

**THE BLACK SASH**

**MINUTES OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE 1990**

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MINUTES OF THE BLACK SASH NATIONAL CONFERENCE 1990 - GRAHAMSTOWN

SESSION 1: FRIDAY 2 MARCH 1990 14:00 - 16:00

(ROSEMARY VAN WYK SMITH IN THE CHAIR)

1. The National President, Mary Burton, welcomed everyone present.

1.2 The Dedication was read by Val Letcher of Albany

1.3 Rosemary van wyk Smith, a National Vice President, took the chair and called upon the conference to observe a minute's silence in memory of all those who have died in police custody and in detention. She also asked the conference to remember Moira Henderson and Netty Davidoff, who were among the first members of the Black Sash and who had both died during 1989.

1.4 Rosemary van wyk Smith welcomed everyone to Grahamstown and expressed the conference's regrets that Ann Colvin and Jillian Nicholson were unable to be present because of illness and that Audrey Coleman was unable to come. All members of conference were asked to introduce themselves and a roll call was held. (See Appendix A - Register for attendance list.)

1.5 Messages had been received from Errol Moorcroft, Jean Sinclair, Ann Burroughs and Zilla Herries-Baird. Messages of greetings were sent to Jean Sinclair, Ray and Jack Simons who would be returning to Cape Town from exile that weekend. A message of support to the family of Anton Lubowski was approved for dispatch in the light of the allegations of the Minister of Defence made under the shelter of parliamentary privilege. (See Appendix C for text)

1.6 The chair called upon Judith Hawarden of Transvaal Region, to propose that Joyce Harris be made an Honorary Life Vice-President of the Black Sash. This was approved with acclaim and a standing ovation.

Joyce Harris thanked the Conference very warmly. She said that for her the Black Sash had always been a non-aligned human rights organisation working for justice and morality in government in South Africa

1.7 Judith Hawarden, chairperson of the Transvaal Region PROPOSED THAT THE PRETORIA BRANCH OF THE TRANSVAAL REGION SHOULD BECOME THE NORTHERN TRANSVAAL REGION OF THE BLACK SASH. (See Resolution No. 1 in Appendix B for text.) The resolution was passed unanimously and Pretoria Branch was received as a Region with enthusiasm.

It was agreed that Pretoria's three members present should be accepted as delegates to conference from the new Northern

Transvaal Region.

The Johannesburg section of the Transvaal Region asked if one of their observers could then be recognised as a delegate, to make up Transvaal's full delegation. This was agreed to.

1.8 Margaret Barker made various announcements in connection with the practical arrangements of conference. The necessity to tape all conference proceedings was questioned. It was agreed that a decision would be taken after tea when those responsible for the production of the minutes would discuss it.

1.9 Sarah-Anne Raynham, Jean Fairburn, Carla Sutherland and Laura Pollecutt were appointed to the press committee.

1.10 Conference gave permission for the proposed closed sessions. It was agreed that both associate members and employees would be allowed to attend the closed sessions.

1.11 Meetings: *Finance* - regional reps were to meet with National Treasurer at supper time. *Magazine* - regional reps were also to meet at supper time. *A.O. Trustees* - were to meet at 24 Market St. after supper. *Regional Chairs* were to decide when they would meet.

1.12 Steering Committee: Sarah-Anne Raynham and Candy Malherbe would form the Conference Steering Committee and members of conference were asked to approach them at any time during the Conference with queries.

1.13 Agenda Review: It was agreed that the resolution on the increase of the Headquarters levy be taken during Session 7 on Sunday morning. The agenda would be referred to the Steering Committee in response to Natal Coastal's request for a substantial change. (See Item 19.1)

1.14 Minutes of 1989 National Conference were adopted. It was agreed that matters arising be taken as they occurred on this agenda.

## 2. HEADQUARTERS REPORTS

2.1 Mary Burton introduced the GENERAL HEADQUARTERS REPORT for the year March 1989 to March 1990. (PAPER NO. 2)  
She drew attention to the proposals for extending the National Headquarters Committee on Pages 3 and 4 of the report.  
(Correction: P3, line 7 - remove Rosemary van Wyk Smith's name.)

2.2 NATIONAL TREASURER'S REPORT (PAPER NO. 3)  
This was presented by Candy Malherbe with the Income and Expenditure Statement for 1989 and the Balance Sheet as at 31 December 1989.

2.3 MAGAZINE REPORT (PAPER NO. 4)  
This was presented by Sarah-Anne Raynham on behalf of the

Magazine Committee. The chairperson expressed thanks on behalf of the conference to the Magazine Committee for the work they had done to make the magazine professional and informative.

### **3. REGIONAL REPORTS**

#### **3.1 NATAL MIDLANDS REPORT (PAPER NO. 5)**

This was presented by Fidela Fouche. She asked that the following omissions be noted:

The Lusaka reportback was given by herself and Else Schreiner.

#### **3.2 NATAL COASTAL REPORT (PAPER NO. 6)**

This was presented by Wendy Annecke. She asked that the following corrections be made:

Cover page: include the name of Korki Bird under Repression Monitoring.

P7, Item 15: The "crumbling infrastructure" referred to Natal in general and not the Black Sash.

**TEA BREAK 16:00 - 16:30**

**SESSION 2: 16.30 - 18:30**

(JENNY DE TOLLY IN THE CHAIR)

**4. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS** - Jenny de Tolly welcomed members of the public who had joined the Conference since the tea break and called upon Mary Burton to deliver her 4th Presidential speech to the Conference. This was received with acclaim. (PAPER NO. 1)

### **5. REGIONAL REPORTS CONTINUED:**

#### **5.1 TRANSVAAL REGIONAL REPORT (PAPER NO. 7)**

This was presented by J. Hawarden

#### **5.2 NORTHERN TRANSVAAL REGIONAL REPORT (PAPER NO. 8) (PRETORIA)**

This report was presented by Kerry Harris

#### **5.3 ALBANY REGIONAL REPORT (PAPER NO. 9)**

This report was presented by Julia Segar

#### **5.4 CAPE EASTERN REGIONAL REPORT (PAPER NO. 10)**

This was presented by Lesley Frescura

#### **5.5 BORDER REGIONAL REPORT (PAPER NO. 11)**

This was presented by Sue Power.

5.6 SOUTHERN CAPE BRANCH REPORT (PAPER NO. 12)  
Presented by Tessa Edwards.

5.7 CAPE WESTERN REGIONAL REPORT - (PAPER NO. 13)  
Presented by Beva Runciman.

Jenny de Tolly thanked all the regions for their reports which reflected such a diversity of hard work. She also thanked them for co-operating so well in presenting the reports within the allocated time. Regions were asked to reflect on all the reports that had been presented and to hand in formal questions to the National Secretaries before tomorrow morning's proceedings.

**CONFERENCE ADJOURNED AT 18.30**

**SESSION 3: SATURDAY 3 MARCH 1990 8:30 - 10:30**

(S. DUNCAN IN THE CHAIR)

## **6. GENERAL**

6.1 Margaret Barker drew attention to the excellent photographic exhibition that was displayed on boards in the side-room of the Conference Hall.

6.2 Mary Burton read out a message of support received from Mrs Adelaide Tambo. (See Appendix C for text.)

## **7. RESPONSES TO HEADQUARTERS AND REGIONAL REPORTS AND TO PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS:**

### **7.1 PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS**

There was debate around the issue of Black Sash's independence. Questions were asked about why Black Sash should remain independent and independent of what? The response was that Black Sash needed to be in control of its own decisions, and that we should be accountable to the people we serve, not to other organisations. Our value lay in working independently of party politics. When we worked with committees and aligned organisations we should always try to work with them and not counter to them but maintain our independence.

### **7.2 HEADQUARTERS GENERAL REPORT**

Concern was expressed by G. Glover about the idea of the expanded national executive, that maybe we were trying to be something bigger than we could actually manage. She asked whether we were

not spending too much money on travel, conferences etc. and whether we should not be keeping this money for our political work. J. de Tolly responded to her concerns by showing that the attempt to expand was an attempt to share the work load more and not to become more "powerful". That it was envisaged that job responsibilities would be shared out more and that under the present "system" too many good people were being excluded from the National Executive. J. de Tolly listed the number of people presently on the Executive, and explained that it would be expanded by two more members only.

It was agreed that further discussion around the role of Headquarters and the National Executive was needed and it was agreed to hold a meeting after supper that night and that as many representatives from each region as possible, should attend.

### 7.3 MAGAZINE REPORT

J. Harris congratulated the Committee on the magazine, but had misgivings about the magazine being too glossy and too expensive and not sufficiently reflective of the Black Sash work. A. Claassens made the point that the magazine was self-sufficient and therefore was affordable in its present form. (The request to increase the H/Q levy was not related to the cost of the magazine but was as a result of an increase in general running costs of H/Q.)

F. Fouche requested that the Committee look into the possibility of using ecologically sound unbleached paper for the magazine.

### 7.4 NATIONAL TREASURER'S REPORT

G. Glover raised a question about income from the magazine. Unfortunately the Balance Sheet had not been handed out with the Treasurer's Report and C. Malherbe apologised for the confusion and said that the Balance Sheet would answer this query.

In response to queries re the increase in the H/Q levy and the resolution, C. Malherbe pointed out that no adjustment had been requested by H/Q since 1979. If we wished to maintain ourselves as a national organisation, we were going to incur costs, especially travel costs. Office rent and the secretary's salary had also increased over the last 4 years.

### 7.5 REGIONAL REPORTS:

N. Transvaal asked for clarity on the mass stand the W. Cape Region had held. B. Runciman explained that there had been divided opinion in the region over holding a stand so soon after de Klerk's announcements of 2 Feb. 1990. Some members had felt we should have given him more credit and others felt that very little had in fact changed regarding legislation and so the stand was a compromise. She mentioned the problems of communication with grassroots membership, problems with consultation and who could make decisions in the region on behalf of whom.

N. Transvaal asked Natal Regions about declaring Natal a disaster area. A. Kotze on behalf of Natal Coastal suggested that the area was in fact a war zone, not a disaster area and she wondered to whom one would address such a request? The S.A. Government or Inkatha? The problems around the conflict were massive and were increasing and the concern needed to become a national one, not merely a regional one.

N. Transvaal asked S. Cape Branch about the activities of the Kitskonstabels. T. Edwards welcomed any suggestions as to how to deal with the Kitskonstabels and the police generally. M. Lacey pointed out that in times of unemployment and rural impoverishment, recruitment into the police force and kitskonstabel force would continue.

Discussion was also held around the fact that despite the so-called changes heralded by de Klerk's 2 Feb. speech, communities were still being harassed and detained, deaths in police custody continued and destabilisation of communities was ongoing. It was agreed that Conference would issue a statement. (See Appendix B - Statement No. 2)

M. Lacey raised the issue of privatisation and its dangers and said that the government was trying to abrogate its responsibilities and that one day, those who participated in privatisation would be expropriated without compensation.

## **8. PRESENTATION/TABLING OF PAPERS RELATING TO REGIONAL WORK:**

### **8.1 UMHLABA (PAPER NO. 13)**

Rural land struggles in the Transvaal in the '80's by Anninka Claassens

### **8.2 EDUCATION UPDATE (PAPER NO. 14)**

This paper was briefly presented by S. Philcox from Cape Western Region. She felt that a national co-ordination of Sash educational input would be very valuable. She had papers available from the N.E.C.C.'s National Conference held in December of last year.

### **8.3 SCHOOLS CRISIS: LEGACY OF THE PAST - WHAT HOPE FOR THE FUTURE? (PAPER NO. 15) (This paper was tabled.)**

8.4 NATAL COASTAL EDUCATIONAL UPDATE - This was a poster hung up on the Conference wall and was not a numbered paper.

8.5 LITERACY, POWER AND LIBERATION by Janet Cherry was a paper brought to Conference for general interest and was not a numbered paper.

8.6 Ann Knott from Cape Eastern Region gave a short talk on *Education in the E. Cape*

8.7 COURT MONITORING REPORT - CAPE WESTERN REGION (PAPER NO. 17) by Rosalind Bush.

8.8 THEIR ONLY RIGHT A NAME - CHILDREN UNDER THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IN SOUTH AFRICA (PAPER NO. 18) by Janet McCurdie

This paper was tabled and was first presented at The International Congress on Working for Children's Rights, Helsinki, 16 - 18 June 1989.

8.9 MEMORANDUM ON THE PIETERMARITZBURG STREET CHILDREN (PAPER NO. 19) Briefly presented by F. Fouche.

8.10 WORK IN PROGRESS: BLACK SASH WESTERN CAPE REGION AND WAGE-EARNING WOMEN (PAPER NO. 20)

This paper was briefly presented by R. Meny-Gibert on behalf of the working group responsible for the paper.

8.11 CAN SASH AFFORD NOT TO BE A FEMINIST ORGANISATION (PAPER NO. 21) by Cape Western Region's Women's Group

8.12 BLACK SASH - ORGANISATION OF WOMEN OR WOMEN'S ORGANISATION? (PAPER NO. 22) by Natal Coastal Region's Women's Group

8.13 THE BLACK SASH WOMEN'S CHARTER REVISITED (PAPER NO. 23) (This paper needed to be read in conjunction with the B.S. Women's Charter of 1979.) (Tabled)

8.14 THE BLACK SASH, ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP AND THE QUESTION OF GENDER (PAPER NO. 24) by Verne Harris

This paper was tabled, but spoken to later, in Session 6.

8.15 EQUAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN : LOOKING BEYOND THE RHETORIC (PAPER NO. 25) by Julia Segar. (Tabled)

8.16 CAPITAL PUNISHMENT (PAPER NO. 26) by the Natal Midlands Region - tabled.

8.17 THE DEATH PENALTY (PAPER NO. 27) pamphlet only - produced by the Pretoria Black Sash (N Tv1) Working Group

8.18 TOWARDS ELIMINATING PROBLEMS INHERENT IN THE PRO DEO SYSTEM (PAPER NO. 28) by Laura Pollecutt of Transvaal Region

8.19 APARTHEID IN PRETORIA (PAPER NO. 29)



8.20 It was pointed out that some of these papers would form the background reading to the "Strategy" Session to be held in Sessions 5 and 6. The Chair apologised for the rushed session and the fact that there had been insufficient time for discussion around any of the papers. It was hoped that ALL these papers would be read as they contained valuable information and represented a lot of hard work.

There was also a suggestion that parallel sessions could be used as a means of dealing more fully with these papers. The problems of parallel sessions were pointed out, but the National Executive promised to reconsider them for the next conference.

**TEA BREAK**                    **10:30 - 11:00**

**SESSION 4:**                    **11:00 - 13:00**

(SUE PHILCOX IN THE CHAIR)

#### **9. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

9.1 There had been a request following the last session, for various groups to talk informally at or after dinner:

Capital Punishment	-	Jane Worsnip to convene
Education	-	Sue Philcox " "
Role of Headquarters	-	Jenny de Tolly and Mary Burton to convene
Urbanisation	-	Astrid Kotze to convene
Political Trials	-	Ros Bush " "
Pensions	-	Marj Brown " "
Women's Group	-	Carla Sutherland to convene

9.2 There were also suggestions for statements - these would be dealt with on Sunday morning, as would the Resolutions that should have been dealt with in the previous Session 3, according to the agenda.

#### **10. PRESENTATION OF WORK OF ADVICE OFFICES AND RELATED ISSUES**

10.1 S. Duncan explained the new process for presenting advice office work to this conference. There had been a workshop in September 1989 at which certain areas of advice office work had been identified for fuller reporting viz:

- a) Pensions
- b) Urbanisation and Homelessness
- c) Incorporation
- d) Land

10.2 All advice office annual reports would be tabled, but Sheena pleaded that all the reports be read as they contained

vital information of things happening on the ground. Headquarters would number all the reports and papers presented in this session and the numbered list would be made available at lunchtime.

### 10.3 PAPERS TABLED BY REGIONAL ADVICE OFFICES:

Paper No. 30 Natal Midlands A.O. Report  
Paper No. 31 Natal Coastal A.O. Report  
Paper No. 32 Johannesburg A.O. Report  
Paper No. 33 Pretoria (N> Tv1) A.O. Report  
Paper No. 34 Albany A.O. Rreport  
Paper No. 35 Albany Fieldworker's Report  
Paper No. 36 Cape Eastern A.O. Repport  
Paper No. 37 Cape Eastern Fieldworker's Report  
Paper No. 38 Border A.O. Report  
Paper No. 39 Border Fieldworker's Report  
Paper No. 40 Knysna A.O. Report  
Paper No. 41 S. Cape Rural Report  
Paper No. 42 Cape Western A.O. Report  
Paper No. 43 Cape Western Fieldworker's Report  
Paper No. 44 Pensions Book "This money will be used to bury me"

## 11. PENSIONS

11.1 "THIS MONEY WILL BE USED TO BURY ME...." The current state of Black pensions in South Africa. (PAPER NO. 44)

This report was compiled and presented by Marj Brown from information gathered by all Black Sash advice offices in the country. Marj apologised for the fact that there were certain gaps in the information as some of the information sent to her, was not in fact received.

## 12. URBANISATION

12.1 THE URBANISATION CRISIS (PAPER NO. 45) A report compiled by the Urbanisation Group of the Natal Coastal Region for National Conference 1990 from information received from all regions.

This paper was presented by Astrid von Kotze on behalf of the group.

note in particular p. 12 "Issues that need to be debated further with Sash", and "Prerequisites for addressing the Urbanisation Crisis".

12.2 REPORT FROM THE URBAN REMOVALS AND HOMELESSNESS GROUP (PAPER NO. 46) presented by Glenda Glover on behalf of the group.

12.3 URBANISATION GROUP REPORT (BLACK SASH NATAL COASTAL REGION) (PAPER NO. 49) Tabled.

### 13. INCORPORATION

13.1 HOMELAND CONSOLIDATION AND DISINTEGRATION - THE CASE OF THE CISKEI (PAPER NO. 47) compiled and presented by Larry Field.

### 14. LAND ISSUES

14.1 NOTES FOR LAND RESEARCH (PAPER NO. 48) Presented by Aninka Claassens. (Refer also to Paper no. 14 UMHLABA)

15. TRAC REPORT TO NATIONAL CONFERENCE MARCH 1990 (PAPER NO. 50) This report was tabled.

16. REPORT ON HOUSING FOR THE CAPE EASTERN REGION (PAPER NO. 51) by Vicki Proudlock. This report was tabled.

**LUNCH BREAK 13:00 - 14:00**

**SESSION NO. 5: 14:00 - 15:30**

(JENNY DE TOLLY IN THE CHAIR)

17. PRESENTATION OF ADVICE OFFICE TRUST STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS (PAPER NO. 52) presented by Beryl Stanton.

Note error on P.3 under heading REGIONAL OFFICES, total under 1986 should read R10 386,00 and not R10 836. The final total should read R62 104,00 and not R39 413,00.

There were no queries.

### 18. NATAL CONFLICT

18.1 Korki Bird, the fieldworker for Natal Coastal's Repression Monitoring Group presented a verbal report of her findings to date. She mentioned that she would be sending out the Repression Monitoring Report on a monthly basis in future.

The State's policy towards detention had changed dramatically over the last few months regarding detentions - this was largely due to the success of the Hunger Strike Campaign last year.

However repression and detentions still continued. The sincerity of the state to address the violence was suspect. Impartiality of S.A.P., S.A.D.F. and KwaZulu Police was doubtful although S.A.D.F. is considered the better option. Buthelezi's popularity continues, both in Natal and overseas. How to deliver peace in this awful conflict is the question. Part of the conflict is about scarce resources, but it went deeper than that.

The conference was urged to read John Aitchison's paper THE PIETERMARITZBURG CONFLICT - EXPERIENCE AND ANALYSIS. This paper was an information paper, and was not numbered.

18.2 PEACE IN PIECES - THE CIVIL WAR IN NATAL - PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE (PAPER NO. 53) by Wendy Annecke.

Wendy Annecke presented this paper which looked at 3 different scenarios for the future of the Natal conflict. Relationships between Buthelezi, Mandela and de Klerk were going to be crucial as the contest for power in the region continued.

The conference sent a special message of support to all Natal members. The conference was urged to take back to their respective regions this information and spread it as far as possible to try and break the Buthelezi "myth". Meanwhile it was important to continue to document all the atrocities and accusations etc. and compile a dossier and this would be done by the joint working committee.

*The conference then went into CLOSED SESSIONS at the start of the sessions dealing with Black Sash policy and strategy.*

19. "A CHANGING SOUTH AFRICA - A CHANGING BLACK SASH"

19.1 Mary Burton responded to Natal Coastal's request for a change in the agenda structure (see Item 1.13), but motivated for the agenda to remain the same. This was agreed to by conference.

19.2 Jenny de Tolly then went on to explain the structure of the next session. Certain issues had emerged from concerns in Black Sash regions and in the general political arena in which we worked. These issues would be presented by the panel.

20. INPUTS BY PANEL

20.1 DISMANTLING APARTHEID - input by Sheena Duncan.

It was important to understand that the 1983 Constitution had in fact entrenched apartheid further and that a enormous amount of

legislation had been introduced since 1983. The most important issue in dismantling apartheid was to get rid of this Constitution and to get rid of the Population Registration Act and Group Areas Act. However, it was equally important to understand that one cannot dismantle apartheid before one has set up an alternative system. One cannot allow a vacuum to exist as this would be too destabilising.

## 20.2 HUMAN RIGHTS - input by Mary Burton

Mary gave an overview of the different "generation" of rights, first, second and third. Our commitment to human rights meant a lot more than just the 1st generation rights, although it was still part and parcel of what we were about. We need to look at the criminalisation of political offences: at political prisoners and what they are - how do we define them? We need still to address the continued restrictions of the press and guard against continuing ethnic divisions.

With regard to 2nd generation rights e.g. welfare, we need to ask how, by whom is it a right - it is an entitlement, not a charity. We need to look at privatisation and free enterprise, who it has benefitted and who not - what it has given to the majority of South Africans who helped to generate this wealth.

We need to expand our understanding of what human rights means for the work we do.

## 20.3 REDRESSING INJUSTICE - input by Candy Malherbe

This was a new issue for Black Sash to be looking at, but the opportunity has never seemed more pertinent than now. Is equal opportunity enough or should it include redistribution, restitution, affirmative action or something else? We are not talking about a type of reform while the repressive regime is intact, but rather the redressing of injustices that may even remain when apartheid has been dismantled.

The question of redistribution raised many different responses in the 1989 draft Mission Statement. Are we talking about access to resources or a total overhaul of the economic system? Can we expect adjustments to the present system if coupled with development programmes to be acceptable if people own less than 10% of the instruments of production? Peter Moll's paper, Redistribution of income: patterns, positions and policies was relevant here (see Paper 54). Redistribution in terms of education was also an important issue to be considered, as also the redressing of injustices suffered under the Group Areas Act.

Vincent Maphai of U.W.C. has 4 stages to his analysis of affirmative action:

a) desegregation

- b) formal equality before the law
- c) equality of opportunity involving remedial measures
- d) affirmative action.

It was necessary to identify gaps where affirmative action may be needed.

**TEA BREAK** **15:30** - **16:00**

**SESSION 6:** **16:00** - **18:30** **(CLOSED SESSION CONTINUES)**

**(MARY BURTON IN THE CHAIR)**

**20.4 ALIGNMENT/NON-ALIGNMENT - input by Sue Philcox and Karin Chubb**

20.4.1 Sue Philcox asked if we really meant affiliation/non-affiliation? Black Sash now worked with many different organisations in alliances, groupings and campaigns. This might be occasional or on-going, and sometimes the links may be deep and other times short-lived. Looking historically at Black Sash's position, the aims and objectives stated that we were "non-party, political" and that the Constitution made allowances for us to affiliate with a 2/3rd majority. We needed to consider whether this was desirable or not and if so, with which organisation/s. There were also practical considerations - different regions of Black Sash worked in different ways with different organisations and the question of regional affiliation would have to be looked at too.

20.4.2 Karin Chubb then spoke of her recent experiences in attending the Malibongwe (women's) Conference in Amsterdam. She would be sending the regions a report by the end of March. In all areas that were discussed e.g. education, employment etc, it became clear that women were worst off. Resolutions were passed and discussion ensued on the formation of a national women's organisation. Working in alliances was seen as a pragmatic way of bringing together organisations from a wide spectrum.

The question for Black Sash was how far were we committed to women's issues - women's rights etc.? (given that women's rights are human rights). Are we prepared to formalise the de facto alliances that have evolved in various regions and if so, how? It was good to be part of the process of developing a national structure. However, we must be clear about what we stood for and inject our perspectives and concerns into the policy discussions.

## 20.5 FUNDRAISING AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR BLACK SASH - input by Joyce Harris

Joyce spoke of how money coming into the Trust had caused changes in the organisation, but how changes made the formation of the trust necessary. Fundraising had been centralised, despite accusations of being undemocratic because it was more practical. She expressed her concern that through lack of voluntary help, Black Sash had had to become an employer organisation. It was not a comfortable situation, either for the organisation or for the employees. She expressed her thanks to Sheena Duncan, Audrey Coleman and Ethel Walt for all their help.

We had to realise that we were vulnerable and that we needed to find donors who could spread their funding over 2 or 3 years. We had to be careful also to use our resources well - the budget for 1990 was 1 1/2 million rand. We could never feel complacent about fundraising - it was an ongoing necessity if we were to continue working the way we were at present. However, on the positive side, our work had expanded and developed due to the Trust funds. It was also important to accept that we were employers and in need of outside funding.

20.5.1 Gill Nicholson from Natal Coastal had a written contribution to make to the debate, as she was unable to be present herself. This was read to the Conference.

She raised the issue of trustees being allowed to raise and allocate funds, but not to make policy decision on a regional level. She also queried whether we should continue to employ more people. She felt that Trustees needed to making decisions on these issues, and that we should examine the positive and negative results of the existence of the Trust.

## 20.6 THE BLACK SASH AS AN ORGANISATION OF WOMEN - input from Fidela Fouche

Fidela looked at the Black Sash against a background of a very patriarchal South African society with extremely exploitative norms. She talked of the different types of feminism, of it being merely an equality with men, of it being more socialist, of it being part of the Struggle. A.N.C. statement seeks emancipation for women from a triple yoke of oppression, however, the A.N.C. Guidelines have no overt proposals against sexism.

Within Black Sash there were two mainstreams of feminist thinking:

- a) should B.S. be a feminist organisation to focus on elimination of all oppression (socialist feminism) or
- b) should B.S. be ecofeminist which criticises values of violent and consumerist society, caring for our planet before it is

destroyed.

Should we therefore continue fighting for the same human rights, or respond to the more urgent demands of our time?

Mary Burton explained how much of the discussion around Black Sash being an organisation of women or a women's organisation arose from the Draft Mission Statement of the 1989 National Conference, and she thanked Di Bishop for the contribution she had made.

#### 20.6.1 THE BLACK SASH ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP - A QUESTION OF GENDER (PAPER NO. 24)

Verne Harris spoke to his paper in which he mentioned the findings of the questionnaire he sent out to all associate members during 1989. His view was that the definition of Associate Membership was vague and provided no rationale for limiting rights of men in the organisation. He suggested several alternatives:

- a) B.S. could retain the status quo on pragmatic grounds
- b) B.S. could retain human rights programme and drop gender requirements
- c) B.S. could make the fight against sex-based injustice a pillar of its programme
- d) B.S. could become a feminist organisation.

He believed that Black Sash should promote feminism, and this would give the subordinate status of men a meaning which it currently lacked.

On a point of clarity, B. Runciman pointed out that in Cape Western Region, there were Associate Members who were women.

The conference then divided into six groups according to topics, with those who introduced them being resource people. Groups were to appoint their own scribes and facilitators. Each group would have an hour to draft a policy statement and reportback to the Conference.

#### 21. REPORTBACKS FROM GROUP DISCUSSION ON POLICY STATEMENTS

It was agreed that all reportbacks would be typed out and made available to all delegates by the end of that evening, for further discussion next day.

*Please see Appendix B for document by Mary Burton "Where do we go from here" for final versions of policy statements arising out of these six group discussions. They are to be found under the*



*following headings:*

- 1. Dismantling apartheid*
- 2. Human rights*
- 3. Wwomen's issues*
- 4. Redressing injustices*
- 5. Affiliation/alignment/alliance*
- 6. Dependency on Fund-raising and the changing nature of Black Sash membership*

21.1 Ethel Walt reported back from the discussion on Dismantling Apartheid

**CONFERENCE ADJOURNED AT 18:30**

**SESSION 7: 9:00 - 11:00 SUNDAY 4 MARCH 1990**

(MARY BURTON IN THE CHAIR)

**22. General Announcements:**

22.1 Larry Field announced that there had been a coup in the Ciskei and that President Lennox Sebe had been out of the country at the time.

22.2 A telegramme had been received from Annica and Niek van Gylswyk conveying their good wishes to the Conference.

22.3 A questionnaire had been circulated to all regions by N. Transvaal Region in connection with Domestic Worker issues.

22.4 The paper CONFERENCE FOR A DEMOCRATIC FUTURE was tabled and numbered (PAPER NO. 58)

22.5 The attention of Conference was drawn to Paper 54, a document compiled by Sarah-Anne Raynham on REGIONAL RESPONSES TO THE 1989 DRAFT MISSION STATEMENT.

**23. Continuation of REPORTBACKS FROM GROUP DISCUSSION ON POLICY STATEMENTS**

23.1 The press group was asked to draw together all statements

coming out of these reports for the press conference to be held at 5 p.m. that afternoon.

23.2 A. Kotze suggested that our publications should be made accessible to 2nd and 3rd language speakers - 1990 was the Year of Literacy and that we should bear this in mind when considering further publications.

23.3 Ros Bush reported back from the discussion on Human Rights. There was a statement on the Hunger-Strikers - see Statement no. 1 in Appendix B. It was agreed to make a separate statement on the returning exiles. (see Statement no. 3 in Appendix B)

23.4 Larry Field reported back from the discussion on Redressing Injustices.

23.5 Mari-Louise Perez reported back from discussion on Alignment/Alliance/Affiliation.

There was much discussion after this reportback and the group's proposals were taken back for reworking. The discussion centred around the following points:

- affiliation on a regional basis only was a contradiction because it affected the whole body of Sash.
- affiliation needed to be looked at in a long-term perspective.
- we needed to take a firm stand on who and what we were and where we were going and that would automatically align us with a broad front.
- it was difficult to continually "sit on the fence" and not align ourselves
- Black Sash is sometimes viewed with suspicion because of its unwillingness to affiliate. It would be necessary therefore for us to explain, formally, to other organisations why our autonomy was important. A policy statement in this regard would need to be made.
- to have a part in the development of a new constitution (or to be part of that process) we would have to join alliances.
- in alliances, we do not subordinate ourselves to others. Our past experience has shown us this. It is important for Black Sash to be free to disagree.
- with regard to the specific issue of women's organisations, we might be asked to affiliate - we would need to anticipate what might be expected of us.

It was agreed to await the proposals from the the Women's Issues Group. There was general consensus that we should allign to other groups, but there was not general consensus on affiliating to other groups.

23.6 Rosemary van wyk Smith reported back from discussion on women's issues. Proposal accepted with acclaim. (See Appendix B for text.)

The reportback and proposals from the Funding Group were held over until the next session.

**TEA BREAK**                    **11:00 - 11:30**

**SESSION 8:**                    **11:30 - 14:30**

(MARY BURTON IN THE CHAIR)

**23.7 Reportback from Funding Group - presented by Barbara Klugman**

This group had concluded that the Black Sash should maintain their dual role as a voluntary organisation and employer. Several proposals had been made but the group had been divided on these: that the Black Sash should become more professional as an organisation; that one person be employed nationally to actually administer the payment of salaries to Black Sash employers; and that the Sash employ a full-time fund-raiser. A counter proposition was that we continue to fund-raise for a year or so before taking this action. There was general agreement that the political and advice office work should be integrated as much as possible, and that some regions in particular, needed more communication with the A.O.T.

On a point of clarification, regions were informed that they could raise funds themselves after first consulting with the A.O.T.

It was agreed that these matters should be discussed with the regions.

**24. TABLING OF PAPERS:** The following papers were tabled:

- NO. 55 NARRATIVE REPORT OF THE WORK OF THE A.O.T.
- NO. 56 ACCOUNTABILITY AND NON-RACIALISM IN THE BLACK SASH
- NO. 57 CONFERENCE FOR A DEMOCRATIC FUTURE

**25. RESOLUTIONS:**

**25.1 RESOLUTION ON ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP - RESOLUTION NO. 2**

There was some opposition to this resolution because of the time it would involve. M. Burton supported the resolution because the Black Sash was often questioned on the status of Associate Membership. The resolution was passed 25 for 6 against and 1 abstention.

(See Appendix B for full text.)

25.2 RESOLUTION TO INCREASE REGIONAL LEVY TO NATIONAL HQ  
RESOLUTION NO. 3

This resolution was passed unopposed, after the words "per ordinary member" were inserted after R13,60 on the original draft resolution.

(See Appendix B for full text.)

25.3 RESOLUTION RE REGIONAL REPRESENTATION AT NATIONAL  
CONFERENCE - RESOLUTION NO. 4

After much discussion, the following amendment to the original proposal was accepted: (amendments in italics)

"For the 1st 100 ordinary members or part thereof.....3 delegates  
For each additional *100* ordinary members or part  
thereof, *up to a maximum of 4* .....1 delegate"

(See Appendix B for full text)

25.3.1 It was agreed, however, that this issue would be discussed by the regions during the year and considered again at the 1991 National Conference. In particular, Albany's proposal for a U.N. form of representation should be considered i.e. each region would have the same number of voting delegates, but any number of official observers. The other proposal to be considered would include a sliding scale e.g. the 1st addition 100 ordinary members would entitle 1 delegate, then the next 150, 200, 250 etc.

25.3.2 The smaller regions noted that they did not have enough delegates to attend all parallel sessions. It was agreed that the seating arrangements should be considered carefully at future conferences so that smaller regions felt less intimidated. Further, Cape Western called for the official observer system to be looked into.

25.4 RESOLUTION ON MEMBERSHIP OF SOCIETY FOR ABOLITION OF THE  
DEATH PENALTY IN SOUTH AFRICA - RESOLUTION NO. 5

The original resolution proposed by Cape Western previously circulated, was withdrawn. An alternate resolution was proposed by Ethel Walt and seconded by Laura Pollecutt and was passed unopposed. (See Appendix B for text).

25.5 RESOLUTION RE TRUSTEES OF ADVICE OFFICE TRUST

This resolution was withdrawn by the Chairperson of the Trust due to lengthy legal procedures.

## **26. PROPOSAL FROM GROUP ON ALIGNMENT/AFFILIATION/ALLIANCE:**

The new proposal was read to the Conference and was greeted with enthusiasm. It was accepted 32 for, 3 against and 2 abstentions. (See Appendix B for full text.)

## **27. REGIONAL REPRESENTATION ON NATIONAL HQ COMMITTEE**

27.1 A report from the group who had discussed regional representation on Saturday night, was made by Jenny de Tolly. It was explained that constitutionally, conference can elect one, two or three vice presidents, the third (or second) being from outside Headquarters Region. It was also emphasised that National Committee can draw on other members if it so wished, but that National Headquarters were seeking ratification from conference before implementing the concept of regional representation on the National Committee.

27.2 The proposal to expand regional representation on the National Committee in principle was carried unanimously.

This decision would be subject to the availability of funding. It was envisaged that three representatives from broader areas attend meetings every three months. These representatives would be mandated from their areas, and not by National Conference.

27.3 A proposal was then made that National Conference should elect a third Regional Vice President who would then become that region's representative. This proposal was defeated, 23 against and 12 for.

27.4 A proposal was then made for National Conference this year to elect two Vice Presidents only. This was carried.

## **28. REPORT ON PENSIONS CAMPAIGN**

This was a reportback from the group discussion on pensions, held on Saturday night, Marj Brown reporting.

The campaign would centre around the following:

- regional meetings with members of the Mouton Commission
- press conferences in regions to launch pensions book approx. 4 days before budget day
- demonstrations on morning of budget day e.g. "You're worrying about your tax - pensioners worry about survival"
- D.P. members of parliament to be asked to invite pensioners to sit in the public gallery for the budget speech instead of having V.I.P.'s

- next focus to be the provincial sittings of parliament

Other actions would include parliamentary questions, information leaflets for pensioners, moving the focus from the officials in the provincial administrations to the political masters. Also important to communicate with other organisations about giving attention to this issue and facilitating collective action amongst pensioners.

## 29. CHAIRPERSONS MEETING:

J. Hawarden reported that this had been very successful and should be repeated at the 1991 National Conference. (There was no report of discussion.)

## 30. ELECTION OF HEADQUARTERS REGION

*(ROSEMARY VAN WYK SMITH IN THE CHAIR)*

A proposal for Cape Western Region to continue as Headquarters Region was proposed by Judith Hawarden and seconded by Laura Pollecutt and passed unanimously.

## 31. ELECTION OF NATIONAL OFFICE BEARERS

31.1 Jenny de Tolly read a moving tribute to Mary Burton on her retirement as National President.

This was endorsed by a standing ovation for Mary by the conference, followed by a tribute song composed especially for her by the Cape Western delegation. Conference then joined in the chorus and toyi-toyed around the conference hall.

31.2 The following nominations had been received for National Office Bearers:

President: Jenny de Tolly

Vice Presidents: Mary Burton and Karin Chubb

Advice Co-ordinator: Sheena Duncan

As there were no further nominations, they were elected unopposed.

## 32. ELECTION OF ADVICE OFFICE TRUSTEES:

The following nominations were received:

Sheena Duncan, Ethel Walt, Audrey Colman, Barbara Klugman, Pat

Tucker, Jenny de Tolly, Jill Nicolson and Val Fletcher. These nominations would be considered at the next meeting of the A.O.T.

33. A special vote of thanks was extended to Rosemary van wyk Smith for her wonderful contribution to the National Executive as the "out of region" 3rd Vice President who had done so much to bring the 3 Eastern Cape Regions together.

A vote of thanks was also extended to Sue Philcox for her contribution as a National Vice-President during 1989. She would remain on the National Executive in its extended form.

Joyce Harris was also thanked as out-going chairperson of the Advice Office Trust for her hard work and dedication to the Trust.

Thanks were also extended to Audrey Coleman.

#### **34. FINAL RESOLUTIONS/STATEMENTS**

34.1 The final wording for the Statement on the Robben Island Hunger Strikers was read out and approved by conference. (See Appendix B for text)

34.2 The statement about Incorporation was now out of context, in view of the coup. Another statement would be issued after conference. (See Appendix C for text)

34.3 The statement on exiles was not yet complete, but would be completed later. (See Appendix B for text - this statement was issued after the close of Conference)

#### **35. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT CONFERENCE:**

Cape Western Region extended an invitation to conference to host the 1991 National Conference. It was accepted that a residential conference might not be possible and that a date would have to be fixed after each region had considered what was best for them. If nothing was received by end of April, Cape Western would make their own plans.

#### **36. NATIONAL CONFERENCE ASSESSMENT:**

Rosemary Meny-Gibert explained that the last assessment had not elicited much response from the regions, but that it was very important for National Headquarters to get feedback from regions.

A brief assessment was handed out to all regions to complete on a regional basis, and the conference was then asked to respond in plenary with any immediate suggestions for changes and improvements.

37. Warm thanks were extended to Lyn Oberhauser for the wonderful catering during conference and to Albany as a region

for the running of conference. All their efforts had been much appreciated. Thanks were also extended to Border and Cape Eastern who had assisted with transport etc. Thanks were extended to Tish Haynes and Rosemary Meny-Gibert for their contribution to the general running of conference.

38. The conference then closed with the singing of Nkosi Sikelele iAfrika at 14.30 p.m.

SIGNED: ..... DATED: .....



MINUTES OF THE BLACK SASH NATIONAL CONFERENCE 1990

APPENDIX A : REGISTER OF ATTENDENCE AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE

HEADQUARTERS, CAPE WESTERN (including S. Cape Br.):

M. Burton,	B. Runciman	C. Smith
J. de Tolly	C. Sutherland	D. Bishop
K. Chubb	C. Tyrrell	A. Hill
S. Philcox	V. Rose-Christie	D. Ackerman
J. Prinsloo	M. Brimble	A. Schuster
C. Malherbe	R. Bush	M. Nash
L. Shaw	A. Hendrikz	D. Meek
S-A. Raynham	S. van der Merwe	N. Robb
T. Haynes	T. Edwards	P. Bukashi
R. Meny-Gibert	C. Parker	L. Harding

CAPE EASTERN:

A. Knott	E. Ngesi	J. Crighton
L. Frescura.	A. Hamlet	L-A Parsons
S. Hurley	L. Woods	B. Melunsky
V. Proudlock	I. Douglas-Jones	5 others for the day
J. Cherry	J. Chalmers	

ALBANY:

R. Smith	V. Letcher	J. Segar
B. Brady	J. Marsh	S. Middleton
J. Walton	V. Botha	B. Davenport
M. Beard	M. Barker	A. Campbell
N. Charton	M. Clarke	E. Coetzee
R. Davenport	C. Davies	M. de Beer
N. de Villiers	S. Rowoldt	P. Hall
L. Harris	H. Holleman	J. James
C. Jefferay	J. Joubert	G. Macdonald
S. Maclennan	K. Marx	P. McCoy
G. Morgan	L. Paterson	L. Pinchuck
D. Russell	M. Reitzes	J. Small
S. Skipper	H. Southall	C. Stephen
S. Stewart	B. Tonsing	A. Whisson
D. Wyndham-Kelly	M. Heleni	M.L. Peires
D. Dowling	L. Osler	

**BORDER:**

S. Power	A. Stoll	D. Denholm
V. Viljoen	L. Field	J. Power
N. Squires	J. Sephton	B. Sephton

**NATAL COASTAL:**

W. Annecke	P. Geerds	K. Bird
A. Alexander	L. Siebel	C. Vinsen
J. Fairburn	A. von Kotze	

**NATAL MIDLANDS:**

M. Kleinenberg	F. Fouche	J. Worsnip
P. Krynauw		

**NORTHERN TRANSVAAL:**

K. Harris	M. Jobson	P. Geerds
I. Pretorius	D. Gillett	V. Harris

**TRANSVAAL:**

J. Hawarden	B. Klugman	G. Glover
T. Milliken	G. de Vlieg	P. Lloyd
E. Walt	B. Rollnick	J. Harris
L. Pollecutt	M. Brown	N. Beattie
		R. Bernett

S. Duncan (A.O.T. Co-ord.)  
B. Stanton (A.O.T. Treas.)  
A. Claasens (TRAC)

MINUTES OF THE BLACK SASH NATIONAL CONFERENCE 1990

APPENDIX B : RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 1

The Pretoria branch of the Transvaal Region of the Black Sash has a distinctive character and 79 members. It has for some time operated independently with enthusiasm and vigour.

The Transvaal Region has pleasure in proposing that the Pretoria Branch becomes the Northern Transvaal Region of the Black Sash. We therefore present the following resolution to National Conference.

*"It is resolved that the Pretoria Branch of the Transvaal Region becomes the Northern Transvaal Region of the Black Sash."*

We take this opportunity of wishing Pretoria every success and we look forward to working together whenever necessary and appropriate in the future.

RESOLUTION NO. 2

The Northern Transvaal Region (Pretoria Branch of the Transvaal Region) of the Black Sash proposes that the National Executive appoint a special sub-committee to investigate the anomalies concerning associate membership in the National Constitution. The sub-committee should include at least one male associate member of Sash and should pay particular attention to the provision of a rationale for the subordinate status of men in the organisation.

RESOLUTION NO. 3

It is resolved that the levy payable to National Headquarters out of membership subscriptions be increased to R13,60 payable quarterly per ordinary member (4 x R3,40) and that this amount be reviewed annually.

Resolution proposed by Headquarters.

RESOLUTION NO. 4

Resolution re Regional Representation at National Conference

"Each region shall be entitled to representation at National Conference on the basis of its PAID UP, ORDINARY membership as at the END OF THE PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR according to the following scale:

Paid up Members:	Delegates
For the 1st 100 ordinary members or part thereof .....	3
For each additional 100 ordinary members or part thereof <i>up to a maximum of 4</i> .....	1

(Ref: Clause 7(iv) of National Constitution)

Resolution proposed by National Headquarters

RESOLUTION NO. 5

Resolution on membership of Society for Abolition of the Death Penalty in South Africa - proposed by Cape Western

We resolve that:

- \* The Black Sash promotes individual membership of the Society for the Abolition of the Death Penalty in South Africa among its members:
- \* The Black Sash seeks a working relationship and exchanges information and ideas with the Society in order to further the cause of abolition in South Africa.

## THE BLACK SASH

NATIONAL CONFERENCE 1990      APPENDIX B      Cont.

### *WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?*

In the light of the dramatically changing political situation, and after 35 years of existence, it was appropriate that at this conference, the Black Sash should devote considerable attention to examining its role and planning its work in the period ahead. At the 1989 Conference, a draft mission statement was proposed, and this led to valuable discussion during the past year in several regions. A number of useful working papers were circulated to stimulate new thinking and analysis.

As a result, a decision was reached not to pursue a mission statement, but instead to discuss at this 1990 Conference the issues arising from these ongoing discussions, grouped under six headings.

#### 1. DISMANTLING APARTHEID

The Conference recognised that despite recent political developments and some promises of change and reform, apartheid is firmly entrenched in the existing Constitution. It was therefore agreed that the Black Sash should embark on a campaign against the "Own Affairs" schedule to the 1983 Constitution which lies at the root of the apartheid *administration* system.

In order to start dismantling apartheid and building a new society it is necessary to move away from the "own affairs" concept so that when a new constitution is agreed to and a non-racial democratic government comes to power at least some of the administrative structures will be in place to enable new policies to be carried out.

The Own Affairs schedule includes Health, Welfare, Pensions, Education, Housing, Religious Affairs, Cultural Affairs, Water Supply etc. etc. A campaign for the removal of the Own Affairs schedule would build on work being done already in the broad democratic movement e.g. the defiance campaign on hospitals, beaches and all public amenities, the demand for all schools for all people; the one city, open city campaigns and the opposition to racially-based local authorities.

A Black Sash campaign could put these and other mass actions into the constitutional perspective and further the process of public education on constitutional systems and justice.

## 2. HUMAN RIGHTS

The Black Sash remains committed to the development of a human rights culture in South Africa, recognising that the civil and political, the socio-economic and the developmental and environmental rights are inextricably linked. It was agreed that this commitment would form the broad framework within which all Black Sash work would be undertaken. This would require a programme of self-education for the broad Black Sash membership which would involve the study of human rights and how they can be protected (e.g. by a Bill of Rights, Charters and Conventions). It would also require an understanding that our attention to socio-economic issues (e.g. pensions), and our training and development work fit clearly within this framework. A focus on environmental issues has not in the past been a major concern for the Black Sash, but interest is clearly growing, together with an awareness that the protection of the ecology can clash with the real needs of a growing urban population. Among the contributions the Black Sash could make to the spread of a human rights culture, is the provision of resource material to stimulate study and debate.

## 3. WOMEN'S ISSUES

The question of whether the Black Sash is or should be a feminist organisation continues to generate discussion in most of the Regions. The following recommendation was made by the Conference group which discussed this issue, and was accepted:

"That on a philosophical level we adopt a feminist ecological perspective; that on a political level we continue to be a human rights organisation with an added dimension of always asking how each area of our work affects women; and that on a practical level we remain an organisation of women as an interim strategy for our empowerment."

Furthermore, a resolution was passed that:

"The National Executive appoint a special sub-committee to investigate the anomalies concerning associate membership in the National Constitution. The sub-committee should include at least one male associate member of Sash, and should pay particular attention to the provision of a rationale for the subordinate status of men in the organisation."

## 4. REDRESSING INJUSTICES

The Conference acknowledged the urgent need to address the serious deprivation of the majority of the population in terms of economic disadvantage, of lack of educational, training and employment opportunities, and of inadequate social services and welfare. It affirmed that the Black Sash is committed to the

attainment of a just and egalitarian society. We realise that this will be achieved through a process in which there will have to be sacrifices. We are committed to the principle of redistribution, but also in the short term to:

- (a) sharing of resources and skills that we have achieved in our work
- (b) working alongside communities and facilitating the voicing of their grievances/aims and working with other service organisations on related issues
- (c) educating ourselves and the broader public in the indepth complexity of redressing injustices so as to ensure that everyone will enjoy social and economic, as well as civil and political rights.

## **5. AFFILIATION/ALIGNMENT/ALLIANCE**

Under this heading, the Conference discussed the nature of the Black Sash's relationship with other organisations and the following statement was accepted:

"The Black Sash is both a service and political organisation, first and foremost working for human rights.

We recognise in our service work the need to be responsible and accountable to the communities and people we serve.

In our political work we have benefitted from the working relationships and alliances which we have been able to establish with a wide range of organisations with which we have common goals and values. In the context of the present shaping of the future South Africa we believe it is essential to maintain and encourage such relationships.

Traditionally these relationships have been alliances rather than formal affiliations. This is because we believe the quest for human rights is an eternal one and to effectively promote their establishment and continuation, a degree of independence is necessary. We seek particularly to maintain the balance of mutual accountability and independence that we have experienced in the past."

## **6. DEPENDENCY ON FUND-RAISING AND THE CHANGING NATURE OF BLACK SASH MEMBERSHIP**

The Conference addressed the undeniable fact that many members of the Black Sash are employed outside the organisation and therefore have little or no time to offer during formal working hours. This has led to a need to employ workers to replace some of the volunteer work and to respond to the demands to expand our

work still further. This in turn creates an ever-growing need to raise funds and to administer them responsibly. A serious burden falls on elected (and volunteer) office bearers, who are also as a result seen as having increased control over the organisation as a whole. A number of proposals were put forward for improving both the process of administration and the channels of communication for financial decision-making, and these will be taken up by Headquarters Committee and the Advice Office Trust.

## CONCLUSION

The Conference gave the organisation a clear mandate to work within this broad framework. The establishment of a new Region, based in Pretoria, to be named the Northern Transvaal Region, was a welcome sign of the growth and energy of Black Sash membership in that area. The successful organisation of the conference itself, hosted by the Albany Region, with the support of the Border and Cape Eastern Regions, was a tribute to the dynamism of a fairly small body of members in an area where apartheid's effects have often been most cruelly felt.

The election of a new President, Jenny de Tolly and a new Headquarters committee, mark the start of a clear programme of work for the Black Sash in the 1990's.



## STATEMENTS

### 1. IN SUPPORT OF HUNGER-STRIKERS

The 1990 Black Sash National Conference issued the following statement of support for hunger-striking prisoners on Robben Island as well as Pollsmoor and Diepkloof Prisons.

"The Black Sash National Conference expresses its deep concern for the 340 Robben Island prisoners and the political prisoners in Pollsmoor and Diepkloof who are currently on a hunger strike.

We believe the time has arrived in South Africa for reconciliation and reconstruction, and we therefore call for an amnesty for prisoners who have been convicted for actions taken in the struggle against apartheid - i.e. for those who would be defined as prisoners of war in terms of the Geneva Convention.

The selective release of some of the political prisoners is not an adequate response to public demands and concern. The Robben Island Hunger Strikers are also drawing attention to their living conditions. The Black Sash believes they are demonstrating great courage in using this means to inform the outside world about their situation.

We align ourselves with the widespread call for rapid attention to the complaints of the political prisoners, and to the issue of their release.

We commit ourselves to a programme of self-education about politically motivated acts of violence and about political prisoners."

### 2. ON REPRESSION

Since De Klerk's stated reform proposals, there seems to have been a conservative backlash within the ranks of the police force in some areas and sporadic shooting into crowds of peaceful protestors, resulting in injuries and deaths. In these incidents police remain protected by the indemnity clause under the State of Emergency.

Detentions have continued under the Internal Security Act as a substitute for detentions under the State of Emergency. This gives the lie to the reform image presented to the international community. After a period of detention under this Act for so-called political reasons many prisoners are charged with criminal

offences.

There have been at least 7 deaths in police custody this year.

Whilst it is commendable that the state ordered a Commission of Enquiry into Clayton Sithole's death, we do not understand why the scope of the Commission is limited to an enquiry into one death in police custody.

We call on the State President to:

- (a) order an independent Commission of Enquiry into ALL deaths in police custody
- (b) end the State of Emergency and thereby end the indemnity of police action
- (c) remove any legislation restricting the right to freedom of assembly and thus prevent provocative police intervention into what otherwise would be a peaceful protest.

3. STATEMENT FROM THE BORDER REGION OF THE BLACK SASH ON RECENT EVENTS IN THE CISKEI

The Border Region of the Black Sash welcomes the overthrow of President Sebe in a bloodless coup. We are particularly pleased to see that the new Military Council has recognised the importance of consultation with the Mass Democratic Movement. We hope that the Military Council has the moral strength to set the Ciskei on the road to democracy and that it pays heed to the calls for Ciskei re-incorporation into South Africa.

The looting and violence that followed the coup is a tragedy and can not be condoned. However violence always has a context. We believe the frustration of years of repression under Sebe and the high rate of unemployment and poverty contributed to the wave of mindless violence. It is only in the combatting of the underlying causes of the violence that we can ensure future peace and stability.

The fact that industry and businesses were destroyed in such vast numbers highlights the deep anger directed at these concerns. It is widely believed that employers benefitted directly from Ciskei independence and repression. Appallingly low wages, no legal protection for workers, corruption of the decentralization packages and ruthless anti-union policies have created deep resentment towards private enterprise in the Ciskei, and private enterprise in general.

We hope the violence will rapidly subside so that reconstruction can begin. We believe the South African Government must take a number of immediate practical steps to ensure the stability of the region. Such steps should include:

1. A public statement of intent committing the Government to the dismantling of the Bantustans and the immediate cessation of all incorporations.
2. The opening of discussions with the Military Council on the question of the immediate re-incorporation of East Peleton into South Africa.
3. The provision of administrative, and if necessary, financial assistance to ensure that people are able to receive their pensions, unemployment benefits and other forms of social welfare.

S. POWER  
Chairperson

APPENDIX C

1. MESSAGE TO THE LUBOWSKI FAMILY:

The Black Sash, meeting at its National Conference in Grahamstown, sends a warm message of sympathy and support to the family of Anton Lubowski. We are appalled that after enduring the pain and horror of his assassination, they should now be made to suffer the allegations by General Magnus Malan that Anton Lubowski was a paid informer to the SADF. We find such allegations impossible to believe, and we condemn the manner in which they were being made in a parliamentary debate when General Magnus Malan was the subject of an urgently necessary inquiry and of criticism from which he was trying to divert attention.

2. MESSAGE FROM ADELAIDE TAMBO

Over many decades, you have tirelessly worked extremely hard for justice and the restoration of human rights in our country. This was done under very difficult conditions, often at the risk of your lives and those of your families.

You have given support, solace and encouragement to our people when harassment, persecution, stress and dejection was the order of the day.

We can never ever forget your continued contribution to our just case.

Your conference comes at a time when there is at last a ray of light in what was a bleak darkness.

The way ahead is steep, but I know that working together, we shall achieve major gains and restore peace and human dignity to our beautiful country.

Let us plough love and understanding into our national work.

I wish your conference fruitful deliberations.

ADELAIDE TAMBO.