

MINUTES OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE BLACK SASH HELD IN CAPE TOWN
FROM 12 - 15 MARCH 1987

DELEGATES

HEADQUARTERS:

Mary Burton	National President
Di Bishop	Vice President
Margaret Nash	" "
Ann Colvin	" "
Lou Shaw	National Treasurer
Candy Malherbe	Magazine Editor
Glenda Webster	" "
Muriel Crewe	National Secretary
Rosemary Meny-Gibert	National Admin. Secretary

TRANSVAAL:

Ethel Walt
Sheena Duncan
Judith Hawarden
Dawn Ingle
Sue Sparks
Charlene Smith
Laura Pollecutt
Audrey Coleman
Gill de Vlieg
Lucille Heydenrich (Pretoria)

NATAL COASTAL:

Wendy Helling
Rita Baston
Sarah Burns
Sue Dawson
Olga Potgieter

NATAL MIDLANDS:

Kerry Harris
Paula Knynauw
Jenny Bowen

BORDER:

Susan Power
Nora Squires
Susan Deutschman

ALBANY:

Rosemary van wyk Smith
Betty Davenport
Mary-Louise Peires

CAPE EASTERN:

Isobel Douglas-Jones
Pat Coonihan

Shelagh Hurley

CAPE WESTERN

: Jenny de Tolly
Beva Runciman
Philippa Taylor
Noel Robb
Helen Zille
Sue Joynt
Lucille Kent
Merry Dewar
Cassandra Parker
Lu Harding (S. Cape)
Alison Uys (Alternate)

REGISTERED OBSERVERS (STAFF/ALTERNATE DELEGATES/VISITORS)

TRANSVAAL

: Margery Jobson (Pretoria)
Elizabeth van Gylswyk (Pretoria)
Joy Harden
Beulah Rollnick
Glenda Glover
Beryl Stanton
Mila Zille
Josie Adler
Lesley Hermer
Alan Morris
Renfrew Christie (SAIRR)

NATAL COASTAL

: Anne Davies
Ruth Lang
Eleanor Mathew
Anne McKay (Diakonia)

ALBANY

: Cheryl Walker
Janet Small

CAPE EASTERN

: Judy Chalmers
Madelaine Stone
Catherine Turner

CAPE WESTERN

: Philip van Ryneveld
Jean Pardey (S. Cape)
Geoff Pardey "
Jill Dugmore "

THURSDAY 12 MARCH : 1.30 - 4.30

MARY BURTON IN THE CHAIR

1. Opening of Conference
- 1.2 Dedication, read by M. Burton
- 1.3 One Minute's silence was observed in memory of those who have died, or are detained, or in exile, and those who are otherwise restricted.
- 1.4 J. de Tolly from Cape Western, welcomed all delegates and observers.

Roll call - delegates introduced themselves.

NOTED: that 12 March was National Detainees Day, and our members exiled or detained, were remembered.

- 1.5 Rules of Procedure were adopted, after being proposed by S. Duncan.

Press Committee: C. Smith, S. Joynt and W. Heiling were appointed by Conference to form a liaison committee with press.

- 1.6 Apologies: received from Bobbie Melunsky, Beyers Naude, Priscilla Hall, Ann Burroughs and Louise Vale.

Messages received from: Annica van Gylswyk (reply to be sent),
Joyce Harris in Canada, Nettie Davidoff,
Jean Sinclair and Board of
Justice and Reconciliation.

- 1.7 It was agreed to consider any agenda adjustments on Friday, when all the papers were in.

- 1.8 Minutes of 1986 National Conference:

Amendments: P.6, Item 6.1 "Philip was partly responsible for ..."
P.9 Item 10.1 "These Councils profess to involve a devolution of power from central government.."
P.13 Item 13.13 Paper 38 "A manual on the legal position of Farm Workers".

The minutes, having been previously circulated with these amendments were accepted. (Proposed by J. de Tolly and seconded by N. Robb)

- 1.9 Matters arising:
 - a) Statement on Violence, as amended, had been accepted.
 - b) Focus on Children work would be reflected in Regional Reports.

c) Advice Office Workshop had taken place and would be reported on later.

DI BISHOP IN THE CHAIR

2. HEADQUARTERS (GENERAL) AND REGIONAL REPORTS

These reports were discussed in workshop format, with groups addressed by regional Chairs and Nat. President, and a reportback in plenary session.

Paper 1 President's Address (delivered at public meeting - 12 March)
Paper 2 Headquarter's Report
Paper 3 Cape Western Report, includ. S. Cape
Paper 4 Cape Eastern Report
Paper 5 Albany Report
Paper 6 Border Report
Paper 7 Natal Midlands Report
Paper 8 Natal Coastal Report, includ. Highway Br.
Paper 9 Pretoria Br. Report
Paper 10 Transvaal Report

Approval was expressed of the workshop method. However, more time was needed and reports of smaller regions got more indepth attention than larger regions. This imbalance needed attention. The following recommendations were made:

Need to accumulate and disseminate information more
Promote image of Sash
Need for legal and other resources, especially in smaller regions
Need for discussion on plight of restricted members
Need for discussion of KwaNatal Indaba and I.D.A.S.A.

It was agreed that Conference would try to address these problems during the Sunday planning session.

FRIDAY 13 MARCH - 9.00 - 11.30

Mary Burton opened the session by thanking all concerned for making the previous evening's public meeting such a success.
It was brought to the attention of the conference that Lisa Seftel was the only white woman in detention in Diepkloof prison and it was agreed that a post card be sent to her from Conference.

MARGARET WASH IN THE CHAIR

2.1 MAGAZINE EDITOR'S REPORT (Paper 11)

Glenda Webster presented her report, and congratulated the interim editor, Candy Malherbe and her committee on the latest issue of SASH, and she gave her best wishes to Helen Zille who would continue as the editor.

Helen Zille then reported on the four main roles of the magazine, as she and her committee saw them.

- to reflect Sash as an organisation,
- to publish as much information as possible
- to explore current issues and to speak through the magazine
- to look at important political issues in a broader society.

It was important to make the magazine national using material from all regions.

Paper 12 Invitation from Sash Editorial Committee was tabled.

2.2 TREASURER'S REPORT (Paper 13)

Lou Shaw presented her report. Discussion followed on the need for subscriptions to cover costs of each region. Student Levy, or reduced subs. should be made available. This was the case in Cape W. L. Shaw pointed out that the cost of airmail copies of the magazine must be increased.

A meeting of all the Regional Treasurers with the Nat. Treasurer would take place on Saturday lunchtime.

2.3 ADVICE OFFICE TRUST REPORT (Paper 14) not for publication

S. Duncan reported that the Director of Fund Raising had instituted investigations into the accounts of a number of organisations in terms of the Fund Raising Act. So far the only Black Sash offices visited had been P.E. and Grahamstown. It appeared likely that legislation would be introduced to prevent money coming from abroad to organisations like ours. It was therefore imperative that the Sash maintains the idea that it is a voluntary organisation and should not rely on this money. It was also extremely important that the management of money in the Advice Offices was meticulous. During the year, two additional trustees had joined the Trust - Noel Robb and Di Bishop from Cape Western.

2.5 NATIONAL ADVICE OFFICE CO-ORDINATOR

D. Bishop reported to the Conference that at the Advice Office Workshop held in August 1986, it had been suggested that a co-ordinator was needed and S. Duncan had been nominated. After discussion, S. Duncan accepted her nomination.

2.6 NATIONAL CONFERENCE BOOKLET

It was agreed by Conference that a booklet of this nature was useful, and M.Nash agreed to produce it, on condition that Transvaal region compile the Advice Office summary. This booklet, together with a full set of Conference papers, would go to the Archives.

3. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

3.1 Amendment to Clause 8(iii) of the Constitution, proposed by Headquarters, was accepted. (Proposed by S. Duncan and seconded by P. Taylor)

"There shall be a National Presideant, one or two or three Vice Presidents ..."

3.2 ITEM FOR DISCUSSION : Addition to Constitution

This item for discussion was proposed by Cape Western, to be ratified by 1988 Conference. J. de Tolly proposed that an addition of "but known to the Black Sash" be made to Clause 4(a)(iv) of the Constitution.

M. Nash proposed that a proforma amendment be circulated, not later than November 1987. This was agreed to.

3.3 ITEM FOR DISCUSSION: Status of paid Workers

Sheena Duncan spoke to the proposed Transvaal resolution. R. Meny-Gibert's proposed amendment was noted with the following addition "or not less than one, if so desired, whichever if the greater".

Discussion on these proposals would be held in the regions during the year with a proforma amendment being circulated not later than November 1987.

With regard to the status of paid workers in the Black Sash, there was a need to standardise the terms of employment and this should be looked into during the year.

FRIDAY 13 - 11.30 - 1.00

CLOSED SESSION

4. Joy Harnden spoke to her paper INTRODUCTION TO A NATIONAL SECURITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (Paper 15)

4.1 After full discussion by Conference it was decided that:

- group discussion should be held on Sunday morning, focusing on Militarisation
- an information booklet should be produced - input would be needed from all regions
- a press statement should be issued by Conference. (SEE STATEMENT NO 1)

FRIDAY 13 - 2.00 - 6.30 P.M.

5. ADVICE OFFICE AND FIELDWORKER REPORTS

5.1 NATAL MIDLANDS ADVICE OFFICE REPORT (Paper 16) was tabled, as it had been mislaid in the post.

5.2 Rita Easton spoke to NATAL COASTAL ADVICE OFFICE REPORT (Paper 17).

COMPANY PENSION SCHEMES (Paper 18) by Rita Easton, was tabled.

Mary Grice spoke briefly about the work of the Hillcrest Advice Office which was open one morning a week. Problems were similar to Natal Coastal's advice office in Durban.

I.D. Documents seem to be causing delays in payments to claimants.

5.3 Sue Joynt spoke to the CAPE WESTERN'S ADVICE OFFICE REPORT (Paper 19) Their work had now been extended into Khayelitsha and Somerset West on a one-day-a-week basis.

Cape Western's Fieldworker, P. van Ryneveld, then spoke to his paper LAWAAIKAMP : ANOTHER FORCED REMOVAL (Paper 20), on his involvement in this pending removal.

He mentioned the problems of his work in the Boland and Lawaaiikamp with regard to meeting the expectations of the community groups and the way in which the State of Emergency detentions had severely hampered both his work and that of the Civics.

This disruption was being felt in the E. Cape, Border and Transvaal too. Attempts were being made to regroup. Problems exist too, of trying to transfer Black Sash Advice Offices into rural communities, where structures and community demands are different.

D. Bishop then briefly outlined the developments that had led to the opening of an advice office in Knysna, in conjunction with other organisations. This office only opened twice a week. There was a tremendous need for this type of support in the Southern Cape area.

5.4 Shelagh Hurley spoke to CAPE EASTERN'S ADVICE OFFICE REPORT (Paper 21) Having a field worker (Judy Chalmers) in the field had been of great assistance to the Advice Office this year.

T.B. HUIS RED LOCATION (Paper 22) was tabled.

FRIDAY 13 MARCH SESSION 4 P.M. - 6.30 P.M.

DI BISHOP IN CHAIR

It was decided that certain papers related to Advice Office work should be tabled with the Advice Office Reports.

BLACK SASH EASTCAPE FIELDWORKER/COORDINATOR REPORT (Paper 23) was delivered by Judy Chalmers. She gave the background to the formation of COPE (Committee Overview Port Elizabeth) and also explained that as there was no representative of DESCOM in Port Elizabeth, this type of monitoring of detainees work was done by the Advice Office.

The following papers were tabled:

DETENTIONS IN P.E. AND UITENHAGE (Paper 24)
OPERATION OLIEKOL:REMOVALS & ORDERLY URBANISATION .. (Paper 25)
WORKER STAYAWAYS:THE STRATEGY FOR 1986 (Paper 26)
THE P.E. CONSUMER BOYCOTT (Paper 27)
STATE OF EMERGENCY DETAINEES: THE POSITION OF EMPLOYEES (Paper 28)

5.5 Betty Davenport delivered the ALBANY ADVICE OFFICE REPORT (Paper 29)

This Advice Office is also only open once a week, on a Saturday. Cheryl Walker, as their fieldworker, forms an important link with the rural communities.

Mary Louise Peires delivered the paper GOVERNMENT FUNDED R4,00-a-DAY SCHEME (Paper 30)

Similar schemes are in operation in Natal (Valley Trust) and Western Cape (Khayelitsha) and Onverwacht. The schemes are open to exploitation and abuse.

The following papers by Cheryl Walker were tabled:

ALBANY BLACK SASH RESEARCHER'S REPORT (Paper 31)
DETENTIONS IN 11 EASTERN CAPE TOWNS (Paper 32)
CHILDREN IN DETENTION (Paper 33)
MUNICIPAL POLICE IN THE EASTERN CAPE (Paper 34)

Cheryl Walker gave the background to the development of her work, which started in August of last year, when the State of Emergency was already in force. She had made valuable contacts in the area and considered the documenting of her work essential in the present climate of repression. S. Duncan suggested that her work should be produced as a booklet. Agreed to.

5.6 here was no formal Advice Office Report from BORDER, but S. Power briefly described conditions in the Border area (similar to E. Cape and Albany). An Advice Office had recently been reopened in East London. D. Bishop congratulated them on this.

Nora Squires and Suzie Power delivered the paper on KWELERHA (Paper 35)

5.7 THE PRETORIA ADVICE OFFICE REPORT (Paper 36) was delivered by Margery Jobson.

5.8 THE JOHANNESBURG ADVICE OFFICE REPORT (Paper 37) was delivered by Joy Harnden.

Further discussion was held on the problems of I.D. documents and their issue by the authorities. S. Duncan believes there is a deliberate obstruction. Cases are being tested in court. Problems with so-called homelands, further complicates the issue e.g. Bophuthatswana.

TRAC REPORT (Paper 38) and
OUKASIE REPORT (THE CASE OF THE BRITS OLD LOCATION, OUKASIE, REMOVAL) (Paper 39) were delivered by Ethel Walt and Alan Morris from Transvaal Region.

5.9 SUMMARY OF ADVICE OFFICE AND FIELDWORKERS REPORTS BY D.BISHOP

- Problems being brought to the Advice Offices now, are ones of basic survival
- It was important to share premises with other resource organisations.
- Problems of how to train other advice office workers for community work.
- Sharing of resources with the rural areas is important and should be equally available to all.
- Problem of where we stand on welfare issues
- Need to work through the issue of whether our advice offices are oiling the wheels of apartheid.
- Sash as an organisation and its outreach into rural areas must inter-relate.

Mary Burton then thanked Di Bishop for chairing this session.

SATURDAY 14 MARCH SESSION 9 A.M. - 10.30 A.M.

ANN COLVIN IN THE CHAIR

6. WESTERN CAPE BACKGROUND

6.1 COURT MONITORING (Paper 40) was read by Muriel Crewe.

General discussion followed. With so few volunteers in other regions, it was difficult for this work to be pursued, but it was acknowledged as being very important. Cape Western were congratulated on their efforts. It was agreed by Conference that this paper should be as widely distributed as possible, to highlight the situation.

Wilfred Scharf of Inst. of Criminology, U.C.T. made the following points:

The Law Society was aware of the need for legal education of the public, and to promote this, funds were now available to universities to establish channels for education in Street Law. He also suggested contacting youth organisations to inform them of resources and services available. Para legal groups like the Court Monitoring Group, were valuable in assisting to bring cases against the Minister.

6.2 CROSSROADS UPDATE (Paper 41) was delivered by Margaret Nash.

6.3 KHAYELITSHA (Paper 42) was delivered by Noel Robb. This paper was an update of the present situation and developments to date.

6.4 FREEDOM TO MOVE, BUT NO FREEDOM TO STOP MOVING (Paper 43) was delivered by Josie Adler of Transvaal Region.

Josie Adler suggested that a workshop with other regions would be useful, to see what strategies could be used successfully in this area of removals and relocation, as it was obviously a countrywide problem that was ongoing.

see STATEMENT ON FORCED REMOVALS : (No. 4)

6.5 OTHER ITEMS:

Thanks were received from Cowley House detainee families for the flowers given to them after the public meeting on Thursday night.

Mary Burton welcomed the Japanese Consul and his wife from Johannesburg, to the Conference. She read out a telegramme of support from Marion Spies of Pretoria.

SATURDAY 14 MARCH SESSION 2 P.M. - 3.30 P.M.

7. PANEL DISCUSSION ON SOCIAL IMPOVERISHMENT CHAIRED BY PROF. E. WILSON

GUEST SPEAKERS: Ms Zorah Mehlomakhulu
Dr Mampela Ramphele
Mrs Shahida Issel

A minute's silence was observed to remember Sash members affected by the past nine months' State of Emergency.

Judy Chalmers requested a meeting of all Sash fieldworkers/researchers, to be held in Johannesburg, to pool resources and form a support system for each other. This was agreed to.

Mary Burton welcomed the panelists.

Prof. Wilson opened the discussion and invited the participation of all those present, after each of the guests had spoken for 15 Mins. He then introduced Zorah Mehlomakhulu who had been previously employed by the Transport and General Workers Union.

7.1 She spoke of the hardships suffered by the rural communities who had previously been able to support themselves off their land. However, with the development of the restrictive homelands' policies, and the process of urbanisation, this self-sufficiency was no longer possible. The people were now disenfranchised, had no one to speak for their cause, and were paid subsistence wages. These problems, together with a poor education had resulted in drastic financial and social impoverishment, both in the rural and urban areas. Added to which mechanisation was causing more unemployment.

7.2 Prof. Wilson then introduced Dr. Ramphele, who is presently working with migrant labourers in Langa, through the Dept of Anthropology, U.C.T.

Dr. Ramphele spoke of the unequal distribution of resources in S.A., and how the poverty of the Black people is an expression of their powerlessness. Power being the ability to shape one's own destiny. Powerlessness also deprives people of human dignity. Women and children

were particularly vulnerable to this type of social impoverishment. Black rural women, often separated from their menfolk, are uneducated, often dependent on other people for survival and are inadequately prepared for their responsibility of socialising children. Poor people can be very resourceful, and from a position of privilege, one must try to nurture this resourcefulness, in order to give the people power. We must be supportive, but not create a dependency. The children have taken over in a dramatic way to create change. There is a need to strengthen the creativity of children to produce useful adults.

- 7.3 Prof. Wilson then introduced Shahida Issel from the Advice Office Forum. She detailed the retrenchment of skilled workers in the Western Cape, which resulted in insecurity and poverty. She then outlined the social consequences of unemployment, and stressed that relief must be given in a constructive manner.
- 7.4 Dr. Ramphela then went on to talk of the future. She saw society now as part of a period of transformation. We should analyse the kind of economic situation we expect in our future society, along with the kind of social change we envisage. We should make use of our diversity. Politically, our options are limited, so we must be realistic about our political power, in terms of what the government is prepared to allow. Real improvement must come from fundamental change, but we must also accept that the process of transformation is going on constantly.
- 7.5 SUMMARY by Prof. Wilson

Impoverishment is more than the lack of material assets, although being poor "is expensive". The causes are multiple and we must ask who is vulnerable. Advice offices could identify the really poor and could ensure that established rights are granted. The population in the rural areas, deprived of industrial and agricultural support, is soaring. The migrant labour system is still intact and the Sash must try to have the system overturned. Short term strategies include the continuation of battles that have been fought for years. The creation and support of non-government agencies is essential, e.g. co-operation and rural development organisations. As for long term goals, political change is vital but the economy needs attention. The Sash needs to debate the "society of the future". South Africa needs a redistribution of wealth and we must ask what sort of land transformation will eliminate unequal distribution. The Sash is in a position to investigate this problem, as it has unusual access to information. All three guest speakers reinforced the urgent need of Sash to make the information they have at their disposal, readily available and widely distributed.

Mary Burton thanked the Chairperson and guest speakers for joining the Conference and taking part in the discussion.

SATURDAY 14 MARCH SESSION 4.00 P.M. - 5.45 P.M.

8. EDUCATION UPDATE AND REVIEW

MARGARET NASH INTRODUCED SUSAN PHILCOX FROM CAPE WESTERN AND THEN HANDED OVER THE CHAIR TO HER.

- 8.1 Susan Philcox explained the purpose of this session would be to examine the role of education in empowering the people in a community and how this had changed. We should question whether poverty will overrun us and our children and take into consideration:

the effects of malnutrition on learning ability,
the effects of overcrowding in generating anti-social behaviour,
insecurity and the resultant cultural withdrawal, rage and despair,
lack of dignity leading to lack of values.

The proceedings would encompass brief reports from the Transvaal, Natal and Eastern Cape, with reviews of the education papers, which provide the information which enables us to make statements and then the Western Cape as case study.

Susan Philcox then introduced the speakers, one a teacher from a black high school and one from E.D.A.S.A (Education for an Aware S.A.) - unfortunately, WECTU felt that they could not share this platform.

- 8.2 Judith Hawarden from TRANSVAAL spoke to her paper EDUCATION REPORT:1986 (Paper 49), citing as important:
the contrast between white and black education,
impoverishment of white school children
NECC conference in March 1986 and the 13 constructive resolutions that came out of that conference;
politics in white education, including the response to a call for white schools to observe Soweto Day (June 16);
the concept of people's education;
militarisation in schools, including military activities in and around black schools and the issue of "academic freedom".
- 8.3 Wendy Helling from NATAL COASTAL reported on their education group which had started as an offshoot of the Children's group, with a function to educate themselves and wider membership. They saw their focus as being needed in white education - black students were well organised and knew

their direction. They had monitored and would continue to monitor, education in general, in Natal and had established contact with NEUSA.

The following papers were then presented:

FARM SCHOOLS:THE BOTTOM END OF A RAW DEAL (Paper 50),
noting that - the provision was totally inadequate,

- there was no justification for the discrimination
- education should be available to all farm children.

THE CLOSURE OF LAMONTVILLE HIGH (Paper 51)

FACT SHEET:NTS REJECTS APARTHEID (Paper 52)

FUNDAMENTAL PEDAGOGICS IN SAPSE (Paper 53)

noting - the philosophy behind education and how this was funded and managed, to advance Christian National Education, questioning the funding formula, contracted research and the protection of power and class by "experts" and denegation of local knowledge and experience. The transfer of technical skills is not the answer, and it is vital to challenge the social structure.

- 8.4 ALBANY had no formal education group, but Betty Davenport reported from her paper THE SCHOOLS CRISIS IN THE EASTERN CAPE (Paper 54) and quoted some of the statistics, while Janet Small noted the trends i.e.

The shift in emphasis, with attempts by students to control their education,
the resultant confusion and harsh response from authorities,
moves toward Ciskei rural schools to complete an education and the politicising effects this has had on rural areas.
a resolution to continue their education, but with poor morale and in a mood of despair.

- 8.5 Helen Zille mentioned that she had a comprehensive article in the latest issue of Sash on People's Education.

- 8.6 The speaker from the black high school was then introduced to the Conference, and he stressed that he was not there as a member of DETU, but in his personal capacity as a teacher. He then outlined the difficulties that teachers and students are faced with in black schools:

SRC does function although not officially recognised,
teachers faced with a choice of loyalty to DET or the community,
involvement of parents,
PTSA structure was strong and provided community backing for teachers, protecting them from DET action,
school enrolment figures are often three times higher than the figures for which the schools are designed, with resulting problems of space, hygiene etc.
almost total lack of teaching materials, books etc.
non-racial sport is not considered a big issue in the face of other more important issues,
communication with Department officials is almost meaningless.

- 8.7 Susan Philcox thanked the speaker for his courage in continuing to teach in this kind of situation, and reminded the Conference that the DET had known what the results of African influx would have on educational resources, yet refused to face the issue. This could be seen as a further strategy to fragment the community.

The member of E.D.A.S.A. was then introduced - he is a teacher at a high school in Cape Town. He outlined some of the issues related to white schools and activist teachers, and affirmed a belief in democratic possibilities and open schools. He saw the poverty of white students being their lack of direction and apathy, coupled with a perception that their social and political responsibilities started after Matric or in the S.A.D.F.. Activist teachers were faced with a difficult and frustrating task within the Department framework. He asked the Sash to:

continue our campaign, pickets etc,
communicate with schools, support any "awareness" activity, oppose cadet activity, join PTA's, committees and school boards, taking up issues like open schools, and ask questions when teachers leave.
communicate our own ideas to our children and others,
put our children in schools where there are EDASA teachers, and support their work,
donate relevant media to school libraries.
support media campaigns
involve ourselves in the Education Charter Campaign.

He concluded by affirming E.D.A.S.A.'s appreciation and support of Sash.

- 8.9 Susan Philcox closed the session by concluding that it was evident that white schools, which have everything, were losing out, and black schools, which have nothing, were gaining in the present education crises which was confronting both white and black education.

SUNDAY 15 MARCH SESSION 9.00 A.M. - 10.30 A.M.

MARY BURTON IN THE CHAIR

Mary Burton thanked all those responsible for the Conference party held on Saturday night, and she apologised for the lateness of the concluding session yesterday.

The final draft of the STATEMENT ON DETENTION (Statement No. 2) was read to Conference and agreed to.

9. CONFIRMATION OF HEADQUARTERS REGION

Sheena Duncan proposed that Western Cape be the Headquarters region for 1987. This was seconded by Laura Pollecutt.

9.1 ELECTION OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS OFFICE BEARERS

JENNY DE TOLLY FROM CAPE WESTERN, TOOK THE CHAIR FOR THE ELECTIONS

9.2 ELECTION OF NATIONAL PRESIDENT

J. de Tolly nominated Mary Burton as National President, this was seconded by Sheena Duncan and accepted by Conference unanimously.

MARY BURTON TOOK THE CHAIR AGAIN

9.3 ELECTION OF VICE PRESIDENTS

The following nominations were received for the Vice Presidency:

DI Bishop proposed by S. Joynt and seconded by J. Chalmers

Rosemary van Wyk Smith proposed by J. Chalmers and seconded by B. Davenport

Ann Colvin proposed by E. Walt and seconded by R. Easton

Beva Runciman proposed by Lucille Kent and seconded by S. Philcox

Margaret Nash proposed by Ann Colvin and seconded by P. Taylor

Mary Burton proposed that Rosemary Meny-Gibert, Muriel Crewe and Cherry Fisher act as scrutineers. This was accepted.

DI BISHOP, ROSEMARY VAN WYK SMITH AND MARGARET NASH WERE ELECTED AS THE THREE VICE PRESIDENTS.

Mary Burton said that the Sash had acted unconstitutionally over the past year. The Constitution said nominations for vice president should be from the headquarters region. The Natal vice-president had been unconstitutionally nominated. She asked delegates to condone that action and drew their attention to the amendment to the constitution which would be ratified at the next conference.

10. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT CONFERENCE:

Transvaal Region offered to host the next conference in Johannesburg, from 10 - 13 March 1983.

10.1 Sheena Duncan suggested that advice office people should arrive at conference 24 hours before, and compile one overall report.

10.2 Discussion was held on the late submission of papers to Conference. It was acknowledged that everyone was extremely busy at this time of the year, but that it was essential to accept the responsibility of getting papers ready for Conference well in advance. It was suggested that summaries of papers would be a great advantage.

SUNDAY 15 MARCH SESSION 10.00 A.M. - 11.00 A.M.

DI BISHOP IN THE CHAIR : CLOSED SESSION

11. PLANNING/STRATEGY SESSION

Di Bishop explained the purpose of this session would be to work through various issues that had been presented during Conference, and see how we should respond to them.

The Conference then divided into eight groups for discussion on the following topics:

Urbanisation
Organisation and Democratising Sash
Advice Office and Fieldworkers (2)
Sash' relationship with outside organisations (2)
Militarisation (2)

11.Cont. SESSION 11 A.M. - 12.30 A.M.

11.1 REPORTBACK IN PLENARY SESSION

URBANISATION REPORTBACK by Sheena Duncan

A fundamental problem in S.A. is "homelessness" and present housing systems increase poverty, which is being used as a tool to keep people out of urban areas. In facing this issue we need to be fully aware of the control mechanism involved in government housing policies. The concept of urbanisation has been distorted and the term degraded; we need to address this.

Development/implementation of R.S.C.'s and their role in the power structure must be monitored.

Allocation of land is a critical issue

It was recommended:

- a) to have regional workshops this year in C. Western, Natal E. Cape and Transvaal, to plan strategy and pool information. Out of this an information package should be produced.
- b) One person should be present as a link at all the above workshops - the A. O. Coordinator was suggested.
- c) Sash to continue pressure for removal of Land Act, Group Areas Act and Aliens Act.
- d) Address the issue of urbanisation as a matter of "survival".

11.2 ORGANISATION AND DEMOCRACY IN SASH REPORTBACK by Rosemary Meny-Gibert

COMMUNICATION within Sash was inadequate, both within regions and between Regions and Headquarters. The National newsletter and the magazine could be used to improve on this. Regions need to feed in more information on a regular basis to H/Q who should then be the coordinating and resource centre for all the regions. Responsibility of H/Q to keep regions in touch with each other.

ACCOUNTABILITY was vital between H/Q and the regions and within each region, between the Regional Committee and the membership. Regional democracy to be examined. Need to train people for leadership roles, possible use of workshops

Position of PAID WORKERS needed clarification, both with regard to working conditions and relationship to decision making body.

CONFERENCE STRUCTURE needed to be reassessed, to accommodate more discussion and planning on matters of POLICY, so that members in all regions knew where the Sash stood on issues.

11.3 ADVICE OFFICE AND FIELD WORKERS REPORTBACK by Candy Malherbe and
Margaret Nash

POVERTY is the root of most problems, with MIGRANT LABOUR the prime cause.

EDUCATION is vital e.g. information and training, esp. rural A.O.'s, and supporting existing community orgs., although state repression makes the establishment of rural advice offices difficult.

Spread of INFORMATION is therefore important.

SKILLS need to be shared, and improved upon, both within our A.O.'s and in outside communities, as also practical strategies appropriate to dealing effectively with black individuals and groups.

The problem of bridging the gap between available resources in urban areas and their lack in rural areas, needs to be addressed, so that unrealistic expectations are not raised.

A.O.'s have a role to play in "prodding" welfare orgs. into involvement.

ONUS ON GOVERNMENT to handle problems that are their responsibility.

Sash must push for this.

MONITORING work is vital, esp. as repression in rural areas increases.

Duty to DISSEMINATE INFORMATION that we gain access to through our work.

Nat. Exec. and A.O. Coordinator asked to cooperate with regions in organising a workshop during the year.

11.4 SASH RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS REPORTBACK by

Important that Sash remain unaligned as this is our greatest strength. We need to consider carefully the implications of any shared platform, but we must work with non-party political orgs., in the form of alliances, for particular goals.

Need more information on IDASA before any further commitment, but accepted that they are working for similar goals as ours.

More information on INKATHA too, as we have serious doubts with regard to their methods. The INDABA likewise. We query the PFP's inclusion of the Indaba in its political argument. Natal Coastal to report on the domination of the Indaba.

Regional discretion to be exercised as to whom we work with, but care needs to be taken lest we are "used" for other ends.

We should press for 1 May and 16 June to become authorised public holidays, and give support to those institutions/firms recognising these dates.

Sash should not support proposals for a non-unified S.A. or proposals that do not include ALL.

.5 MILITARISATION REPORTBACK by E. Walt and Joy Harnden

Concern expressed at the secret way in which the military have crept into a wide position of power - the "creeping coup". War psychosis of white population backed up by censorship, kitskonstabels, border fortification, general ownership of weapons, influence in schools, women's groups and Dad's army. Black population is increasingly being armed. There is an increase in centralised control through the N.S.M.S. and civil defence is being politicised.

Use of "hearts and minds" tactics in the townships, in betterment schemes.

It was recommended that:

we make a strong statement to the press expressing our concern

we use the forum created by the white elections to educate the public

we use the media more to publicise militarisation

Cape Western to produce a "comic" version of Joy Harnden's paper

we devise a slogan for on-going campaign

each region form a working group, to be coordinated nationally and to share resources and information.

we focus on feeding information to white-based service orgs. and black community-based orgs, that could unwittingly be drawn into the web.

we use Sash meetings to inform our membership on this issue.

.6 Di Bishop then called for brief comment on matters that members felt had not been dealt with. The following points were raised:

DETENTIONS: we must continue to press for the release of all detainees.
(see STATEMENT ON DETENTIONS - Statement No. 2)

DESTABILISATION: Ann Colvin would supply all regions with information on her present research and would keep this as an on-going project.

DESTABILISATION : PAPER NO. 55 was tabled. It was regretted that there had been insufficient time to deal with this paper by Ann Colvin.

EDUCATION: we should press for the use of 3rd official language. Concern expressed re centralised control and lack of consultation.

STATE OF EMERGENCY: see Statement No. 3 STATEMENT ON STATE OF EMERGENCY

Press for the ABOLITION OF THE POPULATION REG. ACT.

Closer examination of the ECONOMIC issues at stake

Continue with DEPUTATIONS TO GOVERNMENT

Issue Statement on Children (see No. 5 STATEMENT ON CHILDREN)

Black Sash's condemnation of the Munnik commission and the tapping of telephones. It was agreed to send a message of solidarity from Conference to Mr. Ball and Mr. Surtee.
Use of non-cooperative action as a strategy

11.7 REGIONAL ACTION

1. Natal mandated to produce information on Inkatha,
2. E. Cape " " " " " I.D.A.S.A.. any information from regions to be fed to Isabel Douglas-Jones.
3. Transvaal to circulate information on J.M.C.'s and 5 Freedoms Forum
4. Cape West. mandated to produce simplified (comic) version of J.M.C.'s for general distribution.
5. Firm recommendation that A.O. & fieldworkers meet in advance of next conference, as well as organise workshops.
6. Response to elections - Sash to hold public meetings to publicise political issues during this period.

SESSION 12.30 P.M. - 1 P.M. CLOSING SESSION

MARY BURTON IN CHAIR

12. Mary Burton asked for clarification on the demand for the release of detainees - "charge or release" or the unconditional release of detainees - the latter was agreed to unanimously.

Headquarters to inform public (via a reply to the Weekly Mail) of the Sash's position with regard to the white elections. (see Statement No. 6 STATEMENT ON THE MAY 1987 ELECTIONS.)

Mary Burton then thanked all those prepared to undertake the tasks ahead and felt that increased cooperation will make Headquarters better able to direct Sash affairs. She also felt that if our plans to share information of all kinds through the year proved successful, it would be easier to switch the balance at conference from information-giving to evaluation and strategy.

It was agreed that copies of all statements would be sent to regions expeditiously.

See Item 10 for date and venue of next conference.

Conference closed with thanks to Cape Western for hosting the Conference and members stood for the singing of Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika.

SIGNED:

DATE: