

THE BLACK SASHCIRCULAR NO.14/1978.56 Victory House,
34 Harrison Street,
JOHANNESBURG
4th August, 1978.

Dear Everyone,

Thank you all for making such an effort to be represented at the Special National Conference, which happily accomplished what it set out to do. I am unable to enclose the amended Constitution as Esther has not yet been able to complete the Minutes, but you shall have it as soon as possible, together with the Draft Minutes for your comments.

As I have heard nothing further from any of you regarding the Draft Minutes of the National Conference held in March I am assuming that they are in order, except for the alteration proposed by Transvaal (See Circular No 13,) which I append for you to include in your draft minutes at the top of page 3 below the words, "This was seconded by Joan Kerchoff and was passed with 5 abstentions". Would you also please delete the word DRAFT from the title page.

A number of legal queries have arisen out of the Fund-Raising Act and the General Sales Tax, some of which were raised at the Special National Conference. I give you the legal opinion we have obtained, but naturally each of you is free, and may even be well-advised, to consult your own legal opinion in regard to your own specific problems.

Fund-Raising Act.

1. ALL organisations are vulnerable to inspection regarding the raising of funds, but only registered Fund-Raising Organisations can be controlled by the Director of Fund-raising in terms of the USE of their funds. We reiterate that no money may be collected from the public after the Act comes into force.
2. LEGACIES are acceptable for they are "transferred in terms of a legally enforceable obligation". A legacy from an estate is not a donation or gift.
3. ADVICE OFFICES
 - (a) Advice Offices which are involved with other organisations such as the Institute of Race Relations, the Church or Trade Unions should have no difficulties in sharing resources providing they are engaged in a joint venture, something undertaken together, though the degree of co-operation is important. In this regard shared postage or telephones would be an advantage.
East London should be all right through Val Sullivan, though Athlone and Grahamstown may have problems.
 - (b) The registration of the Institute of Race Relations as a Fund-Raising Organisation would empower the Director of Fund-Raising to inspect our books if we are associated with it, but he has this power in any event

(c) Advice Offices which/
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- (c) Advice Offices which occupy premises belonging to another organisation should pay a nominal rent - say R10 to R20 per month depending upon the accommodation.
- (d) It is in order for the Durban Advice Office to use the Part-time services of the interpreter who is employed full-time by the Trade Union.
- (e) Grahamstown must investigate the possibility of continuing to accept funds from Rhodes Rag Committee. It is possible that either the Rag Committee or the S.R.C. could affiliate to the Black Sash in terms of our amended Constitution, but this would depend on their constitutions and their willingness to do so.
If this is not possible then Rag money is public money and may not be accepted. Possibly the Institute of Race Relations as a Fund Raising Organisation might accept it. In that way it could get assistance in fulfilling its obligations towards the joint venture of the Advice Office. Rag does not fall into the category of a continuing relationship.
- (f) The Chairman's Fund and the Bantu Welfare Trust are continuing relationships and it is therefore in order to accept contributions from them. Any organisational source of revenue which has been long-term and regular falls into this category. The same probably applies to individuals.

General Sales Tax.

1. SASH. We are awaiting final legal opinion on how we should handle the G.S.T in terms of the sale of SASH, but it appears that we have a choice between becoming vendors or absorbing the tax ourselves by paying it to the printers. Our distinct preference at present is to absorb it ourselves, as to become vendors would involve us in all sorts of complications, not least of which would be the clerical difficulties.

2. MAP. The sale of the map fits the definition of an occasional sale, and is therefore exempt from the G.S.T., though a record should be kept of the dates of sales since 1st July.

Welfare Act.

It is vitally important to remember that the Black Sash is NOT a welfare organisation and that NO material assistance of any description may be given out by the Black Sash.

I feel sure that new problems will arise from time to time as we are dealing with complicated legislation, but we shall simply have to try to steer our way through the minefield without exploding any mines, seeking guidance whenever we feel we need it.

I have more cheering news/---

I have more cheering news to report than I had at the Special National Conference about the National Campaign on the proposed new constitution for South Africa and the New Foreigners. (See Circular 13).

A few interested people from the original meeting, together with a couple of new ones, held a meeting to discuss strategies which might be devised to prevent the implementation of the proposed new constitution.

A favoured idea was to persuade the Progressive Reform Party not to participate at all - either by not standing for election or else by refusing to take up their seats after an election. If this could be achieved it would bolster up the objections already raised by the Labour Party and the Indian community.

The intention is to try to promote an on-going consultation of all those sections of the community opposed to the new constitution which would try to devise a viable alternative to the Government proposals and would work together in opposition to them. To this end it was felt necessary to consult with certain influential people from amongst the different groups, and this we are presently doing. Our future moves will depend upon the degree of support that is forthcoming, but it is important to get moving as quickly as possible. Perhaps you should make a start by approaching the influential people in your areas too in order to assess potential support. We have had some encouraging responses to date and people seem to appreciate being included in the discussion on strategies rather than being presented with a finalised plan of campaign.

With regard to the Squatter Campaign I hope that you were all able to motivate support from the Churches for the day of prayer for the people of Crossroads on 30th July. Transvaal is still seeking a venue for its demonstration.

I have been able to write fairly freely in this circular as I am hoping to find couriers to deliver it to each of you. Its arrival may therefore be somewhat delayed.

If the office is able to get them ready in time I shall enclose copies of the proposed new membership forms for associate members. The original form is in order for ordinary members, save for the inclusion of the word "ordinary" before "membership" in the title.

I hope that you will all be able to cope with the new problems and difficulties that have been created for us with the new legislation, and that you won't find them insuperable.

Good luck,
Love


JOYCE HARRIS
NATIONAL PRESIDENT.

P.S. Jean says that It is not businesslike to sign "JOYCE", so now I am
JOYCE HARRIS. NATIONAL PRESIDENT.

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Addendum to the Draft Minutes of the March Conference.

It was agreed that, for the purpose of estimating the number of delegates to a National Conference to which each Region is entitled, only paid-up members should be enumerated, while for the purposes of the levy all signed-up members should be included.