

MINUTES OF BLACK SASH NATIONAL CONFERENCE HELD FROM 11TH to 13TH MARCH, 1980 at the Gemeindeforum, Hillbrow, Johannesburg.

- 1. PRESENT : In the Chair Mrs. Joyce Harris National President.
Gita Dyzenhaus Vice President
Sheena Duncan do

Delegates as follows :

<u>Natal Coastal</u>	Mesdames Piper, Colvin, Grice.
<u>Cape Western</u>	Robb, Livingstone, Platsky, Drerup, Young, Ratcliff, Joynt.
<u>Albany</u>	Mrs. Lacey
<u>Natal Midlands</u>	Mrs. Franklin (proxy)
<u>Border</u>	Mrs. Erica McNulty (Proxy)
<u>Transvaal</u>	Wentzel, Walt, Van Velden, Crosoer, Davidoff, Pretoria. (Alternate) Hermer, Lloyd, Cohen,
<u>Headquarters</u>	Sahli-Magazine, Coleman-Secretary. Ms. Robin Harvey - Treasurer.
<u>Observers</u>	as per attendance register.

- 2. DEDICATION : was read by the National President.
- 3. NAMES of all those who died in detention were read the previous evening at the public meeting to open conference by Bishop Tutu. A minute's silence was observed.
- 4. WELCOME TO DELEGATES : Mrs. Wentzel - Chairman of Transvaal Region welcomed all delegates, and made a few announcements.
- 5. APOLOGIES : had been received from Mrs. Grover - Chairman of Cape Western
Mrs. Melunsky - Port Elizabeth,
Mrs. Val Sullivan - Border.
- 6. GENERAL
 - Telegrams and Greetings : Telegrams were received from Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Lawrence, Mrs. Helen Suzman, S.A.C.C. : A letter from Mrs. Burton, Past Chairman of Cape Western, A telegram was sent from Conference to Mrs. Joan Grover. Conference sent a telephone message to Margaret Kirk and the office staff, thanking them for their forbearance in dealing with the enormous work load prior to Conference.
 - It was suggested that a message be sent to Mrs. Ilona Kleinschmidt who was being released from prison. It was Agreed that a personal note be written to her after the Conference and the message be phoned to the Rand Daily Mail immediately as follows :

"Very happy and relieved at your release. We admire and support the stand you have taken for justice. Our greetings and thoughts to Jackie Bosman".
 - A Telegram was sent to the family of Mrs. Ngoyi who died on Thursday.
do do Mrs. Maimie Corrigan.
 - Mrs. Robb from Cape Western congratulated Mrs. Joyce Harris on her Presidential address.
 - A Telegram to Mr. Robert Mugabe sent from the Conference :

The National Conference of the Black Sash sends you best wishes for the future of Zimbabwe and for your Premiership. Your actions since your overwhelming victory in the elections have provided a shining example of peace-making and reconciliation and you have relit the lamp of hope in the hearts of the majority of South Africans.

The Conference tabled the Resolution unanimously adopted the night before at the Public Meeting of the Conference and it was AGREED that this resolution be sent to the Minister of Justice :

RESOLUTION 1 : This meeting calls upon the Government to return Bishop Tutu's Passport and to desist from all further arbitrary and punitive actions against the natural leaders of Opposition in S.A.

Official Greetings were sent from the Conference to Mr. Mike Illian. He has lost his rights to serve his Black customers in his restaurant.

RESOLUTION 2.

RESTAURANTS :

We protest against the government's refusal to open all restaurants to all races. The Black Sash will encourage its members to patronise those restaurants who have made it clear that they object to discrimination on the grounds of colour.

7. RULES OF PROCEDURE : Adopted.

8. ELECTION OF PRESS COMMITTEE : Mrs. Jeanette Cohen appointed Press Officer. The following were elected to the Committee :

<u>Cape Western</u>	: Mrs. Robb.
<u>Natal Coastal</u>	: Mrs. Colvin.
<u>Natal Midlands</u>	: Mrs. Franklin.
<u>Transvaal</u>	: Mrs. Wentzel
<u>Albany</u>	: Mrs. Lacey.

9. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF NATIONAL CONFERENCE 1972 : The Minutes were ratified.

10. HEADQUARTERS REPORTS

A. HEADQUARTERS REPORT : Presented by Gita Dyzenhaus Appendix 2.

Gita Dyzenhaus reported that there had been some publicity in the papers on demonstrations. There had been pictures of Sheena and Joyce with posters protesting the seizure of Bishop Tutu's passport.

Nettie Davidoff reported that the National President had presented 30 - 40 excellent letters to the Press during the year and suggested that a digest of the letters be assembled, and although Joyce Harris felt that they would be dated, it was AGREED that this be done and sent to all Regions.

Joyce Harris thanked Sheena Duncan, Gita Dyzenhaus, Robin Harvey, Janet Sahli, Audrey Coleman and Jill Wentzel for their support during the year.

Noel Robb brought up the question of whether money could be saved by separating National Headquarters from Transvaal Region.

After discussion it was AGREED that as both share the same office there would be no point to this. Report adopted.

B. TREASURERS REPORT : Presented by Robin Harvey Appendix 3.

Robin Harvey apologised for handing in the report late, but the Auditors had been late in returning the books. It was noted that Cape Town has too many copies of the magazine, and they will send their extras to the Transvaal.

Administrative and other difficulties with Port Elizabeth, Albany, Border were discussed.

Report Adopted - Proposed S. Duncan Seconded J. Van Velden.

C. MAGAZINE REPORT : Presented by Janet Sahli Appendix 4.

Janet Sahli especially thanked Mr. Raymond Tucker, our legal adviser, for his infinite patience and wisdom. She also expressed thanks to Pacific Press for their co-operation, and in particular Roger. She thanked Grant for continuing to do our

She thanked Joyce Harris and Joyce Brown for their support during the year. In particular she thanked Pat Tucker and Marion Nell for undertaking the November issue. She mentioned the rise in the price of the magazine from R30 per page to R41.50 - an increase of 45%. There was an amended quote of R41.50 per page. To save money, Conference should decide whether :

- (a) the magazine should be shortened
- (b) 3 issues instead of 4
- (c) cost of magazine to be increased.

Proposed that Four editions of the magazine be published per annum.

Number of pages to be reduced. Regions to be responsible for supplying articles. Regions to be responsible for handling their own distribution.

AGREED Proposed Mrs. Lacey Seconded Mrs. Hermer.

11. REGIONAL REPORTS :

ALBANY : No report was tabled.

Marion Lacey reported that Betty Davenport had gone overseas. Margot Beazl is the new Chairperson. Pat Lanham who was the Secretary has left the organisation. Jaqueline Kock had given a talk to the Region. She reported that Freehold tenure had changed to 99 year Leasehold in Fingo Village.

The Sash was responsible for breaking the story of the Glenmore Removals and the subsequent freezing of the removals, but she pointed out that this was NOT a solution to the problem, as they are now being moved elsewhere.

She called for the stopping of all removals. She reported that Private school pupils were not being allowed to write their Matriculation Examinations until June 1981. There were 100,000 Private pupils as opposed to 40,000 public school pupils. The Port Elizabeth branch requires encouragement to continue working and building their branch and had played a significant part in the Walmer location activity.

She suggested an article on the Walmer removals be printed in SASH Headquarters will take up discussion with Bobby Melunsky about the branch being established as its own entity.

Noel Robb questioned the reason why the pupils were not being allowed to write the examination until 1981. Sheena Duncan suggested this discussion be held over until the lecture on Thursday being delivered by Mr. Mazibuko. Report Adopted.

CAPE WESTERN : Presented by Sue Joynt

Appendix 5.

Sue Joynt reported that Court visiting plays an important part in their activities. The region regularly attended the City Council meetings. Housing, removals under the Group Areas Act (including District 6), Crossroads and the Cape as a Coloured Preference Area were all areas of great interest and concern to them. She mentioned a Study which has been done by the Graduate School of Business Administration on the expectations of literate urban blacks and said she will send out Copies to the Regions when the study is published. Discussion followed on whether demonstrations are worthwhile. It is left to the region to choose to continue doing so as some felt that the publicity engendered made it worthwhile. Use had been made of the Womens' Charter. Report Adopted.

TRANSVAAL : Presented by Jill Wentzel

Appendix 6.

In her lengthy report Jill Wentzel reported that she felt that the past year ^{was the year} of the Advice Office and mentioned the large numbers of people who came to the office seeking advice. The office had

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TRANSVAAL CONT

Appendix 6 Cont

once again moved to new premises. Publicity had been good, with 105 statements and several overseas broadcast interviews. She reported on the many areas of work undertaken by the region, e.g., Actstop, Housing campaign, "Stop the Bulldozers Campaign", the provision of lunches for the SSRC Trial and many others.

Report Adopted.

BORDER : No report.

NATAL MIDLANDS : Report Tabled Appendix 7
Presented by Beth Franklin on behalf of Natal Midlands.

It was felt that despite the feeling of despair Pietermaritzburg had done a very good job. A stand was taken on the curfew. The Chairman had visited Crossroads. An education chart had been drawn up by M. Clarke.

Report Adopted.

NATAL COASTAL REGION : Appendix 8.

1. Natal Coastal. Presented by Ann Colvin.

She reported that one protest had been held. A Prisoners Education Committee was established with Solveig Piper as one of the prime movers. A Phoenix Anti-Autonomy Campaign was continuing. She reported on the stable and settled community of "squatters" at Richmond Farm.

Solveig Piper reported on a project of "bulk buying". A survey was done on the prices in the Durban area and it was found that Makro was the most competitive. Transport was provided and members were charged R10. each. There was a monthly purchase at Makro., the goods then distributed. A nutrition and gardening course was run. She felt that the whole project had become a taxi service with no real sense of community and no concern for the unemployed.

2. Highway Branch : Presented by Mary Grice Appendix 9.

Mary Grice reported that the main activity for the year had been fund raising. Two discussion groups were functioning. Members visited the St. Wendolin area which is due for clearance. They are assisting in a bulk buying project with Black women in Clermont. Kloof Library had asked to open a library for blacks. This has been stalled. Joyce Harris reported that she is awaiting a date to meet with Chief Buthelezi on the question of Kwa Zulu pensions and invited Natal Coastal representatives to come along. It was noted that the Hillcrest Advice Office is run by the church and not by the Black Sash.

12. ADVICE OFFICE REPORTS :

ALBANY. : No Report Tabled. Appendix 10.

Marion Lacey expressed concern over the position of contract workers. She reported that THERE IS NO RECRUITMENT TAKING PLACE IN THE AREA AT THE MOMENT. This means that the community has no means of livelihood. In the Ciskei Pensions especially Disability Grants are just not forthcoming. The ultimate responsibility for applying for a pension for an individual lies with the headman. People carrying T.I.C's are not being recruited.

BORDER : No Report Tabled.

Sheena Duncan reported that when she visited this office she found the attitude very patronising and felt this should be changed. She reported that although Val Sullivan tries very hard she is too busy with her work at Race Relations. There seems to be no-one left to do the Sash work.

CAPE WESTERN : Presented by Noel Robb Appendix 11.

Noel Robb presented the Supplementary Report for the year 1978/1979

ITEM FOR DISCUSSION : The Extension of Advice Office Work :

Marion Lacey said that some work is being done to train black workers and to provide channels through which to seek help with their problems. There was general discussion on whether it is better to have voluntary or paid workers manning Sash offices. Sheena Duncan felt that it is better to run the office with voluntary staff. The Cape Western Offices said that they had had a definite offer of assistance. It will be left to the individual regions to decide on how best to run their offices.

13. REMOVALS :

i) The Map :

The general consensus of opinion was that the map must be updated.

AGREED

Judy Van Velden (Transvaal) has agreed to undertake the project, but must have help. She will find out the following :

- (a) Cost of re-printing (b) Numbers of copies involved (c) Marketing.

It was suggested she approach the Geography department at the University.

ii) Group Areas :

- (a) District Six : Fact Paper presented by Noel Robb Appendix 17.

Discussion arising out of this report : Some of the uses to which the land may be put if all the families are persuaded to move are :- Police Barracks, Oriental Plaza., or a Technicon. Objections to the above had been expressed by Sash members, but families have little choice when approached by the Community Development Board. There is a possibility of the area becoming an "OPEN AREA"

- (b) Removal of an "Indian" Shopkeeper from Newlands - Appendix 18.

Presented by Sue Drerup

This fact paper was read and Conference expressed distress at this handling of the individual as a result of the Administration of the Group Areas Act. Report Adopted.

- (c) The feelings and thoughts of people housed in Oceanview, having been removed from Simonstown. Fact Paper from Cape Western Not Tabled.

iii) Homelands and Rural Poverty :

- (a) Winterveld : Fact Paper presented by Mary Harrop Allin on behalf of Pretoria Appendix 19.

An ad hoc committee had been set up in Pretoria - Council of Churches and Pretoria Black Sash - much hard work being done. The Government has set up a Commission in conjunction with the Bophuthatswana Government to investigate squatter problems. People are being pushed into Winterveld from Atteridgeville and Saulsville and these people are losing their Section 10(1)(a) rights. Many are not Tswanas and do not want to be in Bophuthatswana, but have nowhere else to go. Some even consider becoming citizens of Bophuthatswana (thus losing their South African Citizenship) in order to have somewhere to live - even so, not all such applications are granted.

- (b) Rural Poverty : This Fact Paper was Tabled Appendix 20.

This fact paper was written by Ruth Imrie. It points out the reduced production of maize etc., being grown in the "homelands" and states that the Homelands are not producing enough food to meet the basic requirements of the population, poor land utilization being a contributory factor. The iron control of migratory labour is causing insurmountable difficulties for poverty stricken rural Africans. The above is a major project and a great deal of information has been collected, and will be published at a later date.

(c) Removals in Natal : Nondweni or Some S.A. Boat People. Appendix 21.

Written by Marie Dyer.

This fact paper is about Nondweni in Northern Natal a "closer settlement" called unofficially 'Tin Town' which was established to house families evicted from 'Black Spots' and White farms from the Paulpietersburg area. Arising out of discussion on this paper it was noted that the Government was creating 'Black States' by "removing" these people. The community was adamant that their CHOICE is to stay where they are, as at least as tenants to local farmers they can have some land use and stocks. Laurene Platsky pointed out that there are massive removals planned for 1980. Marion Lacey said that destitute families are being recruited as farm labourers.

it was suggested that the Sash Demonstrate or Protest and show that we are prepared to act by holding such a demonstration at one of the removal camps.

(d) Makgato and Batlokwa Removals. Appendix 22.

This fact paper was presented by Joyce Harris.

These people were both sited at Dwaars River, the Makgato to be moved to Kromhoek and the Batlokwa to Bochum. Some of the Makgato people have been moved as many as three times. The Batlokwa have lived in the area for about 200 years or more. Following on the removals of the Makgato people many of the children have been absorbed into the Batlokwa schools after a protest march by Batlokwa students. People are sheltering in the homes and the yards of the Batlokwa. The cost of transport and daily commuting is almost double, thus making daily commuting almost impossible. Compensation is only payable in Kromhoek once the family has moved. The RECOMMENDATIONS put to the government :-

- i) Permit those members of the Makgato tribe who wish to remain where they are permanently as part of the Batlokwa.
- ii) Save the Batlokwa towns and villages.
- iii) Re-proclaim Batlokwa as part of Lebowa, as requested by the Batlokwa.
- iv) Dr. Koornhof should visit the area to see the development there.
- v) Stop all forced removals. They are cruel, destructive and totally uneconomic.

At this point the Conference was addressed by Joyce Harris on her meeting with the Minister P. Koornhof and others. He had complained that he had had some trouble with his constituents as a result of publicity over the Emergency Advice Office Report. He requested Sash to report to him and not to the Press. This gave the Sash members an opportunity to ask him to STOP REMOVALS.

With regard to the Makgato and Batlokwa people a lawyer has since formulated a document for submission to the Van Der Walt Commission. In her letter of thanks to the Minister for the meeting, Mrs. Harris was able to point out that the Black Sash is not a welfare organisation. Discussion ensued as to whether this and other information should be made public. Some delegates felt very strongly that when meetings of this type were undertaken the Sash should not agree to remain silent on the meeting and what had taken place. At this point Sheena Duncan who had taken the Chair said that this discussion should continue at the session on 'strategies'.

(e) Homeland and Rural Poverty
Resettlement - Report from Albany, presented by Marion Lacey.

Betterment Areas (article from February issue of SASH)

Rural poverty is acute caused by insufficient land allocations. In the betterment areas there is quite as much hardship as in the resettlement areas. Land was allocated 100 years ago, there has been no increase in the amount of land, but the population has increased enormously.

Families have been resettled to "closer resettlement" villages but only the oldest son has the right to succeed to the plot of arable land, thus in an area where about 200 people have a right to land, you find 5 000 to 5 000 people living, and as the heir only succeeds on the death of his father, those entitled to live there are chiefly the old - they cannot manage to plough their lands and it is very expensive to get it ploughed by others. Few people now own stock and then only a few head. A landless class ^{is developing} thus more and more people are seeking work in the towns which is increasingly difficult to find, particularly in view of the heavy fines now imposed on people employing illegal workers.

There was general discussion of the subject.

RESOLUTION : Proposed by M. Lacey. Seconded by S. Duncan

Conference notes : (1) the uprooting and resettlement of whole communities is an integral part of the apartheid plan and until government has been forced to abandon its policy, removals will go on.

(2) that the possible extension and final consolidation of the Bantustans will necessarily accelerate further mass removals. This organisation therefore acknowledges the futility of calling on Government to stop resettlements and commits itself to :

- (a) Documentation of all population removals in order to expose the so-called "resettlement" policy as an integral part of the strategy.
- (b) Supporting communities and individuals affected in their stand against forced removal.

The Resolution was spoken to by Marion Lacey, and general discussion followed. Ethel Walt proposed an amendment, seconded by Sue Jcynt, This was put to the vote - 10 votes in favour
12 votes against.

The amendment failed.

The Resolution was put to the Conference :

14 votes in favour of the Resolution
7 votes against the Resolution
2 abstentions.

The Resolution was passed by Conference.

AGREED.

14. POLITICS AND CHANGE.

Appendix 23.

- (a) Seeding the Clouds : Discrepancies between Government promises and actualities.

Fact Paper (Transvaal) presented by Mrs. Jeanette Cohen.

Mrs. Cohen thanked the newspapers for the assistance she had received from them while preparing this paper.

Actual changes have been few. Much is heard of the need for change - if this is expressed often enough, eventually change must in fact occur. It is necessary to keep on hammering Government into effecting change they talk about - i.e. where General Malan says the defence of our country is 80% political and 20% military and Koornhof that apartheid is dead.

- (b) A Comparison of Issues as reflected in POST and the English Press
This item has been scrapped for this year but is a project which should be undertaken next year.
- (c) A Bill of Rights - The Concept of a Bill of Rights for South Africa.

Appendix 24.

Fact Paper (Transvaal) by Ethel Walt and Gita Dyzenhaus - presented by Mrs. Walt.

Most Bills of Rights are based on 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A Bill of Rights defines an enforceable minimum standard depends for enforcement on an informed public - a free press - and a free and independent judiciary.

This paper arises out of last year's Conference when there was a call for a campaign for a Bill of Rights, and it was found necessary to investigate the subject before campaigning.

Conference left it to the Regions to decide whether or not to conduct a campaign for a Bill of Rights.

It was suggested that a Bill of Wrongs be listed alongside the Bill of Rights in a publicity leaflet as a form of attack.

- (d) Change in terms of our attitudes towards the Prime Minister's total strategy; the divisivis effects on opposition organisations. The New Constitution. Item for Discussion.

Mrs. Harris moved that this discussion be held over until the discussion on strategy.

AGREED.

- (e) The Constitution Campaign. Mrs. Harris reported on the fact that this campaign is worthwhile and continuing.

RESOLUTION 4 : Proposed by Natal Coastal (Mrs. Ann Colvin)

Seconded by Mrs. Piper

Amendment moved by Mrs. Davidoff (Transvaal)

Conference notes Cabinet Ministers' statements that racial discrimination does not exist in South Africa... It cannot reconcile such easily disproved statements with the blatant discrimination still existing in :

- The right to :
 - live together as a family
 - sell their labour on the best market
 - Freehold land ownership.
 - live in areas and/or suburbs of their choice
 - Participate in government at all levels
 - free and equal education
 - enjoy all cultural, sporting and other amenities

We challenge the Prime Minister to explain such discrepancies between Cabinet Ministers' statements and the real state of affairs.

After discussion, this resolution was passed unanimously :

- 15. JUSTICE. Mrs. Harris read to Conference the gist of the memorandum sent to the Rabie Commission.

- i) RESOLUTION 5 : Proposed by Natal Coastal (Mrs. S. Piper
Seconded by Mrs. Colvin)

Conference notes that a number of people are restricted in Terms of the Internal Security Act and that an unknown number of people are detained and are still being detained, under this Act and once again calls upon the Minister of Justice to repeal these laws, re-establish the Rule of Law, and then bring to court such evidence as he claims to have against these people, and allow their guilt or innocence to be decided in open court.

Conference also calls on the Minister of the Interior to give reasons why he is daily refusing and removing passports.

This Resolution passed.

Mrs. Henderson spoke of the concern of the Dependents Conference re excessive sentences passed for infringements of banning orders.

- ii) Campaign on the Rights of Prisoners : (Ex Minutes Conference 1979)

Kathy Satchwell who represented Transvaal on this Committee reported that a petition had been collected and sent to Durban.

Mrs. Piper reported on the petition organised by Natal Coastal, 10 000-15 000 signatures but Minister refused to meet delegation or accept petition - 'It would serve no purpose'. Press informed.

- iii) Criminal Laws Amendment Act : (Ex Minutes Conference 1979)

It had been agreed at Conference in 1979 that an information pamphlet was required for accused - after discussion with lawyers it was decided that it was not possible to prepare this. However, an excellent booklet has been prepared by / Page Ten/---

However, an excellent booklet has been prepared by the Roman Catholic Bishops Conference called "Know Your Rights", price 10c., which might fill the gap.

Monitoring of Political Trials - no commitment could be made by Conference - Regions should monitor trials wherever possible. Trials are deliberately being held at out of the way places - trials should be public but are no longer so because it is impossible for the public to attend. This is also difficult and expensive for families of accused. Dependents' Conference is looking into this. Many trials take place that receive no publicity at all because they are held in such remote places. If such trials come to the notice of Sash members, the Institute of Race Relations should be informed.

iv) RESOLUTION 6.

This Conference demands that the Government stop banning, detaining, harrassing and persecuting the country's natural leaders. Conference points out that by destroying overt community protests inside South Africa our Security Laws are making it preferable to organise violently rather than non-violently.

Conference further points out that suppression of public protest leads to a rejection of peaceful change by those who are oppressed, and to wishful thinking that there are no legitimate grievances by those who oppress them.

All kinds of community protest organisations, and Trade Union activities, are the only alternatives to violent confrontation on our borders and internally.

This Resolution was carried unanimously.

16. HOUSING. (a) Mitchell's Plain Fact Paper (Cape Western) Appendix 25.

Cape Western Region's Fact Paper on Mitchell's Plain was read to Conference by Mrs. Sue Joynt, and written by Margaret Nash.

This model township has gone sour because people are compelled to live there. There have been forced removals from District Six. It is too expensive, too far away and has poor amenities.

(b) Memorandum on Coloured Housing - Fact Paper Appendix 26.
from Cape Western added in at this point.
Mrs. Noel Robb presented this fact paper.

There is not enough housing for the Coloured community. Of all new houses built 37.5% goes to squatters, 25% to Group Areas Removals, leaving only 37.5% for the families on the housing waiting list. Private accommodation in Cape Town near the centre of town very expensive, more expensive than for whites. Unoccupied housing designed for low income whites should be allocated to Coloureds.

(c) "Crossroads" Fact Paper delivered by N. Robb Appendix 27.

Mrs. Robb reported that a new Crossroads would be built in which a large number of residents in certain categories would be accommodated. In order to categorise the residents a questionnaire was drawn up by the Administration Board. Because there was a great deal of fear of the officials and of the questionnaire a team of Black Sash workers and others undertook a simple form of questionnaire and in 2 weeks 3000 families were interviewed. The results of this survey have been invaluable to the Advice Office.

People had permits to live in Crossroads but no permits to work. After negotiations, Dr. Koornhof and the local officials of the Department of Co-operation and Development and of the Administration Board made statements to the Press to the effect that they would not arrest Crossroads residents working illegally nor prosecute their employers. Following on this many Crossroads residents found employment.

Differences arose between two sections of Crossroads and finally it seemed wise to withdraw and leave them to settle their own differences, but residents continued to go to the Mowbray offices with personal problems.

The Chief Commissioner for the Western Cape gave the assurance that all with legitimate permits up to 31st January 1980 will automatically receive further permits, possibly for a year.

No houses have yet been built at the New Crossroads but provision has been made for stormwater drains and the construction of 1,662 houses. The first plans for the new township were rejected by the Crossroads Committee because of the high costs involved. It was noteworthy that this was the first time Blacks in the area were consulted as regards housing.

At present there is an efficient rubbish and bucket-loo removal service, and mobile clinics providing excellent health services.

Mrs. Robb ended the report by saying that around 20,000 people of Crossroads have housed and fed themselves successfully for five years and are an excellent example of what people can do when not harrassed and prevented by legislation from doing so. She believed more Crossroads were needed all over South Africa with site and service schemes where people can help themselves.

Housing Issues in Natal. Fact Paper No. 28 presented by Mrs. Solveig Piper, Natal Coastal Region.

Appendix 28.

The paper focused on three areas in Natal which cover a spectrum of housing concerns, each the manifestation of the oppressive structures of our society.

1. Richmond Farm is a squatter area north-west of Durban. During 1979 Diakonia and the Black Sash assisted the Richmond Farm Residents' Committee in carrying out a survey of the residents. According to a newspaper report which quoted Professor Lawrence Schlemmer (Director of Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Natal, Durban) the following appeared :

"there seems to be ample evidence that this is not an unstable population of drifters and semi-vagrants. Richmond Farm is integrated into the economy of the greater Durban area and it has a settled and stable core".

The residents of Richmond Farm were entirely dependent on their own resources and those of Kwa Mashu for transport and water. Two conflicting committees existed in the area. One was a Residents' Committee elected by the residents and the other was a committee of Inkatha members with the ear of the authorities but not the support of the community.

It was clear that residents of Richmond Farm were tolerated but not wanted there. Raids have been conducted in the area.

Contact with the Commissioner for Co-operation and Development has been difficult because of his apparent confidence in the Inkatha Committee and disregard of the Residents' Committee. He has also refused to see a delegation of residents from Richmond Farm including any Black Sash representatives or in fact any 'white' people.

In November 1979 seven points were put forward to the Minister of Co-operation and Development from the members of the Richmond Farm Residents' Committee, Diakonia and the Black Sash. Receipt of the memorandum was acknowledged but there has been no further response.

2. Chatsworth - The Chatsworth Housing Action Committee was established and this was precipitated by the price set by the Durban City Council for the sale of sub economic houses in Chatsworth. The selling prices ranged between R4.245 and R4, 880 for houses estimated to have been built at a cost of R1 500 and R2 000. The new committee has been mandated by a significant proportion of the people of Chatsworth to fight, on their behalf, to lower the selling price. Consultation between the people of Chatsworth and the City Council did not take place as the peoples' feelings regarding the selling price/

feelings regarding the selling price of these sub-economic houses although consultation did take place with the Southern Durban Indian Local Affairs Committee, a body which is unacceptable to the Chatsworth residents.

The Croftdene Residents' Association has sent a memorandum to the Minister of Community Development making recommendations.

The response of the Chatsworth residents to the selling prices of the sub-economic houses has put the City Council on the defensive judging by irrational and emotive statements made by members of the City Council.

3. Weenen - Zulu speaking people have been settled in the Weenen area for generations. During the 19th century title to the land passed to the incoming white settlers and the African occupants became farm labourers and 'squatters' on what had once been tribal land. The people have no legal claim to the land on which they live.

In 1969 the labour tenant system was outlawed in the Weenen district. Weenen was the third area in Natal to be affected by the ban, but the first where a large population was involved. It has been estimated that between ten and twenty thousand people were removed and settled elsewhere. Many returned to Weenen illegally. Thousands of others were accommodated in a temporary resettlement camp on land adjoining Tugela Estates. Ten years later these people were still there. Since the 1970's the area has been the scene of a series of deadly faction fights between rival clans, jostling for space and inadequate resources. Despite the prohibition of labour tenancy, tenants have slowly drifted back to the Weenen area where their presence is illegal on the farms and they are completely dependent on the good intentions and well wishes of the farmer. They are often evicted and details vary, but the general predicament remains the same. And so does the response of tenants when asked what they want - the right to live on the land in the communities that they know.

In concluding the report on the three different areas in Natal, Mrs. Piper pointed out that the report served to highlight the broad spectrum of housing issues which require a just and humane response in Natal as well as throughout the country.

Mrs. Mary Grice from Natal Region then reported on her discussion with Mr. Owen Jones, MPC in March 1980.

Mr. Owen-Jones had said that the area of St. Wendolins had been declared Indian and housing for 4000 Indians would be provided in the valley below. Electricity would be supplied and he did not foresee any removals taking place before 5 years. People could move to Kwa Ngendezi and Kwa Dabeka whenever they wanted to provided they were Zulu citizens.

Klaarwater would remain an African area.

In Kwa Ngendezi land could be bought by Kwa Zulu citizens on the "self-bou" scheme (houses had to be built within 2 years) Loans are obtainable from the Kwa Zulu Development corporation. One of the complaints about this area was the high cost of transport to Pinetown.

In Claremont and Kwa Dabeka the single hostels are still being converted into family accommodation. The Claremont Action Committee has been responsible for the "clearing up" of the area.

Mr. Owen Jones said that the Pinetown authorities were attempting to have two Indian areas, Motalla Farm and Stockville, declared white to be reproclaimed back for Indian people.

Discussion on the fact papers followed particularly on the cost of the selling prices of the sub-economic houses in Chatsworth. Agreement was not reached as to whether the prices asked were too high or not or whether they were offered at reasonable replacement prices

Mrs. Lacey asked that other branches keep Albany informed on events.

In summing up Mrs. Harris said that some dreadful facts had emerged from all around the country. She suggested that an overall picture could be put together from all areas indicating housing problems throughout the country.

7. ECONOMICS : Mrs. Harris explained the provisions of the Fund Raising Act, viz :
Members can make donations, pay subs, etc., This also applies to
Associated members and Affiliated members,
Non-Members contributions or donations are not permitted.
Book Sales, Cakes Sales, etc., are permissible as long as realistic charges are made.

Services may be charged for. Speakers may charge for talks but must not charge for services in the Advice Office. She also gave the reasons for non-application for registration.

RESOLUTION No. 7.

That this Government institute immediately an emergency-poor relief programme as a fore-runner to a proper national welfare system, thereby recognizing the ordinary responsibility of a government. By national we mean national, that is, inclusive of rural areas, so-called homelands, and so-called independent states all of which are suffering from desperate poverty largely caused by the implementation of the apartheid policy.

Carried unanimously Proposed by Jill Wentzel
Seconded by Solveig Piper.

Natal Coastal's resolution on the spending of the gold bonanza was withdrawn.

It was agreed that, instead of framing a resolution on this, the Black Sash would support the following statement by FOSATU :

FOSATU believes that the problems of poverty and unemployment confronting South Africa are extremely serious. The gold price bonanza must be used by the government and the private sector to correct these problems and not be allowed to further fuel the wealth inequalities that exist in South Africa.

RESOLUTION No. 8.

This Conference asks the National President to draw the attention of the Minister of Co-operation and Development to the scandalous inequities in the payment of pensions and grants to African people and to ask him to take immediate steps to ensure that the statutory rights of aged and disabled people is honoured, both in the common area and in the so-called homelands in the Republic of South Africa.

Carried unanimously Proposed by Sheena Duncan
Seconded by Solveig Piper

N.B. Regions are to send memoranda on this subject to Mrs. Harris before she writes the letter.

In introducing a resolution from Natal Coastal, Mrs. Jill Nicholson stated that she had been told of a Ministerial enquiry when she wrote complaining of the pension situation in Natal. However, it seemed that this was minimal. The payout is a total shambles.

RESOLUTION No. 9.

Conference notes that it is the right of all aged and disabled people in South Africa to receive pensions and grants and that numerous reports have been received of problems in all aspects of payment of these to Africans. Conference therefore calls on the Government to :

1. Eliminate delays in processing applications for pensions and grants.
2. Eliminate the payment of discriminatory and inadequate pensions to Africans.

3. Re-examine the unsuitable means test.
4. Eliminate delays in the payment of pensions and grants.
5. Re-examine the systems used for the payment of pensions and grants and the conduct of the officials charged with this task ; and
6. Investigate allegations of corruption in the making of payments.

Proposed by Jill Nicholson

Seconded by Mary Grice.

18. EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR.

Appendix 29.

Mrs. Solveig Piper introduced an excellent paper by Stephen Borden on the registration of Black Trade Unions. She was congratulated by Mrs. J. Sakli.

Matters arising from Conference 1979.

Workmen's Compensation :- Mrs. Harris wrote to the Minister in connection with the tracing of people to whom monies were owing and was told that it was the fault of the employee who failed to notify his employer of his address.

Mrs. Lacey pointed out that every contract has to have the employee's address and where there is an open contract this information is held by the District Labour officer who has contact with the Chiefs in all locations. National President to SEE NATAL COASTAL'S ADVICE OFFICE REPORT, before continuing correspondence.

Copy of Contract for Employees.

The Department of Co-operation and Development stated that contracts were read out to the worker who then attested to the contract by signing or by thumbprint.

Mrs. Lacey said that the form is in triplicate anyway and why do they not just make an extra copy.

There was discussion on open contracts where up to fifty names are often on the same contract. It was agreed that these contracts should be abolished and only single contracts made out for each worker.

It was also noted that it is no longer a criminal offence for an employee to break his contract, but that the employee could sue the employer if he terminated his employment before the term of the contract was up.

The Western Cape as a Coloured preference Area.

Appendix 30.

Fact Paper.

This most informative paper was introduced by Mrs. Mary Livingstone who asked that the following be added to it :

"Since the above report was printed, the first reports of the Cillie' Commission have appeared. He mentions changes and improvements in Soweto but none in the Cape for either Coloureds or Blacks - it just stays a Coloured Preference area.

The discussion on the paper included :

Mrs. Robb - A permit has to be obtained to employ a Black and you have to prove that you cannot find a Coloured. Businessmen don't want the palaver of getting permits.

Mrs. Piper - yes, but you must have consultation with both groups.

Mrs. Robb - the reduction of contract workers in the Cape from 94,000 to 16,000 is because of unemployment. Matriculants cannot get jobs, they want better jobs but cannot get them because of Coloured Preference. She wrote to Dr. Koornhof about Domestic workers and got a reply quoting the Theron Commission findings.

Mrs. Ratcliffe said that in the courts for "illegal entry" cases there are fewer and fewer men and more women.

Mrs. Lacey said that in order to remove Africans the "idle" clause was used.

Mrs. Robb gave some information on the employment of people at Crossroads and Mrs. Piper asked that she please find out whether they are employed subject to Industrial Council agreements and that they are members of

RESOLUTION No. 10.

That the Black Sash, believing that it is totally immoral to deny a person the right to continue working in a job he or she has found, resolves to support in any way legally possible, any member of our organisation, or any member of the public, who has decided on principle to refuse to discharge any "illegal" worker and to go to prison rather than pay any fine imposed as a result of prosecution.

Proposed by Marion Lacey
Seconded by Beth Franklin

Carried with two abstentions.

Mrs. Harris thanked Mrs. Jean Sinclair for a wonderful party on Wednesday 12th March.

Mrs. Lillian Ngoyi had died on 12th March and a message of condolence would be sent to her family from Conference.

19. EDUCATION.

Mr. Fanyana Mazibuko, an expert on education and financial director of Sached Trust, then addressed the meeting.

Following discussion took place :

Mrs. Lacey asked about the school feeding scheme which had been stopped at the introduction of Bantu Education and the fact that children who were hungry could not learn.

Reply : Bantu Education stopped feeding, put a curb on pre-school facilities, practically halted the training of pre-school teachers. Socio-economic problems are such that 3/4 of the children are hungry and after 2 hours of work they have lost interest. As a temporary measure, they should be fed. But equalisation of education and employment opportunities would be the final solution.

Mrs. Van Velden asked about the language policy.

Reply : UNESCO says that children should be taught through the medium of the mother tongue, but we contend that this is less important to us because we are split between being a developed and a developing country. There should be a blitzkrieg against all obstacles to learning. Mother tongue cannot deal with most disciplines. We are not emotional about language. I personally speak several languages and although I am a Zulu we do not use Zulu at home. We want things done. The African Teachers' Association has just submitted a memo on reasons for education in English. The earlier you teach a child a language the better. Comparisons done of Standard 6 essays proved that children had serious language problems if they learned it too late.

Mary Harrop Allin : At what stage does English and Afrikaans start.

Reply : English and Afrikaans are learned as languages up to Standard 6. At Standard 7 they switch to English and Afrikaans as the medium of teaching. Now they are free to switch at standard 4 but there are problems about books which have disappeared etc.,

Mrs. Davidoff commented on Black Sash action and suggested that we should have an education specialist in each region. We should set up a special committee to do what they can to remedy matters.

Mrs. Mary Grice : There is a shortage of teachers, should we be raising money for training colleges? What about the employment of white teachers?

Reply : We should utilize all we can. Before building more training institutions we should make full use of those we have. We under-utilize institutions which cost millions. We may also be short of candidates because of the attitude against the profession amongst Blacks.

More teachers who are already qualified would be available if attitudes and conditions change.

Mrs. Noel Robb : School books are supposedly free but there is so much still being paid for books, exam fees etc.,

Reply : Parents claim they have been made to pay as much as R97 - and all sorts of answers are given as to why. It is supposedly insurance against the loss of the books but pupils are not refunded their deposits. R97 is more than the books cost. We are trying to find out what the money is for. Schools are allowed to charge R4. maximum per year for sports etc., They used to charge R10 for minor repairs, chalk etc.,

Helen Suzman : There have been questions in Parliament and the reply is that schools are at fault for charging too much for additional facilities. There should be a departmental directive as to how much should be the maximum charge. Could we get actual figures charged in the various schools?

Reply. Yes we shall do that.

Mrs. Janet Sahli : What do you feel about opting out of the system?

Reply : I will not give prescriptions. Black people want to be educated however bad the system so they make do with a system they do not approve. When I resigned it was necessary - I had to help bring the system to a standstill. Now I would have a few qualms.

Helen Suzman : How many who resigned went back ?

Reply : 503 resigned. Of these 100 went back almost immediately. Finally - 220 altogether went back.

Mrs. M. Lacey : 100,000 pupils who are private candidates for exams have been told that they must wait 18 months to write. There are 40,000 others within the system.

Reply : Soweto is angry about this. There are so many private candidates because Black students have been sent away from schools - too old, failed a class etc. They are now registering with tutorial colleges etc., Of course though they are private candidates they are still within the system. It is the responsibility of the government to provide education.

Mrs. Noel Robb : Why is there this delay for private candidates ?

Reply : They cannot cope with the numbers. I believe there is a general increase in Black people including adults who want to slot back into education. Figures increase all the time but recently have jumped.

Mrs. Mary Grice : People are in a fix because of the delay, they are told at the last moment that they cannot write and there is no appeal.

Reply : None of it is necessary. There are still not nearly enough Black exam candidates and provision must be made to cope. It does not help to accept problems - they must make arrangements and at least plan for the future.

Mrs. Lacey : They pay privately for their education. The State does not accept responsibility - could they not go to the STAR schools which have been donated- why can they not write JMB?

Reply : I have not dwelt on exams. The question of which exam we write is symbolic. The NSC is a symbol of a rejected, segregated system ; inferior physical and human resources. Education is the responsibility of the State. Blacks pay more tax than whites at the same salary and in the same circumstances. We are overtaxed and underprovided for.

Helen Suzman : It is to be "phased out".

Mrs. Van Velden : Are the main problems in the primary schools because of the decline of numbers later on ?

Reply : It is language which/
PageSeventeen/

Reply : It is language which is the problem - there is a delay in the learning of maths and science of 18 months. The JMB syllabus and exam is the same for everyone and a first class pass by a black child declares him a genius.

Mrs. Joyce Harris : If we had time, womanpower to concentrate on education, do we help the present system with more schools, teachers, facilities or do we fight the system :

Reply : Both can be done. If change did come there would be delay : start now to phase out the difference in quality of schools, etc., Recently more educational opportunities have been frustrated by the denial of passports to people involved in the training of personnel overseas. Government is loath to have anyone interfere. Get more and better teachers facilities etc., It will help.

Mrs. Harris : Thank you for a most wonderful talk. We are honoured to have had you here. We regret that you have had problems and we all hope that all goes well and that you are left alone and free.

No.10- RESOLUTION ON EDUCATION .

Bearing in mind that those who do not have the vote are inclined to get second class facilities, this Conference calls upon the government to introduce as rapidly as possible one uniform system of free and compulsory education for all South Africans. The Black Sash gives notice that working towards this objective is one of its aims for 1980.

Proposed by Freda Lloyd
Seconded by Prue Crosoer.

20. MATTERS ARISING FROM 1979 CONFERENCE.

Transvaal Region had agreed to draw up a booklet, based on the United Nations Charter for children for the International Year of the Child. This had not been done because no cases were sent from the Regions.

21. 21a. There was wide discussion on making the work of Headquarters less onerous and one suggestion was that the work should be divided. It was suggested that the magazine be edited outside of Johannesburg by another Region. It was agreed that the changeover would be investigated at the next National Conference and that all regions would come well-prepared to debate the issue.

21b. BORDER AND CAPE EASTERN REGIONS.

Port Elizabeth is functioning although there are some difficulties in communication with Albany.

Border Region is totally in the doldrums with only three committee members who are not really active because of heavy commitments elsewhere. Agreed that they should be motivated through Mrs. Erica McNulty and possibly Mrs. M. Lacey.

Ms. Robin Harvey suggested that all debts owed by Border Region be written off, so that if they become active they will start with a clean slate.

AGREED.

Mrs. Lacey suggested that a number of extra magazines should be sent to them free for publicity purposes. Cape Western might send their surplus.

14a and 21c. DISCUSSION IN CLOSED SESSION ON "STRATEGY".

The following points were raised :

Strategy

Strategy - to remove pass laws ?

Negotiation with Government official bodies
documentation

whether Sash ought to play an educative role (i) for Whites in exposing conditions.
(ii) for Blacks through Advice offices.

" ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ "

What were the objectives of Advice Offices
Is the objective to change the law
What exactly were the objectives of the Black Sash.

DA143

14a and 21c POINTS RAISED IN DISCUSSION.

What emerged from this session was that there is a difference of opinion on how best to change the organisations' view on strategy which is needed due to the GOVERNMENT'S change in strategy.

A few points that did emerge :-

1. Our President felt that there is still merit in continuing negotiating with the Government. There was a difference in opinion on this.

Laurene Platsky felt that we must be very careful about this as negotiation has a lot of pitfalls. She used Crossroads as an example. It was felt that you have to compromise if you negotiate.

Mrs. Lacey stated that "It is not our place to negotiate". Some pitfalls to negotiating.

- i) confidentiality
- ii) openness to bribery
- iii) understanding who is on which side. Why does Government negotiate?
- iv) division of community group.

2. ADVICE OFFICES : The strength of these is the gathering of information which is one of our greatest strengths. We must work more strenuously to the disseminating of this knowledge -(a) through press (b) overseas publicity

3. OBJECTIVES : It is most important to clearly define our objectives. Some members felt quite happy to continue activities as had been done in the past.

- i) our role is to supply all information historical and other - i.e. educate
- ii) to change the law.
- iii) COMMISSIONS some felt that the function of Commissions is to delay action. Using Schleich Commission as an example it was pointed out that the use of this is purely "historical". Publicize where possible evidence given to Commissions.
- iv) RESETTLEMENTS - unless directly approached for support our function is to highlight facts by documentation, overseas media, exposure.
- v) In summing up Mrs. Harris said that Sash is and has always been a political protest group, with the Advice Office performing more than one function.

A number of differences of opinion had been voiced. In terms of ultimate goals and immediate objectives she suggested that delegates return to their regions and after due consideration put forward definite proposals on strategies. She made a plea for tolerance. This was agreed to by the delegates.

- 21a. There was discussion on whether the next National Conference should be held in a rural conference centre but this was turned down on the basis of too much travelling, too little press publicity etc.,

Grahamstown was offered as the next Conference venue by Albany Region and accepted.

22. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT

: Mrs. Joyce Harris Proposed by Mrs. Robb
Seconded by Mrs. Duncan
carried unanimously with acclaim

VICE PRESIDENTS

: Mrs. Jill Wentzel Proposed by Mrs. Duncan
Seconded by Mrs. Coleman
Mrs. Sheena Duncan Proposed by Mrs. Robb
Seconded by Mrs. Walt
carried unanimously

Mrs. Harris thanked the delegates for their confidence in her and said she was deeply honoured. She thanked everyone for their warm support - she felt that she was among friends. Although there are differences in perception the goals are the same. There can be no hard and fast strategy for any crisis so - tolerance please.

She hoped delegates would return to their Regions with this message and wished everyone a good year.

She also paid tribute to the retiring Vice President, Mrs. Gita Dyzenhaus who was unfortunately unable to attend the Conference since Wednesday due to 'flu. Mrs. Harris said she had been a most supportive, helpful and reliable vice-president, and that the Black Sash was deeply in her debt.

Mrs. Davidoff said that Mrs. Harris had had two hard years. She was filled with admiration and respect for what Mrs. Harris had done.

23. DATE AND VENUE FOR NEXT CONFERENCE.

GRAHAMSTOWN - FRIDAY 13TH MARCH to TUESDAY 17TH MARCH 1981.

24. GENERAL.

RESOLUTION 11.

Noting :

1. The increased number of publications of a political nature which have been banned over the past year and
2. That people have been charged and found guilty of editing and producing publications which were subsequently banned.
3. Conference condemns this arbitrary form of political debate.

Proposed by Mrs. Platzky
Seconded by Mrs. Wentzel

Carried unanimously.

It was agreed that Conference send greetings to Mr. Andrew Boraine and two others who are at present in difficulties because of a publication.

Mrs. Robb thanked Transvaal Region for their hospitality, the party, transport etc. She also thanked the press for the wonderful publicity.

Mrs. Harris thanked Sheena Duncan for sharing the chair, Prue Crosoer and company for wonderful catering, Joyce Brown for delicious teas, Dora Hill for beautiful flower arrangements, Eileen Mendelsohn and Millie Zilla for being such efficient and helpful universal aunts, the minute secretaries and Jill Wentzel for everything, plus.

She thanked the press and Jeanette Cohen specially, and Audrey Coleman for her efficiency, helpfulness and very hard work.

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