

Dear Member,

Our annual Regional Conference took place on October 12th, just before our delegates left to attend the National Conference at Port Elizabeth. At the Regional Conference there was much fruitful debate on the resolutions for both Regional and National Conferences, all of which had been discussed by the branches beforehand. There was a very great measure of agreement on all the resolutions, and a feeling of renewed strength and courage that comes from meeting each other and discussing common purposes. We wish that more members had come as observers to share in this.

Mrs. Roberts read an admirable report, which will be circulated to members, and part of which at least we hope to be able to get into the Press. Mrs. Willis and Mrs. Green were congratulated on their financial statement, and thanked for the splendid work they do all the year round for us, unremittingly vigilant for the hard basis of our existence. We are very grateful to have our affairs in their competent hands.

Mrs. Robb presented the report of the Advice Office for the year, a record of devoted and increasingly difficult effort for people suffering under the stringency of the Bantu Laws, undertaken with a courage reminiscent of Bryhtwold's words: "Thought shall be the harder, heart the keener, courage the greater, as our might lessens". Mrs. Parks was thanked for her wonderful work at the Office, and so were all the voluntary workers who go out so faithfully to help. A vote of thanks to Mrs. Robb was passed with acclaim. Likewise to Mrs. Roberts for guiding the Region through a difficult time. The sitting members of the Council were thanked, and as there were no other nominations all were re-elected for the next year.

It was decided to ask Headquarters to publish a statement about Mrs. Hill, a member of Natal Coastal Region of the Black Sash, who has been banned. Mrs. Hill has given unstintingly of herself to help all who needed her help in any way. Even when the help was given as the member of an organisation, she did not spare herself, but has been a dedicated worker. It was felt that an account of her activities should be given to the Press, together with a strong protest against her banning, and a challenge to the Minister to show why she has been banned.

The Group Areas Advice Bureau of which we informed you in the last newsletter reports that many non-White owners who have had to sell their houses have suffered great financial loss. The bureau is willing to help any property owners to try and get the Group Areas Board to set a fair basic valuation on their property. You are asked to urge any owners you know of to apply for assistance and advice. The members of the Bureau are Mesdames Stott, Digby, Coplans, Willis, Thorne, Morris, Ritchken, Schurr, Birt and Robb. It has been suggested that a meeting should be called in Simon's Town and Kalk Bay area that the position may be explained by a lawyer.

We hope soon to have a gramophone record of extracts from the speeches made at the April Protest Meeting against Proclamation 26 (with a linking narrative) which will play for about 36 minutes. It will be available to branches and to individuals, and someone has suggested that it will make a good Christmas gift. Each record will cost about R1; please may we have your orders now.

All Branches:

In July Gerald Gordon, President of the Bar Council, spoke about the restrictions and the loss of liberty that have come about in South Africa. He stressed the fact that loss of liberty for one man or one group is loss of liberty for all. He then detailed the restricting bills passed through Parliament since 1948. A summary of his talk is to be sent to the magazine.

We hope you will attend the November meeting. The delegates will report on the National Conference, and we know that everyone will be anxious to hear them.

Presentation...

Presentation to Mrs. Suzman:

Headquarters presented Mrs. Suzman with the white gold Black Sash badge to the cost of which all the Regions had contributed, at their Regional Conference on August 11th. It was a salute to her for all she has done to further our objects, especially in Advice Office cases.

The Fete:

The Fete will take place on Saturday, November 27th, in the Claremont Civic Centre. Please remember your contribution of one or more articles, useful and attractive, to the needlework stall, which will be run by the Regional Council.

The stalls are:

Claremont and Plumstead	- Delicatessen	Rosebank	- Books
False Bay and Fish Hoek	- "Bargains Galore"	Somerset West and Elgin	- Produce
Gardens	- Teas	Wynberg	- White Elephant
Regional Council	- Flowers	Simon's Town	has had book sales.
Rondebosch and Pinelands	- Cakes		

Already R509.05 has been contributed towards the Fete.

Letter of Appeal:

So far we have received R804.20 from 56 donors in response to our appeal.

The Advice Office:

The report of the Office for the last twelve months tells of the increasing difficulty of obtaining interviews with any of the officials and the consequent hampering of the work. As the chances of Africans getting a fair hearing depends to a large extent on their having a European with them, we are pleading with employers to go with their employees to the officials.

No more women are being given permission to enter the Cape Western Area for work, and even visiting has grown more difficult.

The Contract System by which men must be recruited from the Transkei for one year's service is being strictly applied. It is so complicated and cumbersome, so wasteful of time and money and efficiency, that there is a shortage of labour in this area, as employers are growing more reluctant to be bothered with it, although there are hundreds of Africans in the Transkei urgently needing employment. The African is prevented from selling his labour to what is ultimately his employer's as well as his own advantage, and is powerless to get redress when his employer breaks a contract which he dares not break.

The Press has been very helpful in giving publicity on several occasions. We believe that if the electorate could realise the inhuman results of influx control they would join in protesting against the Pass Laws which are as serious an indictment of our society as slavery was in the last century.

The number of cases interviewed during the year was 4,380. Of these 2,429 were old cases returned, and 1,951 were new-cases. Apart from miscellaneous cases coming for advice and help, 451 of the men and 778 of the women were endorsed out.

The Advice Office (Cont.)

We have about 8,594 authenticated cases in our files, which are available for purpose of research.

Of our 110 visitors, 74 were local and 36 from overseas, a reversal of the proportion of last year. We are delighted that at last South Africans are showing more interest in our work. Members of the Black Sash have been coming regularly to see the work. The Office is open every weekday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and anyone is welcome to visit us after 10 a.m.

One of our cases:

REGINA BEN was born in Port Elizabeth. She came to Cape Town in November 1964 with her employer from Port Elizabeth. She married Norman Hokwana in May 1965 by Christian Rites. Mr. Hokwana was born in Cape Town, went to school at Langa High School and then worked continuously in the Cape area.

They reported to the Registering Officer and on 16th July 1965 she says she was told to return to Port Elizabeth for a permit to transfer to Cape Town. She went to Port Elizabeth and returned with a letter dated 4th August 1965 stating that she had requested a transfer to Cape Town as she is married to Mr. Hokwana (Marriage Certificate No. 351962) and that the Port Elizabeth office have no objection to her vacating their area. This was signed by the Superintendent of the Location in the Walmer Municipality. She presented this letter to the Registering Officer at Nyanga and was told to find accommodation. She told the Registering Officer that she wished to live with her husband, his widowed mother and the three younger children in their house. She says that the Registering Officer told her that only one family could occupy this house. As she had no accommodation other than this she was endorsed out.

On enquiring at Nyanga we were told that it was not a housing problem. He stated that it was not correct that she should have got permission from Port Elizabeth only. She should also have applied to the Bantu Affairs Commissioner here. He suggested that she appeal to the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner. We telephoned the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner and gave him all the facts. He said he would investigate. He said that if the marriage was legal and the husband was qualified she must be allowed to stay. The Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner telephoned later to say that he was prepared to see Mr. and Mrs. Hokwana and to tell her to leave the area immediately. They went to the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner on 2nd September 1965 but we have not heard what happened.

Regina's parents are both dead, she has a married sister in Port Elizabeth where she was working before coming to Cape Town.

Letters and Statements:

July: Statement on the raiding of the Advice Office, which appeared together with a statement from the Cape Western Chairman of the Institute of Race Relations on the raid.

August: From the Director of the Advice Office, congratulating the Cape Times on articles on everyday life of Cape Town Africans, and showing the relevance of the Athlone Advice Office work to an article by Prof. Lewin on government hostility to legal aid for Africans.

September...

Letters and Statements (Cont.)

September: Statement on return of papers seized by the police.

Letter on a speech by the Minister of Defence saying that it was
"necessary to overstep the rule of law ... to save South Africa."

Have you read these?

Hofmeyr, by Alan Paton (Published Oxford University Press)

Liberalism in South Africa, by Leo Marquard (obtainable from the S.A.
Institute of Race Relations for 40c).

The Man, by Irving Wallace (Cassell): a novel of the near future in
which a Negro becomes President of the U.S.A.

Hucklebury Finn, by Mark Twain: a picture of "race relations" in human
terms.

Please tell us of books you have read that might be of interest.

And please write to the papers as a private individual when you see
justice and humanity flouted. There have been an encouraging number of such letters
from members this year.

N.J. Marquard
for CHAIRMAN.