

THE - BLACK SASH -

CIRCULAR TO ALL REGIONS.

CIRCULAR NO. 12/1980

Khotso House,
42 De Villiers Street,
JOHANNESBURG
2001
25th November, 1980

Dear Everyone,

Dr. Koornhof's New Bills : Since my last Circular Dr. Koornhof has held his Press Conference to present his three new Bills which, he claims, are a beginning, if imperfect, to the change and liberalisation he has been promising. I gather that much of the Press was taken in by these claims, and that there has been very little publicity in other Regions of the strong reservations expressed by the Black Sash. Let me, therefore, try to put you in the picture.

The Rand Daily Mail commissioned an article from Sheena analysing and criticising the three Bills, and this was published in full in a large centre-page article. You have had copies of this. Since then there has been editorial comment in the Mail and further in depth analyses appeared in the Mail and the Star. In addition publicity was given to my letter to the Director General of Co-operation and Development written in response to the request for public comment on the Bills, which enclosed a copy of Sheena's article and which totally rejected the Bills, stating that the restrictions would be worse for most blacks and that it was dangerous and counter-productive to mislead both blacks and the public in general, as the truth would reveal itself as soon as the Bills were passed and administered.

Since then our legal advisers have pointed out that Clause 62 in the Laws on Co-operation and Development Amendment Bill would effectively block appeals from the Commissioner's Court, closing all further possibilities for the establishment of rights through due legal process. I have accordingly written to Dr. Koornhof expressing our grave misgivings about the Bills in general and this clause in particular, and suggesting that in addition to reconsidering this clause he also consider the total abolition of the Pass Laws and Influx Control as this is the only manner in which discrimination can be ended,

Children in Detention : Information has been filtering in about large numbers of children under the age of 18 years who are being held in detention. We feel that this is a matter about which the Black Sash must concern itself, but in order to do so we need more definite information, which is very difficult to come by. If any of you have any facts at your disposal please let me have them.

National Conference : Have you noted that the dates for Conference, 13th to 17th March fall over a week-end? You will recall that this decision was taken at our last Conference in order to cater for working members and give them an opportunity to participate. I hope this will make it easier for Regions to send full delegations.

Please remember to let me have your items for discussions, resolutions, amendments to the Constitution etc., as soon as possible - early in the new year - so that I am able to circularise all Regions in good time for their Regional Conferences.

The thorny issue of the Magazine/

Page Two/

The thorny issue of the Magazine will surely surface yet again, and we shall have to think very seriously about raising the price to R1 per copy in order to meet escalating expenses. It seems to me that we shall have to make a firm decision either to subsidize the magazine out of Headquarters' funds or to substantially reduce the number of copies printed, which would be unfortunate.

Please give the matter some thought.

Natal Coastal: Please note that Shirley Moulder, 20 Adams Crescent, Sherwood 4091 Phone No. 23/0277 is the new secretary for Natal Coastal and amend your lists accordingly.

Constitution Campaign: I hope to have interesting developments to report to you at Conference.

Office: The office is closing for the Christmas recess from 15th December to 7th January. I shall not be going away and can be found at home should you need me - 728/2712.

Compliments of the season to you all. I hope that you have a very happy Christmas and that the New Year will bring some of the peace we have all been striving for and some of the progress and developments we should like to see.

Have a good rest and come back with renewed energy and enthusiasm.

My love to you all,
JOYCE HARRIS
NATIONAL PRESIDENT.

The thorny issue of the Magazine will surely surface yet again, and we shall have to think very seriously about raising the price to R1 per copy in order to meet escalating expenses. It seems to me that we shall have to make a firm decision either to subsidize the magazine out of Headquarters' funds or to substantially reduce the number of copies printed, which would be unfortunate.

The thorny issue of the Magazine
Page Two
Section: Book Reviews