

RECEIVED 19 JUN 1979

THE BLACK SASH

CIRCULAR TO REGIONS

CIRCULAR NO 10/79.

56 Victory House,
34 Harrison Street,
Johannesburg.
14th June, 1979.

Dear Everyone,

National Conference Minutes. Margaret Nash has suggested the following small alterations to the Minutes :

Page 10. Nine lines from the end of the page.

Substitute a full-stop for the semi-colon after the word "published"

Start next paragraph with the words, "The following resolution was proposed" :

Delete the initial word "that" from the resolution that follows.

I agree with Margaret that these minor alterations read better than the original, and there is sufficient space in the Draft Minutes for these changes to be inserted by hand, which obviates the necessity for re-typing. There have been no further comments on the Minutes, so, if you are all agreeable to this proposed change, please make the alterations yourselves.

I shall take it that you are all satisfied unless I hear from you to the contrary very soon, and that the minutes thus amended shall be the Minutes of the National Conference.

Constitution Campaign. Headquarters has decided to proceed with this campaign in stages, starting with car and envelope stickers reading,

"No New Constitution Without Blacks".

We are presently investigating printing costs, and I suggest that, if you are in agreement, you go ahead and print your own as this will probably be cheaper than printing here and posting to you. If smaller Regions want us to do the printing please give me numbers as soon as possible.

We are also considering a small, leave-about handout carrying the same wording, for members to leave on shop counters etc., and are roneoing these in the office. The idea is that these three methods will be part of an on-going, softening-up campaign, to be followed later by informative handouts when the time is ripe. In the meanwhile we hope to keep before the public the realisation that a new constitution for South Africa is imminent and that people should give it thought.

I am enclosing a copy of our deposition to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Constitution of South Africa, which has to be in by 30th June. I hope it meets with your approval. We had a little soul-searching regarding the principle of making a deposition, and came to the conclusion that it is necessary for different points of view to be written into the Committee's findings for the historical record even though we do not hold out much hope of influencing them.

The Constitution Group continues to meet and very worthwhile human relationships have been forged.

Bill of Rights. This is a far more complicated project than was originally envisaged. There are a number of prototypes on which we can draw for inspiration but opinions vary as to their efficacy. We are presently studying two or three suggested to us by Prof. John Dugard. The Constitution Group has not shown much enthusiasm for getting involved in devising an acceptable Bill of Rights and it seems that we shall have to move slowly, while bearing in mind that any new Constitution should incorporate such a Bill.

Advocate General Bill/—

Advocate - General Bill. I enclose a copy of the letter Jill Wentzel wrote to the Parliamentary Committee which was constituted to discuss this Bill. The Bill contains a definition of a "newspaper" which includes posters, placards, leaflets etc., so it seems that we shall have to be even more careful of our wording in future

Weekly Stands. For the past three weeks our posters have read,

"Wiehahn-Govt. Back-Pedals Again" and "Black Workers and Trade Unions Worse Off", at which demonstration our women were attacked by some thugs in jeans and T-Shirts who made off with one of the posters though fortunately without injuring our members; "Withdraw All Cover-Up Bills" and "Clean Govt. Needs No Cover-Up"; and, this week, "We Mourn the Loss of Vendaland" and "Stop Carving Up South Africa". Next week we are thinking of standing on the anniversary of the Soweto Riots, but have not yet worded the posters. We seem to get publicity only when there are incidents, but feel the stands are valuable because they are seen by the same people every week, including many students, and so we persevere.

My Letter to Members. I enclose an amended version of the copy I sent with my previous circular. This has now been sent to all our members and you will naturally do with it as you please.

Workmen's Compensation and Contracts for Migrants. (See Circular No. 8/79.)

The Department of Labour replied to my letter to the effect that inability to trace workers who are entitled to compensation is not the result of the employers' failure to keep records but of the employees' failure to notify changes of address. The Department is therefore of the opinion that there is no point in changing the legislation as I suggested. The Department of Co-operation and Development replied that it had noted my request to make it compulsory to give migrants a copy of their contracts and was considering the matter.

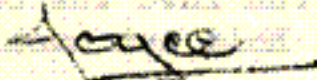
Paper on Police Behaviour Presented to National Conference. We were informed by the Press that this has been banned, but I have not yet seen the relevant gazette. However, I believe that it is under the section that does not make possession an offence.

SASH. I shall be editing SASH for the time being, with Sheena's assistance. When you send me any material at all please send two copies, so that I have one for the files and one to use in SASH if it is appropriate.

I'm sorry that we are continuing to use foolscap instead of metric paper as requested. When you receive copies of material sent to all our members it will be on foolscap, as we find this far more economical. I shall try to make a point of using metric when correspondence is to Regions only.

Please keep in touch with me. I would appreciate comments, criticisms, suggestions on all issues, as I should like to know that I really am representing all of you when I profess to do so.

My love to you all,



JOYCE HARRIS
NATIONAL PRESIDENT.