

CIRCULAR NO. 7/1978

56 Victory House,
34 Harrison Street,
JOHANNESBURG. 2001
14th April, 1978.

CIRCULAR TO ALL REGIONS.

Dear Everyone,

Take a deep breath, because here we go. First of all, the four campaigns.

1. CRIMINAL LAWS PROCEDURE ACT. Sheena is unable to get to work on the preparation of this information pamphlet until after her return from holiday sometime during May. This will then have to be translated into Afrikaans and two African languages. Your only involvement will be with the distribution, and I'm sure Headquarters will have suggestions for this in due course. though the Institute of Race Relations may well be the best Agent.
2. NEW CONSTITUTIONAL PROPOSALS. These pose a problem as at present we are functioning in vacuum, not knowing precisely what form they will finally take. Also there is a rumour abroad that Parliament will recess until September when the new Constitution will be discussed, so we have decided to shelve this campaign until we have more information. Sheena suggested at the theme - "No Constitution without a National Convention".

However, we do have to work urgently on the Thirty Years of Nationalist Rule, which the Government is celebrating on 31st May. At our meeting yesterday many suggestions were made including the mass distribution of stickers, hand outs, book matches, all using a logo, about which I shall consult Bob Connolly, though unfortunately he is not available until next week.

Wording for the logo was discussed, and we all liked "1948 1978. The Great Trek Backwards" - Sheena's brainchild. Suggested method, of distribution were letter boxes in blocks of flats and selected areas, walk-about, the leaving of stickers in shops, restaurants, banks etc.,

All this would obviously have to be backed by Press statements or articles. I shall give you further details as soon as we have reached some conclusions ourselves, but would very much appreciate comments and suggestions from you.

3. SQUATTERS. With reference to the emphasis on the upgrading of squatter camps as an acceptable method of solving the squatter problem and the Conference decision to organise a small seminar of experts to discuss ways and means of achieving this, we have decided to contact the University of the Witwatersrand to explore the possibility of some group there being prepared to organise such a seminar.

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However, I still feel that Cape Western and Natal Coastal are better qualified to deal with this than we are, and would be glad of their comments.

4. NEW FOREIGNERS. Information on the implications of Homeland Citizenship will be incorporated in the planned up-dated Memorandum on the Pass Laws, and Influx Control, which we hope to be able to issue later this year. Sheena has not yet been able to prepare any material on this issue in simpler form for wider distribution, and plans for this campaign have not yet jelled. One suggestion made is that we use the column in the Sunday Times Magazine Section entitled "To Get You Thinking" or something to that effect, in order to publicize the implications - we are thinking along these lines, but of course someone has to write the article, and we are all snowed under right now.

You will have noticed from the Conference Minutes which I hope you have all received, that we are supposed to study basic economics and the role of world economy in South Africa. This is no mean subject, combined with everything else we have to do, but I do suggest that if any of you arrange for speakers, you should let us have copies of these talks for possible inclusion in SASH. This would be one way of spreading information and helping each other.

There are also the decisions to follow up on the use of video-tapes and the human awareness programme; the suggestions by Bunty Biggs mentioned in Circular No. 6; the lobbying of the Urban Foundation; and the monitoring of the pay-outs of pensions.

Please remember the requests made in Circular No. 6 about the Wassenaar letter and the Black Sash badges. I would also like to know how many copies of these circulars you require, as at present we are sending different numbers to each Region, based on requests made years ago. We are deeply concerned about the Fund Raising Bill. In its present form it makes it compulsory for every organisation, irrespective of the work it does, to apply to a fund raising Director for permission to become a "Fund Raising Organisation". The permission can be withheld or given and later withdrawn, and if given means the organisation will be subject to some degree of Government control.

We are presently investigating all the potential implications, and also ways and means of continuing to finance ourselves within the Law. There are various possibilities which may require the convening of an emergency National Conference, but we shall in all probability do nothing until the Bill has been debated in Parliament and, possibly and hopefully, amended.

In the meanwhile there are sound general grounds for opposing this Bill and informing the public of its implications. I shall write an article for the press and let you each have a copy.

I shall be in Cape Town from 30th April to 3rd May to launch Barbara Waite's map. Sadly I must report that her courage has failed her and she felt this was something she could not tackle while she is enduring the anxiety of having a prison sentence hanging over her head. So I shall deputise for her as best I can. Sheena will be away from 24th April until 15th May, and Gita will be acting President in my absence.

Love and good wishes for all there has to be done.

JOYCE.