

CIRCULAR NO. 33.

TO ALL REGIONS.

ESTELLA HOUSE,
47a, Main Road,
CLAREMONT, Cape.

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The Black Sash welcomes the Government's decision to test support for a Republic by means of a Referendum. Nevertheless, they consider the Government's intention to accept a simple, possibly a chance majority, as unwise and wrong.

They also consider that it is completely undemocratic to exclude non-Whites (whose homeland this is and who will be expected to give allegiance to the Republican State) from participating in the Referendum) Although non-Whites might welcome a Republic if it accorded them equality of opportunity with Whites, it is hardly to be expected that they will feel any loyalty to a Republic about which they have not been consulted, and under which they will have no effective political say.

It has been stated that the important issue of whether or not South Africa should remain in the Commonwealth is to be decided by a majority vote in Parliament. But in the opinion of the Black Sash, this matter should also be decided by a Referendum of all South African citizens. It must be remembered that the Nationalist majority in Parliament does not represent the majority of the electorate, and that the electorate itself does not represent all the people of South Africa.

The Black Sash hopes that the Government will not nullify the value of holding a Referendum by ignoring the abovementioned points. A Republic forced on the citizens of South Africa by a minority of the people or even by a bare majority of the White Electorate, could only create further disharmony in this land where race relations are already so dangerously strained.

(sgd.) M.C. PETERSEN.