

CAPE WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL.Chairman. Mrs. M. Petersen.Vice-Chairmen. Mrs. N. Robb and Mrs. E. Stott.Acting Hon. Sec. Mrs. M. Henderson. Treasurer. Mrs. B. Willis.

Mrs. D. Berman. Mrs. H. Spottiswoode. Mrs. N. Le Feuvre.

Mrs. P. Duncan. Mrs. W. Saffery. Mrs. L. Marquard.

Mrs. D. Miller. Mrs. M. Roberts. Mrs. M. Smith.

Mrs. N. Day. Mrs. M. Birt. Mrs. S. Newman.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE REPORT.

The Conference held in Johannesburg in June, 1958, opened with the unanimous agreement that the Black Sash should carry on. After this decision, the next important resolution passed was an amendment to the Constitution to read:

"The Black Sash should work towards the establishment of a Constitution for South Africa in which the fundamental rights of all sections of the community would be effectively safeguarded." Thus the clause stating that "the Sash should observe the moral pledges and constitutional safeguards of the compact of Union" was deleted, because the Constitution of 1910 is dead, killed by the Nationalists and buried beyond hope of resurrection.

It was also agreed that there were three steps necessary for carrying out this resolution.

- (1) To develop a public realisation of the need which exists for such a Constitution.
- (2) To support and encourage those competent to prepare such blueprints.
- (3) To publicise their findings.

It was agreed that the Black Sash should concentrate its public stands on mass demonstrations and that regular vigils and indiscriminate haunting should cease.

On the activity side, Cape Western's idea of administering a bail fund for African women arrested under the pass laws, and giving practical assistance to the victims of unjust and discriminatory laws was adopted enthusiastically.

Another interesting resolution which was carried unanimously was "that the Black Sash should make every effort to raise the level of the political life of the country by:-

- a) encouraging full and free discussion of political topics in an atmosphere of courtesy and reasonableness, both amongst our own members and the general public;
- b) informing ourselves and others of the facts of our situation in this country;
- c) by interest and active individual participation in local and provincial affairs."

Suggested methods of implementation of these resolutions were:-

1. Approach to Nationalist and U.P. committees with a plea to fight a clean election and to discourage supporters from breaking up meetings.
2. More personal approach to Nationalists to try to bring about recognition a) of the need for them to change their policy, b) to get recognition of the sincerity of the Black Sash.
3. More pressure on M.Ps. in each constituency, whether Nationalist or U.P. to value civil rights and liberties.
4. More vigilance over affairs of Provincial and City Councils.
5. Drawing-room and public meetings with Nationalist speakers and, if possible, at the same time non-White speakers and speakers from other political parties.
6. Protest against tyrannous administrative action, i.e. Ministerial decrees refusing passports, banning meetings of more than 10 Africans, banning newspaper reporters at Provincial or Civic or Parliamentary meetings.

VISIT TO THE SENATE.

On Thursday 24th July - the afternoon on which the Criminal Courts Amendment Bill reached the Senate - 16 members of the Sash went in twos to interview individual Senators (names drawn rather at random from the Transvaal, Cape, and O.F.S.) to ask their co-operation in getting the Bill amended so that:

- (1) it would not give the Minister the right to appoint Judges in cases in which he represents the prosecution.
- (2) it would not change conditions for the accused who would lose the right they had originally to choose a Judge and Assessors.

Many also made the point that adverse criticism from overseas would be greatly increased as news of these extraordinary powers given to the Minister became common knowledge.

Some met only the granite featured "Yes" men who "vote just as their leaders tell 'em to" but others had more lively conversations - Senators actually acknowledging a point here and there.

One Senator declared that he could do nothing about it (what is he there spending public money for?) and one made the terrific confession that if he were to try to do anything about it, it was as much as his job was worth.

Each Senator concerned has received a letter thanking him for his kind hearing and hoping that there will be further opportunities to discuss matters of importance.

INCREASED AFRICAN TAXATION.

On Monday 11th August, during the lunch hour, a public meeting in the Banqueting Hall was arranged by the Sash. Dr. O.D. Wolheim and Mr T. Ngwenya addressed the meeting on the iniquities of the proposed increase in African Taxation.

Points from Dr. Wolheim's talk.

There is no moral or fiscal basis for the present proposals with regard to African Taxation.

Do you know that -

(1) The Tomlinson Report stated that African rural incomes varied from £40 - £42 per family per annum ? ?

It has been established that urban earners are paid on an average of £16 per month ? ?

(2) The Social Survey of Cape Town estimates that the cost of keeping alive a man, his wife and 3 dependent children is £25 per month in urban areas ? ?

(3) Many Africans have to maintain two homes - one in the city and one, as a result of influx control measures, in the rural areas for their wives and children ? ?

(4) Africans are expected to pay normal income tax as well as all the indirect taxation which Europeans have to pay ? ?

(5) The Poll Tax (except in Natal) is on a higher scale than that which applies to White, Coloured or Asiatic groups ? ?

(6) African married women are now to pay Poll Tax which no other married woman in the Union has to pay ? ?

(7) The age group among Africans subject to taxation runs from 18 - 65 years, whereas for other groups it runs from 21 - 60 years ? ?

(8) Africans in many urban areas are being taxed - sometimes voluntarily and sometimes compulsorily - at the rate of 2/- per month for educational purposes ? ?

WELCOME BACK to the Constantia Branch after their recess, and good wishes for the future.

HOSPITALITY WANTED.

For a week during the middle of October, Black Sash delegates from all over the Union will be attending the Conference in Cape Town. If any of you are willing to offer hospitality, please telephone the Black Sash office - 6-8660 - or tell your Branch Chair.

ALL MEMBERS ARE VERY WELCOME TO COME AND LISTEN AT ANY TIME DURING THE CONFERENCE and will be able to buy refreshments. The Conference also takes place in St. Saviour's Church Hall. All the Branches are helping with the catering, so you will be hearing from your Branch about this.

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE HEADQUARTERS.

It has been agreed that the Central Executive will move to Cape Town after the annual National Conference, which is to take place on the 14th, 15th and 16th October this year. This means that Cape Western will have to find from among its members the personnel for the Central Executive.

AFRIKAANS AND XOSA LESSONS.

The Regional Council is arranging Afrikaans and Xosa lessons, both advanced and elementary. Anyone who is interested should telephone the office - 6-8660. We are hoping that the fees will be very low and well within the means of every member.

REGIONAL CONFERENCE.

The Cape Western Regional Conference will be held on the 8th. October, 1958, in St. Saviour's Hall, Claremont. Any interested member of the Sash may attend and it will be well worth their while to do so. We are pleased that Mrs. Foley, our National President has accepted an invitation to open the Conference.

OBITUARY.

It is with deep regret that we have to announce the deaths of the following members:-

Mrs. R. Close, Mrs. E. P. Willmott, Mrs. Carey Slater,
Mrs. E.M. Todd, Mrs. E.E. Gillies and Mrs. D. Arton.

Your Editors,
"BLACK" and "SERP".

3. That pamphlets with past activities and future aims be printed with a view to recruiting.

(Rondebosch Branch.)

4. That when embarking on this new year, every member should realise that her work in the Sash may not show any immediate results, but that she fully understands that she is engaged on a long-term policy.

(Rondebosch Branch.)

5. That future projects be outlined so that Sashers can decide in which sphere their gifts can be used to the best advantage.

(Rondebosch Branch.)

[Faint, illegible text, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side of the page]

The News Letter ran out of space!!

The following resolutions were discussed at the Regional Confernece on June 2nd, continued on August 4th and were passed as recommendations to individual members of the Black Sash:-

1. That every member of the Black Sash, as an individual, should try, amongst her own circle, to improve relations between English- and Afrikaans-speaking South Africans, particularly amongst the young people. For example, competition between English- and Afrikaans-speaking schools should be encouraged in the sportsfield, the debating hall and every other possible sphere; and that we should all try to foster the wider speaking of Afrikaans amongst English-speaking people, especially the youth.

(Kenilworth/Wynberg Branch.)

2. That every member of the Black Sash should work in her own immediate circle for better understanding between Afrikaans and English, and Black and White people in South Africa, e.g:-

a) By asking their local minister to have non-European Preacher at least once a year.

b) To ask the school attended by their own children to have non-White and Afrikaans speakers occasionally.

c) To ask the English schools to seek every opportunity of meeting Afrikaans schools in the field of sport, music, debating, etc.

d) To encourage committees who deal with work among non-Europeans to have some non-Europeans on their committees.

(Regional Council.)

/3. That pamphlets.....