

MINUTES OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE BLACK SASH HELD IN DURBAN
FROM 13 - 16 MARCH 1986

DELEGATES

HEADQUARTERS: Sheena Duncan National President
Joyce Harris National Vice President
Ethel Walt National Vice President
Audrey Coleman National Treasurer
Glenda Webster Magazine Editor
Barbara Polonsky National Secretary

TRANSVAAL: Susan Trathen
Judith Hawarden
Caroline Shaw
Marj Brown
Glenda Glover
Gill de Vlieg
Beulah Rollnick
Annika van Gylswyk

Alternates: Laura Pollecutt
Dawn Ingle

CAPE WESTERN: Mary Burton
Noel Robb
Margaret Nash
Sue Philcox
Lucille Kent
Jenny de Tolly
Muriel Crewe
Laurine Platsky
Liz Thompson

CAPE EASTERN: Judy Chalmers
Vicki Proudlock
Shelagh Hurley

ALBANY: Rosemary Smith
Ann Burroughs
Nancy Charton

NATAL COASTAL: Ann Colvin
Rita Easton
Georgina Stevens
Jillian Nicholson
Anne Davies
Pat Steele
Wendy Helling
Sarah Burns
Solveig Piper

NATAL MIDLANDS: Pessa Weinberg
Fidela Fouche
Betty Oberholzer

Alternates: Marie Dyer
Pat Dunne
Pat Merrett

REGISTERED OBSERVERS:

TRANSVAAL: Rose Schlachter
 Christine Roschert
 Carol Bundy
 Trish Milliken
 Enid Robertson
 Beryl Standton
 Joy Harndon
 Marion Spies

CAPE WESTERN: Lyn Jackson
 Philip van Ryneveld
 D. Bishop
 D. Andrews

NATAL COASTAL: Libby Collins
 Ruth Sang
 Alison Boule
 Eleanor Matthews
 Margaret Kedian
 Mary Grice
 Libby Ardington

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1. Mrs Sheena Duncan, Mrs Joyce Harris and Mrs Ethel Walt took the chair in rotation throughout the conference.

THURSDAY 13 MARCH : 4 - 8.30 P.M.

- 1.2 Dedication was read by Sheena Duncan
- 1.3 One minute's silence was observed in memory of Molly Blackburn, Brian Bishop, Matthew Goniwe, Eric Matyana, all those in police custody, those who have "disappeared" and those who have died in detention.
- 1.4 Welcome - Ann Colvin welcomed all delegates and observers.
- 1.5 Roll Call - Delegates introduced themselves

Apologies from Jean Sinclair and Border Region

Messages received from Netty Davidoff, Lesley Hermer, Ann Evans, Jean Sinclair, Gavin Blackburn and Marthe Oppenheim. A telegramme was received from Women vs Apartheid, W. Germany.

Conference messages to be sent to Jill Wentzel, whose husband is very ill and to Doris Wallace who is ill.

- 1.6 Press Committee - The following delegates would form a press liason committee, headed by Georgina Stevens of Natal Coastal!

Jenny de Tolly (C.W.)
Audrey Coleman (TVL)
Ann Burroughs (ALB.)
Judy Chalmers (C.E.)
Passa Weinberg (NTL MID.)

1.7 Minutes of 1985 Conference

Amendments: to p. 15 Item 32 (Paper 32)

- (a) 3rd line "persecution" not "prosecution"
- (b) 5th para - insert "companies" after "Taiwanese"

1.8 Matters arising - Nil

1.9 Agenda Variations:

- (a) Natal Coastal - capital punishment to be added
- (b) Dr Dhomo coming Sat 15 March at 11 a.m. to discuss KwaNatal option - to be a closed session.
- (c) Fri 14 March a.m. session, which was to have been closed, at Natal's request, to be open, as the speaker was willing to have it so.
- (d) Ann Burroughs (Albany) requested permission to read a paper of about 13 pages. Sheena Duncan suggested they summarise the paper and give a copy to each region.

2.1 HEADQUARTERS REPORTS - Papers 2,3.& 4

NATIONAL REPORT - presented by Joyce Harris, who paid a special tribute to Sheena Duncan for her inspiring leadership. This received a standing ovation.

Margaret Nash questioned the extent to which the report reflected sufficiently, the mood of popular resistance. Black people are saying they have had enough; that they refuse to be governed

2.2 MAGAZINE REPORT - presented by Glenda Webster

She thanked members for their support and for the valuable material sent in for the magazine. Among many ideas for the future, she would like a feature on advice office cases. Mary Burton congratulated the editor on the excellence of the magazine. She expressed concern about its finances and brought recommendation from the Treasurer of Cape Western,

that subscription rates should cover costs. A written recommendation was handed to the magazine editor.

These rates should be examined. Sheena Duncan felt overseas subscribers should pay more to cover costs and the question would be discussed further.

2.3 FINANCIAL REPORT - presented by Audrey Coleman

- (a) Conference was informed that funds are received from America, where we sell research material - the product of our research worker.
- (b) Funds are also received for the sale of the copyright of the magazine. This money is to be credited to H/Q to meet some of their financial needs.

2.4 ADVICE OFFICE TRUST - presented by Sheena Duncan (no written report)

Initial trustees in Johannesburg were Sheena Duncan, Ethel Walt and Joyce Harris, with Mary Burton in Cape Town. Additional Cape Town trustees are Noel Robb and Di Bishop.

Cape Town has a second advice office account for their own use. Otherwise applications for funds must be made to Johannesburg, each region filling in a monthly return.

It was pointed out that donations may not be accepted unless a contract is entered into with the donor, and it is specified what service Sash must render in return. This must be done through the Trustees.

Bequests in wills may be accepted and the Trust is exempt from Estate Duty. The idea of affiliate membership for companies wishing to donate money was discussed, but needs careful consideration.

3. AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION

Sheena Duncan requested conference to ratify decisions of H/Q to open accounts (10 vi p.6 of the Black Sash Constitution)

Proposed by M. Nash seconded by A. Coleman and agreed unanimously.

3.1 Clause 9 (i)(a) p.5

The following addition to this clause was proposed by Joyce Harris seconded by EthelWalt and agreed to unanimously:-

"That Clause 9 (i)(a) of the Constitution of the Black Sash be amended by the addition of the words "or three" between the words "two" and "Vice Presidents".

3.2 Clause 9(i)(c) p. 5

The following amendment to this clause was proposed by Joyce Harris seconded by Ethel Walt and unanimously agreed to:-

"No National Office Bearer shall hold .."

3.3 Clause 10(vi)(b) p. 6

The following addition to this clause was proposed by Joyce Harris, seconded by Ethel Walt and unanimously agreed to:-

"All withdrawals of monies shall bear the signatures of any two of the National Office Bearers or of any two Trustees of the Advice Office Trust."

4. REGIONAL REPORTS PAPERS 5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12

NATAL MIDLANDS' REPORT was presented by PessaWeinberg,

NATAL COASTAL'S REPORT was presented by Ann Colvin, including Highway branch. The latter was asked about the fate of Clairwood. Reply was that it was to remain a residential area.

CAPE WESTERN'S REPORT was presented by Mary Burton and a tribute was paid to Noel Robb for 30 years of service to the Black Sash.

ANNUAL REPORTS OF BRANCHES OF CAPE WESTERN REGION as well as Interest Group reports were tabled.

It was announced that Jenny de Tolly would be the new Regional Chairperson, Beverley Runciman and Candy Malherbe the Vice Chairpersons.

THURSDAY 13 MARCH 6.45 - 8.30 P.M.

4. TRANSVAAL REGIONAL REPORT was presented by Su Trathen. This was followed by discussion on the large number of members who are not paid up. Beryl Stanton replied that members who had not paid subscriptions for 2-3 years received a letter asking them to pay or be removed from the membership list.

PRETORIA'S REPORT was presented by Annika van Gylswyk

ALBANY'S REPORT was presented by Rosemary Smith and

CAPE EASTERN'S REPORT was presented by Judy Chalmers. Noel Robb complimented Cape Eastern on the splendid work they were doing.

Discussion on advice office training sessions then followed. Judy Chalmers also referred to the education meeting held in Port Elizabeth where Black students explained their handling of the education crisis - an eye-opener to White women who had no idea of the situation in township schools.

BORDER REGIONAL REPORT was given to Sheena Duncan by telephone, as they could not attend conference owing to pressure of work. Report made by Val Viljoen.

Sheena Duncan then thanked all regions for their support.

Greetings were read from Zara Harber and family, and from Beth Franklin from Sydney, Australia.

Conference agreed to send a message to Val Viljoen and Border, to wish them luck.

FRIDAY 14 MARCH 9.00 - 1.15 A.M.

The meeting was opened by Sheena Duncan.

It was announced that Jubilee Hall, in the City Hall, would be the venue for the public meeting at 6 p.m. today. It was suggested by M. Nash that notes be made by delegates today, be put together with a view to publication. AGREED. Anything off the record should be indicated. It was agreed that Ann Colvin, Caroline Shaw and M. Nash take these notes.

5. A perception of the Inkatha movement was given to Conference by Gerry Maré of the African Studies Dept. Natal University, Durban.

The lecture covered information collected since formation of Inkatha in March 1975, and was illustrated by a chart indicating clearly Inkatha's view of the A.N.C. as the dominant political movement in S.A. - with Inkatha as its legitimate heir. Lusaka A.N.C. is regarded merely as a Mission in Exile. Inkatha claims division arises between their proclaimed stance on non-violent opposition vs A.N.C. insistence on violence to combat violence. Problems facing Inkatha stem from its Zulu tradition, so that cross-ethnic organisations, such as U.D.F. and COSATU threaten its power base; although it claims to have Black support in S.A. generally.

QUESTIONS asked covered (a) the belief that the A.N.C. is a communist org, supplied by communist countries. Recent delegations believe the first allegation to be untrue, the second to be true. (b) the youth movement is seen as a recruiting ground and disciplinary force for the young unemployed. (c) the release of Mandela and the unbanning of the A.N.C. are supported. But these steps must be followed by elections to choose the A.N.C. leadership.

Sheena Duncan thanked Gerry Maré for his informative talk.

ETHEL WALT IN THE CHAIR - SESSION 10.00 A.M. - 1.00 P.M.

COUNTRY IN CRISIS

6.1 DURBAN UNREST PAPER 13 (Natal Coastal)

Georgina Stevens reported. Three affidavits were read and it was alleged that those accused of harassment and violence were identified as members of Inkatha - explained by Inkatha as "sorting out dissidents". Ann Colvin described events in areas outside Durban. Pessa Weinberg raised the question of events in Phoenix and Inanda. In the many recent uprisings it is difficult to pinpoint with certainty who or what is at the bottom of these events - resistance to incorporation into KwaZulu? Genuine or provoked tribal differences? shortage of land for settlement? Inkatha, vigilante, police action?

Cape Western, Philip van Ryneveld reporting (No paper)

The reduction in credibility of Community Councils in rural areas, in particular Ashton and Robertson, was reported on, as these are seen more and more to be closer to the State than to the people. Rise of vigilante groups and their alleged activities discussed. Philip was responsible for initiating procedure to secure interdict against vigilantes, who seem to be openly supported by S.A.P.

D. Bishop reported on Paarl and Worcester and the increasingly intimidatory role played in townships there by S.A.D.F. and S.A.P. - where vigilante action has not been reported.

Noel Robb reported on horrifying affidavits taken at Crisis Centre, Dependants Conference and Sash Advice Office.

All this information has been rejected by police.

ALEXANDRA PAPER NO. 14

Glenda Glover reported on events in Alexandra over the years and its present dire straits.

Martin Manyela of the Industrial Aid Society gave details of the problems facing the unemployed and of events in Alexandra which led to the resignation of some of the Community Councillors there.

Audrey Coleman voiced her concern in respect of the use and effects of tear gas.

Glenda Glover related the incident in which Desmond Tutu, Alan Boesak and Beyers Naude were called to Alexandra to defuse tension there. This was followed by the three men seeing the Deputy Minister Vlok, in Cape Town.

JOYCE HARRIS IN THE CHAIR - SESSION 2 P.M. - 4.15 P.M.

- Announcements:
- a) Copies of all papers to be handed in by Sat. a.m. for member of Eminent Persons' Group visiting S.A.
 - b) Statement wanted from this conference for the Press to cover talks given today. Press committee to do this.

6.1 Cont. VIGILANTES - TRAC PAPER, NO 15

Marj Brown reported. Vigilantes recruited by Devel. Board police and armed by them. This leads to violence against vigilantes. Their action is not stopped even by court interdicts. Moutse was an example of this victimisation.

Annika van Gylswyk (no written report) spoke of the incidents in Atteridgeville, Mamelodi and Mabopani. She reported also on the alleged brutality of the Bophuthatswana police.

6.1 Cont. MASS RESISTANCE IN THE E. CAPE PAPER 16^{*} (Albany)

Ann Burroughs reported. This paper is not for publication, as it needs to be revised.

ALLEGED POLICE VIOLENCE IN THE P.E./UITENHAGE AREA - PAPER 17 (E. Cape)

Vicky Proudlock tabled this paper.

PAPER 16 ALSO INCLUDES .. GRAHAMSTOWN REGIONAL REPORT

INTERDICT BROUGHT BY DR WENDY ORR PAPER 18 - Tabled by Judy Chalmers

6.2 THE CHILDREN'S EMERGENCY - PAPER 19 - Tabled by Shelagh Hurley.

Rosemary Smith reported that the S.A. Paediatric Assoc. requests information relating to children. Nancy Charlton suggested that we follow through our findings to every organisation that can bring pressure to bear on the Government. Audrey Coleman suggested the formation of a committee, nationally, to collect information and to work closely with Child Welfare organisations. Lucille Kent stressed the need to get children out of detention and back to their homes, and to look at the question of raising the age of criminal culpability from seven years. The need was also stressed for psychiatric assistance to children and parents who are victims of violence.

A committee was formed with reps from each region to pursue the task of collecting info. about children, publicising this and motivating possible pressure groups. This was to be convened by Audrey Coleman with the following committee:

Natl Mid.	- Fidela Fouche
Natl Coast.	- Ann Colvin
Cape W.	- Lucille Kent, M. Nash
Transvaal	- Gill de Vlieg
Albany	- Nancy Charlton
Cape E.	- Vicki Proudlock

Statement about detentions in the E. Cape, Fazzie and Jack to be drawn up by Press Committee.

PEACE RIBBON

Decision taken to display the Peace Ribbon inside the Jubilee Hall at the public meeting, (and not outside as a gesture of civil disobedience.) Natal Coastal agreed to prepare posters for display in the hall - these to focus attention on children in detention.

Cont/8...

7. PUBLIC MEETING FRIDAY 6 p.m.

The meeting was opened by Ann Colvin, who welcomed Dr. Beyers Naudé and Archbishop Denis Hurley and all present. A minute's silence was observed for all who have died in detention. Ann Colvin announced the award of prizes to be received by Joyce Harris and Sheena Duncan in recognition of the work of the Black Sash and of Molly Blackburn.

- a) To Joyce Harris - The E. Phillips Randolph Institute Prize, in St. Louis, Missouri, in May 1986 and
- b) To Sheena Duncan - The prize for Freedom awarded by the Liberal International, in Hamburg in October 1986.

Tribute was paid to the director of Diakonia, Paddy Carney.

Sheena Duncan delivered her presidential address, and received a standing ovation.

The address by guest speaker, Dr Beyers Naude followed and was also received with a standing ovation.

Dr Naudé and Archbishop Hurley were invested with Honorary Membership of the Black Sash.

The meeting was followed by dinner.

SATURDAY 15 MARCH 9 A.M. - 1 P.M.

JOYCE HARRIS IN THE CHAIR

Natal Coastal were thanked for the dinner and arrangements for the public meeting.

8. WORKSHOP ON NON-VIOLENT DIRECT ACTION - Organised by Anita Kromberg and Richard Steele of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation to help conference evaluate acts of civil disobedience.

Acts of this kind already undertaken by Sash members were listed, and some of those involved described their motivation and action. The need for preparation was stressed - organisation, tactic, consequences anticipated, evaluation afterwards must estimate success in goal attainment and wider effects.

Notes from the workshop will be co-ordinated and circulated at a later date, to be obtained from Anita and Richard.

SHEENA DUNCAN IN THE CHAIR

9. TALK BY DR OSCAR DHLOMO - Minister of Education and Culture in Kwazulu Legislative Assembly, on THE KWANATAL OPTION-

Dr Dhlomo spoke on the subject of what has come to be known as the KwaNatal Option, deriving from the publication of the Lombard Report, commissioned by the Natal Sugar Association and the report of the Buthelezi Commission. The result of these investigations was that Natal/KwaZulu was one geographic region and should not be separated. He rejected the fragmentation of S.A. and politically enforced ethnicity.

Phase 1 of the proposed option working now in two committees, formed by KwaZulu cabinet and Natal Provincial Executive.

Phase 2 plans for a future Joint Executive Authority to be established by Government proclamation, which will share executive power and financial admin.

Phase 3 aims at the establishment of a single elected legislative authority for the entire geographical area. All parties and interest groups to make input by the convening of a regional conference/Indaba, to be held on 3 April 1986 at 10 a.m. in the Durban City Hall. The Chairman is still to be decided upon.

Phase 4 will be an intensified struggle for Black participation in decision making at the centre - i.e. 1st tier government.

Questions were asked, and it emerged from these that KwaZulu envisages the disappearance of internal boundaries, but that nothing will be done which does not accord with the will of the majority of the people.

Sheena Duncan thanked Dr. Dhlomo for his address

10. NEW LOOK APARTHEID

10.1 REGIONAL SERVICES COUNCILS PAPER 20 (Cape Western)

Jenny de Tolly explained her paper with the aid of a detailed diagram. It appears that these councils involve a devolution of power from central government to regional level, with the emphasis changing ostensibly from racial to economic, which in fact remains racial because poverty, and hence less power, are chiefly experienced by Blacks. R.S.C.'s therefore allow for the devolution of and responsibility for economic and administrative authority but centralisation of power.

10.2 SOME THOUGHTS ON REGIONAL SERVICES COUNCILS PAPER 21 (M. Ambler)

Discussion made it clear that legislation has already been passed to force local administrative bodies to co-operate with the R.S.C.'s. Bloemfontein is to be the first area to be organised as an R.S.C. The need was felt to build up public pressure before it is too late, and Cape Western was asked to produce an information booklet.

Statement to be drafted by J.de Tolly, M. Ambler, M. Dyer and R. Smith.

ETHEL WALT IN THE CHAIR 1.45 P.M. - 6.50 P.M.

Joyce Harris congratulated Sheena Duncan on her excellent Presidential Address at the official opening of Conference.

10.3 REFORM IN EDUCATION PAPER 22 (Transvaal)

Presented by Judith Hawarden. Transvaal Education sub committee refers students to the Centre for Applied Legal Studies when necessary and it has research workers in the field.

NATIONAL POLICY FOR GENERAL EDUCATION PAPER 23 and

EDUCATION CRISIS IN THE W. CAPE CONT'D PAPER 24 (W. Cape)

These two papers were presented by Sue Philcox. She reiterated Beyers Naude's prophecy that all Black education institutions would probably be closed down after Easter holidays. A comprehensive account was given of current situation in Black and Coloured and White schools. It was hoped that Government would meet the demands of the Soweto Parents' Crisis Committee meeting to be held in Durban at the end of the month, so that Black schooling might continue, but there seemed little hope.

Cont/10 ...

The view was expressed that the doors of White schools should be opened to all children, as one of the preliminaries to dismantling apartheid legislation. Reference to S.A.C.'s request for this was made.

Statement on education to be drafted by Judith Hawarden, M. Burton and Sue Philcox.

N.B. There was to be a special meeting to be held at 7.30 a.m. Sunday, 16th, to discuss the KwaNatal option in the light of Dr. Dhlomo's address (Conference meeting to open at 9.00 a.m.) Some members are fearful of Zulu nationalistic power base in the hands of people whose interests are felt to be sectional, rather than being concerned with S.A. as a whole.

10.4 PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ORDERLY URBANISATION STRATEGY PAPER 25 (Transvaal)

This paper was presented by Marj Brown. It was felt that influx control would continue for all who did not have Section 10(i) rights and government would continue to get rid of S.A. Blacks to the Bantustans. Townships would be dealt with under the Slums Act - a new way to introduce controls. It was reported that pass raids were still taking place in Johannesburg although such arrests have virtually ceased in Cape Town.

10.5 FINGER-PRINTING AND POPULATION CONTROL PAPER 26 (S. Duncan)

The new form of identity document is uncertain, but race classification will remain and all races will be finger-printed. All will have to produce I.D. on demand. Control will be more effective than before.

MEMORANDUM ON THE ABOLITION OF INFLUX CONTROL PAPER 27 was tabled by Mary Grice.

TRAC'S INCORPORATION AND DEVELOPMENT-AID LAWS AMENDMENT BILL PAPER 28 was tabled by Marj Brown.

TRAC - REPORT TO 1986 NATIONAL CONFERENCE PAPER 29

Group area declarations have become a form of removal - land is either incorporated in a homeland or made subject to administration by a homeland. It is difficult for the Black Sash to devise strategies to counter new devices of government. Many areas are still under sentence of removal in spite of strong community organisation.

Statement to be prepared by L. Platsky and M. Brown

11. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN WHITE COMMUNITY

11.1 NATIONAL CONVENTION MOVEMENT - Joyce Harris explained her involvement in the development of this movement which she believes holds the seeds for peaceful change in S.A. Division of opinion in Sash led her to remain on steering committee in her private capacity. She read out the manifesto of the steering committee, but felt the future of the movement to be uncertain. Some members felt it inopportune to pursue the movement when so many leaders were in detention, and that the initiative should come from a groundswell of opinion.

11.2 CONCERNED CITIZEN GROUPS- Details of these are contained in the Transvaal Chairperson's Report, the purpose being to make a thrust into the white community.

- 11.3 THE PEACE RIBBON - This idea emerged from meetings of women's groups as a means of individual peaceful protest. Johannesburg has plans to exhibit it in the city.

Mary Burton referred to report of Cape Western Region and a joint meeting of 23 organisations in Cape Town, in response to the State of Emergency.

Rosemary Smith referred to the Albany Report re a group there called "Grahamstown Talks".

12. END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN

E.C.C. ANNUAL REPORT PAPER 30 (Cape W.) This report was prepared by B. Runciman and comment given by Margaret Nash to Conference.

REPORT ON JOHANNESBURG E.C.C. PAPER 31 (Transvaal)

This was presented by G. Glover. It was felt that Sash could help by drawing on the concern of mothers.

Membership of organisation has increased rapidly and it has gained international recognition.

E.C.C. gave evidence to Geldenhuys Commission and suggested alternative national service for objectors to conscription.

SUNDAY 16 MARCH 7.30 A.M. - 2 P.M.

7.30 - 9.00 A.M. A Volunteer group met to discuss further the KwaZulu/Natal option.

9.00 A.M. SHEENA DUNCAN IN THE CHAIR

13. ADVICE OFFICES

REPORT ON JOHANNESBURG "PASS" COURTS PAPER 32 (Transvaal)

This report was presented by Caroline Shaw. Work in the Johannesburg Pass Courts reviewed and satisfactory participation by lawyers reported. A pamphlet on Pass Arrests has been produced.

Muriel Crewe described Court Monitoring in the W. Cape, where influx control cases have virtually ceased, but public violence cases are filling the courts. The findings in respect of unreasonable bail, frequent remands and general punishment by process were endorsed by Albany.

Cape Town, Albany/

Various leaflets on dealing with crisis situations are available from and Durban. Sheena Duncan requested that material produced in any region be made available to all other regions. Marj Brown reported on a workshop organised by TRAC on rural repression with the aid of legal and media representatives. The resultant package would be shared with other regions.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FUND - A conference document was supplied by Sheena Duncan.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE U.I.F. PAPER 33 (Transvaal)

This paper was written by Beulah Rollnick and introduced by Rita Easton.

13. Cont.

The ignorance about U.I.F. is widespread, and bureaucratic obstructionism makes for undue delays in payments due. People involved in U.I.F. to meet at lunch time to iron out technicalities. Sheena Duncan congratulated Natal Coastal for their work in this sphere and the progress they have made with the Department over the years.

Martin Manyela informed conference of work of unemployment organisation Committee formed in Transvaal by combined Advice Offices. This organisation deals not only with U.I.F. but also in respect of school fees, transport, health and working conditions. He made suggestions for relieving the situation in provision of jobs e.g. public works, such as building houses, parks etc. A bulk-buying scheme is also in operation and he hoped this work would be extended to the rest of the country.

P.A.Y.E. - Sheena Duncan said an information paper would be available to regions following assistance Johannesburg Advice Office had received from Mr Desmond McNaughlan. This refers especially to the recovery of tax refund when people are retrenched during the tax year.

STATE PENSIONS - Rita Easton reported on the shocking quota system for pensions in KwaZulu and the bureaucratic incompetence there. A meeting between Natal Coastal workers and the KwaZulu Depts of Health and Welfare and Justice had improved the position, but money had had to be spent on legal expenses in KwaZulu that could have been used for the statutory pension payments.

INSURANCE INVESTIGATION AND REPORT PAPER 34 (Albany)

This paper was presented by Nancy Charlton. The paper voiced concern over the use of stop-orders on the salaries of lower paid people whose jobs are insecure. She has had correspondence with the Registrar of Insurance Companies, the Life Officers' Assn. of S.A. and the Commission for Admin. on various insurance problems.

- * It was proposed that we have an Advice Office workshop embracing all regions. Proposed by B. Rollnick and seconded by N. Robb.

14. ELECTION OF HEADQUARTERS REGION

The Transvaal Region nominated Cape Western as Headquarters for 1986/87. Seconded by Judith Hawarden and carried unanimously. It was agreed that two Vice Presidents should come from Cape Western and that a third Vice President should come from any other region.

15. ELECTION OF NATIONAL OFFICE BEARERS

- 15.1 National President ! M. Burton, nom. by S. Trathen and
sec. by Noel Robb

The motion was carried unanimously and Mary Burton received a standing ovation.

Cape Western Vice Presidents! D. Bishop nom. by J. de Tolly and
M. Nash nom. by J. de Tolly.

Both candidates were seconded by Judy Chalmers and the motion was carried unanimously.

15.1 Cont. Election of 3rd Vice President:-

1. Audrey Coleman, nom. by G. Webster sec. by A. Burroughs
2. Ann Colvin nom. by A. Coleman sec. by A. van Gylswyk

A vote was taken by secret ballot and Ann Colvin was elected as the third Vice President.

Sheena Duncan vacated the Chair to a standing ovation and the chair was then taken by Mary Burton.

13. CONT. ADVICE OFFICE REPORTS

The following Advice Office Reports were tabled!-

NATAL MIDLANDS PAPER 35
NATAL COASTAL PAPER 36
CAPE WESTERN PAPER 37

Noel Robb spoke of the dilemma of people in respect of rent payment - having to choose between possible eviction by authorities for non-payment and burning of home, if payment continued. She stressed also the continuing problems of tenure etc. for people not in possession of Sec. 10 rights.

She expressed concern at the limited time available for discussion of Advice Office affairs.

FARM WORKERS PAPER 38 (Cape Western) This paper was presented by Phillip van Ryneveld. The lack of legal protection for farmworkers was discussed and this was felt to be an area for urgent concern. There is an investigation by the Manpower Commission on the status of farm and domestic workers. A manual on the plight of farm workers has been prepared by W. Cape Legal Resources Centre and is available to all regions. The farm workers' contract provided by Phillip van Ryneveld was discussed.

The following Advice Office Reports were tabled!-

JOHANNESBURG ADVICE OFFICE PAPER 39
PRETORIA ADVICE OFFICE PAPER 40
ALBANY ADVICE OFFICE PAPER 41
CAPE EASTERN ADVICE OFFICE PAPER 42

Mary Burton assured Conference that an Advice Office Workshop would be held within a few months.

STATEMENTS - The following statements were read to conference on behalf of the committees which had prepared them!

1. Overview of Conference - accepted. Agreed that this statement be taken to all regions for use in press here and overseas, if possible, especially in view of poor press coverage in Durban.
- 2- On State Provocation of Violence -accepted

3. On Children - a suggestion by M. Nash that revision was necessary for clarification of some points, was adopted.
4. On Regional Service Councils - a suggestion by G. Glover that revision was necessary for clarification of some points was adopted.
5. On Education - accepted without alteration.
6. On Orderly Urbanisation - an amendment suggested by Ethel Walt that the word "public" be substituted for "community" was accepted.
7. On Violence - Draft statement from Transvaal Region read by Joyce Harris. She felt that differences of opinion on the attitude of the Black Sash to violence had been consolidated and reconciled in this statement and Transvaal hoped that Conference would adopt it. However, discussion made it clear that different points of view still remained.

After considerable argument and discussion, Margaret Nash proposed the putting together of some elements of the statement together with other contributions that had come up in discussion, to release this new version to all regions for consideration, and finally to release it as a statement if generally acceptable. Joyce Harris agreed reluctantly.

Instructions to National Exec. proposed by M. Nash'-

1. Keep historic statement from Para 1 - 4
2. Express alarm, concern about violence in para 5
3. Insert para that we believe we are engaged in a civil war and hence atrocities occur
4. Insert para about means and ends - agreeing with Martin L. King and Desmond Tutu
5. Para to commit us to non-violent action.

After further debate, it was finally agreed to let Nat. Exec. deal with Statement 7, on the basis of M. Nash's suggestions.

8. On Forced Removals - Change suggested by Sheena in 1st line was accepted.
9. On Kwandebele Independence - accepted
10. On Capital Punishment - figures to be checked before press release.
11. On Unprotected workers and clothing - Liz Thompson gave assurance that the facts had been verified.

Statement on Farmworkers to be circulated.

Various statements by Laurine Platsky had been left for Conference to consider. M. Nash proposed their being left for H/Q to deal with - proposal accepted.

16. DATE AND VENUE FOR 1987 CONFERENCE

The 1987 National Conference is to be held in Cape Town, from March 12 - 15.

Joyce Harris recommended that the official opening be on the Thursday night, when it was more likely to get public attention, than on the Friday.

17. PLANNING FOR THE YEAR

There was general discussion of the problems to be tackled and possible means of setting about the tasks ahead!-

1. making the general public more aware,
2. as much information as possible re police and S.A.D.F., in spite of censorship,
3. planning alternatives and devising contingency plans in case of repression of our organisation,
4. ensure better circulation of information between regions,
5. exert pressure on government bodies e.g. Manpower Commission, to release report on farmworkers,
6. Pursue work on Children at Risk,
7. COSATU's campaign needs discussion and suggestions to H.Q.,
8. Cape Western to organise workshops on non-violent direct action,
9. Cape Western to organise an Advice Office workshop,
10. All regions to provide resource material for anti-pass laws campaign.

Ideas for Special focus on Children at Risk:-

1. Headquarters to plan action for Intern. Children's Day
2. Memo on children - Joyce Harris
3. Video?
4. Posters - Glenda Glover
5. Contact with religious denominations - Audrey Coleman
6. Bring test cases to court - contact in all regions with lawyers
7. Approach professional groups/committees in all regions
8. Consider legal quests for compensation - Bobby Melunsky

18. ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRANSFER OF HEADQUARTERS REGION

Finances: Audrey Coleman would meet with Lou Shaw, incoming Nat. Treasurer in Cape Town, to hand over finances.

Magazine: It was agreed that Glenda Webster would continue as Magazine Editor and appreciation was expressed on its high standard. The magazine should reflect H.Q.'s thinking and each issue should be discussed with H.Q. There was a suggestion that H.Q. write the editorial. The overall theme of each issue would also be discussed with H.Q. committee.

19. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND TRIBUTES

Jenny de Tolly thanked Sheena Duncan, Ethel Walt, Joyce Harris and the outgoing Executive.

Mary Burton expressed her thanks to and appreciation of Sheena and the outgoing Executive.

19. Cont.

Sheena Duncan expressed thanks on behalf of Sash, to Joyce Harris, Ethel Walt and Audrey Coleman for their work over the past four years. Ethel Walt thanked Sheena Duncan in return saying that she believed everything Black Sash stands for is personified in Sheena.

Mary Burton thanked Sheena Duncan on behalf of Black Sash members as a whole. She also thanked Natal Coastal for hosting the Conference with special thanks to the Ecumenical Centre for the use of the hall, and to Alison Bouille and her helpers for the catering, and to all who had provided accommodation, transport and other support.

Speeches by Sheena Duncan and Beyers Naude were taped and would be typed and made available to regions.

Conference closed at 2.00 p.m. Sunday 16 March 1986

SIGNED:

DATE:

BLACK SASH NATIONAL CONFERENCE - DURBAN - MARCH 13-16TH, 1986

The Conference issued statements on the following :

1. Conference Overview
2. State Provocation of Violence
3. Children in Crisis
4. Regional Services Councils
5. Education
6. Orderly Urbanisation
7. Forced Removals
8. Kwandebele 'Independence'
- ~~9. Capital Punishment~~
10. Insecticides

In addition it approved certain elements to be expressed in a draft statement on Violence to be circulated by Headquarters to all regions for comment prior to finalisation, if possible within the next 3 months; and authorized the circulation of statements on Farm Workers and on Cosatu, to be issued if duly approved by the regions within an agreed period.

Conference papers and copies of the public addresses by Black Sash President Sheena Duncan and guest speaker Dr Beyers Naudé are available from Regional offices.

STATEMENT 1 - CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

In three days of intensive work we grappled with many aspects of the South African reality, in particular the political contradictions.

These include

the continued claims by the government to uphold the values of Western Christian civilisation and the detention of thousands of people, including over two thousand children ranging in age from 8 to 16, in the name of State security;

promised reforms which either offer hope only to small elite or actually disguise intensified control and repression, and ever deeper poverty, hunger and frustration in the black community, especially among the young for whom the political economy has so little to offer;

the official ending of forced removals and actual experiences of a plethora of forced removal strategies - the incorporation of Moutse into Kwandebele being but one disastrous example.

During the State of Emergency the death toll rose dramatically. Respected community leaders were detained, assaulted or assassinated by vigilantes, or were "disappeared". Democratic Community organisation was undermined or manipulated to provoke horrific black on black violences. Whether officially in a State of Emergency or not in townships either occupied by the army or ruled by vigilantes ordinary people suffer fear and intimidation.

The State of Emergency has officially been lifted but the causes of anger and unrest remain. The tide of black resistance to apartheid is flowing ever more strongly and is likely to find expression in further school and consumer boycotts and resistance to forced removals, as well as increased insurgency. In reaction, the state offers intensified security legislation incorporating state of emergency measures (curfews, security force indemnity), also fingerprinting and uniform identity documents for all members of the population. Ostensibly this is to eliminate discrimination and causes of unrest, promote law and order and facilitate further reform. In fact it amounts to more stringent control of all members of society by an increasingly militarised state apparatus.

White complacency has been eroded. While many still refuse to face reality others are trying to protect their future through strategies ranging from emigration and the export of capital to the formation of vigilante groups and white power organisations and to new expressions of political and social responsibility on the part of business; from resort to non violent direct action and civil disobedience to massive popular support, especially among the young, for the End Conscription Campaign. In all regions of the Black Sash we have welcomed a significant inflow of new members.

Details of our findings on these and other issues are contained in our conference papers, resolutions and statements on particular topics.

Our conference work was encouraged and stimulated by the public address of SACC secretary general Dr Beyers Naudé who with Archbishop Dennis Hurley accepted honorary membership of the Black Sash.

The Black Sash faces the future with fear and hope - with fear because the epidemic of violence shows no sign of abating and threatens to engulf the country; with hope because in our experience in many different situations that the spirit of ubuntu still flourishes. In the African tradition this spirit of sharing, charitableness and co-operation is the essential characteristic of a human and humane society. Its persistence makes possible the buidling of a new South Africa in which all inhabitants will enjoy the benefits of justice and peace.

We believe that spirit of ubuntu would be significantly expressed and strengthened through the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners and the unbanning of black political organisations.

In the strength of that spirit we shall continue and endeavour to extend our contribution to the struggle for liberation and full human rights for all inhabitants of a united South Africa.

agreed unanimously 16/3/86.

STATEMENT NO 2 STATE PROVOCATION OF VIOLENCE

The Black Sash, having carefully considered all the evidence laid before it at its 1986 national conference, is convinced that the South African government is deliberately provoking violence and promoting disorder in South Africa.

We can find no other rational interpretation which could explain the free hand given to vigilantes, the lack of police action to protect persons and property from violent attacks, and the failure to prosecute persons against whom charges of assault, arson and sometimes murder, have been laid.

We can find no other rational explanation for the provocative actions taken by the forces of "law and order" in attacking people who are peacefully asserting their right to freedom of assembly.

There is no other rational explanation for the banning orders imposed on Henry Fazzie and Mkuseli Jack whom we know to be leaders of organised, non-violent, effective campaigns in opposition to apartheid.

We believe that the State, knowing itself, to be vulnerable in the face of organised non-violent opposition, knowing that its power depends on its armed might, and knowing that its guns are of no avail against a population determined not to co-operate any longer, seeks violent confrontation in a deliberate attempt to crush all opposition.

STATEMENT NO 3 CHILDREN IN CRISIS

During the 1985-6 State of Emergency in 36 magisterial districts of South Africa no fewer than 2,106 children aged 8 - 16 years, were among the ten thousand odd detainees. How many others were detained or imprisoned under other laws elsewhere in the country? WHAT an indictment of a State which professes to be Christian and civilised.

Most countries protect their children as an investment in the future. By contrast our children are subjected to the full might of the State. They are being traumatised and brutalised by detention, imprisonment, harassment and daily experiences of security force and vigilante violence in the townships.

The Internal Security and Public Safety Acts are given precedence over other laws such as the Childrens' Act. Juveniles are therefore deprived of the protection which the Childrens' Act is meant to provide.

We believe that Mr Le Grange has shown himself incapable of handling the portfolio of Justice. We therefore call for his resignation. We call on mothers and fathers in this country to exercise maximum and sustained pressure on the South African Government to stop the abuse of children.

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STATEMENT NO 4.

STATEMENT ON REGIONAL SERVICES COUNCILS FROM THE
BLACK SASH NATIONAL CONFERENCE, 1986.

The proposed revision of local government, embodied in the Regional Services Council Act is unlikely to be accepted by the majority of people because :

- (1) It is structured on racial lines and is part of the "new look" apartheid,
- (2) the voting power on the Regional Services Councils is in the hands of the wealthy local authorities,
- (3) the governments insistence on the self-financing of regions will place a heavy financial burden on the poorer regions of the country,
- (4) while administrative and financial responsibilities are devolved to the regional and local level, there is a centralisation of control and power in the State appointed Administrators and the Central Government.

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STATEMENT NO 5.

STATEMENTS ON EDUCATION

The Black Sash is concerned at the worsening situation in schools throughout the country and anticipates the closure of black schools in the near future if the State does not respond imaginatively and constructively.

Immediately, the demands of the Soweto-Parents' Crisis Committee should be met. A commitment should be made to one education system for all in South Africa which allows for participation in decision making for all those concerned.

This commitment can be facilitated by opening schools to all. The Black Sash commits itself to working to this end which presupposes the abolition of the Population Registration Act and the Group Areas Act.

STATEMENT NO 6.

STATEMENT ON "ORDERLY URBANISATION".

The Black Sash will continue to expose and fight influx control in whatever form it is presented in South Africa. We reiterate our commitment to work for freedom of movement for all South Africans, whether urban or rural residents, whether living in 'independent' or 'non-independent homelands.'

We are concerned that the State President's announcement that the pass law system would be replaced by "orderly urbanisation" will introduce a new era of direct and indirect controls on freedom of movement such as the use of the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act, the Group Areas Act, or the provision of land and housing for urban settlements in the homelands rather than in the cities. These measures will restrict people's right to seek employment freely and to live with their families in the place of their choice.

In addition the Black Sash believes that the proposed Identity Documents will be used to control the movement of people and will have the same connotation for African people that passes and travel documents have had in the past.

The Black Sash therefore resolves to

- a) inform itself and the general public on the above issues and fight against their implementation;
- b) work towards an urbanisation policy in which all areas are open to all people and where no direct or indirect controls are imposed on the free movement of people;
- c) press for the urgent development of the infrastructures of metropolitan areas for all people.

STATEMENT NO 7.

STATEMENT ON FORCED REMOVALS

In the midst of all the talk of reform the government is moving ahead with implacable determination to strip ever greater numbers of people of their South African citizenship and subject them to homelands control.

This is occurring in a number of ways involving

- a) the continuation of forced removals "old style", despite the statement by Dr Viljoen in February 1985 that forced removals are suspended. Examples of this are the removal of Brits township and the creation of pressured conditions in Moutse causing people to flee to Saliesloot near Lebowa.
- b) the incorporation of land and communities in homelands against their will, as announced in the consolidation proposals in August and September 1985 and to be extended through the "Borders of Particular States Amendment Bill" presently before Parliament.
- c) the threat of extending homeland administration to black schedules and released areas in South Africa, embodied in the "Laws on Development Aid Amendment Bill" presently before Parliament.

Even reprieves are subject to scrutiny. In 1985 Minister Viljoen announced the reprieve of 52 townships. In 1986 Minister Heunis announced the reprieve of 13 townships, six of which were included in the 1985 list. He also reiterated Verwoerdian policy that families would be moved to 'homelands' but workers would be accommodated in single sex hostels such as Louis Trichardt.

The Black Sash

1. condemns the cynical mystification of the forced removals policy; and
2. calls for the scrapping of
 - a) sections 8 and 9 of the Laws on Development Aid Amendment Bill
 - b) the Borders of Particular States Amendment Bill
 - c) the Group Areas Act
 - d) the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts.

STATEMENT NO 8.

STATEMENT ON KWANDEBELE 'INDEPENDENCE'.

Noting

1. the State President's announcement that apartheid is outdated,
2. the imminent granting of 'independence' to KwaNdebele,
3. the formation of mbokhoto, a group appointed by the Chief Minister of KwaNdebele to keep control and "to stamp out boycotts",
4. the recent incorporation of Moutse into KwaNdebele against the will of the residents expressed in five years of resistance,
5. the abjection and torture at the hands of KwaNdebele vigilantes of more than 250 men from Moutse on New Year's Day,
6. the charges against the Chief Minister of KwaNdebele, Simon Skosana, and h's Minister of the Interior Ntuli, that they were personally present during the New Year's Day event,
7. that Ekangala is to be incorporated "at some later stage", against the wishes of the residents,

the Black Sash rejects this 'independence' which will strip some one million people of their South African citizenship and subject them to a brutal unelected homeland government.

STATEMENT NO 10 ON THE USE OF INSECTICIDES.

Recent newspaper reports on the locust plague have included photographs of unprotected workers applying very toxic pesticides to affected areas. While we recognise the need to deal with the swarms, we are disturbed that it is being done without due regard to the health of the workers involved. Agricultural workers employed in this capacity are covered by MOSA (the Machinery and Occupational Safety Act) which specifically states that workers should be protected from exposure to pesticides, insecticides and chemicals that can be dangerous to their health. The Black Sash urges that immediate action be taken to supply suitable protective equipment and that workers already exposed are examined and that this be followed up by suitable medical experts.