

*Miss. What must done?*

Estella House,  
47a Main Road,  
CLAREMONT. CAPE.

CIRCULAR NO: 10.

20th April 1959.

TO : REGIONS.

BLACK SASH MOVEMENT IN RHODESIA.

Natal Coastal have produced the following excellent statement, and it is being sent to you to use if you feel it necessary.

" Misunderstandings appear to have arisen in the public mind over the use by women overseas of the Black Sash symbol. The South African Black Sash movement is a purely South African movement, membership of which is open only to women on the South African parliamentary voters roll. The Black Sash movement confines its protests to matters within South Africa. The fact that others in countries beyond our borders from time to time adopt our emblem in order to express their own moral indignation at actions which they believe to be unjust or undemocratic, is a tribute to the fact that the Black Sash movement has always based its stand on moral principles. However, it should be clearly understood that the South African Black Sash is in no way associated with any protest movements or demonstrations outside the borders of South Africa. "

LETTER TO MR. SWART.

The following is the letter which has been delivered to Mr. Swart, for your information.

" The Hon. Minister C.R. Swart,  
Minister of Justice,  
Mark's Buildings,  
75 Parliament Street,  
CAPE TOWN.

Dear Mr. Swart,

The Black Sash welcomes the steps you intend taking to stop the police from summarily arresting persons who are guilty of offences for which the fine is likely to be less than £15 for we hope that the result will be that Africans will cease to be arrested for "pass law" offences, and that some of the hardships which stem from the application of these laws will be alleviated.

It is our opinion that the many arrests which have been taking place as a result of offences against the pass laws have tended to breed contempt for the law among many thousands of otherwise law-abiding Africans and we hope that the new measures will result in a change of this attitude.

Since the police will, however, still have the power to arrest Africans if they fail to produce their "papers" on demand we would plead that instructions be given to the Police not to make such arrests but to require that the person concerned produce such papers within seven days as is done in the case of Identity Cards under the Population Registration Act 1950.

We know that the existing laws cannot be applied without great hardship and evidence to this effect has been given from time to time to the Chief Native Commissioner for the Cape.

We believe that the application of this Act, particularly as applied to women, is the greatest single factor causing bitterness, unrest and demoralisation amongst the Africans in this country. It is our sincere hope that this move on the part of the Government is an indication/.....

indication that they are aware of the need at least to modify the administration of these laws.

Yours sincerely,

HON. PRESIDENT.