administrative structures, but will remain a broad, loose alliance. As Sheena Duncan told the press: 'We will each be continuing with our own work and our specific tasks, but will be seeking ways in which we can co-operate with one another wherever possible. □

the drive towards democracy: black sash examines itself

helen zille

To some members the debate on democracy within our own organisation is time-wasting navel-gazing. Others see it as a small but important contribution the Black Sash can make towards the growing movement for a democratic culture in our society.

The issues surfaced at the Black Sash national conference, revealing the tip of an iceberg of growing debate in all Black Sash regions. Helen Zille looks more closely at how the Cape Western Region is facing these challenges. There will be a focus on other Regions in subsequent issues.

Once upon a time, not very long ago, there didn't seem much point in wasting our precious time worrying about the democratic structures and practices within the Black Sash. We were an organisation welded together by a special but informal blend of trust, understanding, respect and the habit of allowing people to get on with things individually, in the best way they saw fit.

The Black Sash has always been a democratic organisation in the sense that our leadership is elected — even if rather indirectly at some levels. For a long time this was accepted. Most members were probably relieved that they could delegate responsibility upwards, and if they wondered how people reached leadership positions, or how decisions were made, they certainly didn't think to ask.

Things have changed. As our organisation has grown, as repression has increased, as our work has expanded, so we have come to realise that the processes whereby we elect our leaders and plan our strategies may be as important as the decisions and actions themselves. Far from succumbing to the temptation of becoming more centralised under the State of Emergency, the Black Sash has realised that its future cohesion and strength will depend largely on the extent to which all its

members feel part of a structure they understand and are able to influence.

New members in particular, spurred to join the Black Sash by an urgency to 'become involved', are no longer happy to wait quietly for years before they understand how the organisation operates. They have stimulated a new look at Black Sash structures and practices — and at the way we apply the term democracy to ourselves.

It has not been a mere flirtation with a concept, that may seem fashionable right now. It is part of a far broader movement, that has been gaining momentum for years, towards the creation of a democratic culture in our society. Prompted by the realisation that we cannot leave democracy to the future, in the hope that utopia will rush in to fill the vacuum left by apartheid, many opposition groupings have been building working models of democracy now, within their own organisations, as the bedrock on which a future democracy may one day rise.

Once one moves beyond the soaring rhetoric there is the less exhilarating task of putting the theory into practice. This isn't as easy as it sounds. Democracy means different things to different people, which is why the debate usually gets bogged down before it begins.

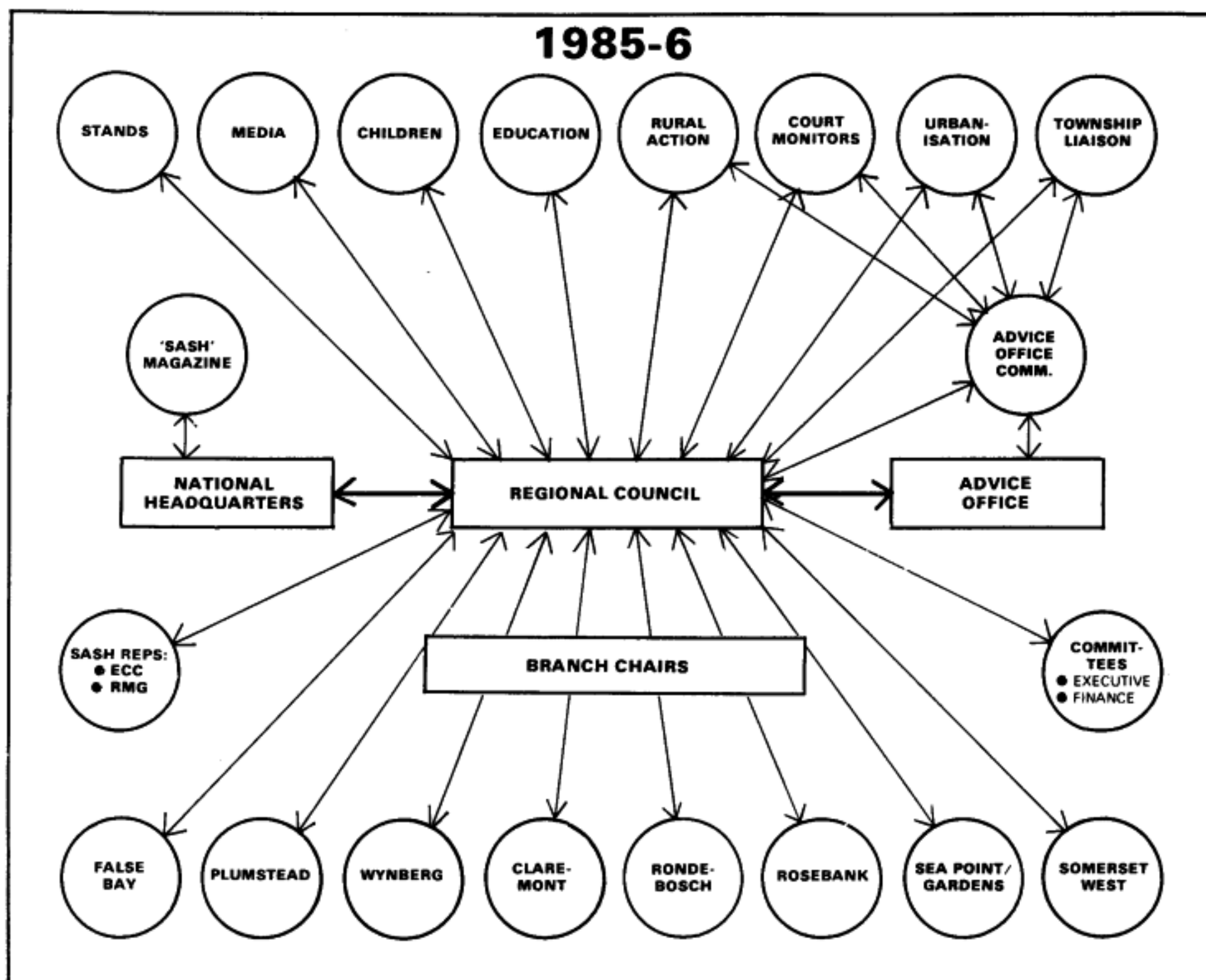
That was the point at which the Cape Western Region found itself when Sarah-Anne Raynham suggested a workshop to investigate the different forms of democracy, to establish where the Black Sash stands on the democracy continuum, where we would like to be, and how to get there.

Shirley Walters of the University of the Western Cape, who wrote her PhD on democracy in community organisations, ran the workshop with much warmth and humour, stimulating a process that is still rippling through the Cape Western Region today.

The most creative part of this process was the consistent encouragement of the Cape Western Region's leadership.

The workshop provided an essential starting point, helping us to define the terms we had been using loosely. We learnt that there are three major forms of democracy within organisations:

- *representative democracy.* In this model members elect a few representatives as leaders, empowering them to take decisions, initiate actions and make statements on behalf of the organisation. These leaders have a great deal of authority and discretion.
- *participatory democracy.* In this model, decisions involve all members of the organisation. Leadership has a very circumscribed role and may be mandated to ensure that group decisions are implemented and tasks carried out.
- *collective democracy.* This model falls somewhere in between. There are many permutations, but usually the organisation as a whole decides which specific categories of action and decision-making should be delegated to the leadership.



The structure of the Cape Western Region in 1985/6. (Acknowledgement: Jenny de Tolly)

The workshop decided that the Cape Western Region is — and should remain — a representative democracy. No other model would be feasible given the Black Sash's size and the workload of its members. However, smaller units within the region, such as branches and working groups, could be run on participatory lines. We discussed the need to improve communication (always an essential component of the democratic process), ease the passage of entry for new members, attempt to re-schedule daytime meetings for greater accessibility to working members, and spread organisational skills.

It was only during the branch report-backs that we realised we still had some way to go. If the Region was going to remain a representative democracy and

delegate so much authority to our leadership, then the crux of the democratic process lay in the method of electing these leaders. Amazingly, at branch level no one was entirely sure how these elections worked, and couldn't recall them happening. The reason became clear when we consulted the Regional constitution: our top Regional leadership has never been directly elected at all.

The process worked like this: the annual Regional conference elected a Regional Council (the equivalent of Transvaal's Committee) to oversee the running of the Region for the year. Not all members are entitled to vote at the Regional conference. Each branch is represented by voting delegates, in proportion to its size. At a later date, the Regional Council would appoint the Regional Chair, Vice-

Chairs, Secretary, etc.

This didn't seem satisfactory. Firstly, the principle of appointing leadership (even if those doing the appointing had been elected themselves) seemed a poor one. It meant that a suggestion by a single member of Regional Council could determine who would hold the most important positions in the region.

Secondly, the process was too removed from ordinary members, who generally had no idea of how it worked, and even less of how to influence it.

After much discussion, the Rosebank branch submitted a resolution to the Regional conference to amend the Regional constitution. That sparked off even more debate, during which the proposed amendment was entirely reworded. However, the spirit of the original resolution was accepted and the

constitution now includes a clause stipulating a new process for the election of Regional office bearers and representatives.

Regional Council shall call for nomination of office bearers and representatives by branches for election at the annual (regional) conference and when necessary between conferences be empowered to elect office bearers and representatives.

In practice, this means that at least four months before the Regional conference, the existing Regional Council will have to call for nominations for a variety of leadership and representative positions, including their own. Branches will have enough time to submit their nominations and decide who to support in an election. Delegates will be bound by mandates, but also empowered to use their discretion if necessary (for example, in the unlikely event that the person they were going to support for Regional

Chair was not elected to Regional Council). Provision was also made for Regional Council to fill positions that may become vacant between Regional conferences.

The constitutional amendment was an important step for the Region as a whole. But there is still some way to go. It is one thing to establish democratic structures; it is quite another to encourage members to exercise the rights they are offered. And, of course, the leaders themselves face the greatest challenge of all within a representative democracy. They have the discretion to determine whether decision-making becomes individualistic and distant from the general membership, or whether the process is based on adequate communication, drawing in others where appropriate, and constantly evaluated in terms of the organisation's best interests. This is a long-term process, but the

commitment is there.

Some branches are trying to take the matter further and model themselves more on participatory lines. Some members have begun to ask important questions: Why should the branch chair preside at every meeting? Why not have a rotating system? Why should so much responsibility be vested in the chair? Let's spread the load and move away from hierarchies. The process has been a fascinating and rewarding one. By far the most exciting by-product within the Rosebank branch (where I have experienced the process at first-hand) has been the enthusiasm with which members have responded, offering their services, and generally coming to realise, perhaps for the first time, that they do not only belong to the Black Sash, but that the Black Sash in some very important respects, also belongs to them. □

a new look at welfare work

lesley greensmith

The Black Sash has always tried to steer clear of what we perjoratively call 'welfare work'. This is changing. More and more people are coming to our advice offices, not only with legal problems, but also with those of basic survival. And we are realising that we can respond, not by distributing hand-outs but by enabling communities to determine their needs and to harness their initiative and expertise to meet them. The story of this discovery is told, in one of the most powerful and moving papers of the conference, by Lesley Greensmith.



Lesley Greensmith

BOB BINNELL

One sunny morning in February 1986, Port Elizabeth Advice Office workers set out on what we thought would be a fact-finding exercise. As things turned out, it was for many of us an operation that changed not only our way of thinking, but our whole lives.

We had been approached by members of Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation (PEBCO) and the Port Elizabeth Women's Organisation (PEWO) to investigate the

living conditions of the 1 000 residents of TB Huis, Red Location.

The history of Red Location goes back to the Anglo Boer War, when the dwellings were originally built as barracks for the British troops. (The 'Red' in the name comes from the rusty red hue of the corrugated iron structures.) The shacks are in the most appalling state of disrepair. It is hard to think they are fit for human habitation. Huge holes

Children queue for their daily meal at the TB Huis soup kitchen.



JACK COOPER

in the roofs and floors let in not only the elements but also rats and other vermin, despite the strenuous efforts of the residents. Outdoors not a blade of grass is to be seen and flies are everywhere. During our visit we were invited into the homes of the residents. Abject poverty assaulted the eye but we could not help being impressed by the dignity, kindness and courtesy of the people and in most cases the cleanliness of their homes in the face of overwhelming odds. We were greeted by the residents with warmth and profuse thanks for caring and actually coming to share in their problems. We were visiting homes, listening to problems, making friends and gaining confidence, when to our amazement the peace was rudely interrupted by the arrival of a Casspir and security force troops, who challenged our right to be in the area. We all had permits, but despite this — because of a photographer who had unwittingly joined our group — we were rounded up and taken under escort to the New Brighton police station. There we were held for several hours and, despite being treated courteously by the police, were left with a very unhappy feeling — but an incredible insight into how black people are forced to live.

Following our visit, many of us got together with PEBCO and PEWO and other concerned people. We asked the people how we could help, what we could do. The residents had three priorities:

1 They desperately felt the area should be upgraded — with special attention to toilet facilities. There were two taps and three bucket toilets for 1 000 people, an open drain that flooded during rain and a stench that in warm weather was overwhelming.

This project was taken in hand by a doctor and an architect in consultation with residents and members of PEBCO and PEWO.

2 As winter was approaching the women felt a great need for warm blankets: many old and infirm people live in TB Huis together with their families, which include babies and young children. I personally will never forget the sight of a baby girl sitting on a refuse bag as she had no nappies — nor the legless man who had to wrap himself in black refuse bags each night to keep the rats off him. Members of one family of seven had to huddle on top of each other to keep dry because of the holes in the roof. One thing was certain, the people needed blankets and warmth.

Cathy Binnell, one of our advice office workers, hit on the idea of knitting squares. Each square could be sewn up to make a blanket. Cathy appealed to everyone, the press, old-age homes, schools, Brownies, Guides — anyone and everyone who could help. The idea took off. Cathy worked unceasingly — she approached firms and organisations for donations for wool, needles, anything that could be used. Her enthusiasm



Cathy Binnell

BOB BINNELL



JUDY CHALMERS

Transcending the barriers of race, sex, age and class — people come together to sew knitted squares into blankets.

inspired others. Many people responded, and gradually the blanket dream came true — a blanket for each person in TB Huis, Red Location. Cathy organised sewing parties. The blanket scheme was no easy hand-out system. People came together to sew the squares into the much-needed blankets. Friendships were forged while women, children and old men sewed the squares into veritable works of art and, of course, each blanket was a joy to the owner. Some people in old-age homes became very enthusiastic — they wanted to do more. Edith, an elderly lady, started knitting, and decided it wasn't enough, so she joined the Advice Office as a voluntary worker and is an inspiration to us all!

3 The third priority was a soup kitchen — people were starving.

Following Cathy's example — appealing to all and sundry, we put out feelers. We needed equipment, food, in fact anything we could use.

During this time we were fortunate in having a local journalist concerned about our project. In May 1986, Sue Ryan wrote a sensitive article highlighting all we wished to do in TB Huis. As a result of her concern we were inundated with all sorts of help and offers. The Australian Embassy offered us equipment — they would finance everything we needed, and they did — gas stoves, pots, etc. Local firms came up trumps, especially Firestone and Pilkington Glass. They have enabled us to supply bread and peanut butter for 1 000 per day, with Operation Hunger providing soup powder for 1 000 people per

day. The soup kitchen is well under way now but as far as everyone connected with it is concerned, it certainly is not a hand-out scheme. Being so closely involved, it is hard to be objective about such a scheme — all I can say from a personal level is that this whole effort has forged friendships, shared problems — especially in the beginning when we could meet in the local church hall in the township and all air our views. With the State of Emergency, this sort of gathering ceased, we no longer had easy contact with street committees, etc.

We persevered, despite spasmodic harassment by troops in the townships. On one occasion after obtaining permission, we were held under armed guard and refused permission to unload our trucks, not being allowed to speak to anyone. It all seemed quite ludicrous, but in a way it made us more determined. We haven't broken any rules but have forged relationships. Because Cathy and I were so restricted due to the Emergency, we relied heavily on the people themselves. Natural leaders came forward, such as Jackson, a disabled man, severely paralysed. He is someone we have been able to rely on for information, records and liaising with the people of the township. Despite his extreme disability he has thought nothing of walking miles from the township to the Advice Office with a list of needed supplies or just to give us some important feedback. It has been encouraging to see him gain his self-respect as a natural leader of men.

Cathy has also involved the Urban Foundation and, thanks to them, the soup kitchen has a proper building instead of the open yard in which it first started. Jackson painstakingly made lists of old and disabled people where the soup should be delivered personally by the children and youth. Social workers were also contacted to help the infirm. The youth also do the heavy fetching and carrying while the women make the soup and sandwiches. Everyone is involved.

TB Huis people do not seem quite as despondent as they did a year ago and other residents in the area have started a similar scheme, closely modelled on the TB Huis project. Despite many setbacks, the soup kitchen is functioning and serving 1 000 meals daily.

We should like to record our gratitude to all the churches through which Cathy and Lesley worked, and especially to All Saints Church, Kabega Park, which handled all the finances.

The future? Well, already the people now want rakes, shovels, wheelbarrows, etc, to organise a clean-up scheme of the area. They hope to start growing their own vegetables and after that a crèche to stimulate the very young. Who knows where it will end? The sky's the limit ... □

national conference scenes

- 1 Margaret Nash, Rosemary Smith, Mary Burton, Di Bishop 2 Duke Ngcukana, Cedric van Dyk
 3 Mamphele Rampole 4 Cassandra Parker 5 Candy Malherbe, Wilfried Schärf 6 Judy Chalmers
 7 Tish Haynes 8 Unidentified by ed. com. - sorry! 9 Alan Morris 10 Di Andrews, Helen Zille
 11 Beva Runciman 12 Jenny de Tolly
 13 Merry Dewar, Jane Prinsloo 14 Zora Meblomakulu
 15 Josie Adler 16 Sue Joynt 17 Sue Phillcox
 18 Mary Livingstone 19 Muriel Crewe



PHOTOGRAPHS: GILL COWAN, MARGY MATTHEW, RUPERT NICOLAY

report round-up

It is impossible to do justice to the 55 papers presented to the national conference. Linda-Jean Dykstra has, however, attempted to pull out a few trenchant extracts that convey the conditions one cannot fail to see in South Africa, if one cares to look.

From the **Albany Researcher's** report:

At the end of September the consumer boycott was lifted. This came a few weeks after the suicide of Nyanisile Moko, the owner of the single township shop and the only local outlet for the community during the consumer boycott. When Moko took his life by hanging himself, eight members of his family were in detention and his shop had been effectively closed down: after first detaining all the family workers in the shop, the authorities had apparently confiscated the shop keys on the grounds that the licence was not in order. Mr Moko had not challenged this because he feared that a fuss would endanger his family members in detention. (White Alexandria is a Conservative Party stronghold.)

From the **Cape Eastern Region** report:

In the Eastern Cape, where 70% of black families are living below the breadline, we have been exposed daily to the devastating effects of the 65% unemployment rate. At the beginning of the year the Advice Office was inundated with people who came desperately seeking to find some way to feed their families and to find jobs. It was a heartbreaking experience for Advice Office workers and a painfully frustrating one in that the resources of welfare agencies were totally inadequate and there was no central organisation. We just couldn't ignore the despair of hungry people.


From the **TRAC** report:

In one area of Lebowa, Sephaku, 400 families live and farm the area. Prior to 1980, the plots were ploughed by the Lebowa Development Corporation (LDC) and the crops were split between them and the peasants to the satisfaction of all. In 1980 a co-op was built and from 1981 the peasants never received any money from the co-op and are now completely destitute.

Four women were recently charged with theft, their crime being taking the mealies from their own land. After negotiations between TRAC, the Lebowa Development Corporation and a lawyer, the land has been returned to the peasants.

From the **Border Region** report:

Duncan Village was reprieved from removal in August 1985 and the state is now attempting to upgrade it, which according to present planning will result in two-thirds of the people being moved out. No indication has yet been given of where they will be removed to. A very strong Residents' Association was formed, but in July 1986 300-odd members of the DVRA were detained and the government made it very clear that they were going to force the community council back into power in the township. (The CC went into hiding in white hotels in August 1985 and are still unable to enter the township without escort.) The East London City Council had previously accepted the fact that the DVRA were the real representatives of the people and had been holding discussions with them, but were forced by Chris Heunis to drop this approach and deal only with the exiled community council.



"KHAYELITSHA: NEW HOME — OLD STORY"

From **'Removals Continue: The Case of the Brits Old Location (Oukasie) Removal'**:

On 17 October 1986 the residents of Oukasie woke up to discover that their township, legally, no longer existed. The Government Gazette of that date states that Chris Heunis had, in terms of section 37 (2) of the Black Communities Development Act, disestablished Oukasie, and that the land it occupied 'is no longer defined and set apart as a town'.

From the **TRAC** report:

In Leandra the head of the vigilantes has now become sergeant of the community guard. The township beer-hall has been converted into a centre for the guards, who at times have conducted joint foot patrols with the SAP and seemingly have completely free reign. Reports of vicious assaults are common, but if the victims attempt to lay charges at the local police station, they are now told to take their complaints to the community guards.

From **'Lawaakamp — Another forced removal'**:

On 3 April 1986 the municipality bulldozed approximately 150 houses in Lawaakamp, many of them the houses of their own workers, and most of them with all the householders' belongings still inside! The following day, when the workers reported for work at the municipality they demanded to know why their own employers had demolished their homes. They were told by the relevant official that it was his secret ("my geheim"). They refused to accept this reply and were then all dismissed for refusing to work.

From the **Port Elizabeth Advice Office** report:

Many people have lost their benefits as a result of being detained. We have appealed without success against this. Likewise we discovered that detainees and their family members were being refused their grants on the grounds that they no longer were in need of these grants as they were in prison where all their bodily needs were taken care of. Grants and pensions, according to the agents for the Department of Co-operation and Development, were for the individual only and family members were not meant to share this. We wrote to the Department in Pretoria querying

this and received a reply stating that power of attorney could be given to another family member and grant payments received this way.

Our field worker had to go into hiding soon after the State of Emergency. He hoped to return once the extreme repression had eased slightly. This has not happened and reports of mass arrests continue unabated. MacDonald has decided it would be safer to end his employment and remain in hiding indefinitely. We shall miss him.

From the **Border Region** report:

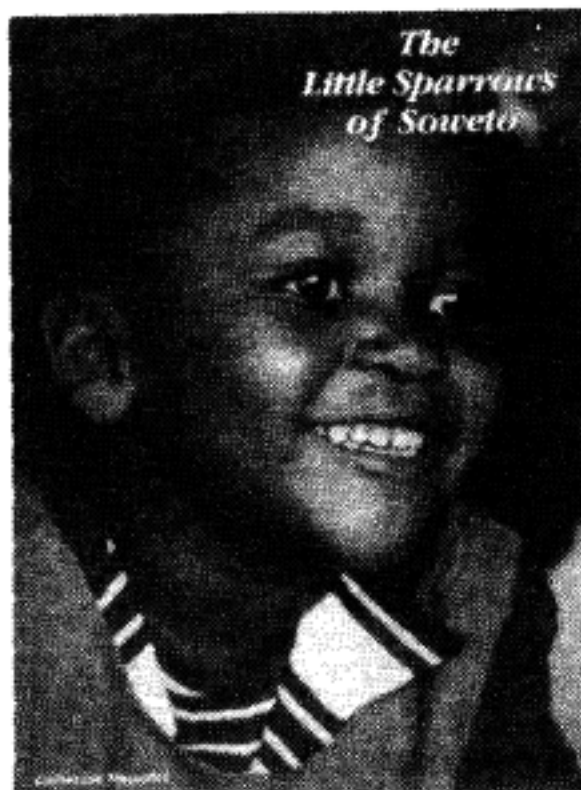
During the year we have held six stands, which, while not appearing to have had much effect on the general population, resulted in heavy surveillance by the police and many abusive phone calls to members — which persuaded us of their worth!

Our only legal adviser moved to Johannesburg and we have not been able to find another lawyer in East London willing to take his place.

From the **Pretoria Advice Office** report:

We have dealt with desperate and sometimes starving people. Mr L came in, one day, so weak that we gave him some food, which he promptly devoured in a ravenous manner that broke our hearts — neither he nor his wife and little children had eaten for over a week.

BOOK REVIEWS



The Little Sparrows of Soweto

Catherine Maunder
(Hope Press, 1986)



Black Mamba Rising

Ed. Ari Sitas (Worker Resistance and Culture Publications, 1986)

This book consists of a number of anecdotes and incidents strung loosely together around the central theme: the development of the Orlando Children's Home.

Although even the most attentive reader would have difficulty remembering more than a few of the many names and events which chequer the narrative, two features of the work make a lasting impression. The first is Sister Maggie Nkwe. Her decision to become a nurse at the age of twenty-one was made in the face of difficulties sufficient to quench even the most cheerful optimism. But Maggie's unyielding determination and dedication were to win her the Matron's Medal of Honour, and it is her spirit which imbues the incidents in the book. Her committed concern and courage brought to reality a refuge for some of the many abandoned children of Soweto.

Also unforgettable are the vivid and moving glimpses we are given into the lives of those born on the wrong side of the apartheid divide. It does not require a particularly sympathetic reading to realise that in the story of the development of the home, we are also presented with a description — if somewhat clichéd — of a society fragmented by migratory labour practices, apartheid laws, poverty and crumbling family life.

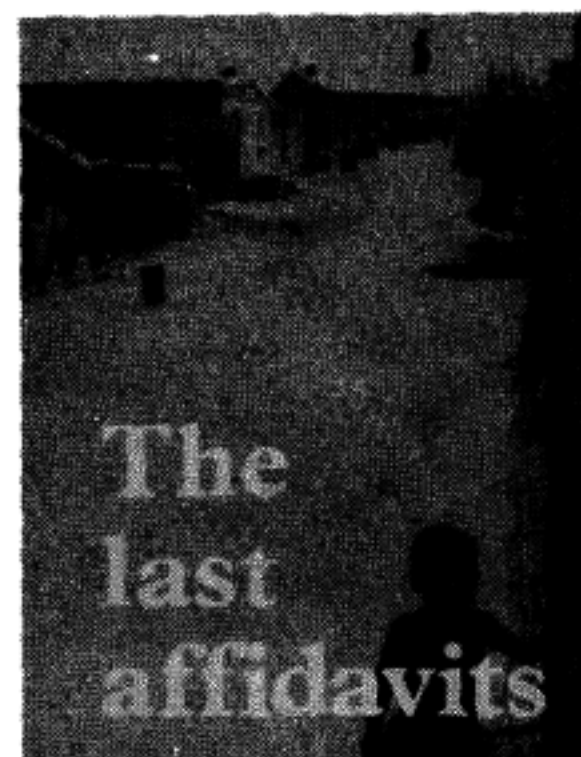
But the book is not essentially negative. However horrifying the situation may be, it is Maggie's spirit of courageous optimism that remains — an instructive example.

Judy Woodward

Black Mamba Rising contains poems by Alfred Temba Qabula, Mi S'Dumo Hlatshwayo and Nise Malange. All three are union members, and all three have been involved at shop steward or organiser level. They have taken part in the revival of oral poetry in trade union circles, and perform regularly at trade union functions, meetings and other events of political importance.

At least some of the poetry in this book can best be seen as both a revival and transformation of traditional *izibongo*, or praise poetry. Praise poetry in South Africa is usually thought of as being related to traditional and ethnic power (Matanzima and Inkatha, for instance, have their own praise poets, as has the Zulu king), but here it is used by those who are challenging established power.

The poetry in *Black Mamba Rising* resembles praise poetry to some extent in both manner of delivery and style. The introduction therefore warns us that 'the poems printed here in translation and outside their context suffer: they lose much of their oral power: the songs, the chants, the ululations, their improvisory nature and of course, the popular responses that accompany their oration.' However, the poetry here shows a broader social vision than traditional praise poetry, and is, in short, a modern, radically transformed oral poetry. All three poets comment on a world especially meaningful to a black worker audience and readership. As one commentator puts it, these poets attempt in their poems to build aesthetic, political and moral



values which will sustain the workers in their struggle for a better life, using images rooted in popular and traditional symbolism.

Images of traditional and rural origin are counterbalanced by Christian and modern symbols. A powerful sense of irony, of contradiction, of the disappointments and dislocations that workers face, emerges. The workers' fight does not always succeed: Hlatshwayo describes it as 'Dying and resurrecting like / A dangabane flower'. And, while some poems name and praise heroes of history and contemporary resistance, the leaders do not always perform what they promise. An apocalyptic tone is present too, especially in the work of Hlatshwayo, who makes various references to the day of the 'new Jerusalem' which will end social exploitation.

Some of these poems are excellent by anybody's standards. In 'I, the Unemployed', Malange gives an evocative and powerful insight into the consciousness of the growing number of unemployed and poverty-stricken people in South Africa. And the tone is not only sombre and stirring. In 'Praise Poem to FOSATU', Qabula hilariously depicts a conversation in fanakalo between a manager and an impimpi during a strike.

Black Mamba Rising is an important and exciting book. One hopes that in future others will follow this example, hone their skills and express their experiences, insights and desires in performance and on paper: for it is necessary for workers to use not only oral but also written means of communication in South Africa today. Literacy, education and writing skills are also crucial if workers are to gain access to political and social power in the country.

Black Mamba Rising can be obtained from: Worker Resistance and Culture Publications, c/o Department of Industrial Sociology, University of Natal, King George V Avenue, Durban 4001; or from COSATU Workers'

Cultural Local, P O Box 18109, Dalbridge 4014. The price is R3,50 for workers; otherwise R6,00. □

Kelwyn Sole

The Last Affidavits (The South African Catholic Bishops's Conference, 1987)

Bhongoletu — variously translated to mean 'blessings' or 'our pride and joy' — is the black township outside Oudtshoorn in the Eastern Cape. It is also the place where Brian and Di Bishop, Molly Blackburn and Judy Chalmers were on 28 December 1985 before the accident which claimed Brian and Molly's lives. The 'last affidavits' of this 62-page booklet are the sworn statements taken in Bhongoletu by these four on that particular day.

Bhongoletu came into being in 1967 when the Group Areas Act was applied to the black people of Oudtshoorn. By 1985 some 4 000 people were living in about 400 self-built houses, which were served by thirteen water points, refuse and nightsoil removal and little more. Di Bishop's connection with Bhongoletu had begun when this community consulted her about its fear of a further removal — a fear somewhat allayed by the scrapping of the Coloured Labour Preference policy in 1984.

The visit to Bhongoletu on 28 December 1985 followed a request which Molly Blackburn received from community leaders to witness conditions in the township and to hear the allegations of terror and repression experienced daily, but especially in the course of SAP/SADF raids. Statements taken from residents as young as twelve form an appalling testimonial to the 'increasingly repressive measures' which the authorities had employed. The

report which Di Bishop completed on 20 January 1986 provides important background information on such subjects as conditions in the schools, the harassment of community organisations and the conflicts which arose from the imposition of community structures from the outside. (Philip van Ryneveld's article in SASH, Vol. 29 No. 3 refers to the recent upgrading of Bhongoletu and to the context in which these improvements are being made.)

The booklet includes Brian Bishop's account of the shooting and burial of Mzwandile Muggles and Johannes Spogter, a schoolboy of thirteen, at Steytlerville. In June 1985 the Bishops and Molly Blackburn answered an invitation to hear about the problems faced by residents of Nonzwakazi Township at De Aar. They became involved in the funeral arrangements for one of four young men who had been shot dead on 16 June. The simple record of the phone calls to officials made by these well-placed white South Africans (both women were MPCs) reveals an almost impenetrable bureaucratic wall.

The Last Affidavits belongs to a genre of South African documents — yet is unique. Those who read it and know its history will understand why. □

Candy Malherbe

Recommendations

Cassandra Parker recommends *People of the Lie* by psychiatrist M Scott Peck (Simon and Schuster, New York, 1986) for its focus on good and evil, easily related to the South African psyche.

We would appreciate contributions from readers who have read books they feel others should know about. Please send us the title, author and publisher, and in a few lines tell us why you think it is notable.

LETTERS

The Black Sash and violence — the debate continues

In Barbara Waite's heartfelt and moving letter (SASH, February 87) she appeals to us in the Black Sash to express our outrage and revulsion at, and to condemn utterly, all cruel and savage acts taking place in this country, lest we ourselves become accomplices by default in murder and dementia, and cease to be wholly human.

I believe that the implications of this appeal are too far-reaching. They include the proposition that all people who keep silent when any of their compatriots commits a cruel or savage action should be regarded as partners, or participants, or at least sharers of responsibility in that action.

This may be true in a spiritual or philosophical sense. (No man is an island.) But the Black Sash is a social and political, not a philosophical and spiritual organisation. In the narrower social and political definitions of 'accomplices' and 'responsibility' appropriate to our aims, there is one and only one violent group in this country whose members we as citizens are *specifically* involved with, whom we are *actually* accomplices of, whose victims in a real, even a strict sense, we are *practically* responsible for. And these are the 'security forces'. We pay their salaries; those of us who are white elect the people who give them their orders, they are accountable to us.

No other group — not the ANC, nor Inkatha, nor the 'comrades', nor the UDF, nor tribal chiefs, nor people's courts, nor vigilantes (except if they are agents of the security forces) — are our responsibility in this way; no other group, I submit, can legitimately call us their 'accomplices', or implicate us 'by default' in what they do.

This doesn't affect the issue of what we *feel* for the victims. We are

surely all wrenched with pity and horror when any person is necklaced or hacked to death, or any home is destroyed, or any child is shot. And our *feelings* are surely in their turn not affected by our sense that the perpetrators of these evil deeds may be 'understood', or that reasons or even excuses may be found for them. Even barbarity has a source: people are not born beasts. They may have been hardened by years of wretchedness and frustration; they may have been brainwashed and brutalised by years of exposure to a corrupt system; they may consider themselves at war where 'all's fair', they may be acting in desperate retaliation for some utterly intolerable injury.

We feel the same *pity* for all their victims; but nevertheless we must feel more *responsibility* for those whose sufferings have been caused by our own agents.

I believe, then, that we *have* to feel responsible both for the sufferings and also for the cruel and unjust actions of some people more than others. Furthermore, we are entitled to demand from some people — the security forces — but not from others, that they attend to us at all.

And so our protests, our investigations, our denunciations do belong more properly in one direction than in others; and to direct them really effectively in this way would take all the energy we have.

Marie Dyer
Natal Midlands

The Black Sash and childcare facilities

We would like to propose that the organisers of future national conferences include a childcare facility in their plans.

We believe there are many Black Sash mothers who would attend the

conference if such a facility existed. As the national conference now stretches over four days, most mothers of young children are effectively excluded from being delegates, if they cannot make adequate childcare provisions for the whole period.

The provision of crèches at conferences is fast becoming established practice both in South Africa and abroad. The recent Namda conference, held in Cape Town, included a childcare centre which was very well used.

As a women's organisation, the Black Sash should be taking the lead in this field.

Rondebosch Branch
Cape Western Region

The Black Sash logo

I was intrigued by the tree symbol that suddenly appeared as a Black Sash logo during the Cape Town conference. Although I thought it was very attractive, I must confess to having a preference for our current logo.

Since the inception of the Sash, the organisation's symbol has been the constitution draped in a black sash and, as this aptly symbolises all that we stand for, I think it would be rather foolish to change it now.

Even if the tree banner was not intended to replace our logo, I feel that this is the effect conveyed by its prominence at the national conference. I would be unhappy if an arbitrary decision by Cape Western or National headquarters resulted in our logo's being replaced in this way.

Would anyone care to comment?

Laura Pollecutt
Johannesburg

Economic illiteracy?

Judging by the 1987 national conference, Black Sash women are not interested in economic issues — the panel on poverty and impoverishment notwithstanding.

Yet, as Francis Wilson pointed out in his concluding remarks, we do need to concern ourselves with political economy as the power structure that shapes our lives and profoundly affects our strivings for justice.

What's more, we are living in an era of what American sociologist Peter Drucker describes as 'dramatic shifts in the global economy'. Drucker maintains the world economy has changed, probably irreversibly, in three major respects:

- the primary-products economy has become 'uncoupled' from the industrial economy,
- in the industrial economy itself, production has become 'uncoupled' from employment, and
- capital movements rather than trade (in both goods and services) have become the driving force in the world economy, with the link between capital movements and trade weakened and unpredictable.

Drucker discusses these changes in an article first published in the journal *Foreign Affairs* early in 1986 and reproduced in *Dialogue*, 1/1987, distributed by US Information Service. People wanting to explore South African issues in a broader context would find this article stimulating, provocative and — to the extent that the analysis has validity — hair-raising when the economic non-prospects of millions of young blacks in South Africa are taken into consideration.

Margaret Nash
Cape Town



'How will you be able to tell when the emergency's over?' (Cape Times, 18 August 1960)

competition

A book of Dave Marais cartoons was sent to us by Margy Matthew, with a comment on their relevance more than 25 years later. We publish one above, dating from the time of the first Emergency.

Along the lines of Punch's famous caption competition, we offer a prize for the best caption submitted for the cartoon at the foot of this page. The prize is one year's free subscription to SASH, to be sent to anyone of the winner's choice — and we can think of several prominent figures who would benefit from it! The name of the winner and her/his prize-winning caption will be published in the next issue of SASH.

Send your entry to SASH Caption Competition, 5 Long Street, Mowbray 7700, together with your name and address, before 30 June 1987.

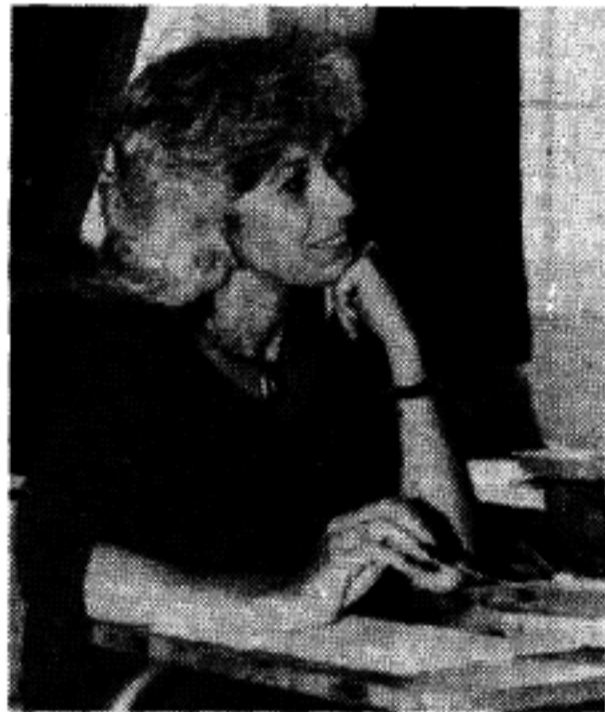


WORKING AT THE OUTPOSTS

minority of one

gill dugmore

What is it like being the only Black Sash member in town? Gill Dugmore describes what life is like as our lone flag-flyer in George.



MARGY MATTHEW

Being the only Black Sash member in George, people often think I must be brave or praiseworthy, but I don't feel that way at all. George may seem a somewhat intimidating laager, locked in from the Langkloof to Lawaai-kamp, and not famous for illuminated vision. In fact, there are many well-meaning people here but they are reluctant to associate themselves publicly with any organisation that might jeopardise their image or business.

It is a small community and I am aware of being discussed. Sometimes it is lonely and I feel as if I am in the middle between white and black, neither belonging to nor fully accepted by either. But as long as I have my own very supportive family with me, I am free to go on. The costs are generally small compared to what I gain.

Each day brings something new — sometimes a lot all at once. I am often approached by legal firms out of town to bail out their clients. This has made me familiar with prison procedure and given me the opportunity to give released prisoners a lift home and meet their families and friends. Then, later, when we meet again at court or, better still, in the street, we are not strangers.

I have also been privileged to be closely involved with Kobus Pienaar, who is the legal representative of the George Civic of Lawaai-kamp (a community that was

threatened with forced removal). This is an exceptional group, whose strength and confidence has grown, despite the detention of their leader, Kenneth Sibotho. I continue to look for ways to meet and mix and share with people, many of whom have already made me feel a trusted friend.

Court monitoring also takes up a lot of my time, and this is another enriching experience. At the beginning I felt extremely uncomfortable and needed almost to 'whistle a happy tune' to keep my courage up. Now that I am gaining experience, I feel much better. One of the most encouraging things has been the support of Black Sash members in the wider Region. Until now my main contact has been with Lu Harding and the new and blossoming Black Sash branch in Knysna, and I have had several visits from members in Cape Town, including Mary Burton, Di Bishop and Margaret Nash. Laurine Platzky, who came as a representative of the National Committee Against Removals, has also been a tower of strength in my involvement with Lawaai-kamp.

I am envious of the regular branch meetings that I read of in the larger Regions, but I know advice and support are just a telephone call away, and I no longer feel like a mouse in a maze. If any Black Sash members are coming through George, I hope you will feel welcome to call on me. □

NEWS-STRIP

Nobel Peace prize nomination

We were greatly honoured to learn from the Director of the Liberal International that one of its member parties, the Swedish Folkpartiet, has nominated the Black Sash for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1987.

To be nominated for this universally esteemed prize makes us very proud but also very humble. It is a tribute to the persistent and courageous work done by Black Sash members over the past 32 years. It is also a challenge to us to work continually for a transition to a more peaceful and more just society in South Africa. We know all too well that there is a great deal to be done.

Mary Burton

National conference booklet

Following a precedent set at previous national conferences, the 1987 conference requested Margaret Nash to edit a booklet on the conference proceedings. Provisionally titled 'From the Insecurity of Injustice to Security based on Justice', this illustrated booklet will contain a review of the 1987 national conference, an index of conference documents, highlights from the regional reports and an analysis of Black Sash advice office development. The proposed price is R2,50 per copy, with a discount for bulk orders. Further information can be obtained from the Conference Booklet Co-ordinator, 5 Long Street, Mowbray 7700.

National conference papers

Copies of the Black Sash national conference papers may be obtained by contacting the national conference delegates from your region.

NEWS-STRIP

**Black Sash première:
'The Native Who Caused
all the Trouble'**

The Market Theatre gave the Black Sash the première of the Amstel award-winning play, 'The Native Who Caused All the Trouble'. This was combined with a wine and snack party in the theatre restaurant, organised jointly by Mary Jankovitch and Caroline Shaw. It proved to be a very successful idea — the tickets were completely sold out, and the Sash raised nearly R3 000,00. A good time was had by all ... as the photograph reveals.



ANNA ZIEMINSKI

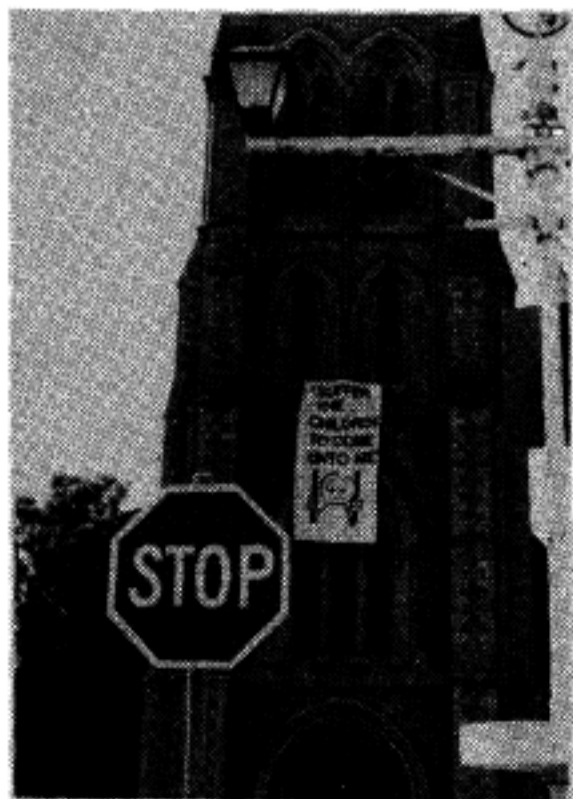
*Opposite, left to right:
Ethel Walt, Sheena Duncan,
Audrey Coleman.*

Erratum

Please note that the Volume Number of the February 1987 issue of SASH was incorrect. It should have read SASH Volume 29, No 4.

Free the Children

A creative action by Albany branch on National Detainees' Day (12 March) was the suspension of a banner from the bell tower of the Grahamstown Cathedral.



STEVE HILTON-BARBER

Albany branch

The Albany branch is sorry to be losing its first fieldworker, Cherryl Walker, after just eight months. Cherryl joined the Albany branch in August last year. She established an office in Grahamstown and took on many tasks, which included developing the work of the East Cape monitoring group.

'We have been very fortunate in having someone with such high professional capabilities and such integrity as Cherryl. We will miss her sorely,' said Albany chairperson and newly-elected national vice-president, Rosemary Smith.

Cherryl will be joining her husband in Natal, where she plans to work on her second book. Her position has been filled by Social Work Honours graduate, Janet Small, who, after completing post-graduate work at Rhodes University, spent 1986 as NUSAS national projects officer. She is currently completing a Master's thesis on community organisation in Cradock.

*Janet
Small*



Vacancy

**Advice office
co-ordinator/
field worker**

The Border Region of the Black Sash is looking for an advice office co-ordinator/fieldworker to cover the Border and surrounding areas of the Ciskei and Transkei.

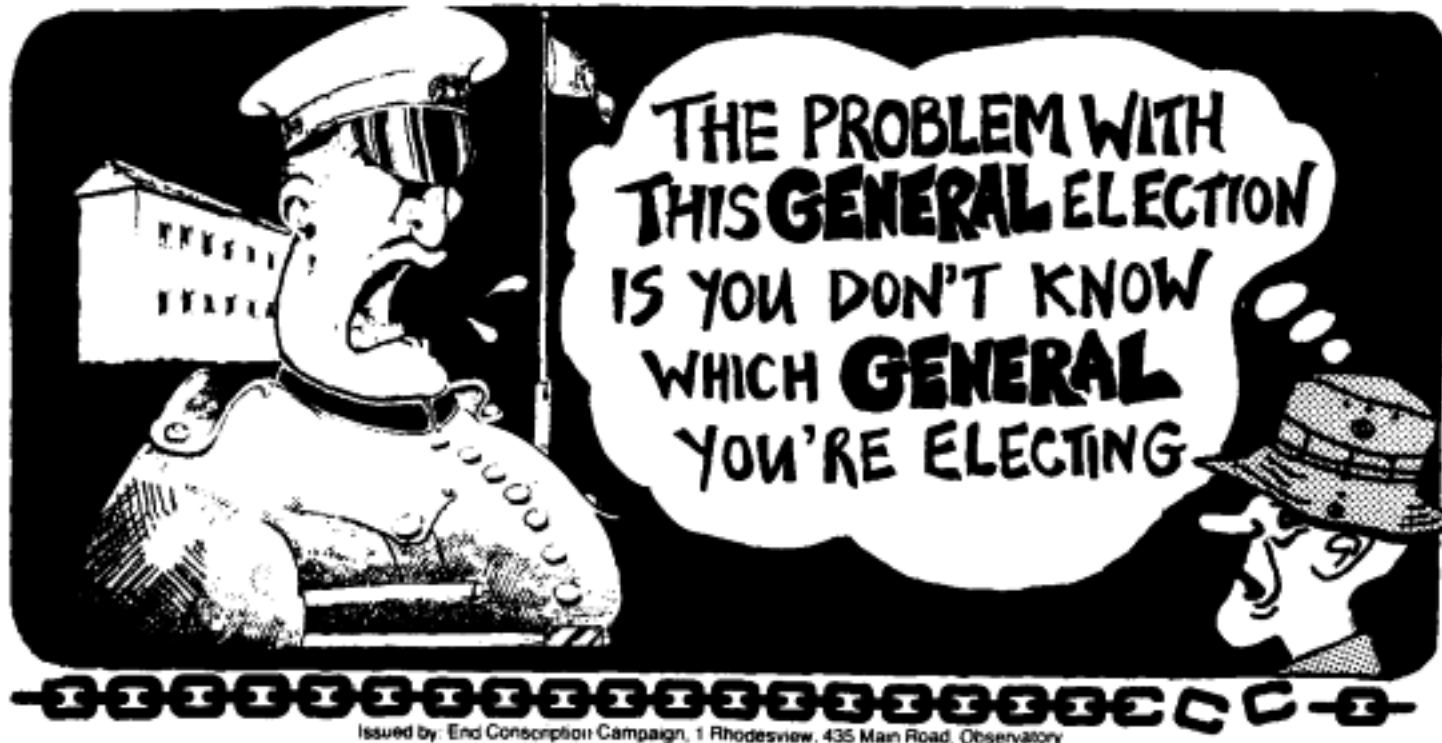
Interested applicants should apply, giving the name of two referees to The Black Sash Advice Office, P O Box 8067, Nahoon 5210.

NEIL HUDSON AGGETT . YAN AH . ROBERT BARBER . STEVE BANTU
BIKO . GEORGE BOTHA . MTHAYENI CUTHSELA . ERNEST MOABI
DIPALE . NEGENI GAGA . ERIC DILIZA GANGALA . THEMBALAKHE
GEORGE . HOOSEN HAFJEJEE . JAMES HAMAKWAYO . ABDULLA
HAROON . PONGOLOSHE HOYE . MBULELO ROCKY JAMES .
TVALIMFENE JOYI . XOLISO JACOBS . NICODIMUS KGOATHE . AARON
KHOZA . TAHLEHO KOROTSOANE . MAKOMPO KUTUMELA . JAMES
LENCOE . PIN LEONG . ELIJAH LOZA . MATTHEWS MABELANE .
PHAKAMILE MABIJA . ALPHEUS MADIBA . MOLEFE PARIS MALATJI
SIPHO MALAZA . ELMON MALELE . SAMUEL MALINGA . ERNEST
MAMASHILA . BELLINGTON MAMPE . SIMON MARULE . SAMSON
MASEKO . JACOB MASHABANE . BENEDICT MASHOKE . ANTHONY
MASUNYANE . SIFUNDILE MATALAZI . CALEB MAYEKISO . LUKE
MAZWEMBE . DUMISANI MBATHA . MBUYISELO MBOTYA . JOSEPH
MDLULI . MANANA MGQWETO . TEMBUYISE SIMON MNDawe .
SOLOMON MODIPANE . FENUEL MOGATUSI . MAPETLA MOHAPI
SONNYBOY MOKOENA . JACOB MOLELEKE . JACOB MONNAKGOTLA
THALO MOSALA . EPHRAIM MTHETHWA . MZWANDILE MUGGELS
TSHIFIWA ISAAC MUOFHE . SIPHO MUTSI . BHEKIMVULANE . BAYEM-
PINI MZIZI . EDWARD MZOLO . PETER NCHABELENG . BATANDWA
NDONDO . LOYISO NDZANDZE . LAWRENCE NDZANGA . SAUL
NDZUMO . JOHANNES BONAKELE NGALO . ERIC NGOMANE .
"LOOKSMART" SOLWANDLE NGUDLE . ABEL NGWENYA . MZUKISI
NOBHADULA . NABOATH NTSHUNTSHA . BENJI OLIFANT .
ANDRIES RADITSELA . NGOAKE RAMALEPE . SULIMAN SALOOJEE
ROSE SEGWALE SHIVUTE . MXOLISI SIPELE . HANGULA SHONYEKA
MGUYISELI SONGELWA . JOHANNES SPOGTER . LUNGILE
TABALAZA . AHMED TIMOL . WELLINGTON MLUNGISI TSHAZIBANE
SAMUEL TSHIKUDO . WILLIAM TSHWANE . JUNDEA BOLOWA
TUBAKWA . JAMES TYITA . UNKNOWN MAN . UNKNOWN PERSON.

The Black Sash Dedication

*In pride and humbleness we declare our devotion to the
land of South Africa; we dedicate ourselves to the service
of our country. We pledge ourselves to uphold the ideals of
mutual trust and forbearance, of sanctity of word, of
courage for the future, and of peace and justice for all
persons and peoples. We pledge ourselves to resist any
diminishment of these, confident that this duty is required
of us, and that history and our children will defend us.
So help us, God, in whose strength we trust.*

some comments on the election .



SOMETIMES
I SITS
AND THINKS
AND
SOMETIMES
I JUST
VOTE
NAT

WHO IS THE
UNITED PARTY
CANDIDATE?


CAN WOMEN VOTE?
*my husband didn't
tell me.*

bumper stickers that say it all

..... and its aftermath

*YOU CAN FOOL
ALL THE VOTERS
ALL THE TIME
- P.W. BOTHA*

why wasn't
my oupa
irish?



**IF
YOU
CAN READ
THIS YOU ARE
THE LAST FAR SIGHTED
PERSON IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

