

THE BLACK SASH

DIE SWART SERP



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Ons Sielelas

SUID-AFRIKA beskadig die siel. In ons land is iedereen gedurig onder druk om sy sedelike en menslike waardes te verslap. Hierdie toedrag van sake is nie aan ons skuld toe te skryf nie, maar die feit bly staan dat hierdie druk wel teenwoordig is en dat ons bomenslik sou wees as ons dit deurgaans kon trotseer.

Dink maar na oor die druk wat d.m.v. die nie-blanke op ons waardes en ons oordeel uitgeoefen word.

Indien ons bv. as Europese burgers 'n oordeel oor die doodstraf moes uitspreek sou ons die feite en die menings van deskundiges versigtig in oënskou neem en 'n onpartydige besluit neem. In Suid-Afrika aanvaar die oor-grote meerderheid van burgers egter die noodsaaklikheid van die doodstraf sonder meer „weens die naturelle.” Dieselfde geld vir die toediening van lyfstraf.

Almal is bewus van die polisie se advies dat diegene wat alleen woon gewapend moet wees en nie moet huiwer om te skiet nie—dit „weens die naturelle.” Oorsee is geeneen gewapend nie en die polisie sou onder geen omstandighede sulke raad gee nie.

Ons aanvaar wette wat gemengde huwelike en die saamwoon van verskillende rasse as kriminele oortredings bestempel. Ander lande kom sonder sulke onsmaklike wetgewing klaar.

Ons het nou 'n wet wat die bestaan van honderde—dalk duisende—Indiërgesinne gaan

The Strain on the Soul

SOUTH AFRICA is tough on the soul. In this country we are all under constant pressure to let our standards of morality and humanity slip. Certainly it is not our fault that this should be so, but the fact remains that these pressures exist and we would be superhuman if we did not give way to them at all.

Consider what the pressure of the Black man alone does to our sense of values and our judgment.

If we were living in Europe and the question of capital punishment, for instance, came up for our judgment, we would carefully consider the facts and the arguments of the experts and come to a dispassionate conclusion. In this country, however, it is overwhelmingly accepted that capital punishment must be retained “because of the Natives.” The same goes for the infliction of lashes.

Then again it is common knowledge that the police advice to people living alone is to be armed and to shoot to hit—without arguing about it. This is “because of the Natives.” Overseas nobody goes armed, and the police would not dream of giving such ruthless advice.

We accept, almost without a murmur, laws that make mixed marriages and cohabitation between the races criminal offences. Other countries are spared that distasteful kind of legislation.

We now have a law in operation that is likely to take the livelihood from hundreds,

bedreig. Ons verag miskien die wet, maar ons is magteloos. Ons het nog 'n wet wat kerkbywoning onder sekere omstandighede beperk „weens die naturelle.” Ons onderwerp ons „weens die naturelle” aan 'n vermeerderende hoeveelheid sensorskap van ons boeke, toneelstukke en rolprente.

Ons neem aan dat geweld in ons daaglikse lewe onvermydelik is. In Sekukuniland is daar reeds maandelank 'n jong burgeroorlog aan die gang—maar ons steur ons nie daaraan nie. 'n Bakleiry in 'n lokasie, met twee of drie sterfgevallen, is niks buitengewoons nie. Polisie-klopjagte en massa-inhegtenisnemings gebeur só dikwels dat die koerante nie eers daaroor skryf nie. In die naturellewoonbuurte binne bereik van ons stede gebeur wrede en primitiewe dinge—en ons is daarvan bewus.

Kort voor Kersfees, twee jaar gelede, is oor die honderd mense gearresteer en van hoogverraad aangekla. Dit het ons Kersfeesviering geensins in die wiele gery nie. Is daar enige ander land ter wêreld waar hierdie grootskaalse inhegtenisnemings met sulke stilswye begroet sou word? Geeneen nie. Rusland sou in oproer gewees het.

Selfs i.v.m. die „blanke politiek” vind ons dieselfde verslapping van ons waardes. Tien-duisende Suid-Afrikaners het sonder blyk van slegte spysvertering die verraaing van die kleurlinge gesluk, ook die klug van die Hoë Hof van die Parlement, die bedrieglike vergroting van die Senaat en die verdelging van ons grondwet. Elke paar jaar het ons 'n afbakening wat van ons verkiesingstelsel 'n klug maak—en ons berus daarin.

Wel het ons as lede van die Swart Serp 'n verbete stryd teen hierdie maatreëls gevoer. Ons kan ons daarmee gelukwens. Dit is egter nie die hoofsaak nie. Wat juis die denkende persoon in die krop steek is die feit dat hy tenspyte van sy vermoë om feite sonder vrees te aanvaar, en tenspyte van die stryd wat hy voer, tog steeds aan 'n invreting van sy standarde onderwerp word. Tensy ons gedurig op ons hoede is, word ons gevoelens mettertyd verstomp. Uiteindelik aanvaar ons sonder verset 'n toedrag van sake wat ons diep sou skok as ons lede van gemeenskappe sou

if not thousands of Indian families. We may loathe the law, but there it is. We have another law controlling church worship in certain circumstances “because of the Natives.” We submit to a humiliating amount of censorship of our books, plays and films “because of the Natives.”

We accept an astonishing amount of violence as a normal feature of South Africa's way of life. There has been something like a civil war going on in Sekukuniland for months past—and we pay virtually no attention to it. A location riot, with two or three men clubbed to death, is a mere commonplace. Police raids and mass arrests are so frequent that the newspapers are tired of reporting them. In the locations that lie within a few miles of the centre of every one of our towns there is jungle law of the most savage kind—and we all know it.

Just before Christmas two years ago over a hundred people were arrested on charges of high treason, and we proceeded happily and calmly with our Christmas celebrations. Is there any other country in the world where treason allegations on this scale would be accepted so complacently? Not one. Russia would have been in a turmoil.

Even if we turn away from the Native question to “white politics”, we find the same sapping of our standards. There are tens of thousands of South Africans who swallowed (without any sign of indigestion) and have now almost forgotten the betrayal of the Coloured people. The farce of the “High Court of Parliament,” the fraudulent enlargement of the Senate and the destruction of our Constitution. Periodically we have a delimitation which makes a mockery of the electoral system—and we accept it.

It is true that we of the Black Sash have fought tooth and nail against some or all of the items on this list, and many others. We can congratulate ourselves that we have done so. But that is not the point. What is so distressing to the thinking person who faces facts and admits them is that, in spite of the struggle, we are still subjected to a constant erosion of our standards. Gradually, unless we guard against it carefully, our susceptibilities are blunted. We come to accept situations which would shock us deeply if we were living in what must often seem to us the

wees so moreel-beskut as die van Engeland of Amerika.

In Suid-Afrika is dit ons lot, dalk selfs 'n voorreg, om 'n sielestryd te voer wat burgers van ander lande nie raak nie. Ons kan dit nie vermy nie. Ons aanvaar dit. Dis egter geen wonder dat ons etiese beskouings in die loop van die stryd ietwat ly nie. Suid-Afrika beskadig die siel.

morally sheltered communities of England, say, or America.

It is our misfortune—and, in some ways our privilege—in South Africa to be subjected to a moral strain that people in other countries know little about. It is not so bad if we recognise the fact and face it. But it is not surprising if our ethical standards get a little ragged round the edges. South Africa is tough on the soul.

WHAT IS THE INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS?

BY JACK HALPERN

Editor, South African Institute of Race Relations.

IDEALISTS have always complained of the lack of morality in public affairs, putting the blame on self-interest. It should, therefore, surprise no-one that in South Africa, which has been built by conquest and exploitation of both man and nature, groups which take a stand on universal moral principles should come in for suspicion and abuse.

With the Black Sash taking an increasing interest in the moral basis of the relations between all races in the Union, its members will make increasing use of the facilities and published material of the Institute, and it might therefore be useful to clarify just what this body is and what it stands for.

The Institute is a non-party-political, completely independent body founded almost 30 years ago to promote "peace, goodwill and practical co-operation" between the various races and sections of the population of Southern Africa. This sounds a large order, and it is—especially for a body which undertakes a tremendous amount of fact-finding, advisory and practical organisational work without receiving any government or other official grants.

The Institute is tied to no party political doctrine. Its approach and work is permeated by belief in the fundamental principles of Christian living and by values basic to Western Civilisation.

These beliefs have been summed up by its present director, Mr. Quintin Whyte: "Belief in the value of the individual and his right to the fullest expression and development compatible with similar rights of other individuals; belief in a democratic society with its accepted freedoms, rights and duties; acceptance of the Christian ideal of the brotherhood of man.

"The Institute has consistently recognized that this concept of democracy has seldom been applied in a multi-racial society. Nevertheless, it has always accepted that the full measure of democracy must ultimately be applied to South Africa.

"The Institute has taken its decisions over the past 29 years against this general background of

faith and belief. Each problem has been considered on its merits alone. In its work for peace, goodwill and practical co-operation, the Institute has paid attention to all views sincerely held and has realized the importance of recognizing the limits of the practicable at any one time."

This is the Institute's approach. It came into being with no dogma or fixed outlook to which its founders wished to convert others. In fact, it took 23 years before it took a definite stand on the issue which today dominates race relations in South Africa: apartheid versus integration.

The late Professor Hoernlé, for many early years the Institute's President, was one of the first South Africans to examine the alternatives on a moral basis. He found that complete separation of the races might be morally tenable but, after years of intense investigation and consideration, concluded that it was quite impracticable. His studies have formed the basis of most subsequent discussion of this problem. Dr. D. F. Malan, when Premier in 1950, endorsed his conclusions.

In 1952, the Institute formulated these conclusions. It believed a just and peaceful solution of our racial problems lay somewhere along the path of sharing. In today's South Africa, it has been attacked for this stand, but nothing that has happened since 1952 has given it reason to change its mind. It is difficult not to sound smug about being open minded whilst sticking to unpopular conclusions, but that is the position in which the Institute finds itself today. It can also be a discouraging position and one which can never attract a mass following.

Yet the outlook is not as bleak as it might seem. Race relations have never been more strained in South Africa, but there are many more people today who are giving this deterioration serious thought.

The founding and subsequent development of the Black Sash, SABRA and the Liberal Party, the holding of the conference of African Ministers Interdenominational Federation in Bloemfontein in 1956, the Multi-Racial Conference at the University of the Witwatersrand last year and SABRA's recent

Stellenbosch inter-racial meetings are encouraging signs, and the Institute can fairly claim that it has been instrumental in creating the climate which makes such discussions possible. These things are not new—we have been holding inter-racial conferences and consultations for 29 years—but they are more significant in today's climate of self-intimidation than they have been in the more tolerant past.

The Institute of Race Relations certainly claims that it has for many years been the premier source of factual, unbiased information about race relations in South Africa. Its monumental Handbook on Race Relations is the standard work in this field. Its annual Survey of Race Relations collates and records all trends and events affecting race relations in politics, legislation, administration, employment, education, health, nutrition, welfare, recreation, justice and external affairs. Pioneer work is continually done in establishing facts about subjects as varied as civil liberties, purchasing power, housing and systems of multi-racial representation. New legislation affecting the races is analysed by the Institute, and the effects of its implementation recorded.

The Institute is proud that the accuracy of its facts and its disinterestedness have never been disputed.

The Institute's expert knowledge and views are sought by AND FREELY GIVEN TO government commissions, wage boards, industry, commerce, welfare societies, research workers and educators. It may be called upon for help, advice or guidance in drawing up a constitution, attempting to remove a tribe from its land, organising a conference; or advise on a complaint of wrongful dismissal, a case of deportation, a dispute over land, the formation of an educational trust, the building of a nursery school, the analysis of a piece of legislation, the pass laws, the raising of funds, a speech, a paper, a riot, a wrongful arrest, and on through a list of apparently minor matters.

The Institute has a highly qualified professional staff running its research, publications, reference library and secretarial departments at its head office in Auden House, de Korte Street, Braamfontein, and small staffs at regional offices in Cape Town, Durban and Port Elizabeth.

The best way to illustrate how the Institute functions and what membership in it can mean is to see what it has done about one measure: Group Areas.

When this scheme was first put forward in 1950, the Institute made a detailed study which was distributed to members, M.P.'s and others. In this analysis the Institute objected to the bill *in principle* and warned that its implementation would inevitably lead to injustices and the uprooting of tens of thousands of people. Local groups met for discussion, and through press statements, pamphlets and discussion groups the Institute tried to make the public aware of the consequences if the bill became law. Once this had happened, Institute members and delegations attended group area board sittings to

protest against unjust proposals. In Cape Town and Grahamstown the local councils followed this line and in Durban the council has now suggested substantial revisions of the proposals which it made initially. Throughout, the Institute's statements and published information were marked by the objectivity and factual accuracy which have become its hallmarks. As group areas have been finally proclaimed, the Institute has analysed their consequences and drawn attention to their meaning in human terms.

This makes the Institute's work sound exciting if not always successful, but it forms only part of its attempts to inform public opinion of all races and to strengthen the power of reason in racial affairs.

Other aspects of this work come to the notice of only a small part of the public, and involve hard, prolonged and unspectacular work. Perhaps the best way to illustrate this is on the question of the cost of living for Africans. During last year's Alexandra bus boycott this subject suddenly hit the headlines, and the Institute was inundated with requests for factual information by government departments, the City Council, commerce, industry, the press, individual employers and householders.

This was a matter with which the Institute has concerned itself for many years, and it had in stock authoritative publications which formed the basis of all subsequent discussions. When this information became connected with a critical and immediate issue, it was natural that the Institute of Race Relations should be looked to as the disinterested source, and it was natural that it should be in a position to provide accurate material. In this lies the Institute's strength and its major contribution to the eventual achievement of racial harmony in South Africa.

Tape Recorded Lectures

Cape Western have taken endless trouble to produce long-playing records of political lectures, and these have turned out to be outstandingly good. The following records are available at £4 each:—

The Role of the Black Sash in South African Politics, by George Clay;
African Tribal Society, by P. Caarstens;
The Need for Constitutional Reform, by General Selby;

and these will soon be available:—

The Pass Laws, by Professor Monica Wilson;
The Bantu Education Act, by A. C. Jordan;
The need for a constitution which will safeguard the rights of all, by Donald Molteno;
Parliamentary Democracy, by Professor L. Thompson.

These records should be tremendously helpful to members, particularly in the country regions.

A Constitution For South Africa

A CONSTITUTION consists of a collection of laws or general principles, which differs from ordinary laws, because it describes the structure of the State and the principles upon which it is based. A Constitution may be flexible (that is, it can be changed easily by the same kind of majority as is needed for ordinary legislation) or a Constitution may be rigid (that is, in order to be changed it may need a more complicated procedure: for example in the United States where it needs the consent of three quarters of the States). This also implies a Court of some kind to prevent the Constitution being altered by an ordinary law.

In South Africa we have a most flexible Constitution. The only attempt to make it rigid was the "entrenched clauses" which provided that any changes in the equality of the English and Afrikaans languages or in the voting rights of the Coloureds and Africans in the Cape Province could only be carried by a two-thirds majority of the House of Assembly and Senate sitting together. Our present Government, by passing the Senate Act, annulled these clauses by packing the Senate so as to secure the two-thirds majority. We have, therefore, no guarantee that a complete change may not be passed by a majority of one in both Houses. It is true that in the case of setting up a Republic the Nationalists have assured us that it must be supported by a substantial majority of the people. But this is common prudence, and there is no suggestion that they will apply the same test to what are at least equally important internal problems, for example, the relation of races to one another.

It will be remembered that, during the controversy over the passing of the Act for placing Coloured voters on a separate list, the Nationalists constantly used the argument that no constitutional check could be tolerated upon the Volkswill, and that the majority (or supposed majority) of the people had always the right to have what they wanted. It was in response to this that the then Chief Justice (in the Coloured Voters' Judgment) said that Americans, who had a rigid Constitution, would be surprised to hear that they were not a proper Democracy.

Mr. Donges, the Minister of the Interior was always fond of using what I suppose he thought an argument *ad hominem* to the Opposition by pointing to the English practice. It is true that the United Kingdom has a completely flexible Constitution. There is nothing their Parliament cannot do by a majority of one. This is because the British Constitution is the result of long growth and much of it is based upon custom (for example the rule that a Government resigns if it has lost the confidence of the House of Commons). No modern Constitution has imitated what has been due to a special historical evolution.

Again, in the United Kingdom, there is a tradition of moderation and compromise. Changes in the Constitution are not generally made without long

discussion, conferences between the parties, and one or more consultation of the people—very unlike the way in which the Senate Act was passed.

Also, there is always in the United Kingdom a group of unattached voters who prevent any party remaining permanently in power by swinging from one side to the other.

Can we honestly say that these conditions exist in South Africa? Parties out here tend to be infected by racial feeling and it becomes increasingly hard for anyone to vote outside his group without being called a traitor. The Nationalist majority do not (to put it mildly) show much consideration for the English-speaking section of the community. In a real democracy all such perpetuation of historical resentments would have been forgotten long ago.

What is far more important is that the rights of the majority of the people of this country are completely at the mercy of the White races. Africans are taxed, moved from their homes, their education and future destiny settled without their being consulted. The grant of the vote to the Teenagers does not hold out much hope of improvement in the sense of responsibility which should accompany such enormous control over the lives of others as the White races of South Africa are assuming. Such a system of Government may be called whatever you please, but it is certainly not Constitutional Democracy.

I do not now intend to go into details of what would be a desirable Constitution for this country, but a few principles seem to follow from what has been said; for example: (1) It must include something like the Bill of Rights in the American Constitution—ensuring freedom, trial by jury, freedom of public meetings and the Press and forbidding all discrimination on racial grounds. (2) Since no rights are secure without the Vote, there must be some provision (I do not go into details) for the representation of all races. (3) There must be a Court to interpret the Constitution and a special procedure for proposed alterations. (4) There must be a real Second Chamber qualified to work with the Lower Chamber and not, like the present Senate, an exaggerated copy of it.

Among the matters that will also need most serious consideration are Regulations to ensure that the Parliamentary majority is a real majority, and the adjustment of relations between Central and Local Government.

Dr. F. H. BRABANT.

A Generous Spirit prefers that his country be poor, and weak, and of no account, but free, rather than powerful, prosperous, and enslaved.

—Acton.

THE GROUP AREAS ACT

Concluding a series on the Group Areas Act
by William Bond

*Opinions expressed in signed articles are not
official Black Sash views.*

THE Group Areas Act has a younger brother, the Group Areas Development Act of 1955. The Nationalists eventually realised that the social upheavals made possible by the principal act could result in economic upheavals in property values. So the new Act came into being with the laudable object of stabilising property prices in newly proclaimed Group Areas.

The Group Areas Development Board constituted by the Act has unusual powers. It can—

- (a) buy, sell, hire, lease, give away, exchange or expropriate any fixed property.
- (b) lay out townships, subdivide land, build houses, shops and factories.
- (c) lend money to anyone, and
- (d) with the approval of the Minister, delegate any of its powers to local authorities, statutory bodies and even companies. Thus a company can be given power of expropriation and certain taxing powers—a startling concept.

The Board can only exercise its powers in areas already proclaimed as Group Areas for ownership or occupation, as reserved areas or as buffer areas, and then only—

- (a) If so authorised by a Proclamation of the Governor General, and
- (b) in respect of property having some racial defect of ownership or occupation as a result of the Group Areas Act proclamation. This is called “affected property.”

Immediately after the Governor General's proclamation, the Board or any body to which it has delegated its powers, makes a list of all affected properties and gets valuers appointed by the Administrator of the Province concerned to fix “market values” for each such property. There is no appeal against the valuations. Thereafter the Board (or body with delegated powers) must first be offered any affected property that comes up for sale, but can either buy it or let it be sold to someone else. Alternatively the Board (or body) can buy property by direct negotiation or by expropriation.

If the Board (or body) buys any affected property, or if any affected property is expropriated under any other law, or if the owner sells any affected property

to any other person with the Board's (or body's) permission, the selling price is compared with the valuation. If there is a “profit”, the Board (or body) keeps 50% of the mark-up; if there is a loss, the Board (or body) makes good 80% of it.

But if an owner of affected property dares to sell it **without** offering it to the Board or body, he forfeits 75% of his profit and gets nothing towards his loss.

Affected property ceases to be affected as soon as it has changed hands once; it can also be taken off the list if its value is found to have appreciated and the owner is prepared to pay the Board (or body) 50% of the calculated appreciation.

The Board is exempted from municipal rates, but this benefit is not passed on to any body to which it delegates its powers.

The Government apparently hopes that property in group areas will appreciate, and the Development Board show a profit. They have overlooked the following facts—

- (a) Most “mixed” areas are “mixed” because they are unattractive to Europeans, and if proclaimed “white” there may be no demand for property there.
- (b) The tendency in proclaiming group areas is to convert all the built-up portions to white and to enlarge the town concerned by creating new Non-European suburbs further out. Thus the town is artificially enlarged beyond the immediate demand for property and a general slump in property values is quite possible.
- (c) If a property's value is recorded at £1,000, a sale at £800 will bring the owner in £960 (i.e. £800 + 80 per cent. of £200), while a sale at £600 will bring him in only £40 less, namely £920. This puts buyers in much better bargaining positions than sellers once property depreciates and will tend to force down prices further still.
- (d) Government enterprises are seldom profitable. If the Development Board tries to exploit property by laying out new townships, introducing housing schemes, etc., the result may be disastrous financially.

To sum up:—

1. The Group Areas Act was probably necessary and, if properly applied, can do a lot of good.
2. To date the administration of the Act has been incompetent and too much affected by political pressures.
3. The Group Areas Development Act can ease the financial burden on property owners affected by the Group Areas Act, but may cost taxpayers millions of pounds.

17th January, 1957.

FACT AND FICTION

FICTION:

Dr. Verwoerd, when he became Prime Minister, promised in his broadcast to the nation to maintain freedom of speech. "The right of people who have other convictions to express their views will be maintained," he said.

FACT:

Since its inception in May, 1955, the Black Sash has unceasingly fought for the freedoms which citizens of democratic countries should enjoy as a right. Freedom of speech is one of the most vital of those freedoms. It should be most comforting to hear that our new Prime Minister has promised to maintain that freedom, but the Black Sash may be forgiven if in the light of its experiences over recent years and months and even weeks it finds it difficult to believe this admirable statement by Dr. Verwoerd.

True, free speech has not yet been forbidden to us, provided we speak of matters concerning Europeans. Or else we may speak indoors and not on the steps of the Johannesburg City Hall. The Black Sash will not lightly forget its three attempts to hold public meetings on the City Hall steps, the traditional forum of Johannesburg's citizens. Thrice was permission refused, and when, at last, on pressure by the Black Sash, the ban on meetings of more than ten Africans was lifted by Dr. Verwoerd and his Department of Native Affairs, and the Black Sash was allowed to hold a meeting to inform its fellow citizens of the implications of the increased African taxation, what sight greeted the eyes of the people who came to listen? An area cordoned off with ropes, armed police everywhere, police vans in side streets, Special Branch policemen taking photographs and notes.

Nor is that an isolated incident. For years now no public meeting organised by the Black Sash has been without its two Special Branch attendants, taking verbatim notes of all the speeches, for what purpose only the Minister and his minions know.

No, Dr. Verwoerd, we do not believe your easy promises. We do not believe you when you promise to uphold democratic institutions, because your version of democracy is not ours, nor that of the free Western world. By the same token your conception of free speech is not ours, because to the Black Sash and to all democrats, speech must be truly free, untrammelled, and not controlled by policemen and political shorthand-writers.

M.E.F.

FANTASIE EN FEIT

FANTASIE:

Toe hy Eerste Minister geword het, het dr. Verwoerd in sy uitsaaitoespraak aan die volk belowe om vryheid van spraak te handhaaf. „Die reg van andersdenkendes om hul oortuigings uit te spreek sal bewaar word,” het hy gesê.

Die Swart Serp, Oktober '58

FEIT:

Sedert sy totstandkoming in Mei 1955, het die Swart Serp 'n aanhoudende stryd gevoer vir die handhawing van vryhede wat burgers van demokratiese lande as 'n reg behoort te geniet. Vryheid van spraak is een van die belangrikste. Die Eerste Minister se versekering behoort gerusstellend te wees, maar die Swart Serp kan dit nie kwalik geneem word nie as hy op grond van sy ondervindings gedurende die afgelope jare, maande en selfs weke dr. Verwoerd se verklaring in twyfel trek nie.

Ons moet toegee dat vryheid van spraak ons nie ontnem is nie, mits ons slegs blanke sake bespreek en mits ons die trappe van die Johannesburgse stadsaal vermy. Die Swart Serp sal kwalik vergeet hoedat hy drie pogings aangewend het om samekomste by hierdie tradisionele vergaderplek te reël. Driekeer is verlof geweier voordat dr. Verwoerd en sy Departement van Naturellesake onder druk die verbod op vergaderings van meer as tien naturelle opgehef het. Die Swart Serp kon sy medeburgers toe inlig omtrent die uitwerking van die verhoogde natuurlikebelasting. Onder watter omstandighede egter? 'n Deel van die gronde is afgekamp, gewapende polisie was orals te sien, polisiewaens was in die systrate, en polisie van die Spesiale Afdeling was met kameras en notaboekies doenig.

Dit was ook geen uitsonderlike voorval nie. Jare-lank word iedere openbare vergadering van die Swart Serp deur Spesiale Afdeling-personeel bygewoon. Toesprake word woord vir woord neergeskryf. Om watter rede sal slegs die Minister en sy handlangers kan sê.

Nee, dr. Verwoerd, ons aanvaar nie u beloftes nie. Ons glo u nie wanneer u beloof om demokratiese instellings te handhaaf nie, want u begrip verskil van ons s'n en van die vrye Westerse wêreld s'n. So ook is u begrip van vryheid van spraak verskillend van ons s'n. Die Swart Serp en ander demokrate aanvaar nie 'n reg wat deur polisie en politieke snelskrifbeoefenaars ingekort word nie.

M.E.F.

This South Africa

Apart from Dr. Verwoerd and the Emperor of Ethiopia, are there any other Prime Ministers or rulers of nations who claim or believe that their election to high office was divinely sponsored?

—From letter to Rand Daily Mail.

* * *

The Minister of Native Affairs, Dr. Verwoerd, on being asked several questions by Mr. Lee-Warden, twice made this reply: "There are no statutes dealing with 'Africans', whoever that may be. The Department of Native Affairs is concerned only with Natives or Bantu as defined in various Acts of Parliament. The question therefore falls away."

—(Hansard 1, pp. 179/180).

The Black Sash, October, '58

FROM OUR POSTBAG

"The Group Areas Act"

The Editor, **The Black Sash.**

In reply to your correspondent, is it not common practice, when introducing an article in conflict with editorial policy, to use the phrase "not necessarily agree"? I should say that this phrase, quite plainly, is not meant to be taken literally.

E. BLAINE.

* * *

The Editor, **The Black Sash.**

I was surprised to read the letter signed "Angry Member", written in protest against the inclusion of William Bonds' articles on the Group Areas Act in the magazine.

Surely a member of the Black Sash, which claims to be "non-party", can read an interesting commentary like this without "going off the deep"?

In removing the offending pages from the magazine, did not "Angry Member" faithfully imitate the actions of certain rank and file Nationalists, who throw Black Sash leaflets away into the gutter without daring to read them?

"Angry Member" did not have to agree with the views expressed, but it could not do her any harm to read and consider them.

The more I contemplate the South African scene, the more I feel we need someone of the calibre of Socrates to sort us all out!

SHOCKED MEMBER.

* * *

The Editor, **The Black Sash.**

It was refreshing to note that even those whose views are opposed to Sash ideas are given a hearing in the magazine. I refer of course to the series of articles by William Bond on the Group Areas Act.

In South Africa there is so much political literature which is channelled into one point of view that it is good to think that the Sash at least likes to listen to all sides.

More of this type of article in the magazine would be most stimulating.

WENDY JACKSON.

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The Editor, **The Black Sash.**

I notice from your comments prefacing the second part of the series of articles on the Group Areas Act by Mr. William Bond, which appeared in the August issue of your journal, that the publication of Mr. Bond's first article in the preceding issue had evoked a storm of protest from your readers. I do not propose to comment on the contents of Mr. Bond's first article which, after all, purported to be no more than a statement of the personal opinions of the writer as to the desirability of residential segregation as envisaged by the Group Areas legislation.

I would however, if you would afford me space in your columns, like to point out certain inaccuracies in Mr. Bond's second article, in which he set out to summarise the main provisions of the Act as they affect residents and property owners.

In the first place, it is surprising to find, in an article published in August 1958, reference to the section numbers of the original (1950) Act rather than to the consolidating measure—the Group Areas Act No. 77 of 1957. Thus Sections 12, 10, 5, 4, 3 bis, 3 ter and 13 of the 1950 Act, which are the sections dealt with by Mr. Bond in his article, became Sections 15, 17, 24, 23, 21, 22 and 16 in the 1957 Act which came into operation on the 1st November of that year.

In the first paragraph of Mr. Bond's article, dealing with specified areas, he states that "a European owner of a building occupied by Natives may sell the building to an Indian." This is not so: a specified area insofar as property ownership as distinct from occupation is concerned is subject to the same restrictions as those that govern controlled areas viz. that land may not be acquired by a member of one group from a person belonging to another group, except under the authority of a permit issued by the Minister.

In the section dealing with controlled areas, Mr. Bond concerns himself only with the provisions relating to occupation. It is misleading however, to state that "property ownership is not affected" for, as indicated above, transfers of property from one group to another are most definitely restricted. Furthermore, the controlled area, for the purposes of restrictions on property ownership, is practically the whole Union excluding areas proclaimed as group areas for ownership by a particular group. When Mr. Bond states that all rural and peri-urban property has been controlled since October 1952, he should make it clear that he is referring only to the provisions restricting occupation in the controlled area.

When dealing with group areas for ownership, Mr. Bond fails to mention the important proviso that companies engaged in mining operations or large factories, even though of the wrong racial character, may continue to hold property in such areas even after the expiry of the period of ten years.

P.E.R.

(This should be read in conjunction with the following letter from William Bond, to whom the Editor apologizes most sincerely.)

* * *

The Editor, **The Black Sash.**

The three letters published in your September issue condemning the first part of an article on the Group Areas Act published in your June/July issue call for an explanation and reply.

The explanation is that the article was never intended for publication, and certainly not in instalments; it is possible that your correspondents' attitudes might have differed had they read the full article. The article was written as a memorandum nearly two years ago and some of the information in it is now out of date. The memorandum summed up my personal views on the Act and its enforcement—views that had slowly matured during countless hours spent studying each successive Bill and proclamation and attending many public hearings and private discussions.

My reply to the criticisms is that all your correspondents have confused the instrument (i.e. the Group Areas Act) with the use to which it has been put by politicians. Although the politicians have used the Act unjustly, the Act is not necessarily inherently evil. Is Christianity evil because thousands of people have been tortured and killed in its name?

The Black Sash, for which I have the greatest respect and admiration, was right in protesting against the way in which the Act has been implemented. The responsible Minister, presumably backed by the rest of the Cabinet, is the man who has filched "from voteless, defenceless non-Europeans their property and other rights for the supposed benefits of the Whites," to quote the Hon. Mr. F. A. W. Lucas. As such he deserves all the moral condemnation that the Black Sash can give.

I believe, like Mr. Lucas, that the majorities of all races in the Union prefer to live, work and play among their own kind. Each race would like to have some areas exclusively its own. Yet on the Witwatersrand, for example, there was not a single township reserved exclusively for Indians until Lenasia was established and zoned an Indian area under the Act. Would it not have been better for an Indian township more centrally situated to have been created in 1910 when the housing of Asiatics in the Transvaal first became a problem?

Injustices in racial zoning are very much older than the Group Areas Act. The Act could (but probably never will) be used to correct some of these injustices. Can the Black Sash do anything to use the Act for good?

WILLIAM BOND.

• • •

Dr. Verwoerd and the Sash

The Editor, *The Black Sash*.

I have read with deep misgiving Dr. Verwoerd's reply to the Black Sash. What disturbs me most is the fatherly tone of the letter, and the strong impression we receive of a "benevolent" despotism at work. Is the Minister for Native Affairs empowered to dictate to Europeans when, where and about what they may hold meetings? Or has he forgotten that he is, after all, an official, the chosen, paid, and removable servant of the public? Insidiously the idea that "the Minister knows best" is being put across, and despotism is becoming accepted even before it has been fully recognised.

JOY LORD.

The Editor, *The Black Sash*.

The letter sent by Dr. Verwoerd's secretary to the Southern Transvaal Region re the meeting on the Johannesburg City Hall steps has frightening overtones. When such a man can quite blandly say "no ordinary rights of citizens were therefore at stake" when very definitely the right to freedom of speech has been removed, one is more horribly aware that democracy is not a word in Dr. Verwoerd's vocabulary.

But that he can get away with this sort of behaviour—that in fact so many of the country's voters will happily accept what he says as true, and will blindly believe that no rights were at stake—that is perhaps what is most frightening of all.

WENDY JACKSON.

BOOK REVIEW

"SOUTH AFRICA'S ELEVENTH HOUR"

by Jan Toekoms

TO everyone who has not yet read this little book, one cannot too strongly recommend that they do so without delay. It is a rare example of straight thinking clearly and concisely expressed, and though it was written before the results of the general election were known, I do not think that Jan Toekoms—he wrote "When Malan Goes" under the same pseudonym—would choose to change a word of it, even in view of the accession to power of Dr. Verwoerd.

The first two sections are devoted to examining our present situation, and to the absolute necessity for white unity as a precursor to solving our larger problems. Though one may not agree with everything the author says, this is a remarkably dispassionate account of the reasons for our present disunity, how it has been aggravated by one section or the other and particularly by events since 1948, and how, in the end, this disunity can and must be overcome.

The final section of the book sets forth, with the same directness of approach, the choice before South Africa today—between total apartheid or a multi-racial society. Each is examined with complete sincerity and without prejudice. Here is none of the muddled thinking to which most of us are prone. One feels that one of the author's chief qualities is that rare one—sheer commonsense.

But there is more than commonsense in this book. It is written by a **ware Suid-Afrikaner**—a true patriot of South Africa. And though he has called his book our "Eleventh Hour", he is an optimist. He believes that good sense and good-will must prevail, that we will accept our destiny and build it slowly together to become a nation of prosperous, contented people—White, Brown and Black united under one flag—going forward to a splendid future.

B.H.T.

Expediency—Right Or Wrong?

The Black Sash has been much troubled by Government interference with the Johannesburg City Council.

The Southern Transvaal Region has sent a petition to the Mayor, asking that the City Council hold a public meeting to explain to the citizens of Johannesburg their attitude to recent issues between the Government and the Council.

The attitude of the City Council has caused much controversy—here is a candid expression of opinion by Mr. R. N. Harvey.

IN its latest and most humiliating surrender to the Nationalist Government our City Council has fallen back on the Act of Union as its justification, and claims that the Act imposes a statutory obligation on local authorities to fulfil the demands of the Minister of Native Affairs.

In fact it does no such thing. It indicates that the Governor-General-in-Council is solely responsible for the administration of Native Affairs, and the Governor-General-in-Council is nothing more than the Nationalist Cabinet: indeed it is clear that under the very clause on which they depend, the Council is freed from any obligation whatsoever.

The duty of administering the policy of ethnic grouping, which the Riots Commission said was responsible for the riots, has been accepted; and with it the Council has leaned over backwards to promise that in future it will be the docile, obedient and silent instrument of all Government policy.

It forfeits its own right for all time even to question policy, and quite impertinently attempts to close the mouths of individual Councillors who in future may prove sufficiently independent to take a line of their own. In its reassurances, the Council undertakes that when any Councillor is addressing an African audience it will ensure that he makes no reference to any laws and regulations as being unreasonable; and if he does they will have an official on the spot to correct what he says. Here ends freedom of speech. The extraordinary situation arises that the Council considers it proper to refrain from telling the truth, if its audience is black. I suppose a development like this was an inevitable corollary to the attempt to stop freedom of speech on the City Hall steps. In the light of these developments it is not unjust to say that the Council has played its full part in achieving the semi-police state that brings freedom of speech to an end.

In its complete surrender of democratic principles what had the Council to fear? The excuse is that had the assurances not been given, housing would have ceased, and a potential 6,000 houses would not have been built.

But it is significant that in the Council debate wherein the majority party made its apologia, the stress was laid not on the hardship thus created to

the 6,000 unhoused families, but rather on the hardship to European industry as a result of orders for bricks and mortar, steel doors and windows being cancelled!

How did the Council know whether the residents of Johannesburg, European or Non-European, would prefer to be sold out on precious principles or to go without houses? They did not know because they did not enquire. Despite all their voluble assurances during last year's Municipal elections that they would consult both European and Non-European opinion on all necessary occasions, they made no attempt to consult. They did not even ask the opinion of the Native Advisory Boards, whose function it is to advise them. Indeed their reply to this point is "the interpretation of an Act of Parliament is not a matter for the Native Advisory Boards." They did not approach the African National Congress, the official voice of Non-European opinion. They did not approach the European electorate, either in ward or city meetings. They did not conduct these consultations because they knew all too well that if they had done so the result would have been the reverse of what they wished.

They plead that had they rejected Verwoerd's demands he would have taken over the administration of Non-European affairs in Johannesburg. If he had done so he would have found himself in very serious difficulties, to put it at its lowest; and be it said from the Non-European point of view that their situation would have been no whit worsened thereby, for with the assurances that have been given, Johannesburg has abandoned any attempt to stand up to Verwoerd and will be doing his bidding anyway. Whether under these circumstances administration is by the Council or by the Government makes no difference to the Non-Europeans, so the plea is groundless.

The United Party majority had consultation with and accepted the advice of two national leaders of the party who are not City Councillors. It was inevitable that their advice should have been to surrender. It was inevitable because for years now the policy of these leaders has been based on an attempt to impress the Platteland. It is not the first time that this has happened, and so long as we permit this interference in our affairs by outside politicians so long will it continue.

R. N. HARVEY.

"A Government which depends on force runs the risk of being destroyed by counterforce."

—Sir de Villiers Graaff.



With acknowledgements to Bob Connolly and The Rand Daily Mail.

MAN'S INHUMANITY TO MAN

I AM going to deal with the proposed increase in Taxation for African men and women as it affects the life of the housewife of the townships and her family. Every housewife who budgets on an average income knows that the payment of income tax once a year has a pronounced affect on her weekly or monthly planning. She knows that she has to allow for it when she is planning to spend. It is a problem difficult enough when it comes to cutting down on extras or luxuries. But what do you do when you have no extras or luxuries? Do you cut down on food, or coal, or wood or light? It presents a problem doesn't it? Now go one stage further and think what you would do without if you and your family had only the irreducible minimum of clothes and you had hardly money to buy enough food to keep your husband, your children and yourself from actual starvation. Just suppose for a moment that as well as your husband working you have to work too, that you have three children to feed, that you are keeping your mother who is unable to work but who looks after your children while you are at work, and that your total income is £15 6s. 8d. per month. Now just in case you think that I have suggested something outrageous, let me tell you that at least 48% of families in the Johannesburg townships are living on an income of less than £15 per month. Think of it, nearly half the black people you meet in the street are living on a combined family income of less than £3 10s per week. These are the people who will have to pay £1 15s. tax. Where is it to come from? In order to show what a serious situation they face, I've taken a typical Township family as an example.

Mrs. Miriam Kumalo lives in one of the Western Townships. She has a husband and three children, and she keeps her old mother. She and her husband between them earn £15 6s. 8d. a month. Both husband and wife have to travel to and from Johannesburg and this costs them usually £1 0s. 4d. per month. So, she is left with £14 6s. 4d. on which to keep 6 people. Rent accounts for £2, so Mrs. Kumalo starts budgeting for the month with £12 6s. 4d.

Now, according to various authorities, the minimum diet on which a family of 6 can even live—without starving—costs £15 11s. 1d. a month for food alone. Mrs. Kumalo, as you see, is already over £3 short of the bare minimum.

But food is not the only thing Mrs. Kumalo has to worry about. She has to clothe her family in addition to feeding them, and further, a thing for which everyone of us here may be very, very thankful, like most of her people she wants her family, her house and herself to be clean. So she spends roughly 19/8d. a month on soap and all other cleaning materials. Clothes have occasionally to be bought. She and her husband must try to keep up to the standards required by most employers. They may not be employed if they do not. Given two Africans, one in dirty rags, one clean and fairly

well turned out—which one would you employ? So £2 a month must be set aside for these clothes and their children's clothes too.

There is now some £9 7s. 8d. with which to buy food. This is £6 4s. 3d. short of the barest minimum on which a family of six can exist.

Have you ever tried to work out a budget for 6 people on £9 7s. 8d. a month, or rather, because Mr. X is paid weekly, on £2 3s. 3½d. a week? I did! £2 3s. 3d. will buy 10lbs. of Mealie Meal, 4 pints of Milk, 2 pints of Sour Milk, 4 lbs. Meat, 3 lbs. Sugar, 5 ozs. of Tea (for a week for 6 people), 5 loaves of bread, ¾ of a pound of dripping, 2 lbs. of Mealie Rice, 3 lbs. Samp, 2 lbs. Beans, 6 potatoes, 3 cabbages, 6d. carrots, 6d. soup greens, 6d. onions, a tickey's worth of Salt, 3 tiny Mealies, and perhaps a couple of bananas or an orange or so for the children.

That is the food for a family of six people for a week. Imagine, 3 cabbages for 6 people for a week—it's ridiculous isn't it? But, perhaps not as ridiculous as about ½ lb. of Meat a day for 6, or one potato.

Now they must pay the extra tax. Where is the money coming from? It cannot come from money spent on education, newspapers, odd bus rides, stationery, tobacco, sweets, hobbies, pocket money, or from money that might have been used to replace blankets or furniture, because there never was any. The money for the extra tax must come from food. This is what Professor Gillman of Natal University has to say about African malnutrition:—

“Chronic malnutrition from infancy is eroding the health and vitality of the African people. Mothers are malnourished from infancy. Babies are born underweight, are hyper-susceptible to the many infective diseases so prevalent in their slum environments, and succumb to these so easily and so often.

“60 to 70 per cent. of African school-children are malnourished; 50 per cent. need nursing and medical attention; and almost 10 per cent. require hospitalization for diseases directly or indirectly attributable to malnutrition.

“The African's diet is deficient in calories as well as in vitamins. It is grossly unbalanced, in that his staple food, such as maize, is defective.

“African adults present themselves at hospitals by tens of thousands with chronic diseases. Due directly or indirectly to the consumption of a grossly unsatisfactory diet the average life expectancy of the African in the Union is estimated at 36 years, compared with about 70 years for the European.

“Diet should be constituted of eggs, bread, butter, milk, fish, meat, vegetables and the like, in quantities sufficient to make mealie meal comprise a much smaller part of the total food consumed.”

But we know that far the largest quantity of food bought by Mrs. Kumalo is “the staple food—this defective maize” of which Professor Gillman speaks.

It has to be the largest quantity of food Mrs. Kumalo buys, since it is the cheapest and the most filling.

Mrs. Kumalo's family, as we have seen, lives well below the bread line as it is. They never, never have enough to eat. Mrs. Kumalo may not see quite as clearly as Professor Gillman does, that even living as they are at the moment, her husband is doomed to die young, that her children are already suffering from malnutrition, and that one or more of them must inevitably die within quite a short time. She knows that the children are often very sick, that one or other of them almost always seems to be in bed. She knows that her husband is tired and listless when he's at home, that he seems to think slowly and wanders aimlessly about the place. She knows that what happens in her home is no different from conditions in the homes of her neighbours—as for dying, lots of people die all the time, old people and

young people and, of course, babies and children die every day. She doesn't use the words Professor Gillman uses, but she knows exactly what her £9 7s. 8d. will buy—that was our budget: £2 3s. 3d. a week—£9 7s. 8d. a month.

What is Mrs. Kumalo to do the month the £1 15s. tax is due? Is she to look from her mother to her husband and then from child to child and decide which one she'll starve in order that the others might combine to exist for a time? Or shall we suggest to her that she lets the whole family go much, much hungrier that month, so that they all die inevitably a little earlier?

What is Mrs. Kumalo going to do the month she has to feed 6 people on £7 12s. 8d.? How would you plan that budget?

MARY WALKER.

MEN WHO HAVE "SYSTEMS"

The following is from a leading article in the East London Daily Despatch:—

All South Africans must reflect deeply on the implications of a recent utterance of our Prime Minister and refuse to be misled by his facile thinking. He tells us that God decides about the future of nations, and who their leaders should be. God had a purpose, Dr. Verwoerd said at Pretoria, when He decided to bring the Europeans to the south of Africa. This shoddy thinking must receive attention because of the status of the man who expressed it. He really believes it. That is the trouble which is going to issue in much more trouble. But let us notice, first of all, how stupid it is. If God decided to bring Europeans here, who decided on the trek of the Bantu to the south? Who decided, if God decides who shall be national leaders, on Hitler's rise to power? Who decided that Russia should be handed over to Communism, and who decided that nations in Central Europe should be raped and pillaged?

“. . . Western Christianity is going to see eventually what God's purpose for South Africa is,” says Dr. Verwoerd. Meanwhile, he is not going to tell us what it is. That is a secret. It looks as if it is hidden from all except God and our Prime Minister.

Dr. Verwoerd says there are people who are making fun of his religious beliefs. Is there anybody who really does that? The matter is not one for fun. There is no cause for laughter. Our plight is horribly serious. We are all in great danger because the Prime Minister believes that what God allows to happen is in accordance with the Divine Will. This means that Dr. Verwoerd imagines himself as wielding immense power. If there is nothing that stops him from pressing his belief to a logical conclusion, this power will be used against all those who dare to disagree with him.

There are those who say: It can't happen here. The only reply to that is to ask, Why not? There have been some rude awakenings in some other lands, some of them more enlightened than this. No greater danger can exist than that which comes from a refusal to see the growth and development of absolute power springing from a deeply rooted religious conviction. And make no mistake, Dr. Verwoerd's convictions are deep-seated. One day it will be too late. If that day comes the jack-boots will be stamping out the pattern of our lounge carpets and Government officials, with forms and files, will be telling us what we must eat for breakfast, if there is any breakfast in those days for those who rebel against interference in their domestic affairs. When that day comes, we shall be told to thank God for it and to hail the man who fulfilled God's plans as the one who knows, because God has told him what is good for us.”

* * *

The following is a description of life in another small, isolated republic governed by a clear-thinking man, and a great organiser, who, “with perfect sincerity and imperturbable conviction, announced ‘I have from God what I teach, and herein my conscience fortifies me.’” He was a “foreigner” who became a dictator in Geneva quite simply because its carefree and pleasure-loving people, newly free from Catholicism, didn't know what to do next, and needed to be organised.

Set beside the above editorial, this description of life under Calvin makes interesting reading. (It is taken from Zweig's “Right to Heresy.”):—

“Once a month, rich and poor, the powerful and the weak, had to submit to the questioning of these professional ‘police des Moeurs.’ For hours (since the ordinances declared that such examination must be done in leisurely fashion), white-haired, respectable, tried, and hitherto trusted men, must be

examined like schoolboys as to whether they knew the prayers by heart, or as to why they had failed to attend one of Master's Calvin's sermons. But with such catechising and moralising the visitation was by on means at an end. The members of this moral Cheka thrust fingers into every pie. They felt the women's dresses to see whether their skirts were not too long or too short, whether these garments had superfluous frills or dangerous slits. The police carefully inspected the coiffure, to see that it did not tower too high; they counted the rings of the victim's fingers and looked to see how many pairs of shoes there were in the cupboard. From the bedroom they passed on to the kitchen table, to ascertain whether the prescribed diet was not being exceeded by a soup or a course of meat, or whether sweets and jams were hidden away somewhere. Then the pious policeman would continue his examination of the rest of the house. He pried into bookshelves, on the chance of there being a book devoid of the Consistory's imprimatur; he looked into drawers on the chance of finding the image of one of the saints, or a rosary. The servants were asked about the behaviour of their masters, and the children were cross-questioned as to the doings of their parents.

As he walked along the street, this minion of the Calvinist dictatorship would keep his ears pricked to ascertain whether any one was singing a secular song, or was making music, or was addicted to the diabolic vice of cheerfulness. For henceforward in Geneva the authorities were always on the hunt for anything that smacked of pleasure, for any "paillardise" and woe unto a burgher caught visiting a tavern when the day's work was over to refresh himself with a glass of wine, or unto another who was so depraved as to find pleasure in dice or cards. Day after day the hunt went on, nor could the over-worked spies enjoy rest on the Sabbath. Once more they would make a house-to-house visitation where some slothful wretch was lying in bed instead of seeking edification from Master Calvin's sermon. In the church another informer was on the watch, ready to denounce any one who should enter the house of God too late or leave it too early. These official guardians of morality were at work everywhere indefatigably. When night fell, they pried among the bushes beside the Rhone, to see if a sinful pair might be indulging in caresses; while in the inns they scrutinised the beds, and ransacked the baggage of strangers. They opened every letter which entered or left the city; and the carefully organised watchfulness of the Consistory extended far beyond the walls of the city. . . . Any word of discontent uttered by a Genevese citizen who might be visiting Lyons or Paris, would infallibly be reported. . . .

Who could feel safe under such a system, could be sure that he was not breaking one of the commandments, since Calvin forbade practically every thing which might have made life joyful and worth while? Prohibited were theatres, amusements, popular festivals, any kind of dancing or playing. Even so innocent a sport as skating stirred Calvin's bile. . . .

An organised reign of terror never fails to work miracles; and when his authority was challenged,

Calvin did not hesitate to work this miracle again and again. . . . During the first five years of Calvin's rule, in this town which had a comparatively small population, thirteen persons were hanged, ten decapitated, five-and-thirty burned, while seventy-six persons were driven from their houses and homes—to say nothing of those who ran away in time to avoid the operations of the terror. . . . So horrible was the martyrdom not only of condemned persons but also of suspects, that the accused laid violent hands upon themselves rather than enter the torture chambers. . . .

Being, as he (Calvin) himself openly admitted, unable to endure the sight of cruelty, he never attended one of the executions and burnings which were so frequent in Geneva during the days of his rule. But herein lies the gravest fault of fervent ideologists. Men of this type, who (once more like Robespierre) would never have the pluck to witness an execution, and still less to carry it out with their own hands, will heedlessly order hundreds or thousands of death sentences as soon as they feel themselves covered by their "Idea," their theory, their system."

—J.W.

Gems From Hansard

Capt. G. H. F. STRYDOM: I am a moderate man. Do you know what I have against the Minister of Native Affairs? What I have against him is that he is too moderate. That is his trouble. He is obeying the instructions of the National Party and he is too moderate. He is too considerate of his opponents. My experience is that when one deals with an enemy one must hit and hit hard; one must destroy the enemy. He is much too moderate. He should take no notice of all the things you say here every day. The great cause must go on and it will go on.

—(Hansard 7, 1958, pp. 2,479).

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MR. VISSE: Mr. Speaker, in South Africa we have often heard that rugby and politics are the religion of the Afrikaner. In the political sphere the Afrikaner struggled for years before reaching his present position. South Africa was the uncrowned king of the rugby world. We have gradually lost ground in that sphere. Why? Because we have always retained older men in our teams. Tomorrow we are playing in a second test at Johannesburg.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must get away from rugby and come back to the Bill.

MR. VISSE: I would like to compare rugby with politics. I want to refer to the infusion of new blood which the granting of the vote to the 18 to 20-year-olds will give our politics. It will revitalize the political religion of South Africa. I want to compare it with our rugby religion. . . .

—(Hansard 6, pp. 2211-2).

REGIONAL AND BRANCH REPORTS

EASTERN CAPE

From Port Elizabeth, Mrs. Diana Davis writes:—

We have had a couple of meetings in the country and in our own towns, and the branches have met and they are one and all, those members that remain, convinced that we are now on the right track. They all love the magazine and we still sell it in the shopping areas and try and encourage new subscribers.

We have formed a newsletter sub-committee with the hopes of promoting sales, making distribution easier and also collecting more articles and letters.

The Sashing of Ministers appealed to some members greatly but the vigils have always been gruelling and sometimes a physical impossibility. We have no doubt that we will protest again often, but will not waste too much of our energies on too many too small demonstrations.

All the country branches have discussion groups on the go, Knysna, Grahamstown, Addo and Salem definitely do. At some of them they arrange for speakers and at others they discuss literature such as is sent to them, getting a grasp of new laws and situations as they arise and fairly educating themselves before rushing out to tell others.

We are to be given a talk at our Council meeting by the secretary of the Distressed Areas Committee, which is not a charity but is trying to uplift all those from the distressed areas with libraries, socials, ways of cooking and housekeeping cheaply and combating the terribly low wages that most of them receive. We as members will then see where we can play our part.

The Regional Council sent a long letter to the City Council protesting against the new laws for the New Brighton location which we felt were thoughtlessly harsh, undemocratic and unsettling. The press gave us good space over that.

Where possible we expose injustices and discrimination in letters to the press, making quite sure that our facts are correct.

CAPE WESTERN

Various approaches have been made to Nationalist M.P.'s requesting them to talk on the 18-year-old vote. Three such meetings were arranged, but one fell through due to Mr. Strijdom's death. It is felt that these meetings provide an excellent opportunity for asking questions and then putting the Black Sash point of view. Early in August, Professor Olivier of SABRA addressed a drawing-room meeting of members, and the subsequent question time was most revealing. We feel that these contacts with Nationalists on a friendly basis are most worthwhile. Nationalist M.P.'s were also approached over the ban precluding more than 10 Africans from attending meetings.

A public meeting was held in the Banqueting Hall on 11th August, 1958 on the Increased African Taxation. It was addressed by Dr. O. D. Wolheim and Mr. T. Ngwenya. It was planned to have a mass demonstration around the Houses of Parliament when the second reading of the relevant bill is being debated.

We are planning a Public Symposium on the New University Apartheid Bill and the findings of the Commission and had planned a mass demonstration at the Second Reading of the Bill, but this falls away as the Bill has now been withdrawn for this Session. Branches are arranging to have University students (who have volunteered to do this) to speak at their meetings next month to explain the new Bill and the findings of the Commission.

A roster of members regularly attend the courts at Langa and our bail fund is now in operation.

Drawing-room meetings have been arranged, to which members are asked to bring non-member friends with a view to renewing interest amongst our members and expanding.

At the last Regional Conference, a resolution was passed recommending that every member of the Black Sash, as an individual, should try, amongst her own circle, to improve relations between English- and Afrikaans-speaking South Africans, particularly amongst the young people. For example, competition between English- and Afrikaans-speaking schools should be encouraged in the sportsfield, the debating hall and every other possible sphere; and that we should all try to foster the wider speaking of Afrikaans amongst English-speaking people, especially the youth.

NATAL MIDLANDS

Natal Midlands are planning a Day School on Constitutions in September. Their plans for practical work among people who suffer from immoral legislation include the establishment of a legal aid society, regular attendance at sessions of the Children's and Magistrates' Courts, and work with established welfare societies in relevant projects.

Candid Comments

“ . . . the establishment of the so-called Bantu authorities, another of the Nationalist Party's great frauds, which is being more and more revealed as such, a system which pulled up by the roots the whole democratic process which had been developing in the reserves for over 50 years. It is not a restoration of Bantu tribal authorities but the establishment of Ministerial authority. The Bantu authorities are a very thinly disguised facade for the authority of the Minister of Native Affairs . . . The traditional authorities are the chiefs but they can only be chiefs whilst they agree with the Minister.”

—(Mrs. Ballinger, Hans. 1, pp. 69/70).

It Can Happen Here

AT a large Black Sash tea-party given at Mrs. Sinclair's house by the Southern Transvaal Region, Mrs. Muriel Fisher spoke on her depressing week behind the Iron Curtain in Czechoslovakia. She thought it would be a good idea for the Special Branch to attend the meeting, feeling that, during her talk, they might just notice certain similarities between Communist methods and those of some other government. She invited them to attend the meeting—they accepted and joined in the amicable tea-party atmosphere, and, at Mrs. Fisher's suggestion, took down her speech in shorthand.

The three gentlemen were visibly horrified when Mrs. Fisher described the atmosphere of terror in which the citizens of Prague exist, where people prod the seats for microphones in little restaurants, when taking tea or drinks with friends. Uneasy glances over one's shoulder are a commonplace, visits to private flats (there are few houses left) are noted by concierges, your friends ask you to meet them in unfrequented parks, rather than in busy streets or hotels, and, so said Mrs. Fisher, she and her husband, when taken on a shopping expedition by Czech friends, were shadowed from shop to shop.

Mrs. Fisher pointed out, too, that never was one Czech allowed to be with "foreigners". Always there

had to be two, just as there are always two Special Branch gentlemen at Black Sash public meetings. One might, you see, be corrupted.

She asked Czech friends, very quietly, of course, how they had allowed a small Communist minority to bring a once free nation of seven million people to this state of abject, quivering fear. The answer was: "Apathy! When we threw off the German yoke, we thought we had plenty of time to get a democratic government going. But while we played around with party politics, the Communists were organised, awaiting their opportunity, and overnight they seized power."

Thus was a free nation turned into a police state and a whole country into a concentration camp, which only a favoured few may leave, and then only by leaving wives and children behind as hostages.

The Special Branch were not amused when Mrs. Fisher pointed out that Communism and Fascism are only different names for the same state of affairs—a nation shorn of its liberties, enslaved by the few, because of their own apathy and lack of vigilance. It happened in Czechoslovakia, and it is happening here.

It is good to know that our Special Branch have Mrs. Fisher's warning on record—and we congratulate her on a step forward in our educational programme!

REGIONAL CHAIRS AND SECRETARIES

BORDER.

- C. Mrs. D. Curry, 3 Carisbrooke Road, Stirling Ext., East London.
- S. Mrs. M. G. Pollock, 106 Devereux Avenue, Vincent, East London.

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- C. Mrs. A. Pirie, 68 Westview Drive, Port Elizabeth.
- S. Mrs. D. Davis, 196 Main Road, Walmer, Port Elizabeth.

CAPE MIDLANDS.

- C. Mrs. Conroy, Watergift, Box 53, Beaufort West.
- S. Miss Conroy, Watergift, Box 53, Beaufort West.

CAPE NORTHERN.

- Chair: Mrs. M. Owens, 7 Howie Road, West End, Kimberley.
- S. Mrs. B. Buck, 3 Poole Street, Kimberley.

CAPE WESTERN.

- C. Mrs. M. Petersen, Beacon House, Klaassens Road, Wynberg, Cape.
- Acting S. Mrs. M. Hendersen, 1 Kildare Road, Claremont, Cape Town.

LOWVELD.

- C. Mrs. Sandenbergh, Eastry, Plaston, Tvl.
- S. Mrs. B. Tracey, Pleasant Hill, Box 17, White River.

NATAL COASTAL REGION.

- C. Mrs. M. Scott, 16 Chelmsford Road, Durban
- S. Mrs. J. F. Hill, 27 Meyrich Avenue, Durban.

NATAL MIDLANDS.

- C. Mrs. M. Corrigan, 306 Alexandra Road, Pietermaritzburg.
- S. Miss D. Anderson, Box 293, Pietermaritzburg.

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- C. Mrs. A. Findlay, 296 Mears Street, Pretoria.
- S. Mrs. J. C. Brink, 1,082 Pretorius Street, Hatfield, Pretoria.

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- C. Mrs. H. O'Connor, P.O. Box 245, Bloemfontein.
- S. Mrs. R. Kruger, 4 Van Heyningen Street, Bloemfontein.

SOUTH-EASTERN TRANSVAAL.

- C. Mrs. M. Fourie, Box 222, Springs.
- S. Mrs. E. Gouldie, Marievale Mine, P.O. Marie shaft, Transvaal.

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- C. Mrs. V. Sinclair, 11 The Valley Road, Westcliff, Johannesburg.
- S. Mrs. D. Grant, 21 Victoria Avenue, Sandringham, Johannesburg.