

BLACK SASH - CAPE WESTERN REGION

NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 1972

NO. 53

Dear Member,

The Secretary's Report was circulated to members at the time of the Regional Conference in October and this Newsletter deals with matters which have arisen since then.

REGIONAL COUNCIL

The Office Bearers for the ensuing year are:-

Chairman	Mrs. D. Andrews
Vice-Chairmen	Mrs. R.N. Robb
	Mrs. S. Turner
Hon. Secretary	Mrs. M. Barker
Assist. "	Mrs. H. Kotze
Hon. Treasurer	Mrs. M. Burton

Also elected to the Council at the Regional Conference were:-

Mrs. I. Aitchison	Mrs. B. Brock
Mrs. M. Coke	Mrs. M. Henderson
Mrs. L. Herbstein	Mrs. M. Schurr
Mrs. A. Stekhoven	Mrs. N. Thompson

It is highly desirable that each branch is represented on the Council, and now that Mrs. Coplans of the Gardens/Sea Point branch has been co-opted to the Council, only the country branches are without representation.

OBITUARIES

It is with deep regret that we record the death of Mrs. Parkes of Plumstead and Mrs. Dora Landsberg of Gardens. The Chairman in paying tribute to Mrs. Landsberg, said of her: "An outstandingly active and highly valued member of the Black Sash since its earliest days, Mrs. Landsberg was the mainstay and inspiration of her branch until her death. Totally committed to humanity, her personal concern showed itself at every level and found political expression through this movement of concern".

REGIONAL CONFERENCE

The Conference was well attended and the resolutions and items for discussion were debated with much interest. The guest speaker, Prof. Jan Loubser, addressed the meeting on "The South African Situation", which provoked a number of

deeply relevant questions. The Athlone Advice Office report received good news coverage in both English daily papers and the Chairman's report was published in Johannesburg papers.

#### NATIONAL CONFERENCE

National Conference was held in Johannesburg from 16th to 19th October and was attended by eight Cape Western members, namely: Mesdames. Andrews, Robb, Barker, Burton, Henderson, Shepherd, Aitchison and Dallas.

It was decided in future that the National Conference would not necessarily be held annually, but that it be held "at least once every two years." Acting in terms of the revised constitution, it was decided that a National Conference would be held in 1973, the venue being Durban.

The proposal to increase the minimum membership subscription to R3.50 p.a. was defeated, the figure remaining at R2. The other two resolutions increasing the magazine subscription to R1.60 p.a. and the levy to R1.50 p.a. were passed. This, in fact, means that the Region needs R3.10 to cover commitments to Headquarters. Members will, however, be asked to make additional voluntary donations where possible to help cover costs of the Cape Western Region.

A new leaflet answering the question "What is the Black Sash?" was tabled by the Johannesburg Region. It was thought that this document gives straightforward answers to many of the questions which are often asked about the organisation and Cape Western have ordered 2,000 copies for distribution.

Delegates to the conference were unanimous that the most stimulating feature was the presentation of a number of Fact Papers. The subjects covered were Employer and Employee Relationships and Low Wage Structure; Campaign on African Women; Resettlement Areas; Alexandra Hostels and Work of Dependants' Conference. The latter paper being presented by Mrs. Moira Henderson on behalf of the Cape Western Region. These papers are available from the office on request.

#### ALL BRANCHES MEETINGS

The Annual Regional Conference took the place of the October meeting and at the November meeting delegates to the National Conference reported on their experiences. The December meeting was addressed by Mr. David Curry on the subject of his recent trip to the United States.

ATHLONE ADVICE OFFICE

The Advice Office has been very busy with attendance records in November being the highest for the whole year. The Annual Report referred to the extreme severity of the hardships confronting "mixed" Coloured and African married couples. One such case dealt with in October concerns Mrs. E.C., the African wife of a Coloured man who has deserted her and their nine children, wants about all to live somewhere legally together with all her children. But they are Coloured and she cannot remain in the Coloured township where they formerly lived quite legally. The youngest three children are lodging with her in Guguletu but it is not in their interests to attend an African school as they are "coloured" children. The two eldest are now applying for Coloured Identity cards, to which they are entitled, and the mother wisely regards this step as priority number one among all her heavy burdens, a place to live together as a family coming second and tracing the defaulting husband for support, a poor third.

During November ten cases concerned young people born in the Cape Peninsula and seeking to establish their rights of residence, permission to take out their reference books and be employed in the area. One of these young people, Gordon Nongauza, was told that as he had been away from the area for several years, he must take out his reference book at Tsomo and get contract work from there. Acting on our advice and supported by our attorney, he collected documents proving his birth in the area and the record of his schooling, which showed that his absence had been for schooling purposes only. He returned annually for holidays and although his name did not appear on any rent card, relatives could testify to his continued "home base" in Cape Town. Now he has permission to live and work here, where he belongs.

MORNING MARKET

We extend our thanks to those who bore the brunt of the preparation for the Morning Market held in the Claremont Civic Centre on 18th November and in particular to Mrs. Mary Shepherd. On the morning of the 18th an amount of R3372 was raised, and together with other subsidiary efforts before that date the total became R4,609, a very commendable effort. At the recent All Branches meeting discussion ensued as to the advisability of holding a Morning Market next year. This was referred to the February All Branches.

LETTERS

Cape Times/Argus Drawing attention to Human Rights Day -  
10th December  
Cape Times In reply to Mr. Marais Viljoen's state-  
ment on Student Protest.  
Cape Times Obituary - Mrs. Dora Landsberg  
Cape Times Article on "Handicaps the Black pupil  
faces" by Nell Marquard

RESEARCH PANEL

The co-ordinator of this panel is now Mrs. Coke and each Branch is required to ensure that they are represented. One of the current research projects is the assembling of information in regard to beach and swimming facilities and the inequalities which exist.

METROPOLITAN ACTION MEETING

Representatives of the Cape Western Region attended a recent meeting of Metropolitan Action where the main theme was the lack of consultation in all sections of city life.

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

It is regrettable that the Service of Affirmation which was to have taken place on December 10th to uphold Human Rights Day had to be cancelled. The viewpoint of the Black Sash on the rights of the individual was, however, very well expressed in the Chairman's letter to the Press.

OVERSEAS DONATIONS

Following a recent query in this regard, the attention of members is drawn to the fact that the Black Sash is not able to receive subscriptions or donations from abroad. This prohibition does not apply to magazine subscriptions.

LOST PROPERTY

A number of articles belonging to members remained unclaimed at the conclusion of both the Regional Conference and the Morning Market. These may be collected from the offices in Rosco Building, Claremont.

CONGRATULATIONS

We extend our congratulations to Mrs. Cornish Bowden who recently celebrated her 90th birthday and to Miss Daisy Solomon and Mrs. Crofton who have turned 91. We remember with gratitude the example set by these members through their involvement in Black Sash activities over the years.

CLOSING OF OFFICE

The Cape Western office in Rosco Buildings will be closed for the holiday period as from 15th December 1972 until 15th January, 1973.

The Regional Council extends to members the compliments of the Season and best wishes for the New Year.

Yours sincerely,

Shirley Turner  
Vice-Chairman