

Dear Member,

At this time the activities of many of you will be more closely connected with the coming election than with the normal round of Black Sash routine. The undercurrent of excitement among people of all types, (white, of course!), working at pressure for a common and deeply-felt cause, gives a satisfaction that some of the older members of the Sash felt in the beginning of our movement and now miss in the prolonged and less spectacular work of today. Yet the need to awaken the conscience of the ordinary citizen by protest, (letters to the papers and stands), by symposia, or by the broadcasting of stories of sorrow and tragedy from the experiences of the Athlone Advice Office becomes more and more necessary as we plunge ever deeper into the morass of Apartheid.

Wearing their badges, facing criticism and even ridicule with courage, members can hold up their heads with pride, knowing that there are very many to whom the Black Sash stands for something worth while, a flicker of light in a situation that so often seems without hope.

Members should take note of the change in the Office address which is now:

109, Rosco Building,
105, Main Road,
CLAREMONT.

Our new Secretary, Mrs. King, is valiantly coping with the congestion due to cramped quarters in the present building. Until another room can be found for our Regional Council, meetings are being held at the home of Mrs. Birt in Rondebosch.

Mrs. Roberts' letter to the "Cape Argus" against the removal of the Coloured Municipal Vote was followed up by a letter signed by a large number of prominent citizens who have asked the Mayor of Cape Town to call a public meeting to protest against the removal. This petition was handed to the Mayor by Mr Frank Robb, Dr. J.P. Duminy and Mrs. Joyce Newton-Thompson.

At Mrs. Stott's suggestion several members of the Regional Council attended a meeting of the Cape Town City Council when the proposed removal of the Coloured Municipal vote was discussed.

ALL BRANCHES

Mrs. Mavis Solomon gave us a most interesting and sympathetic talk on "Social work in London."

STANDS

A stand which was attended by 33 members was held on 20th February against the Bantu Laws Amendment Bill (B.L.A.B.) Members have voiced disappointment that Cape Town stands are not given the publicity accorded to those held in Johannesburg.

ADVICE OFFICE

It was heartening to receive a visit from 90 boys of the Diocesan College, Rondebosch, this was arranged by the Board of Social Responsibility, of the Anglican Church.

A suggestion has been made that a letter of invitation to visit the Advice Office should be sent to all South African Foundation guests and other fact-finding visitors to South Africa.

Cases: Rachel Moko is a quaint little woman with a face as full of humour as of pale-coloured blotches. Like the cheshire cat, she has a grin which seems to precede and follow her, even when she is in big trouble. Township officials have frowned on her personal conduct but we hope that she has turned whatever leaf needed turning and have duly admonished her on the subject as she is now a recognised resident in her own right under Section 10 lb, of the Act. A month ago she was officially "awaiting re-settlement".

In the Divisional Council Area of the Cape Peninsula since 1948, Mrs. Moko and her husband were allocated a house in Nyanga in March 1954. Sometime after his death in 1963 this was transferred to her name, and she and her children live there still and have kept the rent paid up. But as she only took out her reference book, so say official records, in 1956, it was decided that she could not claim lawful residence for over fifteen years and that she therefore did not qualify and should be rehoused in a resettlement area. Anxiety and resentment lurked behind her smile for a while, with sufficient disbelief to keep her fighting for her rights. The case was referred to our legal adviser, who held out little hope of success until Mrs. Moko produced a sheaf of rent-receipts in her late husband's name. Stamped by the Divisional Council, these dated back to March 2nd 1954! She had been arrested once and the case withdrawn for lack of evidence. Her request for extension had been turned down and she was arrested all over again. This time the case was remanded to February 12th before which date the attorney was able to call attention of the authorities to the rent receipts. The rent card was then consulted and it was found that her name had indeed been on it in 1954. Lawful residence of over fifteen years had been demonstrated. Mrs. Moko qualifies as a resident and the smile is no longer a mask.

LETTERS: A sub-committee of the Regional Council was formed to write letters to the Press on: B.L.A.B., Bantu Taxation, Re-arrests under the Suppression of Communism Act, Hertzog Square (Bloemfontein Out of bounds for Coloured people), Bantu Homelands Citizenship Bill, Gary Player's press statement, Proposals re Alexandra Township.

Yours sincerely,

R. N. Robb.

CHAIRMAN.