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THE BLACK SASH. DIE SWART SERP.

CIRCULAR 62.

4, Oakdale,
Main Street,
Newlands. C.P.

To All Regions:

June, 1961.

We have sent you or send you herewith the following:-

1. Black Sash memorandum on the Bill for the Establishment of an Educational Advisory Council.
2. Headquarters Regional Report for May, 1961 with attachments one of which is
3. Memorandum on Interview with Dr. De Wet Nel of the Bantu Administration Department and a letter in this connection referred to in the Headquarters Regional Report for the month of May.
4. Magazine; Postage on.

As our magazine is now published quarterly we are debarred from continuing to be registered at the G.P.O. as a "newspaper" because one of the provisions is that for registration as a newspaper, a periodical must be published at least monthly.

Withdrawal of the registration will mean that subsequent consignments of "The Black Sash" magazine will be accepted at the tariff applicable to printed matter, which is exactly double the rate paid on newspapers.

5. Next National Conference.

The attention of Regions is drawn to the fact that the next National Conference is due to be held in November 1961 at East London. We suggest the week commencing 6th November as Cape Western has its annual fete scheduled for Saturday 4th November. We would like to know from Regions how many days they think the Conference should last and on which day in the week they think it should commence. When suggesting days, Regions are asked to take into consideration the times of train, boat and plane arrivals and departures.

6. National Conference Resolutions.

These must be submitted to Headquarters by the 15th September. Regions are asked to arrange Regional Conferences or other meetings for the end of October at which the resolutions sent in by all Regions may be discussed with their members.

7. Letters to the Press. (latest.)

The following letters were sent to the local press. Please use them locally if you so desire:-

- a) URBAN BANTU COUNCIL BILL.

The Black Sash accepts the principle that Africans should have a share in the government of their country and that they should be given more responsibility in all spheres. Any steps in this direction for urban Africans would be an improvement on the present position. It seems to us, however, that in order to achieve the above desirable ends, a first step should rather have been to give Africans direct representation on the existing Town Councils which manage the affairs of Urban Areas. Because these urban Bantu Councils are separated from and subordinate to local authorities as well as the Minister, the Councils are denied any real power comparable with that held by existing Town Councils.

...../ The Clauses.....

The clauses which seek to confer judicial powers whether civil or criminal on unqualified persons are undesirable.

So too are the clauses which seek to divide people into ethnic groups.

We do not consider that racial harmony can be achieved by accentuating and perpetuating differences.

It is regretted that when many people throughout the country are beginning to recognise the necessity for consultation with those who have no effective political rights, this Bill should have been introduced without the views of African leaders and local authorities having first been obtained.

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b) The Black Sash welcomes the urgent appeal to Whites, by Mrs. Flora Snitcher to stretch across the colour bar through friendly social contact with non-Whites. (Cape Times, June 13th, 1961.) It welcomes, too, the call a day or two later, by the Natal Convention Committee for a move to crash the colour bar within the law.

There are, of course, many opportunities for Whites and non-Whites to meet through various societies and cultural organisations which do not practise racial discrimination. Those who have taken advantage of these occasions will readily admit that they do not see each other primarily as members of a particular racial group, but as fellow South Africans, beset by the anxieties and longing for security to us all.

In recognition of the fact that for many there are restricted opportunities for friendly association, the Black Sash in Johannesburg, Durban, Port Elizabeth and East London has organised a series of discussions through conferences and tea-parties to which members of the public, both White and Non-White, are invited as individuals free to speak as they choose.

Some of the subjects discussed at these functions are:-
Income and Employment (working nothers, standards of living, cost of living, etc.)
Parents and Children (old age, courting problems, adolescence, citizen or delinquent?)
Education (for what? This includes best use of talents, use of leisure, etc.)

During the discussions, White women learned - among other things - that African women, because of the restrictions on their lives, have to cope with problems undreamed of by White women in the enjoyment of their freedom of movement. African women, in their turn, learned that all women, whatever their colour and background have similar family and domestic problems.

The Black Sash offers to sponsor or to help in the organisation of gatherings such as these, where White and non-White may meet each other as fellow human beings and so break down the barriers of suspicion and mistrust.

8. Re Circular 61.

Please let us have your reports for incorporation in the article mentioned in Circular 61 by return. If we do not have them soon we will have to do the article without an account of your Region's work taken from past magazines.

HEAD-QUARTERS

REGIONAL REPORT FOR MAY 1961.

1. Mrs. Petersen and Mrs. Robb have returned from long leave and are very welcome indeed.
2. ADVERTISEMENT DEMONSTRATION - The proposed half-page advertisement with figures of Sashers holding up a banner and similar placards to the anti-apartheid street demonstration was prepared but would have cost R460.00. This was considered far too much for the Region, although it would reach many more people than street demonstrations, and so the idea was dropped unless specific donations can be obtained to cover the cost.
3. TOURS -
 - (a) Cape Eastern - Mrs. Stott paid a flying visit to explain, amongst other necessary consultations, why, for personal reasons, she considered it advisable to postpone her proposed tour there. Cape Eastern was most understanding, and although all had been arranged, they kindly agreed to do the work all over again later. For expense incurred in changing invitations etc. a donation was made from National Funds of R.20-00.
 - (b) Southern Transvaal - Mrs. Stott attended the Annual General Meeting at their invitation and took part in their stand asking for a National Convention. She also met Mrs. Wallace of Natal Coastal and Mrs. Lund of Natal Midlands in Johannesburg for consultations. The visit had been found most helpful to Headquarters Region. Mrs. Stott had also interviewed senior representatives of the Press, Anglo-American and the Chamber of Commerce while there.
4. 31st MAY CELEBRATIONS - No action was taken by this Region. The Archbishop's Conference Committee had approached leading citizens to sign a declaration for the Press (COPY ATTACHED).
5. GROUP AREAS OFFICE - An office has been opened in Cape Town to deal with those affected of all races. Two members of the Regional Council staff the office; Mrs. Schurr in a paid capacity and Mrs. Parks as a voluntary assistant.
6. BANNED MEETINGS - Two public meetings scheduled for May, to which thousands of invitations had been sent, had to be cancelled at the last minute owing to the proclamation and the necessary permits being refused. One at the City Hall on Passes and one at Rondebosch on Group Areas, these will be held later when permissible. Mrs. Petersen had much fun and games with the S.A.B.C. trying to get them to broadcast a spot message about the cancellation of the City Hall meeting. Permits were obtained for the usual Council, Branch and the All-Branches meetings.
7. DEMONSTRATIONS -
 - (a) A stand was held with a poster - "General Law Amendment Bill Further Inroads on Personal Liberty" - at the top of Adderley Street (all demonstrations outside Parliament having been banned for this session) against the General Laws Amendment Bill.
 - (b) Two stands were held along main traffic arteries with posters asking "WE APPEAL TO YOU - CONFER WITH NON-WHITE LEADERS NOW", and thereafter giving the acts we think wrong such as Pass Laws, Group Areas etcetera. On the 5th May it was on the foreshore artery and on the 12th May on the Main Road at Mowbray. These stands were also held by our country branches in Somerset West and Hermanus.

- (c) A novel stand - of one Sasher only at a time, relieved every half-hour - and very lonely it was! - was held on the Monday after the General Laws Amendment Bill became law. The excellent wording of Johannesburg's poster was used - "JUSTICE DEMANDS A NATIONAL CONVENTION OF ALL RACES". Permission was refused by the Magistrate, after consultation with the Security Branch, for 12 Sashers to stand at the top of Adderley Street, so, after careful consultation with a Q.C. to ensure that we were not breaking any law, it was decided to do the lone member stand. (See June magazine for fuller report).

Intended call for National Demonstrations on the General Laws Amendment Act and the need for a National Convention by Headquarters owing to the time spent in getting a Q.C.'s views on the effects of the General Laws Amendment Act and thus the ban on all meetings these had to be abandoned.

8. LUTHULI FUND - Members in their individual capacity have provided R.102.00 and this has been sent off.
9. MAGAZINE - To avoid delay in receipt of magazines, the Headquarters region has decided to send all magazines to Cape Western members out by post from the office. THE EDITOR PLEADS FOR A CONSTANT STREAM OF INFORMATION, REPORTS and PHOTOGRAPHS FROM ALL REGIONS. We are grateful to Border for increasing their order by 50.
10. A VISIT FROM JOHANNESBURG of Mrs. Nel Green in order to try to obtain sponsors for a National Conference on the same lines as the National was. Mrs. Stott, in her capacity as National President, signed as a sponsor.
11. STATEMENTS AND LETTERS PUBLISHED IN THE PRESS - (COPIES ATTACHED)
 - (a) Offer of help for Coloured People's Convention.
 - (b) Announcement of opening of Cape Western Group Areas Office.
 - (c) On Elections - with special reference to Constantia by-election.
 - (d) Letter to University of Cape Town welcoming their call for Convention.
12. TREASURER'S REPORT FOR MAY - Circular T. 29 - attached.
13. REPLY TO INTERVIEW WITH DR. DE WET NEL AND OTHER OFFICIALS.

(Correspondence sent under cover of Circular 62.)
14. MEMORANDUM FROM BLACK SASH ON BILL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL - Already sent to all Regions.
15. GOODWILL BADGE - (See 1960 National Conference decision) Mrs. Coplans has undertaken to form a sub-committee to deal with this matter. Any suggestions will be welcomed from Regions.
16. OFFICE SECRETARY - Mrs. Walton has had to undergo an operation and will be away for about a month. Mrs. Solomon was employed for seven days in her place until she went away on leave.
17. TRANSVAAL EDUCATION VIGILANCE COMMITTEE'S "CHARTER FOR CHILDREN OF SOUTH AFRICA" - Mrs. Robb and Mrs. Marquard will confer and make recommendations from the Sash.

18. WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION FOR AFRICANS - It has been brought to the notice of the Sash that some Africans fared very badly over this. South African Insurance and the South African Railways paid out their workers within a few days of injury, but many other employers paid them nothing at all until after they left hospital, although the Hospitals receive R.4.00 per day from the Province. The result being that many African families are left completely destitute while the breadwinner is hospitalised. The wheels are only set in motion through Bantu Affairs Dept. after they are discharged fit for work. Often they have been replaced and are unable to find work and even endorsed out. It sometimes takes many months for money to arrive from Pretoria and it is wondered whether the Bantu Affairs Dept. traces the people who have returned to the Reserves. It was agreed to ask the Leader of the Opposition to bring this matter up in Parliament.
19. CIVIL RIGHTS LEAGUE had approached us for help in trying to call a National Convention. We had agreed.
20. COLOURED PEOPLE'S CONVENTION in the Cape has been postponed until July. Cape Western decided to make a donation towards this of R.50-00.
21. SOUTHERN TRANSVAAL'S TELEGRAM TO PRIME MINISTER - A telegram was sent asking for a National Convention. (In this connection the notice of all Regions is once again drawn to the fact that no Region should communicate direct with a Minister without prior consultation with Headquarters, mainly to save overlapping or differing approaches from various Regions. Any suggestions in this connection are, however, warmly welcomed from Regions.
22. CAPE WESTERN ACTIVITIES - For these see Cape Western all Branches Minutes for May, two copies of which were sent earlier to each Region.

DECLARATION PUBLISHED IN THE PRESS, SIGNED BY LEADING CITIZENS AND SPONSORED
BY THE ARCHBISHOP'S CONTINUATION COMMITTEE.

We are gravely concerned at the crisis which is developing in our country. The growing antagonism between the races, the hostility displayed abroad to our official policies, are symptoms of a deep-seated and dangerous disorder in our social and political structure.

White domination and racial discrimination are universally discredited and repudiated. Leaders and other responsible people in all walks of life agree that South Africa cannot continue along present lines. Far-reaching changes will have to be made before South Africa can recover the esteem of other nations and achieve internal harmony and the conditions for sustained economic progress.

South Africa requires a New Deal. But no reforms will avail to attain the ends just mentioned unless based on the consent of all races. And such consent, in turn, will not be forthcoming unless freely elected representatives of all races participate in drawing up a reformed Constitution. Such representation cannot be achieved until the right to organise politically is restored to all South Africans.

We therefore welcome the call, that has been made in various quarters, for a National Convention of spokesmen of all our several racial communities to seek agreement upon and to draw up proposals for a Constitution that will secure justice for and safeguard the rights of all South Africans.
Signed by 42 leading citizens.

STATEMENTS AND LETTERS PUBLISHED IN THE PRESS.

a) Offer of help for Coloured People's Convention.

The Black Sash welcomes the movement initiated by prominent leaders of Coloured opinion to unite the Coloured community in working for the abolition of the colour bar and full citizenship for all South Africans.

We would be glad to offer them all the assistance we can in their efforts to call a National Convention representing all races to seek agreement on the terms upon which all races can live and work peaceably together in South Africa.

We deplore Mr. Abe Bloomberg, Mr. Botha and Mr. Golding's suggestion that in seeking co-operation with Africans, the Coloured leaders are doing so for an Anti-White purpose. The record of these leaders and their publicly stated desire to obtain closer co-operation with Africans on the one hand and progressive Europeans on the other, shows this suggestion to be unwarranted.

b) Announcement of opening of Cape Western Group Areas office.

In consequence of the large number of people affected by the recent Group Areas proposals, the Black Sash have decided to open an office where people can come to discuss their problems.

This office is at Room 408, 47, Parliament Street, Cape Town and will be open on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Saturdays, from 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

c) On Elections - with especial reference to Constantia by-election.

It has come to the notice of the Black Sash that some members of the public are under the impression that, in the Constantia by-election, the Black Sash is supporting the Progressive Party, while others firmly believe that it is only supporting the United Party.

We therefore, wish to reiterate that the Black Sash is a non-party political organisation and does not, in consequence support any one political party.

Its membership is open to all and consequently it has among its members, supporters of the various political parties as well as many who belong to no political party.

The Black Sash seeks to make its members aware of their political responsibilities and encourages women who belong to it to work during the elections for the party of their choice.

d) Letter to U.C.T. welcoming their call for Convention.

The Black Sash which is gravely concerned at the crisis which is developing in our country welcomes most heartily the call made by the members of the staff of the University of Cape Town for a meeting of South Africans of all races to work out principles as a preliminary to the holding of a National Convention. In common with other organisations and individuals, the Black Sash believes that the only way to save our country from self destruction and danger from without is to find a way by which all our people can live in harmony and all our resources of intellect and goodwill be drawn upon.

From their public pronouncements and our personal knowledge of the non-White leaders we know that there is still a spirit of goodwill and a desire for peaceful negotiations. In this knowledge and belief, we have for some time been working for mutual discussions. We believe that for a meeting such as that called for now to be fruitful our section must be represented by leaders chosen by their own people, such representation cannot be achieved until the right to organise politically is restored to all, and by no one else.

The Black Sash reiterates its offer of its service towards the calling and organising of such a meeting either on a local or a national basis. We believe that such a Convention or Conference would prove that it is possible to find a peaceful and reasonable solution to our problems.