

THE BLACK SASH.

EAST LONDON

NATIONAL CONFERENCE.

7th NOVEMBER, 1961.

ATTENDANCE: As per attendance register.

1. The DEDICATION was read by Mrs. Stott, the National President, in English and Afrikaans.
2. Mrs. Curry welcomed delegates and observers from all Regions to East London. Border Region was delighted to have everyone for the Conference and wished them a happy stay.

She announced that Mrs. Pollock would be in charge of the Universal Aunts, and she would be happy to assist in every way. The only planned entertainment would be a cocktail party to be held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Street, on Wednesday evening. Transport would be available if required. There were no further announcements to be made.

Mrs. Curry was thanked by Mrs. Stott for the excellent arrangements made and the lovely flowers provided.

3. The President, Mrs. E. Stott, welcomed the delegates and gave her address. Mrs. Hill (S.Tvl.) thanked Mrs. Stott for her address and for all the hard work she had put into her job as National President.
4. APOLOGIES: were recorded from: Mrs. Davidoff and Mrs. Fisher (by Mrs. Hill (S.Tvl.)), who informed Conference that these two delegates would be arriving later in the day.
5. RULES OF PROCEDURE as circulated with 1960 Conference Agenda, were ACCEPTED.

Mrs. Stott gave a rough TIME SCHEDULE, which was ACCEPTED.

6. PRESS COMMITTEE: The following were elected: Mrs. D. Berman (Cape W.)
Mrs. N. Davidoff (S.Tvl.)
Mrs. D. Curry (Border)
Mrs. S. Johnson (Natal Mid)
(with the National President ex officio).

CONSTITUTIONAL SUB-COMMITTEE:

The following were elected: Mrs. Fisher (S.Tvl.)
Mrs. Petersen (Cape W.)
Mrs. Willis (Cape W.)

(with the National President ex officio).

Mrs. Hill (S.Tvl.) advised Conference that they had sent a letter to Lutuli. After some discussion, it was decided that Mrs. Hill should draft a letter to Chief Lutuli and Dr. Geyzer, from Conference, and also send a wire to Mrs. Lutuli when she leaves for overseas. Mrs. Sinclair's proposal that the Black Sash should help to raise money to assist Mrs. Lutuli to join her husband in Oslo, was NOT AGREED TO.

At this stage, a representative from the S.A.B.C. arrived and requested permission to stay until the tea-break, when the Press representatives would be leaving. Mrs. Cluver (S.Tvl.) immediately put forward the following proposal :-

- " that a similar procedure be adopted at this Conference as Radio South Africa adopts for United Nations Reports and that the Chairman of this Conference be appointed as our news representative. " (16 For 8 Against 1 Abstention).
AGREED.

In consequence of the above Resolutions, it was decided not to have the SABC Representative present at the Conference.

Mrs. Curry (Border) asked whether delegates wished SABC invited to Press Party. (Voted 10 for, 12 against). LOST.

7. MINUTES OF 1960 CONFERENCE: (i) and (ii) to be left until tomorrow.

8. ARISING out of 1960 National Conference Minutes:

- (a) Amendment of Clause 2 (i)(b) of Constitution. (Referred to 1961 National Conference by 1960 National Conference. See Item 19 on Page 23 of 1960 Minutes). Suggest item should be taken under "Constitutional Amendments" section. To be taken under Constitutional Amendments.
- (b) "That the Black Sash be allowed to co-operate with any organisation on a specific project". To hear reports that this decision has proved satisfactory and is still the wish of Regions. (Page 3 of last National Conference Minutes, Item 11 (a)(ii) refers).
- (c) Goodwill Badge: (To report progress) Mrs. Stoy (Cape Western) proposed that we should drop this project. Seconded by Mrs. Robb. AGREED UNANIMOUSLY. 1 abstention.
- (d) ALAN PATON'S PLAY: Mrs. Robb (Cape Western) suggested exploring the possibility of producing this play - M'Kbane - in the towns of the various Regions. Decided that this would prove very difficult and expensive.
- (e) PASS LAWS: Decided in principle to make a film on Pass Laws. Mrs. Stott informed Conference that there was a little money to do this at present but it was only one of the things in the background at the moment. Mrs. Lundt (Natal Midlands) and Mrs. Stoy (Cape Western) would follow up the matter of certain films they had seen and find out more about them.
- (f) BOOKLET TO BE PRODUCED BY SOUTHERN TRANSVAAL: Dealing with exactly what the Black Sash had achieved. Mrs. Sinclair reported that they had not got far with this project. She read suggestions drawn up by Southern Transvaal for this booklet, as far as they have got. Mrs. Stott requested that this be roned and sent to Regions. Mrs. Stott would also try to get an article in "Drum" magazine on the Sash. Mrs. Sinclair (Southern Transvaal) proposed that we write to Angela Reid of the "Sunday Telegraph". AGREED to do this.
- (g) Mrs. Johnson (Natal Midlands) enquired whether Mrs. Stott had received a reply from the Illustrated London News re the Sash photograph which had appeared, and in reply to which she had drafted a letter to be sent to the Editor. Mrs. Stott informed her that a reply had been received to the effect - and that the London Illustrated News would file our letter for future reference.
- (h) Mrs. Struben (Cape Western) advised that Mrs. Pearce of the Wellington Branch had written a book on her activities in the Sash. This had been shown to Mr. Molteno who approved.
- (i) Mrs. Stott explained what she had done about the housing for the 38 persons who were homeless through their being

turned out of decent houses in order to comply with the law.

9. ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD FROM 1958 NATIONAL CONFERENCE MINUTES:

- (a) Electoral Laws: Mrs. Cluver (Southern Transvaal) proposed that we do not continue with this question. AGREED.
- (b) Secrecy of Ballot Papers: AGREED to drop this.
- (c) Bantu Education Act: After a very lengthy discussion - all Regions taking part - it was decided that the Black Sash should properly inform itself and the public on the effects of the Bantu Education Act and recommends that the Black Sash make local investigations into the implementation of the Bantu Education Act. AGREED.

10. GORDON BAGNALL PLAY: Mrs. Hill (Southern Transvaal) reported that efforts had been made to have the play put on on May 31st. Mr. Bagnall did not want any political groups to be associated with the play.

- (b) Plan of Action: It was realised that there were many things decided upon which Regions did not get around to doing; Regions would try to cover the field that is stated on the Plan of Action in future.
- (c) Border Questionnaire: Mrs. Curry (Border) reported that she had found that the formal questions were not very successful at the multi-racial meetings arranged by Border Region. The sort of questions contained in the Questionnaire had, however, been put in an informal way at gatherings and this had been very successful so far. To be reported in Border Regional Report.
- (d) Bail Fund: Mrs. Pirie (Cape Eastern) reported of their efforts to help Africans convicted under Pass Law offences. The Africans are beginning to realise that they can come to the Sash for such help. Mrs. Robb (Cape Western) reported that there had been cases of men who required in that area. After ~~the~~ bail consulting (by circular letter) the people who had kindly given us money for the Bail Fund, it was agreed that men as well as women could be helped.
- (e) Signature Tune, Theme Song or Slogan: Mrs. Willis (Cape Western) proposed the Slogan "Stand for Justice". It was decided to drop this matter. AGREED.

11. NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT: This report had already been given.

12. REGIONAL REPORTS:

- (a) Border Region: Mrs. Curry read her Regional Report. This was roneod during the Conference and copies sent to all delegates and observers. An interesting item was the tour through Shanty Town, near East London. Conditions appalling. Council say they have not got enough funds to build sufficient houses and provide adequate sanitary arrangements. After much discussion, it was decided that Border should draw the attention of the N.C.W. to this state of affairs. Mrs. Curry reported for the information of Wellington delegate, (Mrs. Struben) that she had visited Kleinbooi and Pauline and that although they looked healthier than they had before, Pauline was not happy. Mrs. Stott congratulated Border Region on the amount of useful work done by them.
- (b) Cape Eastern Region: Mrs. Pirie read her Regional Report. Copies already handed to Conference. This was a most.... Page 4

This was a most comprehensive report of the Regions work during the past year. Mention was made of Mrs. Stott's tour and its effect on all the people she had come into contact with. There were multi-racial tea-parties - which proved very successful. Welcome back to Treason Trial people - ex-detainees given a party. Attendance at the National Coloured Convention held in Port Elizabeth. Important work done for victims of Pass Law offences. Items of finance, Regional meetings etc., contain in detail in the report. Mrs. Stott thanked Mrs. Pirie for all the hard work undertaken so successfully by Cape Eastern.

Mrs. Pirie was asked at this point whether she had served on the Defence and Aid Committee in her private capacity. She confirmed that she served in a private capacity. There was some discussion as to whether or not Sash members should serve privately on these Committees. Mrs. Stott reminded members that any organisation which had a constitution and on which the Black Sash was represented as an organisation according to our Constitution involved "affiliation" and this could not be done with^{out} the approval of two-thirds of the delegates at a National Conference, and after due notice had been given to Conference. (Mrs. Pirie added here that she had omitted to mention that Cape Eastern had arranged for Inter-racial meetings between school children - debating societies).

Before breaking for lunch Mrs. Stott read three telegrams received from Mrs. H. Spottiswoode, Mrs. Mavis Solomon (Cape Western); and Mrs. D. Grant (Southern Transvaal).

(c) Natal Midlands Report: Mrs. S. Johnson read extracts from her Report, copies of which had been handed to delegates. Drawn up under heading of Plan of Action for the year, including Education, Natal Convention, Brains Trust, Multi-racial tea party, Youth meetings. Pietermaritzburg had dealt with the Group Areas problems of the Indian community. Attended Indian National Congress.
Publicity: National Statements sent in letter form to the Press. Answering questions by Mrs. Stott, Mrs. Petersen (Cape Western), Mrs. Johnson confirmed that the multi-racial meetings are varied, purely entertainment value. This breaks the ice for further discussion. Each time three other people are brought - different points of view. In reply to Mrs. Willis (Cape Western), Mrs. Johnson said that the Youth meetings were multi-racial. Mrs. Stott thanked Mrs. Johnson for a most interesting report and for the work done by Natal Midlands.

Before giving her report, Mrs. Hill (Southern Transvaal) told Conference that Mrs. von Gesau of Pretoria had died. Mrs. Evans of Natal Midlands Region was now living in Springs where she was continuing to do the grand work for the Sash started in Howick. Mrs. Hill also read a letter from Mrs. H. O'Connor of Bloemfontein. Wonderful work was being done in Bloemfontein by three people. Bail Fund Committee being formed. School feeding for African children still going on.

(d) Southern Transvaal Regional Report: Mrs. Hill read her report. Copies had been circulated to all present. There was lengthy discussion about each heading in the report. Under Education Vigilance Committee, Mrs. Rankin's report read to Conference. Cape Western delegates (Mrs. Stoy, Mrs. Robb and Mrs. Petersen) brought to the attention of the Conference the difficulties encountered in the Cape with regard to the signing of the Petition. Mrs. Cluver, (Southern Transvaal) said that the Petition had been sent to PTA and other school committees. Mrs. Willis (Cape Western) confirmed that if the Sash had not undertaken the Petition, nothing would have been done about it as the Cape Education Vigilance Committee would not do anything about it.

Mrs. Davidoff (Southern Transvaal) then said that no one really appreciated Mrs. Rankin's three year plan. Mrs. Stott reported that the wording of the Petition had not been considered suitable.

Mrs. Hill continued reading her report and at this stage told the Conference of the club Southern Transvaal were forming in Johannesburg. Mrs. Davidoff (Southern Transvaal) told of the difficulties of the Defence and Aid Committee which was sorely in need of funds.

Tea Break at 4 p.m.

Mrs. Hill continued reading her report, and there was discussion under each heading. Mrs. Stott thanked Mrs. Hill for her marathon report and for the excellent work done by the Southern Transvaal Region.

(e) Natal Coastal Report: Mrs. Wallace, chair of Pinetown/Westville Branch read the Natal Coastal Report (copies circulated to all present at Conference). Details were given of the work undertaken by the Branch, into which had been co-opted members of other branches from Natal Coastal Region. Mrs. Stott thanked Mrs. Wallace for the excellent work done, and said we were all grateful to her for carrying on and keeping the Region alive.

(f) Cape Western Region Report: Mrs. Stott started to comment on this report. Mrs. Sinclair (Southern Transvaal) drew attention to the fact that Cape Western was not the first Headquarters Region. NOTED

Mrs. Stott proposed that the Conference continue until 6 p.m. AGREED.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8th, 1961: 9 a.m.

Mrs. Petersen took the chair, whilst awaiting Mrs. Stott's arrival. Mrs. Robb to continue to read Cape Western Report.

Mrs. Sinclair (Southern Transvaal) requested that Item 18 on Agenda, 'Next Headquarters Region' be taken next on the Agenda, as she wished to telephone Johannesburg re her standing for the Transvaal Provincial Council election. Her decision depended on whether Southern Transvaal was nominated and chosen as the next Headquarters Region.

Mrs. Petersen asked that this be held over until Mrs. Stott arrived. AGREED.

Mrs. Robb continued to give Cape Western's Regional Report.

(Mrs. Stott took the chair at 9.45 a.m.)

Mrs. Fisher (Southern Transvaal) congratulated Cape Western on their report and all the work done by this Region.

Mrs. Davidoff (Southern Transvaal) mentioned at this stage that she wished to congratulate Cape Western on their quick method of getting statements to the Press. It was proposed that Mrs. Davidoff draft a letter for the Press to ex-Chief Luthuli, congratulating him on being granted a passport, but regretting the remarks made by Radio South Africa and Mr. de Klerk. AGREED.

Before taking the next item, Mrs. Stott apologised for being late - she said that she had been talking to the 'Evening Post' - who were distressed that they had not been given the story about the SABC. She explained that the Port Elizabeth was not present at the Conference yesterday, because according to them, they were short of staff. They had, however, been given a copy of the Presidential Address. Mrs. Stott had not wished to queer the pitch of the East London newspaper reporter who had been present, and had not therefore given the story to the Port Elizabeth paper. Mr. O'liviera, the local representative of

the 'Evening Post' was rather upset, but Mrs. Stott reiterated that she considered the local Press should be given preference as they were the paper that had had a reported at the Conference.

Mrs. Stott, in answering Mrs. Davidoff's plea that we had lost good publicity by not giving the 'Evening Post' a report, said that this was not so. S.A.P.A. had been present and we had done everything we should to be fair on this ruling. There was always great competition between evening and daily papers. We would try to get the 'Cape Times' and the 'Rand Daily Mail' - which is on sale in East London, to see what they had said.

Mrs. Sinclair's request to take Item 18 next on the Agenda was AGREED to. 26 in favour, 1 against.

Mrs. Stott ruled that the discussion on the Control of the Organisation should precede any discussion as to where Headquarters should be.

Mrs. Petersen (Cape Western) to take the chair while Mrs. Stott discussed Control of Organisation.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE ORGANISATION BY HEADQUARTERS REGION:

Mrs. Stott gave the Administrative Report. She stated that the National Conference last year decided that Headquarters Region was to

- (1) Issue National Statements
- (2) To co-ordinate projects on a National basis.
- (3) To arbitrate between Regions.
- (4) Call special conferences and do tours of Regions.

Mrs. Stott said that at first she had not much faith in the usefulness of tours of Regions, but she has come to the conclusion that out of the way Regions did need to have some pepping up. Organising Brains Trusts in a country area, or having a member visiting them and telling them what is being done in the other Regions, and explaining policy, serves a very useful purpose. In addition, if there is discussion of more important things such as the Group Areas Act, Pass Laws, then tours serve a very useful purpose indeed in keeping Regions together and informed. Branches feel that they are then a useful part of the organisation.

Conclusion: Tours are very necessary and useful. They are costly when Headquarters is far away from a particular Region or Regions. It is too long a journey by train for people who cannot be away from their families for longer than perhaps a week, so air fares are necessary. The money spent on tours exceeds the total amount paid in levy by the particular Region being toured. In some instances, cost equal to levy paid.

National Statements: Headquarters Region had found it difficult to produce a National statement which meets the requirements of everyone. When Cape Western had been a Region they had seldom liked the statements that came from the former Central Executive. We had found that the same thing applies the other way round. When Regions send us their statements there have been parts that have made us think 'Why didn't we put it that way'. For example, Southern Transvaal's statement on Sash women and party politics - we liked one paragraph very much and we made use of it.

Conclusion: That National Statements are valuable but primarily to the smaller Regions. We have learned that a statement is nothing like as valuable as a letter to the Press. Statements are invariably cut to ribbons. For the latest example - our statement on Chief Luthuli - only three short paragraphs were used. Letters take longer, but are very useful in getting the Sash views across.

Initiating or organising National Demonstrations and/or Co-ordinating Projects:

As Headquarters we had tried to organise a National demonstration on the General Laws Amendment Bill. Legal advice was taken and then came the ban on all meetings. So we did not and could not have a nation-wide stand. No other Act, equally important to the whole Union, came up. Experience has shown us that it is very difficult to arrange for successful National demonstrations. We feel that the time for organising National demonstrations is past. For example, last year (1960) when we tried to get everyone to do something on May 31st, only Cape Western did ~~it~~ in conjunction with something the Archbishop's Conference Committee. This has made Cape Western feel that the effort expended nationally does not afford any big public response. Southern Transvaal had felt it necessary to demonstrate on the return of Dr. Verwoerd from the Commonwealth Conference, but Headquarters had decided against a National demonstration. Did not think there would be enough public support and were unwilling to take responsibility for a fracas which seemed possible. As a result did not call for a National demonstration.

Arbitration between Regions: The past year had been characteristic by an absence of friction between Regions. Headquarters Region had, as a matter of policy, tried not to interfere with anything anyone was doing unless it clearly conflicted with our Constitution. We offered our advice or point of view when necessary but for the rest, left it to the Region to decide for itself what it thought was best to do. Quite impossible to judge the feeling in a place from a 1000 miles away. That is why we felt that National demonstrations could never be organised successfully or effectively.

Calling of Special Conferences: We found it necessary to call a meeting of Regional Chairs in the middle of the year to discuss conditions that might arise from the threatened stay-at-home.

In consequence, we arranged for Regional Chairs to meet together with Headquarters Region, at our ordinary weekly Regional Council meeting on Monday, June 5th. Prior to the meeting, we had decided on a National Statement and had been surprised to find objections to it from several Regions. This showed us how essential it was to have consolidation before undertaking anything of major importance on a National basis. It is always a long time between National Conferences and therefore it is most helpful for representatives of each Region to get together at least once between Conferences. This again is an expensive business, as most people find it necessary to come by air. However, for the joint meeting most Regions did not claim and some only claimed the difference between air and train fares.

Correspondence: Regions have been most co-operative in this regard. They have corresponded direct with each other and kept Headquarters Region informed of the correspondence. Headquarters Region regret that they have not always been able to get their reports out monthly. Regular reports were, however, received and on the whole this was found to be satisfactory.

Mrs. Fisher (Southern Transvaal) asked whether Mrs. Stott found there was any other work not covered under the above headings. Mrs. Stott replied that she had not. Further she had not found the National President's work at all onerous. The onerous part of the work performed by Mrs. Stott seemed to be from her being both Chairman of Cape Western and Regional Secretary. Most of the work she had to do would have had to be done by her in her capacity as Regional Chair or Secretary, even had she not been National President. If Headquarters Region has an honorary secretary as well as a separate National President and Regional Chair, the duties of the three persons would not be so very tiresome. If the next Headquarters Region could have an Honorary Secretary instead of a paid one, the administrative expenses of Headquarters Region would be considerably reduced.

Mrs. Stott thanked Mrs. Willis particularly for her help - as well as all members of the Regional Council and the office staff.

Mrs. Johnson (Kei Road) said that she would like to say how valuable the visits of members of Headquarters Region were. Mrs. Stott confirmed that Regions were perfectly free to ask anyone from any Region to tour.

Mrs. Curry (Border) thanked Headquarters Region for their co-operation at all times. This was endorsed by Mrs. Johnson (Natal Midlands).

Mrs. Fisher (Southern Transvaal) stated that was more of a 'loose' Region. In the days of the old Central Executive with Mrs. Dietrich and the amount of work that was done - was no longer possible for close work. Not sufficient personnel for this purpose. Enormous onus on each Region to write and keep each other informed.

Mrs. Sinclair (Southern Transvaal) said that in the old days factual papers were sent out - these of great assistance to the Black Sash. Discussion followed on the possibility of having talks typed on to stencils and then sent to the various Regions for roneoing - a record can be kept.

Mrs. Stott told of bad recordings of speeches by prominent speakers - unable to take copies from these.

Mrs. Cluver (Southern Transvaal) suggested that a 'central' printer be found - as prices for printing in Johannesburg very high - compared with, say Natal Midlands. Reduction in printing price would cover the cost of postage.

Mrs. Pirie (Cape Eastern) requested that Regions get National Statements a lot quicker than they do. When they do come, they are no longer news. Discussion CLOSED.

NEXT HEADQUARTERS REGION:

Mrs. Stott asked whether Conference wanted the present set-up continued

Mrs. Davidoff (Southern Transvaal) wanted another point laid down - that Headquarters Region should give clear directives at times of stress. (Oblivious of expense). If South Africa is plunged into another emergency - Chairs to be called together immediately.

Mrs. Petersen (Cape Western) said we must leave some discretion in the hands of the Headquarters Region. No really useful purpose could have been served in meeting during the first few days of the State of Emergency for example. There was no support for Mrs. Davidoff's proposal that Headquarters Region should issue immediate 'directives'.

Mrs. Davidoff (Southern Transvaal) then put forward the following resolution:

As soon as possible, Headquarters Region to get into contact with all Regions at any time of stress.

CARRIED. ONE ABSTENTION.

(Cape Eastern)

Mrs. Pirie proposed Southern Transvaal for next Headquarters Region. Seconded by Mrs. Stoy. (Cape Western)

Mrs. Johnson (Natal Midlands) proposed Cape Western.

A S.Tvl. delegate asked whether, as Cape Western had more delegates than the rest of Conference put together, all Cape Western delegates should not be on this issue. After discussion, it was decided that all delegates had a right to vote. Mrs. Stott proposed that a revote be taken, as, after votes were counted, it was found that there

were 28 votes instead of the number of delegates, namely 27. AGREED.
After a revote, SOUTHERN TRANSVAAL REGION was elected the next Headquarters Region by 14 votes to 11.

Mrs. Fisher replied for the new Headquarters Region and said she was very surprised at the result. Expressed her warmest thanks to Cape Western for the wonderful way they ran the H.Q. Region.

Election of Office Bearers: Mrs. Cluver nominated Mrs. Sinclair as National President. Seconded by Mrs. Fisher. Mrs. Hill and others were nominated, as National President, but all refused. Mrs. Sinclair was then welcomed as the next National President. Mrs. Stott congratulated her on her election and wished her a successful year of office.

Mrs. D. Hill was nominated as Vice-President by Mrs. Davidoff. This was seconded by Mrs. Robb (Cape Western). ACCEPTED.

Mrs. Stott was proposed as a second National Vice-Chair - but this was not constitutionally possible. RULED OUT.

In proposing a vote of congratulations to Mrs. Sinclair and wishing her well, Mrs. Stott said she felt quite sure that Mrs. Sinclair would do her best to combat the difficulties that may arise in the coming year. She pleaded with Mrs. Sinclair to take great care that the Black Sash did not become inextricably associated in the public mind with her political party. We must keep the independent status of the Black Sash.

Mrs. Curry (Border) felt that once we associated ourselves with any party political organisation, this would be the death knell of the Sash.

Mrs. Powell (Natal Coastal) felt that it would be quite a tragedy if Mrs. Sinclair could not combine her political career with her Sash job.

Mrs. Robb (Cape Western) felt that it would be a valuable thing if Mrs. Sinclair was on the City Council. As National President of the Sash, however, she should not stand for a political party.

Mrs. Johnson (Natal Midlands) associated herself with Mrs. Robb's remarks and said that their Region had sent forward a resolution in this respect, but that it had arrived too late to come before Conference.

Mrs. Pirie (Cape Eastern) felt that it was unfair to expect Mrs. Sinclair to stand down because of her party political affiliations.

Mrs. Hill (S.Tvl.) thought the attitude of members who threatened to resign on account of this, was wrong. We must make our members understand these things. Put our country first.

Mrs. Stott said she felt sure that Mrs. Sinclair would do her utmost to steer the Sash along the best way.

A PROPOSAL that a vote should be taken as to whether Mrs. Sinclair should stand or not, was DISMISSED.

Mrs. Hill (S.Tvl.) felt that this point should not come up — only nomination. Mrs. Stott from the Chair, pointed out that we had a National Conference Resolution which allowed office bearers to stand as party political candidates.

Mrs. Sinclair assured the Conference that she would do all in her power to try not to sacrifice the Black Sash to the work of her political party.

Mrs. Fisher (S.Tvl.) thanked everyone for the honour bestowed on the Region.

ITEM 17. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS.

OBJECTS: Amendment to Clause 2 (i) (b) of Constitution.

After some discussion as to whether in fact we could accept the Declaration of Human Rights and then omit "human" rights from our Constitution, and reference to Mr. Molteno's memorandum drawn up on this subject, Mrs. Robb proposed that the clause be amended to read:-

" that we strive to secure the recognition and the protection by law of human rights and liberties. "

This was AGREED to by all.

STRUCTURE. Section 4 of the Constitution.

(i) Rearrangement of Regions: (a) It was agreed that Lowveld Region having sent in audited statement, should now be taken over by S.Tvl. Region.

(b) It was agreed unanimously that the Pinetown/Westville Region having complied with all requirements that Regions are expected to comply with, should constitute themselves into Natal Coastal Region and that this be left as an internal arrangement.

(ii) Renaming of S.Tvl. Region: It was agreed that S.Tvl. Region be formally called TRANSVAAL REGION.

REPRESENTATION AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE: (See Section 5 (iv)).

(a) on a basis of Branch representation: Mrs. Robb (Cape Western) spoke of the dwindling numbers in all Regions. Suggested that every Branch should have a delegate. Mrs. Currie (Border) agreed that this would be a great stimulus. Suggested words " or part thereof" added after words " 100 members". Mrs. Robb proposed that over 50 should read " over 75". AGREED.

(b) This would then read: " that each Region be entitled to 3 delegates for the first 100 members; and to an additional delegate for each additional 75 members or part thereof (if larger representation is required, an additional delegate could be allowed for every 25 members instead of for every 50).

(At this stage, greetings were recorded from Mrs. Nel Green and Mrs. Tertie Rubis, to conference.)

MEMBERSHIP: (See Section 3 (i) of the Constitution).

" that membership of the Black Sash be open to women of all races in South Africa. " (Border).

Mrs. Curry (Border) put forward the reasons her Region wished that the membership of the Sash should be open to women of all races. Clear and concise reasons given for their request. Seconded by Mrs. Streek (Border).

Mrs. Hill (Transvaal) put her Region's reasons for voting against this. She felt that the Sash must do a lot more spade work, with regard to multi-racial consultations; by getting to know each others points of view.

Mrs. Petersen (Cape Western) agreed with Mrs. Hill.

After a very lengthy discussion, it was decided that any decision be deferred for a year hence.

Mrs. Willis (Cape Western) proposed that all Regions should get competent speakers to give the views which Conference was fortunate enough to hear this day. AGREED.

MAGAZINE: Mrs. Berman, the editor of the magazine, gave her report.

Cover: Mrs. Curry (Border) pointed out that the cover used for the last two issues proved to be rather confusing - particularly in the street sales - when people thought they were buying the same magazine. Could a different colour be used? Mrs. Berman confirmed that to use colour would add to the expense. Mrs. Stott suggested that a colour block would be cheaper. Mrs. Berman will investigate this possibility.

In reply to Fish Hoek's suggestion that the magazine be sent to overseas newspapers, it was confirmed that this is being done and that the magazine was being sent to individuals overseas, who hold subscriptions.

It was confirmed that Mrs. Grant would be the new Magazine Editor. Mrs. Berman will pass on to her all the material she has collected over the years, which may of use to the new Editor.

The question of the editorial being written by a man. This was full discussed at the Cape Western Regional Conference, and it was agreed that the editorial be left entirely to the editor, in consultation with the Headquarters Council. AGREED.

Mrs. Stott proposed a sincere vote of thanks to Mrs. Berman for the magnificent work she had done during the years of her editorship of the magazine.

Mrs. Sinclair (Transvaal) seconded this and heartily endorsed what Mrs. Stott had said. Transvaal Region hoped to be able to keep up the standard of the magazine.

Mrs. Sinclair (Tvl.) enquired whether special issues were financially successful. Mrs. Willis (Cape Western) gave details of price per copy - numbers of copies ordered - and ways to keep down costs.

HON. TREASURER'S REPORT: Mrs. Willis read audited statement for 1960/61. All Regions had sent in their financial statements.

Paid Up Membership: 2384 (See Treasurer's Report for details.

(Add Cape Western's contribution to the Education Issue).

Noted that Natal Coastal and Natal Midlands had sent their representatives to the meeting with Transvaal Region at their own expense.

Cape Eastern Region had squared their debt for the Mirable Roger's book.

RoadAhead: 498 copies sold (first edition sold out). Mrs. Spottiswoode's sponsor paid for 200 (second edition). 170 copies sent by him to Provincial Libraries all over the country. Black Sash chose libraries.

Mrs. Willis requested that a letter of thanks be sent to the Auditor, Mr. Chetwin, and to the Sam Newmal Trust.

Adoption of Balance Sheet proposed by Mrs. Sinclair (Transvaal) seconded by Mrs. Marquard. ADOPTED:

Mrs. Sinclair proposed a vote of sincere thanks to Mrs. Willis for her hard work for the many years she had acted as Honorary Treasurer.

FUNDS: AGREED that there be discussion with the new Headquarters Region re. the permission to continue to safeguard the funds of the Black Sash.

LEVY: to Headquarters Region (Section 10 (Vii)).

Mrs. Willis proposed that subscriptions be raised to R2. (R1. 65 Headquarters.

35c Region and 80 cents (Magazine) to non-members.

After discussion, Regions giving their reasons for and against, the raising of subscriptions., it was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that members subscriptions should include the Magazine and be in one lump sum.

It was AGREED that annual national subscriptions would be R2, this would cover Magazine, old membership subscription, plus what is required per head. (Regions free to make arrangements re. subscriptions). 17 for - 8 against - 2 abstentions. ADOPTED (d)

LEVY TO HEADQUARTERS REGION: (See Section 10 (vii)).

Mrs. Willis proposed that the levy be 85c for the next financial year.
Mrs. Sinclair (Transvaal) proposed that the levy be R.1.65 - free Magazine to be sent - to be written in the Constitution.

Proposed by Mrs. Robb (Cape Western) that the levy should be the same as in the past, namely 60 cents. (Seconded by Mrs. Hill (Transvaal)).

Mrs. Willis proposed that if Headquarters Region find themselves out of pocket during the year, that the matter should be re-considered. 20 for, 3 against. AGREED.

MRS. ROBB TOOK THE CHAIR.

ITEM 14. Items for General Discussion:

1. The Black Sash's attitude to Racial discrimination. (Headquarters Region)
Mrs. Stott said that the Black Sash had never taken a decision on this point. Not enough to say that one was opposed to legal, racial discrimination only. At this stage, that is wrong and discussion should be taken not in this context.

Mrs. Sinclair (Transvaal) could not understand this - thought principle had been accepted.

After lengthy discussion and proposals by Regions, it was decided to make the following Resolution:-

That the Black Sash, in its efforts to work for justice for all South Africans categorically rejects discrimination on grounds of race, colour or creed. It will work to change the attitudes of mind which are governed by prejudice.

2. The Sash's attitude to a National Convention and National conference, bearing in mind the difference between the two. (Headquarters Region).

There is a great difference between 'Convention' and 'Conference'. When the word 'Convention' is used, seen as "sovereign National Convention (something called by the Government or which has the backing of the Government in power).

A 'Conference' is something which is represented by as many races and groups as will come together.

The Black Sash must realise that the call for a new National Convention means we want all people in the country to sit around a Conference table to find common ground. Need not necessarily mean that we agree with everything everyone else has done, who has asked for a National Convention. It was generally considered that there was a lot of spade work to be done at present before getting a National Convention called.

Mrs. Stott and Mrs. Hill gave details of their meetings with Coloured and African leaders and representatives at the Coloured Convention in Cape Town and in Johannesburg.

The following was AGREED UNANIMOUSLY: That an enormous amount of spade work to be donePage 13.

to be done before a National Conference is called. Great deal of consultation across the colour line. CARRIED 23 for. 2 Against. 2 Abstentions.

(Mrs. Stott read a letter to Conference from Mrs. Spottiswoode, who is unable to carry on with active work for the Sash) Reply to be sent by Cape Western.

3. STAY-AT-HOMES: (Which the Sash does not support). AGREED to abide by the decision taken in 1959, that if we were approached in advance re. stay-at-home, we would indicate that we were not able to offer any support. When we do help, this would depend at the time on what was done and how it was done, and our help would be given to the people who are wrongly accused. Such as Legal Defence and Bail - especially to dependants.

4. THAT ALL SASH BRANCHES SHOULD RE-EXAMINE THEIR ACTIVITIES:etc.,

Natal Midlands withdrew their Resolution. Carried out Plan of Action.

5. WHY THE BLACK SASH IS NOT ATTRACTING NEW MEMBERS: Suggestion that we come in on a wave of popular revolt - Sash should seize opportunity when a tense moment arises and invite people to join us and work with us. Discussion followed as to whether the Sash should not first try to educate itself before going out to educate the electorate - difficulties understood of smaller Regions trying to carry out our aims and objects.

It was AGREED that if Sash discovers that an organisation is not carrying out its duties, the attention of the organisation should be drawn to this rather than institute a sub-Committee to do the job for them.

Mrs. Sinclair (Transvaal) brought up the question of biased broadcasting by the SABC - government policy and proppganda put over the radio. Time something was done about this. Cancelling or not re-renewing radio listeners licences could possibly be the way of stopping this. Suggests that we run a National Petition saying unless SABC ceases to behave in this way, listeners will not renew their licences. Also suggested that Mr. Silver be approached and suggest that advertisers go into competition with Springbok Radio and produce their own programmes and draw up their own advertisements. Mrs. Pirie (Cape Eastern) gave instance of a listener wanting her radio dismantled - Inspector could not do so, but offered to give her a permit to be re-renewed every six months when her licence expires. This will enable her to have an unlicensed radio set in her home.

After lengthy discussion, it was AGREED that Mrs. Sinclair (Transvaal) should run an ordinary Petition demanding that slanted broadcasts be stopped.

Mrs. Robb (Cape Western) suggested that the Sash revert back to its original methods - namely of holding drawing-room meetings to attract new members.

Mrs. Sinclair (Transvaal) pointed out that people think that we are out of the picture - also a lot of our workers were lost to political party work. Suggested that we invite non-members to multi-racial clubs, take this type of person on fact finding expeditions, and write more letters to the Press.

Mrs. Petersen (Cape Western) agreed that we were not in the public eye - must have things done in our own name - establish that we are still an extremely valuable organisation - reasons for not being popular - fear and apathy. Peg ahead and in time people will realise that our work is vital.

AGREED that we undertake activities in pursuit of Sash aims in the name of the Sash. Try to find increased Press support.

6. ATTITUDE OF BLACK SASH TO DISSIDENT NATIONALISTS: Mrs. Hill (Transvaal) summed up Transvaal Regions attitude - referred to memorandum sent round by this Region. She had nothing further to add.

Mrs. Stott pointed out that by contacting Nationalists and trying to put over....

to put over our point of view was never a question of falling down on our principles. Felt that we could not achieve our aims if we did not try to break down the Nat-non-Nat and Black non-Black attitude.

7. NATAL MIDLANDS AGREED that there was no need for further discussion on the existing Resolution re. Black Sash attitude re. the Republic.

ITEM 15.

NEW RESOLUTIONS:

1. That the Black Sash establish channels of communication through which we can hear what the non-whites want for South Africa, and, in turn, put our point of view to them; and between us attempt to define and work towards a system of good government. (Transvaal Region).

Mrs. Hill for Transvaal Region told of attending Congress of Federation of African Women - given good insight as to their viewpoints. Mrs. Sinclair, (Transvaal) emphasised that we must not put ourselves into the hands of other organisations who use us for their own ends. Mrs. Birt (Cape Western) said that Cape Western Region were well aware of Transvaal's difficulties. Cape Western Regional Conference supported this Resolution. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. That each Region should investigate the curfew regulations in its own area, with a view to having them lifted. (Cape Eastern Region).

It was AGREED that each Region should investigate the curfew regulations in its own area, with a view to having them lifted. It was also AGREED that this in within the power of local authorities.

3. This Resolution, 'That the Black Sash institute a campaign for the removal of discrimination in franchise rights on the grounds of sex alone' was withdrawn by Cape Western Region.

4. No number 4.

5. That country Branches be urged to pay particular attention to the serious overcrowding of gaols in rural areas. (Natal Midlands - Kokstad).

Mrs. Johnson of the Kokstad Group told of the overcrowding of gaols in Pondoland. It was AGREED that the Black Sash should ask Prison Reform, Social Services and the Red Cross, and the Medical Association to make enquiries into this situation; The Opposition to be asked to make representations in Parliament. CARRIED.

ITEM 8. (1960 National Conference Minutes). Propose that these be read in conjunction with the Secretary's notes and any errors and omissions to be brought up next year).

ITEM 20.

Date of next National Conference and Venue:

Natal Coastal Region: Invited the Conference to be held in Durban next year. Invitation accepted gratefully. The question of the expense of taking Headquarters Region to the Conference and delegates from distant Regions to Natal to be gone into.

The date of the Conference provisionally fixed for the last week in October or the first week in November 1962.

Mrs. Lundt brought up on behalf of a Natal Midlands member, certain amendments proposed in the Constitution.

Secretary's notes, pages 23 and 24 to be read in conjunction with Minutes.

Mrs. Lundt to see Constitutional Sub-Committee re. points of English.

DEDICATION: Old one to be used, if so wished.

Mrs. Stott thanked all delegates and observers for the earnest attention given by all.

A very hearty vote of thanks to Mrs. Curry and the Border Region for the wonderful hospitality extended to all and the excellent arrangements made for the delegates, and the Conference in general.

Hearty thanks also to the 'back-room' girls who did a wonderful job and to Mrs. Streek for the most enjoyable cocktail party at her home.

The observers were thanked particularly for coming to the Conference.

Mrs. Sinclair, the new National President, thanked Headquarters Region for the standard reached in spite of diminishing numbers. Very sincerely appreciated Mrs. Stott's tireless efforts, sacrifice of time and energy to the Sash.