

Telephone 836-0789/0800.

THE BLACK SASH.

56 Victory House,
34 Harrison Street,
11th June 1979.

Dear Member,

Please don't forget our cake sale on Saturday 23rd June. Philippa Harvey is our new convenor and needs encouragement or maybe she won't ever do another. Books left over from last year's morning market will also be sold: Sally Smith in charge. We badly need a garage/storeroom in which to keep a vast number of books all year round.

<u>CAKE SALE</u>	<u>SATURDAY 23rd JUNE - 8.30 a.m.</u>	<u>RIVONIA NEWS</u>	<u>BOOK SALE</u>
Depots:	Philippa Harvey, 112, 8th St, <u>Parkmore.</u>	V. White, 6 Scott St, <u>Waverley</u>	
	B. Beinashowitz, 6 Riviera Rd, <u>Killarney.</u>	L. White, 1 Rose St, <u>Melrose.</u>	
	J. Wentzel, 97 Edward Ave, <u>Sandringham.</u>	F. Lloyd, 29 Summit Rd. <u>Morning side.</u>	

At the Black Sash mini-Conference held in the Eastern Cape early this year Jacqueline Cock presented a paper based on her research into the lives of domestic servants in the area. This historically English area is also the area of the greatest poverty and the lowest wages. Jacqueline is visiting Johannesburg this month and we have luckily been able to arrange for her to address the next general members' meeting.

The committee is currently studying the situation in the Eastern Cape and Ciskei both as part of our year's project to investigate rural poverty and because there is presently sitting a Ciskein commission enquiring into the feasibility of independence for the area. Sheena Duncan has presented a memo to this commission on behalf of the Black Sash and Race Relations and Ruth Imry is attending some of its sessions. All this will be discussed at the general meeting.

GENERAL MEMBERS MEETING. WEDNESDAY 27th JUNE. 9.30 a.m. 34 Venus St, Birdhaven
(Audrey Coleman 788-2723)

JACQUELINE COCK - DOMESTIC SERVANTS IN THE EASTERN CAPE.

Weekly Stands, Tuesday mornings, 7.30-8.30. University Fountain. We are battling on with these although they do not always get press coverage. Since the last newsletter we have stood on the Group Areas evictions, twice on the Advocate-General and Police Bills, everyday for a week on the Riekert and Wiehahn Commissions, and once on the implementation of the Wiehahn commission. A small group has had to bear the brunt of all this early morning demonstrating, hence the justifiably sad letter to members which is enclosed from Joyce.

Riekert Commission. Sheena Duncan was commissioned by the Financial Mail to do an analysis of the Riekert commission which they could use as a reference for their reports and comments. You will have seen her article on this commission in The Star. At our July members' meeting (Wed. 25 July, 29, 5th St. L. Houghton, 8 pm) she will analyse the Riekert report and the subsequent legislation; and also report back on the International Conference of Women Leaders in Israel.

On 29th May during our Wiehahn stand one of our posters was snatched by a group of five young men in tackies, blue jeans and striped tea shirts. Judith Briggs and Merle Beetge chased them and tried to recover the poster by pulling it out of the car as they drove off with it. They got the car number and we have written to the licensing department for the name and address of the owner and have reported the theft to the police. The incident was reported in The Star and well reported in Post, which is a newspaper all members should read if they want to know what is really going on - non-stop harrassment and arrest of black journalists and writers, trouble in the schools, evictions for rent default, what is really happening in Alex, conditions in the rural areas and the "black states."

The Advice Office now operates all day, and we'd be glad of help in the afternoons. Untrained members can give all sorts of peripheral help while our regular workers get on with the more difficult cases.

Evictions. Eleanor Anderson, Judy van Velden and I had lunch with the Altafs in their Lenasia box last Saturday. No doubt Marais Steyn believes he has done them a favour. I don't understand how it can in any way be sensible or economic to build such awful dwelling places - tiny windows and no attempt at all to make use of our magnificent winter sun, rooms so small that no ordinary suite of furniture can fit in them, cold water only and an electrical system that allows only two of the following to be used at once or else the trips switch out - fridge, top of stove, oven, lights! For this sub-economic dwelling the Altafs have to pay R95 p.m. rent (because they can afford an economic dwelling); whereas in Mayfair their solidly-built house cost them R50 p.m. Mr Altaf's transport costs to/...

to work are R30 a month and his daughter will have to pay the same when she starts work this month.

Advocate-General Bill. We sent our objections to the Select Parliamentary Committee pointing out that it is for Cabinet Ministers to respect the public and its press: not vice versa.

We were really disappointed that the press did not support our "Lights On for Press Freedom" campaign. One small bit on the front page of the Daily Mail on the first day was not enough, and those of us who drove with our lights on felt foolish and cross and eventually gave up. The Star kept on promising to support the campaign and kept on not doing so. Also the weekend papers. Joyce Harris spent every day of the week including Saturday visiting newsmen and trying to get the campaign off the ground. Finally even she gave up: whereupon the Mail published a thoroughly stale "lights on" letter she had sent to them for publication at the beginning of the campaign!

The Coloured Management Committee, 3rd Thursday each month, 3 p.m. City Hall. At its last meeting the CMC rejected the idea of autonomous committees (which Lenasia has accepted) and demanded direct representation on the Johannesburg City Council.

CMC representatives said they could not get excited about Coloured schools going up because of the critical shortage of teachers.

There were bitter complaints (which our housing committee will help to follow up) about building defects in new houses. Apparently all tenders go to one firm.

Mylie Richards left the Chair to express his disgust with the Johannesburg Management Committee for bringing before the Coloured Management Committee a suggestion from Community Development that the Illegal Squatters Act should be invoked in conjunction with the findings of the Riekert Commission in order to get Coloureds and Indians out of accommodation they were illegally occupying. CMC members angrily pointed out that the Riekert Commission's tying of employment to housing when there was an 8,000 housing backlog for Coloureds alone would mean Coloured (and Indian) townships would land up with influx control, permits and police. Claiming that the legislation resulting from the Wiehahn report, and the Riekert Commission "would do more harm than Ino" the CMC passed a resolution that the City Council must have nothing to do with it. They also called on Trade Unions to object.

New Constitution for South Africa. In the Black Sash deposition to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on The Constitution of South Africa, we suggested that the Du Preez Commission of the Labour Party, which recommends a unitary state, be used as a basis for consultation: this because its principles are widely supported by blacks. Joyce wrote, "because there are presently no multi-racial political parties as a result of the Political Interference Act, broad representation truly reflective of the political and constitutional aspirations of all the people can only be ensured if all shades of opinion in every ethnic group are invited to participate in devising a new constitution."

The committee is considering issuing car stickers, "No new Constitution without Blacks," leave-about leaflets and handouts. We'd like to know if members would be prepared to distribute these. We were encouraged that all the "lights-on" car stickers were quickly used up.

Winterveld. Our Pretoria Branch is very much involved in the Winterveld raids, prosecutions and evictions. Under the ecumenical auspices of Church leaders an ad hoc committee is trying to negotiate a solution with Mangope and the Government. Members of the Johannesburg committee will visit the area shortly and any other members who'd like to come should telephone the office and we'd be delighted to take you "with."

Morning market. We are tremendously grateful to Robin Harvey for agreeing to convene the morning market and to Mrs Harvey for lending us her house and garden for this year's morning market.

Yours sincerely,

Jill Wentzel,
Transvaal Chairman.