

Dear Member,

The legislation that has come up this Session has been a ringing challenge to us, as to all who value the rights of human beings and citizens. Two Bills that concerned us have already become acts - The Suppression of Communism Amendment Act, which gives the minister the right to decide who may practise as a lawyer and who is to be stigmatised as a communist (that much abused word), and the National Educational Policy Act. The latter gives the Minister the sole power, for the exercise of which he is responsible to no one, "advised" by a body of his own choosing, to enforce a narrow, sectarian form of education on all Government and Government Aided-schools, to deprive parents of the choice of language medium widening still further the gulf between English and Afrikaans children, and to "investigate" any deviation on the part of teachers. Whatever modifications of the C.N.E. policy as published in 1948 the Minister may intend, it must not be forgotten that the expressed object of that policy was to build the "Boerenasië", that Christian meant according to the doctrines of the Afrikaner Churches, and that the teacher who is not a "Christian" is "a most deadly danger to us". No cognisance at all is taken in the Act of non-White education, nor of the fact that we live in a multi-racial country.

Another bill that has become law is the Training Centres for Coloured Cadets Bill. We were by far not the only body to protest vigorously against the forced labour, summary arrest and loss of parental rights implied or stated in the Bill. As a result of these protests a number of modifications were made, allowing seven days for producing registration certificates and restoring parental rights.

A Bill that is still in committee and that was strenuously fought in the House is the Population Registration Amendment Bill. It seeks once again, and more viciously than ever, to determine the race of individuals and their descendants for good and all, so that there shall be no more crossing of the colour line. The full humiliation and cruelty of this can be realised only when we consider that a Coloured person is not a citizen with the rights of a citizen, that he may not associate publicly with White people, even to watch a tennis match, without rare and humiliating permission sought, but must be a marked person, one set apart, refused the freedom to choose his work, where he may live, his school and university, never for one minute allowed to forget his inferior status, so matter what his ability or the contribution he may be able to make to our country.

Another Bill that is to come up is an extension of the already obnoxious Mixed Marriages Act, to make mixed marriages contracted outside South Africa illegal here.

WHAT CAN I DO in the face of this juggernaut? That is the question that many of our members are asking, some with a certain measure of hopelessness, others with a genuine desire to have an answer. It was to seek an answer to just this question that the Branch Chairmen met a couple of months ago. None, I think, suffered from the misguided optimism of the member who after the Sash had been in existence for six months resigned because it had brought about no change in our legislation or Government! But to be an effective body the Sash must have a living body of members, and like all organisations and living things it needs a bit of shaking up and of stocktaking from time to time.

For...

For one thing it was felt that communication had broken down between the Council and the members - the "ordinary" member is too much on the outskirts, knows too little of what is being done and has consequently lost interest. A great many criticisms and suggestions were brought up and thrashed out, and at the March All Branches meeting these were discussed.

The first requisite is, of course, to get members together, both in their branches and in the monthly All Branches meeting. It is very important that as many members as possible should attend the monthly meetings, for there they will be put in touch with what Council and Branches are doing. EVERYONE is welcome at these meetings, on the first Monday of each month at 12 Noon, in Christ Church Hall, Selwyn Road, Kenilworth - and not only welcome, but free to speak and to vote on any matters discussed there apart from purely constitutional ones; to vote, that is, in their personal capacity, and not as representing any body.

As there are members who are unable to attend meetings by day, it was decided that as an experiment two of the monthly meetings this year will be held in the evening. The first will be on Monday, May 1st at 8 p.m. at Mrs. Robb's house, Silverhurst, Alexandra Road, Wynberg.

Speakers are often invited to talk at these meetings on a variety of interesting matters, among others to explain the full implications of Bills which in this sheet there is space only to mention. At the March Meeting Mrs. Grant spoke on the Education Bill, and at the April meeting Mr. Molteno spoke on the Population Registration Bill, both very informatively and interestingly.

At a number of Branch meetings, too, there have been speakers on subjects of interest to us: Mrs. Stott on housing problems and Group Area removals as they concern the City Council; Mrs. Hoffenberg on Kupugani; Mrs. Fricke on recreation for non-Whites in South Africa; Mrs. Versfeld on her visit to America, with particular reference to the circumstances of the Coloured people; Mrs. Ellis Smith on the Transkei; Mrs. Solomon on the work of the Institute of Race Relations.

Branches are anxious to interest their members by involving them in branch activities, and will welcome suggestions. One of the most important has been meeting non-White people at our parties. Rondebosch and Pinelands had one in March, and Simon's Town and False Bay will have one in May.

Rondebosch has arranged for a monthly meeting in order to give continuity to acquaintanceships made at parties. The first of these will be on April 18th, when one of the Coloured ladies will give a short cookery demonstration.

The best way in which private members can assist in fighting the Bills going through the House is by writing letters to the press. There has been an encouraging increase in the number of these, but please keep it up. Don't forget that protests caused the modification of one bill.

Athlone...

ATHLONE ADVICE OFFICE:

Cases dealt with since December 1966:-

	<u>December</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>March</u>
Men endorsed out	19	14	18	29
Women endorsed out	22	16	12	12
Miscellaneous	31	28	19	31
Old cases	<u>65</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>109</u>
	<u>137</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>146</u>	<u>181</u>
Average per day	12½	11	7	9

Visitors:

South African	1	2	4
Outside	3	4	3

A case from our files:-

MRS. P.M. came to Cape Town in 1960 and went back to the Transkei from 1962 to 1965. She returned to live in Simon's Town with her husband on 15th July, 1965. In September 1965 they were removed to Guguletu where they were given a brick house.

They laid a cement path to the front door, had inside doors put in, laid linoleum and prepared to spend their lives together in Guguletu, because her husband has been here legally since 1949.

In July 1966 they were told to vacate their house and she was told to return to Mount Frere. Her husband has a brother there but no land or house of his own.

We helped her to make an appeal against this decision to the Commissioner for Bantu Affairs but it was dismissed.

She was arrested on 20th October 1966, defended and found guilty of being in the area illegally, fined R20 or 60 days suspended on condition that she left the area within 21 days. The State accepted that her husband qualified and that she was his legal wife but that she was not ordinarily resident with him in terms of the Act as she only received permission to visit her husband, and that the various extensions which she had been given did not in any way give her the right to reside with him on a permanent basis. She appealed to the Supreme Court against this judgment on 23rd March 1967. Her appeal was dismissed. She will have to leave Cape Town and reside with her brother in law in Mount Frere.

There have been four Stands this year:

February 3: The Suppression of Communism Amendment Bill.

Posters: "Only the Courts should say who is fit to be a lawyer".
"Innocent or guilty the Courts must decide".

February 22: National Education Policy Bill 1962 - 1967.

Poster: "Dictatorship in Education comes to Cape Town".

March 3rd: Training Centres for Coloured Cadets Bill.

Poster: "Compulsory Education and equal opportunities - Yes.
Forced Labour and summary arrest - No."

Stands (Cont).

March 21: Population Registration Amendment Bill.

Posters: "Race classification destroys homes, families, lives".
"White privilege entrenched by Race Classification".

The following letters and statements have appeared:-

2nd February 1967 - Cape Times - Suppression of Communism Act.

14th February 1967 - " " - Training Centres for Coloured Cadets Bill.

27th February 1967 - " " - National Education Policy Bill.

26th March, 1967 - " " - Population Registration Amendment Bill.

BOOKS TO READ:

The Need for Dialogue by Dr. E. G. Malherbe (Published by the Institute of Race Relations - 25c).

Yours sincerely,

Barbara Wilks

BARBARA WILKS
CHAIRMAN.