

CIRCULAR NO. 51.

TO ALL REGIONS.

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

26th September, 1960.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE.

Will all Regions please note that the Conference will be held IN CAPE TOWN, NOT DURBAN; The date of the Conference will be Monday 31st October to Thursday 3rd November, 1960, inclusive. Will Regions please notify the C.E. as early as possible what accommodation they would like provided for delegates from their Region.

The C.E. wish to draw the attention of Regions to the fact that at the last Conference it was the express desire of ~~many~~ Regions that four days should be devoted to National Conference resolutions, in order to ensure adequate discussion for all resolutions etc. In the circumstances, the C.E. decided to allow four days for this Conference. It is evident from the resolutions -- the closing date for which was September 16th -- that have come in, that in fact, three days will be quite adequate <sup>to allow</sup> for full discussions. Therefore, although the Conference has planned to last from Monday 31st October to Thursday 3rd November, inclusive, it is considered unlikely that the Thursday will be used for Conference matters. The C.E. will endeavour to arrange some kind of interesting tour or meetings for that Thursday, so that those who have in any case to be in Cape Town, will find their time well-spent.

ANNUAL REPORTS:

Regions are reminded that their annual reports should be sent in in time for the C.E. to roneo and forward them out again to other Regions before the Conference. Please send your regional reports AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. It is suggested that it might be useful if Regions included reference to the following subjects when writing their reports:-

- Number of members.
- Number of branches.
- Financial position.
- Magazine.
- National Statements.
- Demonstrations :- (a) Local (b) National.
- Educational Lectures or Brains Trusts.
- Active Work:- e.g. on Farm Labour, Pass Laws, Group Areas, C.N.E. etc.
- Long-playing Records.
- Propoganda Material.
- Methods used to keep all branches in touch with Regional Activities.
- Union Day 1960 in your Region.

SPECIAL MEETING:

On the first night of the Conference there will be a special meeting to discuss current trends of thought and possible political developments. It is hoped to have at least three speakers covering Nationalist, non-Nationalist and non-White opinions.

MAGAZINE:

Will Regions please let us have any comments on the Education Issue in the form of Regional Reports. Will Regions also please let us have press cuttings from the various newspapers for reviews or write-ups given to "Education for Isolation".



MAGAZINE (Continued).

The new printers sent the Education magazines carriage forward because they say it ensures despatch and delivery more quickly and more safely.

Will Regions please render their accounts to the National Treasurer and refunds will be made. This should be done immediately in order that the cost of the Education issue can be correctly assessed.

(Signed) M.C. PETERSEN.  
NATIONAL PRESIDENT.



C.E. REPORT NO. 9: C.E. MEETINGS HELD ON 4TH, 10TH, 18TH AND 24TH AUGUST 1960, AT ESTELLA HOUSE AND WITH CAPE WESTERN F GION ACTION COMMITTEE AT 1 KILDARE ROAD, CLAREMONT.

1. HELP FOR DETAINEES: The Red Cross received a donation of £5000 from De Beers, so were able to help the families longer than anticipated. The Sash was still pressing to get Government assistance for the different categories of people affected by the Emergency, among whom were the families of convicted persons.
2. CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE: The Minister referred our letter asking him to inform families of detainees of their whereabouts to the Commissioner of Prisons. (All enclosed). It was agreed that in view of this reply, we should write a letter to the Director of Prisons stating that in our view it should be the State's responsibility to inform next-of-kin of the whereabouts of prisoners. Our letter concerning the clemency shown to the Sekhukhuniland convicted has been sent to the Minister and we are awaiting his reply before publishing it. (Letter is enclosed).  
CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE PRIME MINISTER: Copies of the correspondence between the S.Tvl. Region and the Prime Minister are enclosed. The C.E. has asked S.Tvl. not to send copies of this to the press, or to the other Cabinet Ministers. The C.E. letter to the Prime Minister has been sent. (Letter enclosed).
3. S.A.B.C. PROTEST: In answer to our appeal to Regions to protest against the slanting of news from the S.A.B.C., Southern Transvaal Region replied that they had already sent the enclosed letter to the S.A.B.C. The C.E. has suggested that in future when any Region writes to a Government Department or Government body, it should not be indicated that publication of the correspondence is intended, as this jeopardizes the possibility of receiving a considered reply.
5. LETTERS TO THE PRESS: Letters on the Reference books for African Women, Freedom of the Press, and Violence, have already been sent round to Regions.  
BRAINS TRUST AT MOORREESBURG: Mrs. Stott has organised a Brains Trust on Constitutional Reform to be held in this stronghold of Nationalism on September 9th. The "Brains" will be Mr. Colin Eglin (Progressive), Mr. Japie Basson (National Union); Advocate Burger (Nationalist); and Mr. L. Marquard (Liberal); with Mr. Hennes Fagan as question master. The United Party said they were not able to comply with the request to provide a speaker.
7. PROFESSOR MATTHEWS: Mrs. Curry has informed us that Professor Matthews is again in good health, and the C.E. was glad to see in the Press that he has now been released.
8. GROUP AREAS: The film on Group Areas which is being made for us has been sent to England for processing. The attention of all Regions is drawn to the fact that there is much which can be done in the matter of Group Areas, particularly in those districts and towns where they have not yet been proclaimed.
9. PASSES FOR AFRICAN WOMEN: It was agreed that we should try to bring pressure to bear upon the Government to have the proclamation re reference books withdrawn. It is suggested that influential individuals and organisations be asked to bring pressure to bear on the Minister to this effect. Both Nationalists and non-Nationalists should be approached. It is hoped to have a number of meetings, both drawing-room and public but to wait till the referendum is over before attempting to organise them.



Enclosure No.1 to C.E. Report No. 9.

(Our letter to the Minister of Justice dated 3/8/60 was sent with C.E. Report No. 8).

Letter from Acting Commissioner of Prisons, Pretoria, dated 15/8/60, reads :-

Madam,

In referring to your letter of the 3rd instant addressed to the Honourable the Minister of Justice, I wish to inform you that all persons detained in terms of regulations 4 and 19 of the Emergency Regulations are permitted to write and receive two letters per month and it would appear, therefore, that no difficulties should be experienced in respect of such detainees.

2. The Prisons Act and Regulations are applicable to persons committed to prisons in terms of regulation 4 (bis) of the Emergency Regulations and as such they are allowed and encouraged to advise their relatives of their whereabouts.

3. Commanding Officers have nevertheless been requested to ensure, as far as possible, that all detainees advise their nearest of kin of their whereabouts.

(Signed) J.C. STEYN.

Acting COMMISSIONER OF PRISONS.

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Enclosure No. 2. Our letter to Secretary for Justice dated 29/8/60, and our proposed statement to newspapers.

Sir,

With reference to your request for a copy of the statement we intend publishing, we submit the following which will be in the form of a letter to the Editor of various newspapers, both English and Afrikaans, throughout the country.

" Dear Sir,

The Black Sash would like to express, through your columns, its appreciation of the clemency shown by his Excellency, the Governor-General, in commuting the sentence of death imposed on Makopole John Kgolane and thirteen others in the Sekhukhuni Case and in the cases of Sepeke Ratau and Pelane Matjie.

The Black Sash joined with the Institute of Race Relations in asking the Governor-General to extend clemency to these people, because it believed that consultation with those cognisant of the whole background of events would indicate that mercy should be extended. "

NOTE: Previous correspondence with Secretary for Justice and his reply were attached to C.E. Report No. 7, circularised to all Regions.)

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Enclosure No. 3. Letter by S. Transvaal Region to The Prime Minister,  
dated 22nd June, 1960.

" Sir,

The members of the Southern Transvaal Region of the Black Sash are deeply concerned about the situation in South Africa, and the loss of South Africa's good name abroad.

Numerous sections of the population have appealed to you for a change in policy on economic and other grounds. We wish to appeal to you on moral grounds.

Good government, by western standards, means government by consent, not government by force. It means the acceptance of the rule of law. It means that those who make laws and those who administer them must recognise that justice is for all persons, irrespective of race, colour or creed. Good government means the recognition of the fact that the Christian view of man is not compatible with policies which deny the legitimate aspirations of individuals or groups, for the selfish purposes of one section of the population.

The enforcement of apartheid in a country already economically integrated must mean that justice will be perverted and peace destroyed.

It is not yet too late for South Africa to adopt policies which will bring peace and prosperity to all her peoples. We look to you to bring about the changes in policy that will restore South Africa's good name, and establish the conditions for peaceful progress.

It is not too late to consult with all races in order to arrive at a just and fair solution based on the best traditions of the West.

On your shoulders rests this grave responsibility.

(Signed) Mrs. Jean Sinclair.  
Regional Chairman.

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Enclosure No. 4.

Letter to the Prime Minister from the C.E. dated 12th September, 1960.

" Sir,

We wish to draw your attention to the fact that we wrote to you on the 28th September 1959, asking for specific information concerning the Government's reasons for wishing to introduce centralized education.

On October 5th 1959, we received a reply from you which not only failed to reply to any of the points raised by us, but which made a number of entirely unfounded allegations concerning the Black Sash.

On January 15th 1960, we replied to your letter of the 5th October, pointing out that none of the pronouncements made by you and reported in the press gave clear answers to some of the points raised in our letter of 28th September, and reiterating our desire for clarification on these points. We also pointed out how unfounded were the allegations concerning the Black Sash, which were made in your letter to us of October 5th.

Realising that your long illness would make it difficult for you to keep abreast of affairs, we wrote to the Minister of Education for the information we sought, but we have had no reply to that letter.

As it was our earnest desire to be objective, we were most anxious to have a reply and submit that it is the duty of the Prime Minister to provide information concerning government policy when requested by an association consisting of a large number of voters. You will appreciate that in the absence of any reply we have had to draw our own conclusions, based on such facts as are available.



Enclosure No. 5. S.Tvl. Region's letter to Chairman S.A.B.C. 11th May 1960.

Sir,

The Black Sash in the Southern Transvaal is alarmed at the party political bias of the programme "The South African Scene". This was particularly noticeable on Monday 9th May, but has been only too apparent on several previous occasions. We understand that it is laid down in the policy of the Broadcasting Corporation that no programmes evincing party political bias may be broadcast, except at the time of an election when leaders of all parties may put their point of view.

It is essential that our broadcasting should remain above reproach in this respect, and if such bias is shown in certain programmes the suspicion will be aroused that the news service is not unbiassed.

We ask you, as Chairman of the Board, to enquire into this matter, and ensure that in future such biased programmes are not put on the air.

A copy of this letter is being sent to the Press.

(Signed) Jean Sinclair.  
Regional Chairman.

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Enclosure No. 6. Letter from Chairman of S.A.B.C., Johannesburg. 3rd June 1960.

Madam,

I have for acknowledgment your letter of the 11th May, 1960.

The delay in replying only now is regretted, although in view of the penultimate paragraph of your letter I am not quite clear whether you expect a reply from me.

In any event may I reassure you that the aim and object of the Corporation and its policy are constantly as stated by you that no programme evincing party political bias shall be broadcast.

(Signed) P.J. Meyer.  
Chairman Board of Governors.

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Enclosure 7. Letter from Acting Regional Chairman, S.Tvl. Region to S.A.B.C.  
Dated 17/6/60.

Sir,

Thank you for your letter of the 3rd June, in reply to our letter of 11th May.

We note your assurance that it is not the policy of the S.A.B.C. to broadcast programmes which evince party-political bias. In view of your assurance we would like to draw your attention to a further edition of the programme "The South African Scene", in which such party-political bias was again distinctly shown on Friday 10th June. This programme has aroused considerable indignation in the listening public on account of its political bias, and in view of your assurance we hope it will be discontinued in its present form.

Copies of your letter to us, and of this letter, are being sent to the Press.

(Signed) Nell Green  
Acting Regional Chairman.



MRS. STOTT'S BORDER TOUR:

(August 8th to August 12th)

It was with great pleasure that I visited Border Region. I found that the newspapers gave very good publicity to any Sash activities in that area and this obviously helps to keep the name of the Black Sash before the public.

The first meeting in the Region was a public meeting on Pass Laws in East London, attended by about 90 people. I dealt with "How Pass Laws cause hardship" and Mr. Molteno dealt with "The Purposes and Effect of the Pass Law System.", and showed that the objects which Pass Laws are supposed to achieve can be more satisfactorily achieved in some other way.

This meeting was tape recorded and is available on a long-playing record for those who want it.

The next day I did a visit to Kei Road where I talked to the members on the need for the Black Sash and also why the existing Pass Laws need to be repealed. That night I spoke to a public meeting of about 40 people at Stutterheim on Pass Laws. Here, as at East London, I had a special contingent of the Security Branch in attendance, as well as the Dutch Reformed Church Minister. I dealt with both how Pass Laws cause hardship and why we did not need them at all.

From Stutterheim, I went to Queenstown where I had a meeting with the committee of the Queenstown Branch. It was obvious to me that in the Queenstown branch there is some doubt as to the real need for a Black Sash branch. The members I met seemed divided in their approach. Some are keen U.P. supporters and some now keen Progressives and since the branch appears not to be particularly active on Sash business, it is not surprising that they are not enthusiastic about remaining a separate branch. It seems a great pity as I believe that there is a great need for actual Sash work to be done in that area.

- (a) All country districts need public meetings at which they are informed of the facts of Government legislation, particularly as applied in the main towns.
- (b) The application of the Pass Laws in the big urban areas is resulting in a large number of people being sent back to Queenstown and its surrounding districts and I am sure therefore, that local investigations would uncover some of the problems that African women are encountering.
- (c) The poverty in the Ciskei and Transkei as a result of wages which often do not exceed £2 a month, is largely responsible for the stagnation of business in the East London area.

Professor Hobart Houghton undertook a survey in the Border Region to discover what lay at the root of the stagnation in the King Williamstown and East London areas - and the country within a radius of 150 miles thereof. This clearly indicates that the poverty of the inhabitants chiefly is responsible. I have suggested that Mrs. Curry try to arrange a Brains Trust on the contents of the publication which is commonly referred to as the Border Survey, and the same thing could be done with advantage in Queenstown and other areas.

At the Queenstown meeting, the men in charge of the Native Affairs Dept., and of the Municipal Native Affairs, were present and asked some useful questions and gave me some valuable information about conditions in their area. There were only about 30 people at the Queenstown meeting. This may have been due to the fact that the invitations sent out for the meeting were sent out in open envelopes without any indication as to where they come from and that no display advertisement appeared in the press to advertise the meeting. Even two of my

friends/.....



friends in the town were not aware that the meeting was taking place.

From Queenstown I was taken to Idutwya for the last public meeting of my trip. This meeting was the perfect example of what the enthusiasm and personal contact of a single member can do. The meeting was well-attended by at least 45 people. I was particularly asked by Mrs. Jackson to start the meeting by talking for a few minutes about the Black Sash and what it does. It was an excellent suggestion and I was extremely sorry that I had not thought to do the same thing at the other meetings which I had addressed and it was obvious at question time that the audience were extremely interested in what the Sash was doing. Present at this meeting were approximately six people whom I was told were Nationalists and from whom I got a very interested hearing.

I am amazed at the amount of work done by the small East London group in assisting detainees, etc., over the past few months. It is astonishing what can be done with only one or two enthusiastic self-sacrificing people.

Mrs. Curry's task has not been made easier recently the fact that she has had no secretary for several months. In consequence some branches were not in touch with what was happening and in order to make things easier for Mrs. Curry, I suggested to her that if she could not find an efficient voluntary secretary, forthwith, that she should engage somebody for a day a week to do secretarial work for the Sash, for which the C.E. would be willing to pay a £1 per day up to a maximum of £4 or £5 per month.

Another reason for some branches not being in closer touch with Regional Headquarters is the fact that they are unable for various reasons to attend the monthly meetings of the Regional Executive. I was reminded again how much these meetings, when attended by all branches, are the life-blood of the movement and how when branches are unable to attend regularly, they begin to be like arms and legs from which the blood supply is cut off.

My other impression on each occasion when I have returned from a regional tour is what a wonderful thing the Sash movement is because in every area it has attracted women who must undoubtedly be among the finest women in South Africa.

I sincerely hope that as many as possible from these branches will be able to attend the National Conference as observers, even if not as delegates.