

March 1972

No. 51

Dear Member,

When the Regional Council reopened after the Christmas recess on 10th January, 1972, so many members were still away that it was decided to open a week later in future.

Our new offices are on the third floor of Rosco Building, Main Road, Claremont, where we have two adjoining rooms on the south side with less noise from traffic.

With regret we have said goodbye to Mrs. King, our Secretary, who has taken another post which will give her the school holidays. In future the two posts of Secretary and Treasurer will be combined, Mrs. Leonard having been appointed to this position. Mrs. Slater, our present Treasurer, will stay on for a while to help with the change-over. Our good wishes will go with both Mrs. King and Mrs. Slater in their new posts. Mrs. Burton will be the Hon. Treasurer who will submit the reports to the Regional Council.

Our very deep sympathy went to Mrs. Wilks in the loss of her husband. During her leave of absence the Chair was taken by Mrs. Robb who has now resigned from the Council for the six months she will be overseas.

Volunteers were called for to help with office work on regular days and several members have responded.

RESEARCH PANEL

The Research Panel has this month carried out a survey on bus services at Mowbray and Claremont stations affecting travellers to Coloured and African townships. An exhausting and exhaustive but extremely interesting experience, involving not only Sash members but students and friends.

Interest and appreciation of the survey was shown by the travellers who co-operated, as well as bus officials. It is hoped that the information collected will be well used.

EXPENDITURE

An amount of R1,000 was donated to the Bantu Scholars' Fund. R20 was given as a courtesy payment for the use of Callow House for our All Branches meetings.

Our offer to pay half the cost of replacing the plaque on the Methodist Church in Buitenkant Street - the 'memorial' to the displaced Coloured people - was gratefully accepted.

Despite our successful fund-raising efforts, our expenses remain very heavy (only 5 cents of our subscriptions come to a region, the rest going to Headquarters). It has been agreed in consequence that members should be invited this year to make a donation of R1 (one Rand) in addition to their subscriptions. (This to be voluntary).

A new list of possible donors is being compiled. Names of others will be welcome.

ATHLONE ADVICE OFFICE

Four important American visitors, members of the U.S.A. African Advisory Council, Drs. Edwin Munger, Harriet Murphy, Chester Marcus and Wesley McLean paid a visit to the Advice Office in which they showed great interest.

Copies of a NUSAS booklet, "You and Your Pass", in English/Xhosa and English/Zulu, have been much appreciated by Africans visiting the office.

On 3rd March, 1972, Mesdames Robb, Versfeld and Henderson paid another visit to Bonnievale where they interviewed the official in charge of the proposed African removals.

Burglar bars have been fixed to the windows of the Advice Office.

ALL BRANCHES

At an afternoon meeting Mrs. Robb gave a talk which she called "African Scrapbook". She drew our attention to various important aspects of recent and proposed legislation.

At the evening meeting Dr. Francis Wilson spoke on "African Re-settlement and Migratory Labour".

At our next All Branches on 10th April, 1972 Mrs. Manning, a dietician, will speak on "Food for Thought in Guguletu".

ELGIN PICNIC

This was voted a great success by those who attended as well as those who organised it.

FILMS

The attention of members is drawn to the regulation which forbids the showing, even at private venues, of any film made for Public Showing unless it has been submitted to the Censor Board.

LETTERS AND ARTICLES

Mrs. Robb's article on "Aid Centres" appeared in the "Cape Times". Her article on "African Brides" appeared in the "Cape Argus". These will also appear in "Sash".

The Sash of Cape Western wrote to Dame Margot about their proposed stand, to which a most understanding reply has been received from Dame Margot.

STANDS

A leaflet has been compiled to explain the purpose of stands and the behaviour expected from participants. This, together with a copy of "The Black Sash needs You" has been sent to all members. On the Opening of Parliament a stand was held with posters (under the banner "REMEMBER"), reading:

- That 100's of Thousands are uprooted by the Law of the Land.
- That families are broken by law
- That there is punishment without trial
- That labour is restricted
- That people are in solitary confinement
- That 80% of South Africans have no voice in Parliament

Other posters read:-

- Apartheid is unjust
- Let beaches be open to all
- Innocent or guilty the courts must decide

"Do not try to take a man's home from him"

(Prime Minister, Windhoek 29.8.67)

Settled communities destroyed

Race Classification destroys homes, families, lives.

These posters appeared in Afrikaans also.

When Parliament opened we inserted a quarter page advertisement in the Cape Times reminding the public that 80% of South Africans have no voice in Parliament. We listed major deprivations which have occurred during the twenty-four years of Nationalist government. We asked when Parliament would restore human dignity.

At the end of March a member of the Sash financed personally an insertion in the Cape Argus which pointed out that thousands of people in South Africa lived below the breadline and yet costs of food and transport continued to rise. Our punch line was "Pay better wages - or press for them". Unfortunately this advertisement was put in a very bad position and the vital words "inserted by the Black Sash" were omitted.

Yours sincerely,

B. Wilks

B. Wilks
Chairman