

But much graver problems appear with the permanent crèche. For even less ably than a temporary crèche, can a permanent crèche, run according to the regulations laid down for Bantu Crèches, fend for itself, despite a grant of £100 a year (now increased to £150). A European committee becomes essential to provide a regular and reliable income. The Chairwoman, exactly by virtue of those qualities of leadership, which made her steer her group so far, may find it difficult to submit to such direct European influence, and may depart with rancour. A new Chairwoman is found, more gentle and less of a personality, who will be submissive to the "white committee".

This "white committee" finds it difficult to have its meetings in the township, and becomes estranged from the SC members who, relieved of their main responsibility, begin to take a rest, and let their Crèche be managed and provided for by others. They are pledged to help with a regular monthly £5, but are at the moment only square up to the end of April. It is suggested to halve their monthly contribution, and the secretary has been sent to give them a pep talk. It will help for a while, but if examples from elsewhere are any indication, ultimately that SC will peter out and die a natural death.

And if this is anything to go by, it is likely, as mentioned earlier on in this Section, that the Association will find itself with the responsibility for a number of crèches for which the African women have ceased to feel responsible. But the women think, ultimately "Government will take over, and we shall all have jobs".

The circle of problems around a SC unit ever enlarge, and the moment comes to confront the "authorities".

The Association has applied for permanent building sites in the case of four SC's:

Orlando Shelters 3. A site has been granted by the Non-European Affairs Department, as yet unnamed, but known. The Monday Club has promised a donation of £300. However, the Minister's approval is not yet forthcoming, although this was asked for nearly one year ago. It seems unlikely that this approval will be forthcoming because it concerns a "temporary camp". Moreover, according to its Chairwoman, the site for the nursery school is "too far" anyway, i.e. too far from the school which she also runs. She wants both her institutions together, for she is the "owner of the work".

Moroka. Here a site has been granted and approved by the Minister. It is situated in the upper part where the better houses are, which may be permanent. But little money has as yet been collected.

The / .....



The grant from the Non-European Affairs Department given to Moroka was, by the Association, transferred to Orlando East.

Orlando White City. The site has been granted by the Municipality although it has not yet been approved by the Minister. Approval has been awaited for a long time. This SC has been promised a donation of £300 by the Monday Club.

Orlando East. This SC is nearest its goal. It is the SC of the African organising secretary. The site has been granted and the Minister's approval obtained. The £250 granted by the Non-European Affairs Department to Moroka has been given to this SC. Added to this they have their own help from the Department in the form of 3,500 breeze blocks, still subject to the Minister's approval, but apparently a certainty. Free labour will be given by the Vocational Training Centre, and requests are being made for further donations.

Pimville is a special case, because, although it is the richest SC (partly through a remarkable woman's fund-raising effort) and the need is probably highest, the Association was advised not to do anything about seeking a permanent building since Pimville's lot is uncertain.

Reedepoort is another special case. The school and kindergarten are run in temporary premises which have been taken over by a School Committee, for which the City Council gives a grant. The idea of building is discouraged because "we are going to be moved". As there is little more to do for this SC, the women are losing interest.

Here the SCs are hitting against the wall of the "basic facts", and these are beginning to close in on the Association's work, and to threaten the fulfilment of its purpose.

Forces from within are also beginning to destroy the SC's. These are not peculiar to the ABAW. They are part of the general atmosphere of the city, and the overall climate of its African population. Many examples from my case records could be quoted to show that Africans are beginning to reach out for direct contact with "government".

At the time when Alexandra obtained independent registration <sup>(1)</sup> and parted from the ABAW, this was not only a matter of personalities, but merely the first sign of a movement which is spreading. Another SC, very much in the same pattern position, threatens to break away and seek independence. Other SC groups are wondering why the Minister's approval for their sites is so slow in coming, and whether an appeal by a mixed Association is an advantageous in the present political situation as it seemed before. They seek help elsewhere, from the superintendents, and the Advisory Boards. One SC has already put out feelers towards individual registration.

Thus/....

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(1) At the last meeting at which its Chairwoman was present in the Darragh Hall on February 17th 1954 she had her registration papers in her handbag.



Thus the demand for independence from the Association is growing. This is symbolized for the women as "Registration" under the Welfare Organisations' Act. The connection with the Association is considered a hindrance and a handicap. The women want to collect their monies in their own way, and they want to do things generally in their own way. The general trend is very similar to that which we mentioned as manifested in the NCAW branches.

The new Government Policy with regard to Municipal Native Administration will have a direct bearing on welfare organisational work.<sup>(1)</sup> With its promise of independence from individual European welfare agencies it suits the present mood of the women. They resent restrictions imposed by European welfare workers, for practical and ethical reasons. They want to collect and control their own monies in ways which are congenial to them. They want to manage their institutions and amenities put up by their own efforts according to their own lights. They resent being patronized. Above all, they resent their own dependence, for which they blame the imposition on them of European ways. They try to convince themselves of their own capabilities.....

## EVALUATION.

### A. THE PERSONALITIES.

The SCs of the Association were founded with too much idealism and too little knowledge.

This applies to both ethnic groups which are here co-operating. (All the many admirable exceptions are, of course, excluded).

#### The European side.

The ABAW has suffered all along from too few European women who were capable and willing to do their difficult job with reliable regularity over longer periods. This is not the type of welfare work that provides committee meetings and administrative activities. It demands personal contact and human relationships. It requires infinite patience, deep understanding, subtle guidance and, above all, immense tact.

It also requires a means of transportation, and fearless entry into the locations and the life of the African people.

It/.....

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(1) See a.o. the article by Julius Lewin in the Rand Daily Mail of September 13th 1954.



It represents a totally different conception of welfare work centering around the idea of "godmothers". Very few Europeans are as yet ready for this, and if there are more than a few, the Association has not always been fortunate in securing their co-operation. Moreover, the rapid increase in the number of SCs demands an ever-growing number of such "godmothers".

Also, in the understandable eagerness to find these women, the Association may not always have informed them sufficiently about the African women's wiles and ways. Thus, European workers may have run the risk of being sent out blindly on a labour of love that demands seeing and knowing love. Too much has been asked from unsuspecting, though kind, voluntary workers. Many a capable helper has been lost because original idealism could not withstand the subsequent shock of discovering some of the real facts.

#### The African side.

Here various aspects must be distinguished.

1) There should have been a more careful searching in to the motives behind the formation of an SC. Job-seekers should not have been allowed so much freedom of action. They have, however, set the pattern and coloured the Association's reputation. Through their predominance, many a good and selfless African woman has been lost.

2) Some instruction should have been given. It would, in my opinion, not have been impossible to make, for instance, the following of a small course conditional to an elected committee's starting to function.

Many an SC leader has asked me pitifully whether her group could not be given "some lessons". Everywhere the necessity for leadership training is becoming apparent. In general too much reliance is placed on the so-called "born leader". Such instruction should have included<sup>(1)</sup>

How to run an organisation;

The structure of organisational leadership;

The financial and technical requirements for a crèche or school;

The workings of Western money-economy;

Book-keeping, cost calculations;

Procedure and minutes of meetings;

The value/.....

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- (1) Co-operation could have been sought with other organisations that have experience in this field. The advice and assistance, for instance, of the experts of the leaders'-courses of the Transvaal Associations of Girls' Clubs and Youth Clubs could have been invaluable. These Associations are preferable to the Jan H. Hofmeyr School, since, at all costs, the impression must be avoided that the SC women are going to be "social workers".



- The value of the constitution;
- Democratic election of office bearers and their functions;
- The necessity of rotation of office bearers in a Community-service group;
- Accounting for monies spent and earned;
- The ethical requirements of their task;
- The meaning of "community service";
- The difference between voluntary, untrained, and paid trained social workers, etc. etc.

3) The leaders should have been selected from the more evolved classes, from the younger generation predominantly, and from those with a good educational level, some economic security and social status. The difference between those SC's which have a more educated and younger Chairwoman and membership, and the ones directed by the so-called "born leader" of the older generation is striking, some exceptions notwithstanding.

Now there are several younger women working within the SC's under an older type of Chairwoman. These younger women haven't a chance. Yet it is this new generation which is the only hope. But they cannot voice their opinion, nor even offer suggestions to the older generation who, not only exploit their working capacities, but also keep them under domination.

The introduction of class-mixture and age-mixture, added to the already high demands put on these groups, has been too much at the time. There is no overall pattern that can be used and understood by all.

4) Rotation of Office bearers should have been insisted upon from the very start. Once the Chairwomen have become fixtures, as is now the case, the situation cannot be altered. Their deposition at this stage would risk the break up on the SC.

Similarly, the position of the African "Joint Vice Chairwoman", which has been in actual fact a post of honour, should have been open for annual election by secret ballot. This is very important for the women, as it gives them an idea that they are self-determining.

Moreover, this woman should then have sat with the European executives at the table of the Chairman, Secretary, etc. There is mixture on one level only.

Here again, once the opportunity in the beginning has been missed, nothing further can be done about it later.

5) The appointment of this Honorary Vice Joint Chairwoman as half-time employed and paid Assistant African Organising Secretary at a salary of £10 has been particularly unwise for the following reasons:

Firstly/....



Firstly, because the two posts should not have been given to one person, as that gives too much power to one African woman. Secondly, because of the type of person, method of appointment, and the actual person chosen.

Regarding the type and the methods, the great differences in the stages of development of the members prohibit the adoption or acceptance of any one method for universal use. But one thing is certain, the women should have been consulted about the post and its necessity and the field of action should have been clearly explained to them.<sup>(1)</sup>

As to the person herself, she would have to be 100% on the European side of the Association, though acting as liaison officer between the two groups and as a recruiting, clarifying and encouraging agent, she would also have to act as a barometer indicating the moods, motives, movements and methods of the SC's and within each SC. It is my honest conviction that the person thus appointed is not the right person. However, in this matter my conviction stands against the equally honest conviction to the contrary of most of the European executives.

The ABAW's CS units should have been an élite corps setting an example to all other crèche-seeking groups. However, quantity (of SC's and SC-members) has had the better of quality.

The great and over-riding difficulty of this modern type of organisation - that the African women are at the same time organiser and organised - has not been satisfactorily solved. The leaders complain about too much control, and the Association cannot, it feels, give them greater independence.

With a better quality of SC-leadership, this independence, which is the ultimate aim of the Association, could have been realised possibly at an earlier stage.

#### B. THE ACTIVITIES.

Here a distinction must be made between :-

(a) The /.....

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- (1) It seems to me incredible that the Association should not have realised that many of the women would have wanted that job! It is very highly paid in comparison to that which unqualified, semi-educated women generally can earn legitimately in the townships. In this appointment, one is again forced to see and regret the lack of co-operation and exchange of experience between the European organisers. The Zenzele YWCA, as we shall see, embarked a little earlier on a similar experiment in Johannesburg.



- (a) The direct objectives towards the realization of which the SC (like every CS group) strives - crèches, schools, soup-kitchens, recreational centres, old-age homes, etc.;
- (b) The small community services which an SC is supposed to maintain.

(a) If the aim of the Association has been to teach the women and prove to them that they can do something themselves towards the provision of their actual needs, then it has been successful. The women are beginning to realise this, even to the extent of forgetting how much they owe to Europeans. They will continue the work as long as they have a direct stake in it, for, as has been demonstrated, apart from a minority, the greater part of the women have their own interests at heart.

One should, however, be appreciative of the fact that there are already women who are willing to work hard to improve their own and their family's conditions, instead of the former passive waiting for European initiative and money. Two ideas must be distinguished: working for the common good and working together for personal good. If the former is as yet extremely difficult for the women, the fact that they are beginning to realise the latter is already an achievement.

Another gain is that a few more Europeans have learned to see African women in a different light. Some have become appreciative of what the women are beginning to do.

In this respect, the Darragh Hall meetings can have immense publicity value. There is a touching quality in these meetings, and a convincing atmosphere, mainly due to the wonderfully warm and human way they are conducted. Many more Europeans should be brought to attend these meetings.

As to the fund raising activities, it is in the collection of monies that the women want greater liberty and possibly have been rightly withheld this so far. The inevitable desire to substitute hard work by "begging" is naturally always present.

As to the sewing circle activities, these can only continue working because of the insistent prompting by the Europeans and the free distribution of the materials. Only one SC, one of the more recently formed ones, bought its own materials from its first proceeds. This SC has a very evolved type of leader and is (no accident) from Dube, the new "aristocratic" township. But if ever the Europeans stop their prompting and free gifts, these sewing circles may cease.

It must be remembered that many members of the SC's are poor, really poor. In many respects, they would themselves (and in any other society they would) become recipients where here they are supposed to be donors. Many women want and need paid jobs. And one cannot

expect/...



expect from them to do exactly the same thing voluntarily which would represent for them a much needed source of income. Here the aims of the ABAW are unrealistically high, if they are, as expressed by the Chairman in one of the monthly meetings: "We want you to learn to build up little businesses, taking orders from the townships."

The majority of women are breadwinners, or want to be breadwinners because they have to be.

There is an urgent need to work towards the establishment of the "Workshop" idea (1), where women with young babies can, under capable supervision, and on regular contact with European firms, sew and stitch garments against regular payment.

There is also an urgent need of combines, or "Kompanies" (2) of dressmakers and assistant dressmakers and apprentices, who will turn out cheap garments for African residents in the area, which will still allow a reasonable profit for the workers.

Apart from allowing the women to earn a decent living, there is the additional consideration that the stolen-goods trade, which has taken on wellnigh astronomical proportions, might receive in the women's idea the stigma of being competitive to their own earning possibilities. Abuses do not disappear by laws incapable of enforcement, nor by "moral teaching" (although this last is a stronger motive for people who, above everything else "would so much like to do the right thing", than is generally so amongst Europeans), but by furthering the emergence of counteracting forces within the society and by the society itself, in which ~~the~~ they appear.

As it is now with these sewing circles, no well-regulated society would allow what can be called unfair competition from voluntary workers who receive their materials for nothing and need not make a profit. It is because the need for cheap little garments is so great, and that most are bought by the sewers or members themselves, that these sewing circles still do work.

But voluntary work, when it interferes with the rightful use of the few earning possibilities of others is unjust in a modern society.

In another respect, actually related to the fund-raising

activities/.....

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- (1) Entokozweni has just started such a "workshop" as an experiment. Its energetic and sound Director said: "Well if you say that they want and need jobs, then one must give them jobs." Whilst there was originally some difficulty in recruiting the first women workers and it was feared already that the contract obtained from a European firm for "sewing rubber strips on cricket gloves" would be lost, Entokozweni now finds itself with 35 women workers all equally eager to avail themselves of this rare opportunity of earning some money, whilst their babies are all screaming and playing around them. How it will go later, is not yet known.
- (2) The experience of Durban women could be valuable for Johannesburg women.

AIR  
CONQUEROR



activities, the ABAW has been unrealistic. It is not known to me whether a determined attempt was made to gain the husbands' collaboration, but if so, it has not been successful.

Many women complain: "the European ladies do not understand African husbands!" "We are the servants of our husbands," they say, and many a woman has told me that her husband has "started looking round for some work for me, because he says I seem to have so much time for sewing for the SC". Husbands, (and the average SC-member has not a very evolved type of husband) do not like their wives working for something, or being away from the house for a reason, from which they do not benefit... Others say that their husbands complain or make a "big noise" when they keep the light burning in the evenings, when he wants to sleep, or that she is using precious candles for nothing. (1)

In the poorer localities, such as Moroka and the shelters of Orlando, the husbands are also against concerts. And concerts are a big source of income. Husbands complain about the concerts and do not want their wives to attend them. "They say: 'You think you're a young girl!' ". This is due to the fact that their wives might meet somebody with more money....."

Any experienced missionary worker will tell one that in South Africa, nothing can be achieved without at least the silent consent of the husbands. Granted that it is difficult to win over the husbands, and that it is difficult to contact them except at night (if) and during Sundays (if); but they do constitute a graver impediment to their wives' activities than most Europeans suspect. (2)

These problems do not occur to the same extent in the two other organisations of the type under discussion. In the NCAW the average member is of a slightly higher social class, the husbands are a little more evolved, and more members are teachers and have afternoons free, or do not work. In the ONWA, the African President knows exactly what she can ask from her members and what not. And she, an African, knows when and in how far she can let the Stockfel ideas play in with her plans.

If any men had to drawn in, it should have been the husbands and not the Advisory Board members. As far as my knowledge goes, the Association/.....

(1) The average European voluntary worker never enters a location at night, and cannot know its atmosphere. African women, in over great majority, simply have no evenings, no after-supper times. After the family has been fed, and the pots are washed, one goes to bed. One is tired and the days in the locations start early. How many extra jobs and voluntary work is done by the European working women after dinner?

(2) See about the importance of the "good" husband, and their scarcity, the Section on "Class structure" and Emancipation of the women".



Association has welcomes this (possibly new) development in some of its SC's. This appears unfortunate.

Many case records could show that these have often a stifling, corrupting and destructive effect on the women's activities.

Let one quotation suffice:

"A member of our Advisory Board came to me the other day and said: "You have these European women. You start this crèche. You get nothing. Why don't you come to me for help. Let it be ours that you are doing. Not of these European people. Make it yours. Make it into the foundation of your own money for always". And the woman, (one of the SC leaders with a true sense of social responsibility, of integrity and sincerity of purpose, a strong leader type) concluded:

"This is another spirit which I did not have<sup>(1)</sup>, which he put into me".

b) If the ultimate aim of the ARAW is the setting up of permanent bodies of women, who will voluntarily undertake community services, as and when the needs for these occur in their various locations, then the Association's task seems difficult of realisation. To the best of my knowledge none of the SC's as they exist at the moment, will survive the realisation of their direct object, not even with continuous European prompting, let alone without it. Such social services are, in any case performed by only a minority of the older Chairladies, but the aim of the more recently appointed Chairladies is exclusively the crèche or school.

The experience that no African women's group can continue on its own without a direct object realisable within a certain time-limit, is common amongst European organisers as well as evolved Africans<sup>(2)</sup>. The Chairman of the Association knows this, and an immediate effort to find another direct object for a SC which has been relieved of its responsibilities, has to be made by the Europeans, and will not succeed, at least not with the same group.

They are "tired of it now", and will scatter. Or they will try something entirely different, a type of Homemakers Club, or they will revert to one of the many forms of "Stockfel".

As to the smaller social services which SC members sometimes render, complementary to those of the professional social workers, and which in any case are only attempted by the older generation of the Association's members, they are, as we have seen, not encouraged by the professional social workers.

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(1) Note the ominous use of the Past Tense.

(2) See Mental Attitudes and Behaviour Patterns, "The necessity of a direct object".



I have given all the reasons, but some points must still be mentioned.

Possibly some difficulties could have been avoided if the women had been given another verbal concept. If they had been told, for instance, not to become "social workers" for the community, but "mothers of the community", they would have had a better understanding of their rôle, through the tribal associations connected with the name "mother". A mother needs no training for her job. A mother asks no payment for her work, and a mother looks after everybody's children.

Another point can only briefly be touched upon, since it concerns the "underworld" of Johannesburg. But, as has been stressed before, nothing of African society can be understood in its deeper motivation without a study of this "shady" society. A full discussion of it falls outside the scope of this enquiry.

All over the townships of Johannesburg there are women, elderly mature women, who are the typical "born" leader-types. They have strong personalities, brains and resourcefulness. They once have had, or still have, or pretend to have, connections with Europeans. These women are what is called "influential people". They have the "right contacts", and that is a lucrative qualification, which pays more dividends than a European university degree.

They are self-appointed "intermediaries" between those who seek favours from "the Government", or European welfare workers, or other kinds of European workers. They are the typical "middle-men". Young couples seeking a house, mothers seeking a home for disabled children, hostesses seeking European alcoholic drinks, women seeking a job, slaves-women seeking replenishment of their dagge-stock, to all these and many more, they promise to bring the case to the "proper channels", to establish the "right contacts". They find buyers for stolen goods, girls for entertainment, old age pensions for elderly couples, school-entry for children - all this against proper payment or commission for their "services".

In a society where every aspect of life depends on the right kind of contacts (which contacts are always ultimately European; it is not an exaggeration to say that the only real break in the colour bar is exactly on the level of vice and crime), where the "rights" of normal citizens are called "privileges", where the distinction between what is legal and what is illegal has become blurred, such phenomena are bound to occur.

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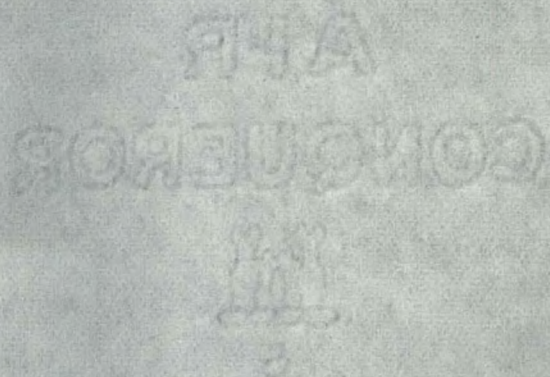


These women have set a pattern of supplementary "social services". The emergence of "intermediaries" affords a great temptation for the SC organisers as well as arousing suspicion in the onlookers regarding the services which should be rendered voluntarily and in good faith. It is not right to expose these women to such temptations, and the reputation which the SCs have already acquired because of the predominance of personal motives lays them open to the accusation.

Many observers have told me that, in their opinion, the Association's institution of SCs have come too early. In a deeper and truer sense, they have come too late.

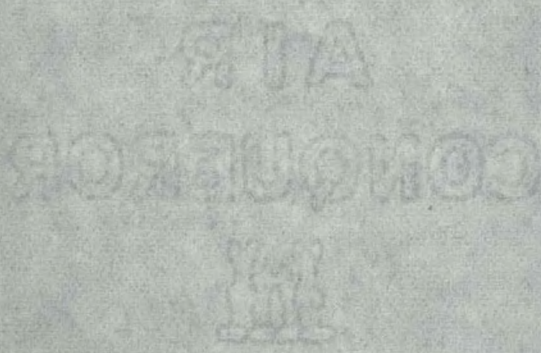
THE HOME MAKERS CLUBS /.....





THE "HOME MAKERS" CLUBS

the transition from "tribal" to "modern" woman





THE "HOME-MAKERS" CLUBS

Definition - Origin - The Zenzele YWCA

Organisations studied: general description

Some so-called "Home-makers" Clubs  
 The independent "Home-makers" Clubs  
 The Home-makers Clubs of the Mission Churches  
 The Zenzele YWCA

Analysis

Common features of these Home-makers Clubs

in relation to the Needs of the Women

Some financial resources.  
 An "evolved" mentality.  
 The sharing of knowledge and experience.  
 The use of experts.  
 Competitions.  
 Western Organisational Techniques.  
 A homogeneous Membership.  
 The Educated versus un-educated.  
 The older versus the younger generation.  
 Emphasis on quality rather than quantity.  
 Development of the woman's personality.

The refinements of Civilisation: -

Etiquette  
 Beauty-culture and dress-sense  
 Parties

Evaluation

A. Personalities  
 B. Activities



Definition

Organisations whose main aim is home-improvement and self-improvement.

Origin

This movement is, in idea and development, of much earlier date than the movement towards Community Service, though in some cases these two may coincide.

There is an early reference to a Mrs. D.D.T. Jabavu of the Victoria East District of the Cape Province, who, in 1918, founded the "Bantu Women's Self-improvement Association".<sup>(1)</sup>

It was a movement amongst Christian women who felt the need of learning all those things which house-wives in more civilised environments ought to know. Cooking, sewing, buying and budgeting, matters of health and hygiene, the care of children and husbands, ways of caring for European clothing and homes. Also, they wanted to learn new methods of social entertainment; this lack amongst Christian women was strongly felt by comparison with all the many functions and festivals which the old tribal life offered them, and was still offering to their non-Christian sisters.

The movement caught on, and soon this earliest organisation had established nine centres holding weekly meetings.

Later, in 1929, another group of women met at Alice and formed the Unity Home Improvement Club, the idea of which spread rapidly in the form of "Unity Clubs" over wide areas. Then, later, in the 30's, came the foundation of the Jeanes' visitors, which arose out of the Jeanes' schools, and concentrated more on community living.

All these clubs, came as a direct answer to the most urgent need of the women; tribal wives learned how to become civilised modern house-wives, and how a woman could become a "person", a "somebody", and, at the same time, a "social somebody".

Naturally such ideas appealed mainly to those earliest pioneers of women's emancipation,<sup>(2)</sup> the first who had started out on the road towards "Westernisation". The leaders and organisers were

generally/..

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(1) Ray E. Phillips, "The Bantu are coming", Stellenbosch, 3rd Ed. pp. 113 ff. Another source mentions the origin as 1922 at Peddie also in the Eastern Province.

(2) It is regretted that I had no time to meet these pioneers of the women's emancipation.



generally educated overseas and were far ahead of their sisters in South Africa. These, however, were necessary to form the bulk of the membership which was naturally recruited from the more educated women, at that time mainly teachers. But they were probably not ready yet, or there were too few of them, to develop the ideas and foster it.

When Mrs. Yurgan<sup>(1)</sup> arrived from America, about 1936, she found all these clubs in existence, probably in various stages of development or decline. Since similar movements existed amongst the Negroes in America, she could help them with her wider experience.

She apparently formed the "Women's Home Improvement Association", to promote and co-ordinate the local clubs' activities, to guide and assist in the making of the clubs' programmes and generally to act as a source of information and instruction.<sup>(2)</sup>

How this organisation worked and how many clubs are still and an active force in their communities I do not know. As always, it depends on local leadership, and particularly in this type of organisation, the women become quickly "tired of it".

One line of development must be traced, since it has a direct bearing on our context.

Mrs. Mahopeloa, a member of the Paris Evangelical Mission at Lovedale, joined forces with Mrs. Yurgan. Her aunt heard about this, and started a Home-makers Club in Basutoland, and when Mrs. Mahopeloa later took up residence there, she founded some more such clubs, with the help of the Paris Evangelical Mission.<sup>(3)</sup>

I am told that Home-makers Clubs are still very active in Basutoland, as well as in the Transkei and Ciskei.

Some members of the Paris Evangelical Mission having heard of these clubs in Basutoland, wanted similar clubs here in Johannesburg. And so in 1946 the Paris Evangelical Mission formed its first clubs here, originally affiliated to the Basutoland clubs, later independent of them.<sup>(4)</sup>

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- (1) Mrs. Yurgan wrote a booklet "Home-improvement, Suggestions for promoting the work of the Women's Home Improvement Association", Fort Hare, Alice, 1935.
  - (2) In aims very similar to the NCAW which was founded a few years later.
  - (3) After her visit to Europe, she became, <sup>apparently</sup> anti-European, and rejected all her former European connections, although she still calls in European women for lectures in her training courses.
  - (4) The break came about because Mrs. M. wanted no Europeans as "God-mothers", whereas the Johannesburg and Reef Clubs were deeply attached to their "mother".



This partly explains why the Paris Evangelical Mission Clubs are so far advanced in comparison with all the other Mission Clubs.

As the idea spread, certain clubs were formed independently in and around Johannesburg along similar lines.

From whatever little is, as yet, known about their historical development, the following facts emerge:

- a) that the idea of home-improvement (like all other improvement,) is fundamentally European, and has everywhere been inspired by Europeans,
- b) that realisation and, more particularly continuation are also dependent on European assistance.

Always when African women turn away from European help and try to "do things on our own", their efforts are bound to lose quality, variety and interest.

#### The Zenzele YWCA (African side)

The road to the Zenzele YWCA Clubs is paved with moribund Home-makers Clubs, those independent African clubs which were started with great enthusiasm and became "social" (which, means "snobbish" and "entertainment only",) or they petered out when European attempts at a return to their original aims failed and they were gradually taken over by the African women themselves (1).

When, therefore, Mrs. Madie Hall Xuma (also an American Negress) started her "Zenzele" idea in Sophiatown, she found some such clubs already in existence. For years she worked as a second Mrs. Yurgan, to stimulate, co-ordinate, inspire and mould existing groups, and she also formed new ones, which all came to be known as "Zenzele" clubs. (2)

In the Reef towns, some of these clubs carried names indicative of "gift", such as "MPIO" or "NEO". But not all of them had originally been "gift-clubs" of the Stockfel type. At least with some, the women themselves maintain that the name originated from

a "Gift" by/....

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(1) Of course, as with all rules, there are exceptions.

(2) "Zenzele" is from "ENZA" (Zulu) for "to work"; "ELA" is "for"; "IZENZA" is "to work (reflexive)", Litt. "working or acting for oneself". Therefore, very close to "Self-help".



a "Gift" by their respective Town Councils towards the formation of their club.

Mrs. Xuma, was far ahead of her new African women friends. But in spite of all her tremendous efforts, the Zenzele Club movement did not seem to be able to advance beyond a certain degree of quality and quantity of members. As one of the old members told me:

"Those Zenzeles were never well organised. There were never any books. And you never knew beforehand where the meetings were. You went to the Jubilee centre and then heard that the meeting was in Newclare".

"And when the YWCA came, everyone was very pleased".

The YWCA in South Africa is divided, one part is affiliated to the World's YWCA and the other is not. The former consists of Johannesburg, Durban and Port Elizabeth. And it is in these 3 world-affiliated centres that the great Zenzele YWCA movement has been started, and it is here that, in principle, a mixed European-African movement is maintained, supported by some of the European YWCA members from the European group.

The assistance from the World YWCA for the "Zenzele's" was originally sought by Mrs. Xuma. The world organisation sent out Mrs. Hears to investigate the position and study the needs. The affiliation was then decided upon, explained to the Zenzele's of Johannesburg and its Zenzele groups along the Reef, and subsequently, put to the vote.

The Zenzele branches were in the majority, in favour of affiliation. Some were not, but they did not have the courage to say so openly. Each of the three centres obtained registration under the Welfare Organisations Act.

Soon afterwards, the World organisation, "recognising the great need of South Africa", appointed Mrs. Hathaway as a paid full-time organising Secretary for the period of 3 years, which period can, however, be extended for another 3 years.

This choice could not have been more fortunate. How much understanding and tact, how much patience and devotion are necessary for this task will become increasingly apparent.

Of this type/.....



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