

MINUTES OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE BLACK SASH HELD AT  
MARIANNHILL, NATAL 2 - 5 MARCH 1989

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DELEGATES, ALTERNATE DELEGATES AND OFFICIAL OBSERVERS:

HEADQUARTERS:	Mary Burton	National President
	Rosemary van wyk Smith	National Vice President
	Di Bishop	" "
	Jenny de Tolly	" "
	Sheena Duncan	Advice Office Co-ord.
	Candy Malherbe	National Treasurer
	Lou Shaw	Ass. Treasurer
	Sarah Ann Raynham	Managing Editor
	Tish Haynes	National Secretary
	Rosemary Meny-Gibert	National Admin. Sec.
CAPE WESTERN:	Muriel Crewe	
	Annemarie Hendrikz	
	Sue Philcox	
	Kathy Ricketts	
	Beva Runciman	
	Carla Sutherland	
	Sue van der Merwe	
	Karen Chubb	
	Merry Dewar	
	Judy Woodward	
	Jayne Beaumont	
	Cassandra Parker	
	Noel Robb	
SOUTHERN CAPE:	Phumlani Bukashe	
	Carol Evans	
	Stephne Henley	
	Deborah Stott	
CAPE EASTERN:	Lou-Ann Parsons	
	Isobel Douglas-Jones	
	Clyn Potts	
	Judy Chalmers	
BORDER:	Sue Power	
	Pat Flemmer	
	Sharlene Crago	
	Janine Spijker	
	Coiletta Waterson	
	Larry Field	

ALBANY: Betty Davenport  
Barbara Orpen  
Bronwyn Brady  
Shirley Maclellan

NATAL COASTAL: Wendy Annecke  
Ann Colvin  
Christine Lucia  
Jill Nicolson  
Sarah Burns  
Lynn Hotz  
Olga Potgieter

NATAL MIDLANDS: Fiona Bulman  
Marie Dyer  
Joan Kerchhoff  
Jane Worsnip  
Fidela Fouche

TRANSVAAL: Selma Bordie  
Audrey Coleman  
Marion Crawford  
Gill de Vlieg  
Judith Hawarden  
Dawn Ingle  
Mary Jankowitz  
Laura Pollecutt  
Beulah Rollnick  
Ethel Walt  
Joanne Yawitch  
Josie Adler  
Esther Basel  
Jo-ann Bekker  
Ann Burroughs  
Glenda Glover  
Jennifer Klot  
Dan Pretorius  
Beryl Stanton

PRETORIA: Kerry Harris  
Majorie Jobson  
Dee Gillett  
Penny Geer<sup>2</sup>+s

SESSION: THURSDAY 2 MARCH 1989 1.45 - 3.30 P.M.

MARY BURTON in the chair

1.1 Mary Burton opened Conference by welcoming all delegates to conference.

1.2 A minutes silence was observed in memory of those who have died in detention, or are detained, or in exile or restricted or on hunger strike.

1.3 The Black Sash Dedication was read.

1.4 Ann Colvin and Sarah Burns, on behalf of the host region, Natal Coastal, welcomed all delegates and observers to Conference. Lou-Ann Parsons from Cape Eastern responded. M. Burton asked all present to introduce themselves and a roll call was held.

1.5 Agenda Review: M. Burton asked the Conference to check the agenda and respond if necessary. It was agreed that Regions would discuss amongst their delegation who was to be included in the Closed Strategy Session on Saturday and respond on Friday morning.

1.6 General Announcements:

a) Sarah Burns, Mary Grice and Universal Aunts would help with residential queries.

b) Rosemary Meny-Gibert and Tish Haynes would organise paper distribution. All Regional papers to be handed to them first for them to distribute.

c) Olga Potgieter would organise the photostat machine

d) Jenny de Tolly would answer any queries about the Strategy Session.

1.7 Press Committee: Carla Sutherland (Cape Western)  
Wendy Anneke (Natal Coastal)  
Laura Follecutt (Transvaal)  
Isobel Douglas-Jones (Cape Eastern)

1.8 National Treasurer (Candy Malherbe) requested that only one representative from each region come to her with requests for refunds etc.

1.9 Apologies: D. Bishop, who would join Conference on Friday  
H. Zille, who would join Conference on Saturday

1.10 Telegrammes had been received from: Joyce Harris and  
Jean Sinclair

1.11 Minutes from last Conference were accepted, taking into account the already circulated amendments. Proposed by M. Crewe and seconded by J. de Tolly.

1.12 Matters arising: Nil

## 2. HEADQUARTERS REPORTS:

2.1 NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS REPORT - PAPER NO. 2. was tabled. Thanks to T. Haynes for compiling the report.

Note: Trial of 13 - a decision had been taken to continue selling and distributing.

M. Burton paid tribute to all on the National Executive for their contributions.

2.2 NATIONAL TREASURER'S REPORT - PAPER NO. 3 presented by C. Malherbe. It was agreed that a group should meet on Sat. lunchtime to discuss the question of levies and cost of National. C. Malherbe, T. Haynes, A. Coleman, Betty Davenport, Beryl Stanton and P. Krynauw to form group.

2.3 MAGAZINE COMMITTEE REPORT - PAPER NO. 4 was presented by C. Malherbe. She introduced S.A. Raynham as the incoming representative of the Magazine Committee on the National Executive. S. Duncan thanked the Mag. Comm. for the excellent quality of the magazine.

Distribution of the magazine was still problematic and the Committee was seriously investigating the possibility of centrally distributing the magazine from Cape Town, to all regions.

C. Malherbe then motivated the MAGAZINE RESOLUTION which resolved that production of the magazine be reduced from four copies per year to three. Much discussion followed due to concern of regions about this step. It was agreed to hold over discussion until Sunday when the Regional Magazine Reps. would have had a chance to meet (Sat. lunchtime) for further discussion.

REGIONAL CHAIRPERSONS' MEETING: B. Runciman motivated for this meeting and it was agreed that all regional chairpersons would meet at 8 a.m. on Saturday morning.

## 3. REGIONAL REPORTS

ROSEMARY VAN WYK SMITH in the chair

3.1 ALBANY REGIONAL REPORT - PAPER NO.5 presented by Rosemary van wyk Smith. S. van der Merwe proposed sending good wishes from conference to Janet Small and Janet Cherry who, because of their restrictions, could not be at conference. Agreed to unanimously. Mary Jankowitch commended the smaller regions on their wonderful efforts.

3.2 SOUTHERN CAPE REPORT - Part of PAPER NO. 6 C. Evans from Plettenberg Bay presented the report. S. Cape was still a branch of Cape Western although there had been some discussion about

forming a separate region.

3.3 CAPE WESTERN REGIONAL REPORT - PAPER NO. 6 presented by B. Runciman. Two amendments to the report were tabled: S. Cape Br. Report had been omitted from contents page and list of Cape W.'s Executive and Regional Council had also been omitted. B. Runciman apologised for these omissions.

TEA BREAK 3.30 - 4.00 p.m.

SESSION: THURSDAY 2 MARCH 1989 4.00 - 5.30 P.M.

ROSEMARY VAN WYK SMITH IN THE CHAIR

There was a request from Transvaal that the Conference seating be rearranged and it was agreed that another arrangement would be made before the start of the Saturday morning session.

Attendance at Strategy Session: It was finally agreed that all delegates, official Black Sash observers and staff members would take part.

3. REGIONAL REPORTS CONT.

3.4 BORDER REGIONAL REPORT - PAPER NO. 7 was presented by S. Power.

3.5 CAPE EASTERN REGIONAL REPORT - PAPER NO. 8 presented by I. Douglas-Jones.

Cape Eastern felt strongly that the issue of separate editions of newspapers for different reading sectors should be taken up by Black Sash. It was seen as contributory to skewed perceptions in white and black constituencies. The region agreed to circulate an information sheet to delegates.

J. Chalmers was applauded by Conference for having been voted "Woman of the Year" by the Union of Jewish Women.

3.6 TRANSVAAL REGIONAL REPORT - PAPER NO. 9 was presented by Ethel Walt.

3.7 PRETORIA BRANCH REPORT - PAPER NO. 10 was presented by K. Harris. The branch was considering forming itself into a separate region. National Executive agreed to investigate how best to do this and liaise with Pretoria Branch.

It was agreed to continue the Regional Reportbacks on Sat. a.m.

CONFERENCE ADJOURNED AT 5.40 P.M.

The Conference was formally opened at a public meeting held at the Jubilee Hall, City Hall, Durban. Speakers were National President Mary Burton and Wendy Leeb from University of Natal (PMB) Dept of Adult Education.

A party was held afterwards for Black Sash delegates and invited guests.

SESSION: FRIDAY 3 MARCH 9.00 - 10.30 A.M.

ROSEMARY VAN WYK SMITH in the chair

Thanks were expressed to Natal Coastal for organising the public meeting and the party. Mary Burton was congratulated on her opening Presidential Address.

### 3. REGIONAL REPORTS CONT.

3.8 NATAL MIDLANDS REGIONAL REPORT - PAPER NO. 11 presented by Joan Kerchhoff.

3.9 NATAL COASTAL REGIONAL REPORT - PAPER NO. 12 presented by A. Colvin. Apologies for omission of Christine Lucia's name from list of committee members for the region.

### GENERAL:

R. van wyk Smith informed Conference that Albany had produced a pamphlet on the Black Sash, which could be ordered from them.

### 4. ADVICE OFFICE REPORTBACKS

SHEENA DUNCAN in the chair

S. Duncan reported on a highly successful workshop held on Wednesday 1 March at Mariannhill. Each region was asked to present a brief report to Conference.

4.1 NATAL MIDLANDS ADVICE OFFICE REPORT - PAPER NO. 13 presented by J. Worsnip. There were 3 other A.O.'s in P.M.B. so numbers had dropped slightly. This year SACHED office closed and a worker was detained, and Ashdown office closed and a leader killed.

4.2 NATAL COASTAL ADVICE OFFICE REPORT - PAPER NO. 14 presented by Lynn Hotz. New regulations for KwaZulu Disability Grants therefore payments difficult to get. Cut-off level of R45,00 for receiving pension.

4.3 CAPE WESTERN ADVICE OFFICE REPORT - PAPER NO. 15 presented by S. van der Merwe. 30th anniversary of A.C. celebrated in Dec. 1988.

4.4 KHAYELITSHA ADVICE OFFICE REPORT - PAPER NO. 16 presented by S. van der Merwe on behalf of Nomahlube Nabe.

4.5 RURAL ADVICE OFFICE WORKER TRAINING PROGRAMME - PAPER NO. 17 presented by S. van der Merwe.

4.6 Kathy Ricketts spoke briefly about the work of the Somerset West Advice Office which has been operating for 1 year.

4.7 CAPE EASTERN ADVICE OFFICE REPORT - PAPER NO. 18 presented by J. Chalmers. Shortage of case workers because of increase in caseload. Open day very successful for public and recruiting of voluntary workers. Mention was made of the Uitenhage Community Advice Office.

4.8 BORDER ADVICE OFFICE REPORT - PAPER NO. 19 presented by L. Field. Numbers increasing greatly and now open every week day. Types of problems changed - everyone fighting for survival through U.I.F. etc.

4.9 JOHANNESBURG ADVICE OFFICE REPORT - PAPER 20 presented by D. Pretorius. Labour related cases had increased the most. People desparately seeking grants and money owing in order to survive. Effects of deregulation need to be exposed.

4.10 ADVICE OFFICE TRAINING PROGRAMME 1988 - PAPER NO. 21 was tabled. Soweto office closed.

4.11 PRETORIA ADVICE OFFICE REPORT - PAPER NO. 22 was presented by D. Gillett. Office had new structure and paid supervisor (D. Gillett) and 2 paid interpreters instead of relying on few volunteer workers.

4.12 ALBANY ADVICE OFFICE REPORT - PAPER NO. 23 was presented by Betty Davenport. Most cases related to poverty. Detainees are a major concern at present.

4.13 KNYSNA ADVICE OFFICE REPORT - PAPER NO. 24 was presented by P. Bukashe. Work expanding and hoping to open two offices in townships.

T E A    B R E A K    10.30 A.M. - 11.00 A.M.

SESSION:    FRIDAY    3 MARCH 1989 - 11.00 A.M. - 1 P.M.

DI BISHOP in the chair

5. RURAL OVERVIEW

5.1 FIELDWORKERS REPORTS:

5.1.1. FIELDWORK IN THE ALBANY REGION - PAPER NO. 25 was tabled in the enforced absence of Janet Small whose restriction order forbade her to work with the Black Sash.

5.1.2 PIETERMARITZBURG - no written document. Fiona Bulman talked about the violent conflict and civil war in the Pietermaritzburg area.

IT WAS AGREED that Wendy Leeb's paper delivered to a conference in Harare, would be circulated to all regions as well as John Aitchison's analysis. (Copies of the latter would be sold at this Conference.)

Other Natal delegates described how the conflict had spread far beyond Pietermaritzburg and was engulfing the whole of the Durban area and the hinterland.

The United Nations had for the first time recognised internal displaces as having refugee status and will make financial assistance available.

IT WAS AGREED that a group from the conference would meet on Friday evening after supper to work through possible actions.

5.1.3 CAPE WESTERN FIELDWORKER'S REPORT - PAPER NO. 26

This report was presented by Annemarie Hendrikz. She highlighted the aspect of how too much money poured into projects could be destructive where no strong community based structures existed to manage it. She tried to focus her work on women who bear the brunt of the repressive system. Women were "second-class" in the struggle here as elsewhere. Empowerment carries its own traps in that those so empowered do not always help to empower others, but use it to keep power over them. The question of empowerment needs to be examined.

5.1.4 CAPE EASTERN FIELDWORKER'S REPORT - PAPER NO. 27

This report was presented by J. Chalmers. She also drew attention to the destructive potential of too much money. She noted the fact that the youth of the communities who had previously been there to strengthen and organise, were now all in detention, or had become vigilantes.

5.1.5 BORDER FIELDWORKER'S REPORT - (SEE PAPER NO. 19)

L. Field reported briefly. He noted that organisation in rural areas had survived the State of Emergency in a way which many urban communities had not. He spoke of problems in Potsdam where



the representative committee became dependent upon the support group and almost severed connections with the community. Again availability of money was part of the problem.

#### 5.1.6 SOUTHERN CAPE FIELDWORKER'S REPORT - (SEE PAPER NO. 24)

P. Bukashe spoke to his previous report. Again, problems of money being incorrectly used had led to problems. The S. Cape had few resources and support structures e.g. progressive doctors or lawyers. The Chairperson welcomed Phumlani Bukashe to his first National Conference.

#### 5.1.7 T.R.A.C. - NO PAPER

J. Yawitch reported. TRAC was now 5 years old and going through a period of assessment. The Khotso House bomb had disrupted their work severely and they were short-staffed and training was necessary because they had not been able to pick up on a number of rural crises. Success achieved in overturning the evictions of farm workers by approaching the Courts, may now be a thing of the past, with the new Prevention of Illegal Squatting Amendment Act in Feb. 89. Brits and Koster are both still destined for removal. Problems now due to members of communities being local councillors and attempts being made by authorities to co-opt the councillors. Since the attempted coup in Bophuthatswana, many different communities had brought a variety of problems to TRAC. Mogopa was still in crisis, with another court action pending on 17 March 1989.

The Chairperson paid tribute to the fieldworkers and thanked them for the enormous contribution they are making to the work of the Black Sash.

#### 5.2 REMOVALS, HOMELESSNESS AND SQUATTING

(It was agreed that these three items would be treated together as the overlap between them was so great.)

#### 5.2.1 TRANSVAAL URBAN REMOVALS AND HOMELESSNESS GROUP - PAPER NO. 28 - "NEARLY AN A - Z GUIDE TO HOMELESSNESS ON THE WITWATERSRAND"

J. Adler spoke on the current position on the Witwatersrand, with the aid of a map of the area.

#### 5.2.2 SQUATTING IN THE PERI-URBAN AREAS OF METROPOLITAN CAPE TOWN - PAPER NO. 29

This paper was presented by J. de Tolly. She pointed out that

squatting had become a security issue and was being handled in the W. Cape by the J.M.C.

5.2.3 HOUSING SURVEY OF FACTORY WORKERS IN EAST LONDON -  
PAPER NO. 30

This paper was presented by S. Power and covered a special survey conducted by the region. She contrasted the situations and costs in Mdantsane, in the Ciskei, with Duncan Village which was in South Africa.

5.2.4 THE CRISIS OF AFRICAN HOUSING IN PORT ELIZABETH -  
"ALL ROADS LEAD TO MOTHERWELL" - PAPER NO. 31

J. Chalmers spoke to this paper written by Melanie Preddy. 44% of the homeless in Port Elizabeth cannot afford any of the current options offered in the P.E. area. They are to be removed to Motherwell - further away from other squatting areas where they currently live.

The Chairperson asked J. Chalmers to convey Conference's thanks to Melanie Preddy for her excellent paper.

L U N C H B R E A K 1 - 2 P.M.

(MAGAZINE REPS. MEETING and MEETING TO DISCUSS NATIONAL FINANCES)

SESSION: FRIDAY 3 MARCH 1989 2.30 - 3.30 P.M.

DI BISHOP in the Chair

5.2 REMOVALS, HOMELESSNESS AND SQUATTING CONT.

5.2.5 BRAKLAAGTE - RESISTING INCORPORATION - PAPER NO. 32

This paper was presented by J. Yawitch

5.2.6 THE INCORPORATION OF EAST PEELTON - "WE WILL NEVER BE CISKEIANS" - PAPER NO. 33

This paper was presented by L. Field.

D. Bishop congratulated everyone on the time and effort that they had put into their papers. She noted that the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936 were still in effect.

## M. BURTON IN THE CHAIR

It was agreed to send a message of sympathy from the Conference to Mr Mkwazi, on the death of his wife. A card was handed round for signature.

### 6. REPRESSION MONITORING

M. Burton explained to the Conference that the following feed-in and papers would help inform the discussion for the Saturday Strategy Session.

Transvaal Region had produced an information booklet "YOU AND YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITIES" which had been widely distributed throughout the regions.

#### 6.1. THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IN THE E. CAPE - "RE-INSTATING CONTROL TO MANAGE REFORM" - PAPER NO. 34

B. Brody presented her paper and asked that special attention be paid to the tables at the back of this paper.

#### 6.2 NATAL COASTAL REGION - REPRESSION MONITORING GROUP REPORT BULLETIN NO. 3 - PAPER NO. 35

A. van Kotze spoke to her paper. It was confirmed that although copies of Bulletin no. 1 and 2 had been sent to the Regions, they had not been received.

#### 6.3 AN ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT IN INANDA - PAPER NO. 36

This paper was presented by H. Hughes

6.4 A. Coleman then gave an informal update on the detention situation, with particular attention to the present hunger-strike. She noted that whilst many people were being released, others were at the same time, being taken into detention.

It was agreed to prepare a statement from Conference responding to the hunger strike. (STATEMENT NO. 1) A small group agreed to work on this and bring it back to conference.

T E A B R E A K                    3.30 - 4.00 P.M.

SESSION: FRIDAY 3 MARCH 1989                    4.00 - 5.30 P.M.

MARY BURTON    in the chair

6. REPRESSION MONITORING CONT.

6.5 CAPE WESTERN COURT MONITORING REPORT - PAPER NO. 37

M. Crewe spoke to her paper

6.6 ALBANY COURT MONITORING REPORT - PAPER NO. 38

B. Orpen spoke to her report

6.7 TRANSVAAL COURT MONITORING REPORT - PAPER NO. 39

A. Coleman spoke to her report

M. Burton then thanked all the court monitors and their teams for their contribution. The work was extremely important and their findings were continually being used, both here and abroad for information and statistical purposes.

7. EDUCATION

J. DE TOLLY IN THE CHAIR

7.1 TRANSVAAL EDUCATION REPORT - PAPER NO. 40

Presented by J. Hawarden. She stressed the continued importance of monitoring the education situation, as trouble in the schools was not getting through to the public because the media were not picking up on it. She drew attention to the statistics at the end of the paper.

7.2 THE STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL IN EDUCATION - A W. CAPE UPDATE  
PAPER NO. 41

The paper was presented by S. Philcox who pointed out that S. van der Merwe and M. Probyn had also contributed to the paper.

She then handed in 4 other papers as resource material, one of each being given to the Regional Chairs.

In Cape Town an education forum had been set up to monitor the educational crises. S. Philcox then drew attention to the Dept. of Educ. & Training's management and committee structures, the increased parent involvement in education and the effects of the Harare talks on educational bodies in the W. Cape.

7.3 WENDY ANNEKE SPOKE BRIEFLY ON THE EDUCATION SITUATION IN NATAL COASTAL AREA. There was no paper and there had been no Education Group in their region last year. Severe problems had been experienced in getting Matric results, even at this late stage, with resulting problems for students wanting to go on to tertiary education. Headmasters had been targets for attacks by the community.

Noted that Glenwood High School in Durban had declared itself a multi-racial school! The Black Sash was working with Idasa on

education.

7.4 BETTY DAVENPORT REPORTED FROM ALBANY - NO PAPER. They are monitoring the schools in their area and noted that the start of the school year had been problematic. Results were also late in Albany and matriculants who failed were not being readmitted and there was much threatening and intimidation of pupils.

7.5 J. Yawitch from Transvaal reported on the boycott of 4 schools in Botshabelo. There were no books and non-admittance of pupils was common.

J. de Tolly thanked everyone for their contributions, at the close of the session on Education.

W. Anneke then read out the STATEMENT ON THE HUNGER-STRIKE for the press. It was accepted with acclaim by the Conference.  
(Statement No. 1)

M. Burton asked for more time on Saturday morning's agenda for the Advice Office Trust reportback.

The Resolution re office bearers and employment structures, from the E. Cape would be discussed in this Saturday session.

MEETING OF THE ADVICE OFFICE TRUSTEES TO BE HELD AT 7.30 P.M.

as also a MEETING TO DISCUSS THE NATAL CONFLICT - anyone interested was invited to join this group.

For those not involved in these two meetings, an interesting video would be shown.

THE CONFERENCE THEN ADJOURNED AT 5.40 P.M.

SESSION: SATURDAY 4 MARCH 1989 9.30 - 10.30 A.M.

D. BISHOP IN THE CHAIR

8. ADVICE OFFICE TRUST

8.1 'ADVICE OFFICE TRUST REPORT - PAPER NO. 42

This report was presented by S. Duncan.

8.2 SUMMARY OF FUNDS - PAPER NO. 43

This paper was presented by Lacon Stanton who also presented graphic detail of the Trust's income, expenditure.

regional allocations and future budget requirements. The Chair expressed thanks to Lacon Stanton for the detailed report and for his dedication to the Black Sash.

The Trust now employed 39 people and it was necessary to set up a pension fund. After some discussion, the Conference agreed in principle to the setting up of a pension fund. Draft rules were already being worked on and would be available soon and would be circulated to all regions for comment.

### 8.3 DRAFT CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT - PAPER NO. 44

This paper was presented by S. Duncan. The employment guidelines contained in it were already in practice in the Transvaal Advice Office. She suggested that all regions study it carefully, although it might not be appropriate for everyone. This paper was to be read in conjunction with

### JOHANNESBURG MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE SALARY SCALES FOR WORKERS - PAPER NO. 45

### 8.4 DISCLOSURE OF FOREIGN FUNDING BILL - PAPER NO. 46

S. Duncan presented this paper. Much discussion followed as to the effects of the Bill, about to become an Act, on the work of the Black Sash and other organisations. Statements against the bill by S.A.C.C. and S.A.C.B.C. were noted.

It was agreed that we should make a statement condemning the Bill and supporting the stand taken by these organisations. Press Committee would draft a statement and bring it to Conference later. (Resolution No. 4)

M. Burton thanked S. Duncan for the investigative work she had done on the bill and for bringing to our attention the serious implications of it.

## 9. GROUP AREAS

### 9.1 THE GROUP AREAS AND THE WESTVILLE RESIDENTS SUPPORT GROUP PAPER NO. 47

This paper was presented by N. Gering from Natal Coastal.

T E A    B R E A K    10.30 - 11.00 A.M.

MARY BURTON IN THE CHAIR

9. GROUP AREAS CONT.

9.2 GROUP AREAS - AN OPEN CITY INITIATIVE - PAPER NO. 48

This paper was presented by H. Zille from Cape Town. D. Erlank had also contributed towards the paper. The paper should be read in conjunction with

DRAFT POSITION PAPER - OPEN CITY INITIATIVE PAPER NO. 49

J. Yawitch mentioned the Open City campaign in Johannesburg. The Open City Initiative was separate from the Cape Town City Council's efforts at an "open city".

S. Browde spoke about the Group Areas support committee in Johannesburg. They were attempting to get legal representation for anyone who was convicted under the Act.

10. CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

10.1 "MAY THE LORD HAVE MERCY ON YOUR SOUL" - PAPER NO. 50  
(Albany Capital Punishment Report)

B. Orpen presented her report on research she had done in the Albany area. The aim of her report had been to highlight and publicise prisoners on death row. A large number of death row prisoners came from the E. Cape. The S.A. Soc. for the Abolition of the Death Penalty was to be launched on March 16 in Grahamstown.

10.2 PROFILE OF A DEATH ROW PRISONER - PAPER NO. 51

This paper was presented by Jo-Ann Bekker from the Transvaal, as an extract from the book INSIDE S.A.'S DEATH FACTORY. (This paper was embargoed until March 10th when the book would officially be launched.) J. Bekker thanked the many people who had helped her with information and statistics. The findings of this research work should help Black Sash and other groups to campaign against the death penalty. She noted that there was not a single black judge in S.A. and that S.A. has the dubious distinction of being the world leader in hangings.

Note: copies of the book INSIDE S.A.'S DEATH FACTORY were available at R10,00 per copy. Regions could order copies from Transvaal.

10.3 BLACK SASH INVOLVEMENT IN THE RELAUNCH OF THE S.A. SOC. FOR

THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY IN S.A. IN THE W. CAPE  
PAPER NO. 52 - by B. Runciman and A. Hill was tabled.

#### 11. NOMINATIONS FOR NATIONAL OFFICE BEARERS

M. Burton called for nominations for President and 3 Vice Presidents. D. Bishop was no longer available for nomination.

B. Runciman from Cape Western then motivated the nomination of Noel Robb for the position of Hon. Life Vice President. This was accepted with acclaim and a standing ovation. N. Robb then thanked the Conference.

#### 12. RESOLUTIONS

12.1 Text of E. Cape resolution on employment structures and paid Black Sash staff being able to take office was read by R. van Wyk Smith. No discussion was held, but regions were asked to caucus so that the resolution could be considered later on the agenda. (Resolution No. 3)

#### 12.2 MAGAZINE RESOLUTION (Resolution No. 2)

H. Zille spoke to the resolution and strongly urged Conference to support it. The Conference expressed its concern at cutting down on the number of copies per year from 4 to 3, but at the same time was appreciative of the reasons behind the resolution. Various options were discussed and it was agreed to defer the passing of this resolution until Sunday.

#### 13. REPORTBACK FROM DISCUSSION GROUP ON THE NATAL CONFLICT

A. Colvin reported back and thanked everyone for their contribution, saying that the discussion had been most helpful and supportive. She proposed that Black Sash mount a national campaign to collect and disseminate information to facilitate the end of the conflict. J. Yawitch proposed that the Conference also issue a statement committing itself to action. This was agreed to.

L U N C H    B R E A K    12.30 - 1.30 P.M.

SESSION: SATURDAY 4 MARCH 1989 - 1.30 - 10.00 p.m. breaking  
for tea and dinner

#### 14. CLOSED STRATEGY SESSION

J. DE TOLLY IN THE CHAIR



The following summary of the Closed Session was written and presented by D. Bishop to the Sunday session of Conference. It was agreed that it would form part of the permanent record of the Conference Minutes. Separate minutes were recorded by S. Duncan throughout the Session and were used by D. Bishop in formulating her summary.

#### SUMMARY OF CLOSED SESSION

Michael Morris, Mary Burton, Karen Chubb and Ethel Walt (on behalf of Annika Claassens) situated our discussion on strategy. Briefly, these were the major points and questions raised by them:

1. MICHAEL MORRIS of the Centre for Social and Developmental Studies (Univ. of Natal) described the history of the Black Sash's involvement as a struggle against Verwoerdian apartheid. He urged a recognition of the importance of reform (that it is not window dressing) and the necessity for new THINKING on GOALS and STRATEGIES.

He was clear in his encouragement of the Black Sash to

1. recognise the validity of ongoing protest
2. understand the underlying forces at work in our society and
3. be practical in our strategy and action (i.e. recognise who we are and what our strengths and weaknesses are).

He suggested that the role of the Black Sash is to push to the extreme for the building of a nation that is inclusive of all people, and that the focus of the work in the urban areas should be on unemployment, squatting, housing and unemployment benefits (collective consumption). He believes that 30 - 40 % of the population has been incorporated into the new urban society, providing a ratio of "insiders" to "outsiders" of 40 : 60.

2. MARY BURTON expressed the hope that this session would assist in the responsibility she carried in reflecting the views of the organisation on a range of issues. She urged special consideration of our being a women's organisation working for a non-sexist, non-racist, non-violent society which is free, enabling, democratic and redistributive and where the rule of law and a bill of rights exist.

Working for change, she felt, should be in two broad categories:

1. breaking down the old and
2. building up the new.

Leadership and staff training were mentioned as areas of special concern as we worked towards the creation of a human rights climate in which the "how" of redistribution is being addressed.

3. KAREN CHUBB'S paper on Black Sash's work alongside Fedsaw in the Western Cape bore testimony to the gratifying results of detailed discussion, exploration and negotiation over a period of 2 years. Like Mike Morris, she pointed to the need for developing theory and consciousness in an attempt to avoid making mistakes.

She urged a recognition of

1. the existential differences between women classified as white and black,
2. the predominance of Eurocentric knowledge (also in the Black Sash) and the challenge to Black Sash to become involved in education around women's issues and women's oppression in South Africa and internationally,
3. feminism being a philosophy of transformation.

REPORT ON OUR INVOLVEMENT WITH THE FEDERATION OF S.A. WOMEN IN THE WESTERN CAPE - PAPER NO. 53

4. "THE TENTATIVE AND EXPLORATORY VIEWS" OF T.R.A.C. after a five year evaluation of their work, were then shared by Ethel Walt.

They have called for a need to consider our aims and objects as an organisation in order to address the immediate issue of whether working to strengthen democracy (i.e. the process to achieving it) is not of paramount importance in working for a just future, rather than being primarily focussed on removal or eviction or other such issues at hand.

They point out that there is no place for romanticism about valiant, good, democratic people against the ugly, violent evil state, as this approach merely papers over the cracks.

Four areas for focus were suggested as

1. research,
2. a need to get rid of the over-simplifications and myths in S.A.'s history,
3. land reform - what about the people who live in the homelands - what can be learnt from how they survive, and
4. our need to understand the power we wield in our service role.

THREE GROUPS THEN FOCUSED ON 3 MAJOR ISSUES THAT CONFRONT US:

1. our relationship to existing state groupings and structures,
2. our relationship to other extra-parliamentary groups and
3. international pressure and foreign funding.

The detailed summaries of issues raised in these discussions will be made available to delegates for discussion in the regions. What follows is an attempted summary of positions taken by the

groups.

GROUP 1: BLACK SASH'S RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING STATE GROUPINGS AND STRUCTURES

1. Consensus was reached that relationships with existing state structures involved questions of strategy rather than of principle. Each case has to be decided individually, given the particular circumstances that pertain.

2. Analysis should precede strategy, and gains should be estimated in terms of our overall goals of a non-racial democracy with the Rule of Law.

3. If our analysis indicated that engagement in the processes of a general election might help to break the current log jam and contribute towards our long-term goals, we should design strategies for that engagement.

4. A suggestion that a Black Sash delegation should approach the Democratic Party to clarify its views on a range of issues including:

1. one person one vote
2. militarisation
3. conscription

seemed to enjoy considerable support.

GROUP 2: BLACK SASH'S RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS

1. There was an understanding in the group that Black Sash is an extra-parliamentary group itself.

2. There was consensus on the usefulness of alliances, especially working/focussed on specific issues.

3. No conclusions were reached on the question of affiliations to other organisations.

4. Our principle is justice and we will condemn injustice and violence wherever it occurs; the failure of the state to halt some of the violence is also to be condemned.

5. The group urged the taking of initiatives and making the Black Sash more visible. Exploring the internal resources of the organisation was also urged.

GROUP 3: SANCTIONS, BOYCOTTS, INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE AND FOREIGN FUNDING

1. It was agreed that international pressure is very important with the example of the Free the Children Campaign being cited.
2. We do not wish to send a message abroad that we are against sanctions. The S.A. government is very vulnerable to economic pressure at present and the threat of sanctions should not be removed.
3. The group posed the question: can one be in favour of sanctions and continue to bring all the foreign money you can get into S.A.?
4. Close contact with the unions was suggested in order to attempt to gain clarity on their position and to inform them of our concern for the unemployed.
5. The importance of consultation with other organisations was stressed.
6. The difficulties of reclaiming academic and cultural contact if they are rolled back, and the need to more carefully consider the range of pressures included under the blanket name of sanctions (e.g. targetted sanctions, divestment, disinvestment) was requested.
7. There was a suggestion to deal with the issue of sanctions on next year's conference agenda.
8. Packaging information quickly and efficiently for wide dissemination was urged.
9. Attention was drawn to the December issue of SASH which focussed on economic issues and the position of COSATU.

After unanimously agreeing to accept an invitation to meet with the A.N.C. during 1989, the session then moved to planning for 1989 around four main themes:

1. Black Sash Protest Work
2. Empowerment and Welfare
3. Creating a Human Rights Culture and
4. The Reform Process - regaining the initiative and new initiatives for a new society.

GROUP 1: BLACK SASH PROTEST WORK

The limitations of single person stands are recognised, and the possibilities for group protests should be explored.

It was agreed that the situation in S.A. is such that civil disobedience is sometimes the only possible strategy for effective opposition and protest. There is consensus on this within Black Sash and a past resolution of a National Conference which makes it clear that any member who in conscience disobeys the law has the full support of the organisation, is sufficient support for future action.

An important resource paper was produced by Western Cape, for use in this group discussion and is available to all regions as a working document.

#### GROUP 2: EMPOWERMENT AND WELFARE

The group raised a number of questions and concluded that a better understanding needs to be sought for what the term "empowerment" means.

The important work of empowering our own body of membership could be enhanced by sharing social analysis on a regular basis at general and other meetings.

Difficulties encountered in TRAC work and the Advice Office Training programme indicated a need to involve Sash in self-education, also by developing an understanding of collective community work such as in the Mboza Village.

(Commend Simon Berber's article Cape Times 28.2.89 quoting M. Rhampele and F. Wilson on "empowerment".)

#### GROUP 3: CREATING A HUMAN RIGHTS CULTURE

There was consensus within the group that the Black Sash is a human rights organisation which has a deep concern for the sanctity of life in the midst of our present violent conflict. It was important to re-affirm the need for a H.R. culture and to increase an awareness of it in the face of continued violence.

Suggested areas of action for 1989 were as follows:

- a) preparing packages on human rights for use in schools in areas where this is feasible.
- b) the preparation of a booklet "You and Human Rights" in at least 3 languages and
- c) a focus on the Declaration of Children's Rights in this 30th anniversary year of the declaration.

#### GROUP 4: TAKING INITIATIVES FOR A NEW SOCIETY

The discussion of this group served as an important catchment for issues not dealt with during conference as well as new ideas to work on as follows:

- a) The Group Areas Act: Regions could research the existence of apartheid amenities in National Party constituencies with the view to exposing these.
- b) A focus on continued Population Registration and the ineptitude in pensions administration is an area of need.
- c) The process towards Namibian Independence: There is a need to monitor information and attention was drawn to 3 fact papers prepared by Cape Democrats.
- d) Aliens Courts: Monitoring of the treatment meted out to aliens is urgently needed.
- e) The Alternative Service initiative: was stressed for its importance as part of Black Sash's work. Regions should take this up.
- f) Housing: Legislation regarding designated areas requires an on-going campaign. The advantage of working in alliances on such an issue was repeated.
- g) It was suggested that Black Sash set up its own bureau for publicity and campaigns to counteract the work of the Bureau of Information. No consensus was reached on this, nor on the need for a paid organiser and publicity secretary, but the support that such personnel could provide to the National President and her voluntary executive is obvious.

"As I have worked through this material, it has been interesting to me to pick up on the responses to the quest for identity i.e. questions were asked by the lead-in speakers on WHO WE ARE AND WHAT ARE OUR AIMS. May I add to that a recognition of us as a women's organisation to which Mary alluded. Isn't this unique about our organisation? In other words, what would be qualitatively missing if we were not around?

Our stated aims and objectives are well known to us and, as always, are contained in the conference papers.

But it occurred to me that what might help us in 1989 is to work from a mission statement. This is something that should be generated by the organisation as a whole, and several of the discussions yesterday provided some of the ideas we need to do just this.

I have drawn these together in a draft mission statement which I would like to suggest we take home with us to refine - share our ideas with other regions, and before the end of the first half of 1989, see if we have reached consensus. We may find this very useful to have before us as we work in 1989."

## DRAFT MISSION STATEMENT (OF THE BLACK SASH)

The Black Sash is a women's organisation committed to human rights and justice for all. It is working for a non-racial, non-sexist and non-violent society that is free, democratic, redistributive and in which the Rule of Law is upheld and a Bill of Rights is entrenched. At the centre of its concern is the sanctity of life and the development of the potential of every human being.

SESSION: SUNDAY 5 MARCH 1989 9.00 - 10.30 A.M.

MARY BURTON IN THE CHAIR

15. Reportback by D. Bishop on Strategy Session, (as above) in CLOSED SESSION. It was agreed that this summary would be typed and sent to regions as soon after Conference as possible.

### 16. RATIFICATION OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

A. Colvin proposed that Cape Western should continue as Headquarters Region. Cape Eastern were asked to consider being National Headquarters, but declined due to their geographic position and lack of resources. It was agreed that Cape Western would continue as Headquarters Region.

### 17. ELECTION OF NATIONAL OFFICE BEARERS

M. Burton had been nominated for President, R. van Wyk Smith, J. de Tolly and S. Philcox had been nominated as Vice Presidents. As there were no further nominations they were duly elected.

B. Davenport raised the question of having Transvaal and Natal regions represented on the National Executive. Due to practical considerations this was not feasible, but M. Burton made the point that any regional chair was welcome to attend any National Executive meeting, should she be able to.

A. Colvin thanked the National Executive for the helpful communication link that had been established through the circulation of Nat. Exec. minutes.

### 18. ADVICE OFFICE TRUST CO-ORDINATOR

S. Duncan was nominated and as there was no other nomination, she was duly elected.

## 19. ADVICE OFFICE TRUSTEES

M. Burton explained that as D. Bishop was no longer Vice President, she would no longer be a trustee and M. Burton called for nominations to replace her and these would be taken to the next trustees meeting for consideration.

J. de Tolly from Cape Western and V. Viljoen from Border were proposed.

Present Trustees were: S. Duncan, E. Walt, A. Coleman, M. Burton, D. Bishop, N. Robb, J. Nicolson and P. Counihan.

## 20. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT CONFERENCE (1990)

Venue: Albany were happy to host the next conference provided a suitable venue could be found.

Advice Office Workshop:

It had been agreed at the Advice Office Workshop, that the next workshop would not be held immediately before Conference, as had been the case for the last two years.

Date of next conference: Concern had been expressed by working members of regional delegations that they could not easily get time off to come to Conference. Other options should be considered, e.g. long week-ends, Easter week-end. Albany would investigate possibilities on their return home and advise Headquarters. Cape Western was happy to offer hospitality if Albany was unable to make the necessary arrangements.

## 21. REGIONAL CHAIRPERSONS' MEETING - REPORTBACK

J. Hawarden thanked B. Runciman for initiating the group. It was felt to be one of the most productive and supportive working groups of the conference. The meeting had discussed the following:

1. circulation of newsletters
2. Nat. Exec. asked to look into the matter of security
3. accountability structures looked at in each region
4. transfer of members from one region to another
5. vulnerability of Black Sash and other orgs
6. chairing of regions - the difficulties and responsibilities and the practice of shared chairing
7. skills training - Cape W. to make available its package
8. conflict resolution - to be included in skills training
9. stress of working in present crisis situation
10. associate membership - to be investigated further

J. Hawarden asked that space be made on next year's conference agenda for a similar meeting for regional chairs.



R. van Wyk Smith asked on behalf of S. Cape and Pretoria Branches, if the question of them forming into regions could be looked into and guidance by Nat. Headquarters given as to the practical implications that this change would involve. Agreed to.

## 22. NATIONAL CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS - HOW TO USE THEM

It was generally agreed that distribution of the information contained in the conference papers and reports should be considered. J. de Tolly agreed to make up a bibliography of the papers which regions could distribute to appropriate people of their regional mailing lists. Also suggested that sets of papers on various subjects could be put together in folders, as H.A.P. did.

## 23. NATIONAL FINANCES MEETING - REPORTBACK

C. Malherbe reported from the group. The present levy that regions pay Headquarters does not cover costs of servicing members and regions were asked to go back and reassess their subscription rates with a view to raising the levy to Headquarters. C. Malherbe stressed the importance of reading her National Treasurer's Report.

## 24. PRETORIA'S PETITION FOR HUNGER STRIKERS

It was agreed that even though there was another national petition, one could sign more than one and that Pretoria should go ahead. Pretoria asked that delegates sign the petition at Conference and it would be sent to the Minister before the end of next week.

## 25. RESOLUTIONS CONT.

25.1 RESOLUTION ON NATAL CONFLICT (Resolution No. 1) was passed unanimously. Pietermaritzburg would help supply and co-ordinate information and Headquarters would circulate this to the regions.

T E A    B R E A K    10.30 - 11.00 A.M.

SESSION:    SUNDAY 5 MARCH 1989    11.00 A.M. - 12.30 P.M.

M. BURTON IN THE CHAIR

## 26. RESOLUTIONS CONT.

### 26.1 MAGAZINE RESOLUTION: (Resolution No.. 2)

J. Hawarden proposed that despite conference's misgivings, the resolution be adopted and that other ways be found for sharing information around the regions. The situation would be reviewed in a year's time. The resolution was passed 43 for, 2 against and 1 abstention.

### 26.2 RESOLUTION ON EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYEE STATUS (Resolution No. 3)

Much discussion was held on the background to the resolution and how it was so relevant in smaller regions where womanpower was so limited that one could not easily exclude paid Black Sash staff from holding Executive office. It was finally decided to vote on the two sections separately. Both sections of the resolution were passed unanimously and the whole resolution was therefore carried.

It was stressed that each region would have to work on this resolution as was appropriate. Transvaal had already set up the necessary employment structures.

### 26.3 RESOLUTION ON FOREIGN FUNDING BILL (Resolution No. 4)

The draft resolution was read and much discussion was held regarding the implications of the resolution for Black Sash. The final version of the Bill had not yet been made available to the Black Sash. The resolution was taken back to the press committee to be worked on again.

## 27. EVALUATION

D. Bishop had drawn up an evaluation questionnaire so that each delegate would get an opportunity of assessing and commenting on Conference. She stressed the importance of completing this evaluation process immediately and asked that delegates return it to R. Meny-Gibert in Cape Town AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. The text of the questionnaire was read out for delegates to copy.

A 10 mins "buzz" session was then held with each delegate's neighbour to discuss particular points of the evaluation.

## 28. RESOLUTIONS CONT.

### 28.1 FOREIGN FUNDING BILL (Resolution No. 4)

The Black Sash statement was read again and after minor changes, was put to the vote and passed unanimously.

W. Anneke asked that the statement be given to the press that night.

## 29. NAMIBIA\FRONTLINE STATES

M. Burton explained that these issues had not appeared on the agenda partly because they were not high on the list of priorities on the questionnaire sent to regions prior to conference, and partly because there had not been time to deal with it as an addition to the agenda at the start of Conference. She asked regions to undertake to continue work on the issues during the year.

## 30. CLOSURE

M. Burton then thanked Natal Coastal for all the work they had put into the smooth running of the Conference as the host region. She also thanked the press committee for their efforts, and thanked all the delegates and observers for their participation as also the National Executive who had worked so hard on the planning of the agenda.

She emphasised that it was in the regions that the important work of the Black Sash was being done and that Headquarters served to coordinate and reflect that work.

Members of the Conference stood for a minute's silence in commitment to the work which lay ahead.

CONFERENCE CLOSED AT 12.30 P.M.