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THE BLACK SASH

DIE SWART SERP

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WOMEN IN POLITICS

THE fallacy that women have no place in politics dies hard. Probably it will never die because men, who run the political game, like to nurse that illusion.

But the fact is, of course, that women have always had an influence in politics, mostly in one or other of two ways. One method, the personal, has a long and fascinating history from Cleopatra down to any clever woman you can think of to-day who manages a man in public life. Sometimes they are wives; sometimes they are not. But they are always exceptional women, distinguished, apart from charm, by subtlety, ruthlessness and ambition. They are at work all the time, crisis or no crisis, since they are artists and must practise their art.

The other way in which women have an influence in politics only comes into action intermittently and at times of crisis. The women involved in this case are not particularly subtle, certainly not ambitious and normally not ruthless. What makes them important is that they are angry. They are "ordinary" wives and mothers, working spinners, benign aunts and beloved grandmothers. But they have seen an issue straight and know what ought to be done about it. Their great strength is that they are not interested in the rules. They do not know anything

DIE VROU EN DIE POLITIEK

DIE dwaalbegrip dat vroue geen rol in die politiek behoort te speel sterf nie maklik uit nie. Waarskynlik sal dit nooit uitsterwe nie, want die mans, wat die politieke spel reël, hou daarvan om daardie illusie te koester.

Die waarheid is natuurlik dat vroue al van toeka se tyd altyd groot invloed op politieke gebied uitgeoefen het op die een of die ander van twee maniere. Een manier, die persoonlike, het 'n lang en boeiende geskiedenis vanaf Kleopatra tot by enige knap vrou aan wie 'n mens vandag kan dink, wat een of ander man in die publieke lewe beïnvloed. Soms is hulle eggenote, soms nie, maar altyd is hulle buitengewone vroue, gekenmerk nie alleen deur hulle aanvalligheid nie, maar deur geslepenheid, meedoënloosheid en eersug. Hulle is dag in, dag uit, besig, krisis ofte nie, want hulle is kunstenaresses wat hulle kuns moet beoefen.

Die ander manier waarop vroue invloed uitoefen in die politiek tree net so af en toe in werking wanneer daar 'n krisis ontwikkel. Die vroue wat daarin betrokke is, is nie eintlik geslepe nie, seker nie eersugtig en gewoonlik nie meedoënloos nie. Wat hulle belangrik maak is dat hulle kwaad is. Hulle is „gewone” vroue en moeders, werkende oujongnooiens, vriendelike tantes en geliefde grootmoeders.

about the political "game"—and do not want to know.

With all due deference to the many women who have gone into public life, have become city councillors, have entered Parliament, have sat on commissions of inquiry and so on, we think that they have surrendered a valuable asset. They have lost their amateur status. They have learned the rules of procedure, they know how to pass the minutes of the previous meeting, they know what constitutes a point of order. They are caught up in the game. They are no better than the men. They can think of a dozen reasons why something should not be done. They have "gone political." All honour to them, for they are doing good work in a male world, but they have lost something important.

The Black Sash women are not interested in the political game. They yawn when their menfolk talk about the niceties of procedure, and when they are told why it is impossible

DEDICATION

IN pride and humbleness we declare our devotion to the land of South Africa, we dedicate ourselves to the service of our country, we re-affirm our loyalty to the contract of Union which brought us together. We pledge ourselves to uphold the ideals by which our Union was inspired, of mutual trust and forbearance, of sanctity of word, of courage for the future, and of peace and justice for all persons and peoples. We pledge ourselves to resist any diminishment of these, confident that this duty is required of us, and that history and our children will defend us.

So help us God, in Whose strength we trust.

to do this or that, they think of Sylvia Pankhurst or Emily Hobhouse.

Dreams? Not at all. A few thousand women who can see an issue straight and know nothing about politics can do more than the politicians can ever do.

Maar hulle het 'n geskilpunt helder gesien en hulle weet wat hulle daaromtrent moet doen. Hulle groot sterkte lê daarin dat hulle nie in die gewone reëls geïnteresseerd is nie. Hulle weet niks van die politieke „spel” nie—en wil niks daarvan weet nie.

Met alle respek vir die baie vroue wat aan die politieke lewe deelneem, as stadsraadslede, lede van die Parlement of van verskillende

TOEWYDINGSREDE

MET trots en nederigheid verklaar ons ons gehegtheid aan die land van Suid-Afrika, ons wy ons aan die diens van ons land, ons bevestig opnuut ons getrouheid aan die Unie-verdrag, wat ons bymekaar gebring het.

Ons belowe plegtig die ideale te handhaaf waarmee ons Unie besiel was—ideale van onderlinge vertroue en verdraagsaamheid, van die onskendbaarheid van beloftes, van moed vir die toekoms, van vrede en regverdigheid teenoor alle persone en rasse. Ons beloof plegtig om ons te verset teen enige vermindering hiervan, oortuig dat hierdie plig ons opgelê is en dat die geskiedenis en ons kinders ons sal regverdig.

Mag God ons help, op Wie se krag ons ons verlaat.

kommissies, dink ons dat hulle 'n waardevolle besit prysgee. Hulle verloor hulle status as amateurs. Hulle het die reëls vir prosedure geleer; hulle weet hoe om die notule van die vorige vergadering aan te neem, hulle weet wat 'n punt van orde is. Hulle is vasgestrik in die spel. Hulle is niks beter as die mansmense en kan dosyne redes opper waarom iets nie gedoen kan word nie. Hulle het politici geword. Ons ken hulle alle eer toe, want hulle doen goeie werk in 'n manlike wêreld, maar nogtans het hulle iets belangriks verloor.

Die Swart Serp vroue is geïnteresseerd nog in die politieke spel nog in prosedure en as vir hulle gesê word dat dit onmoontlik is om die een of ander ding te doen, dink hulle aan Sylvia Pankhurst of Emily Hobhouse.

Drome? Gladnie. 'n Paar duisend vroue wat 'n saak helder kan sien en niks van die politiek af weet nie, kan meer uitvoer as die politici ooit kan doen.

CREDO

deur **PROF J. S. MARAIS**

"I am a British (indeed primarily an English) Nationalist . . . I am . . . a British Race Patriot."
(Uit Lord Milner se *Credo. Key to my Position*).

EK is 'n Afrikaner, maar geen nasionalis nie. Tussen nasionalisme en nasionaliteit is daar 'n onderskeid. Nasionaliteit beteken die nasie of volk waaraan 'n mens behoort. Nasionaliteit is 'n feit. Nasionalisme is die verafgoding van die nasie.

Nasionalisme en die „enersdinkery” van die massamens was die middels wat handige politici gebruik het om Duitsland in die afgrond te stort van die Nasionaal-Sosialisme, d.w.s. die nasionalisme van die kuddemens wat die „volksleier”—die Führer—blindelings volg.

Ek is 'n Afrikaner, maar ek is ook 'n burger van Suid-Afrika, d.w.s. 'n Suid-Afrikaner. Op staatkundige gebied is Suid-Afrikaner meer as Afrikaner, soos die geheel groter is as die onderdeel.

LOJALITEIT

EK is 'n patriot, maar geen rassepatriot nie. As Suid-Afrikaner glo ek aan 'n onverdeelde staatkundige lojaliteit aan Suid-Afrika. Die begrip „Britse onderdaan” kan Suid-Afrikaners nie saamsnoer nie, net verdeel. Die begrip „burger van die Gemenebes” is onhoudbaar, omdat die Gemenebes nie 'n Staat is nie.

As Suid-Afrikaner wil ek èn nasionale vlag en èn nasionale lied. Die woord „nasionale” in „nasionale vlag” en „nasionale lied” het natuurlik 'n ander betekenis as die woord „Nasionale”, d.w.s. Afrikaner-nasionalistiese, in Nasionale Party.

'n Nasionale vlag het ons reeds, en dit lyk dat „Die Stem van Suid-Afrika” ons nasionale lied gaan word. Dit is nie seksioneel nie, maar Suid-Afrikaans. Geen Engelssprekende burger hoef gesteur te voel dat dit 'n Afrikanerdigter was wat eerste daarin geslaag het om 'n aanneemlike lied van Suid-Afrika te skryf nie. Die Afrikaners was immers die eerste blanke burgers van Suid-Afrika.

Ek glo aan konstitusionele sedelikheid.

GEEN BETEKENIS

WAT 'n republiek betref, glo ek dat die woord „republiek” op sigself geen betekenis het nie. Dit word gebruik enersyds as 'n slagspreuk om stemme te werf, andersyds as 'n paaiboelie om vrees aan te ja. Die woord „republiek” sal betekenis moet kry voordat iemand buite die kuddemens oor die wenslikheid daarvan 'n oordeel kan vel. Beteken „republiek” bv 'n staat binne of buite die Gemenebes? Bowenal sal ons, ons Suid-Afrikaners, wil weet watter soort staat „republiek” beteken, d.w.s. wat sy grondwet gaan wees.

Laat daar hieromtrent geen misverstand bestaan nie. Ons Suid-Afrikaners het gedurende die laaste

vyf jaar baie verduur en baie geleer. Ons het ryper geword. Ons, Afrikaans- en Engelssprekendes, is besig om mekaar te vind op die grondslag van 'n gemeenskaplike trou aan ons vaderland, ten spyte van die pogings wat daar gedoen word om ons van mekaar te vervreem.

MAGSPOLITIEK

ONS verstaan vandag wat magspolitië beteken, waartoe 'n groep in staat is wat slegs sy eie voordeel soek. Ons verstaan vandag waarom die westerse demokrasie eis dat daar beperkings gelê sal word op die mag van 'n regeringsparty met 'n blote parlementêre meerderheid. Sulke beperkings bestaan vandag in verreweg die meeste westerse demokratiese state. Hulle is dubbel noodsaaklik in 'n staat met ten minste twee blanke en verskillende nie-blanke „rasse”.

Vandag het ons nie meer 'n grondwet nie, want 'n regering kan doen wat hy wil met 'n blote parlementêre meerderheid, wat 'n minderheid van die kiesers kan verteenwoordig. Aan hierdie toestand moet daar 'n end kom. As „republiek” dit gaan beteken dan is ek ten gunste van 'n republiek.

So iets lê waarskynlik nie in die bedoeling van die regering nie: dis te gerieflik om te maak en te breek soos jy wil. Gevolglik sal ons in die toekoms vermoedelik minder van „republiek” hoor. Maar èn ding staan vas: as Suid-Afrikaners eers beseft wat die huidige toestand beteken, dan, republiek of te nie, sal hulle 'n nuwe—en beter—grondwet eis in die plek van die een wat ons gehad het.

(Opedra aan die vroue met die swart serp, ter erkenning van wat hulle reeds gedoen het om die volksgewete te laat ontwaak).

VRUGTE

IN ons beweging pluk ek reeds met genot die vrugte van die gees van wedersydse waardering tussen ons twee taalgroepe wat ons probeer aanmoedig. Een lid het vir my in Afrikaans bedank vir 'n klein bydraë—'n ander het die moeite gedoen om 'n Afrikaanse telegram van Kaapstad aan my te stuur. Hierdie erkenning van welwillendheid teenoor my taal maak my warm om die hart. Dankie dames!

* * *

OP 'n trein na Kaapstad het ek in die eetwa rug aan rug gesit met 'n Kabinetsminister. Daar was twee dames en 'n man ook aan sy tafel. Met die opstaan het ek gesorg dat ek so uitsukkel dat ek die aandag sou trek en hulle onvermoeid my handsak met ons leuse sou sien. Ek kon hulle gesigte nie sien nie maar die dogters by my het gesê dat die een dame verskrik haar hand voor haar oë gesit het toe sy die woorde gelees het.

A.M.

REPORT ON THE REGIONS

IT was not possible in our January and February Newsletters to publish more than the briefest references to the interesting activities of our Regions. We had only eight pages—and we had to tell the story of our beginnings and growth. In February it was the Convoy that you wanted to know about. Regions had sent us fascinating information—unhappily, we could merely file it after the pleasant experience of reading it.

But now we have 16 pages and, although we must still be brief, there is room for a regional stock-taking.

* * *

LHE LOWVELD (Transvaal) Region is heartily to be congratulated not only on the quality of its demonstrations, but on its dynamic energy in enlarging its own membership and starting new and keen branches in SABIE, BARBERTON and NELSPRUIT.

* * *

KIMBERLEY, our newest Region, has a branch membership of 170 and intends soon to undertake the formation of country branches. "I'm sure Hillary felt as I do when he first set eyes on Everest," writes the secretary. "It's not the work, but finding the best and quickest methods, which occupies my thoughts. However, I have no doubts at all that we shall succeed."

* * *

WITBANK and NORTHERN TRANSVAAL are large Districts, and not Regions. But we feel that the magnificent work done by BANDOLIERKOP, MUNNIK and WITBANK should be mentioned with gratitude. Distances between towns are very great and the organising of Black Sashing entails the covering of many miles. The branches responsible for organising and opening up such areas have indeed an uphill task. They have to cope with bad roads, scattered farming or mining communities, the fear afflicting people and the prevalent ignorance.

* * *

PIETERMARITZBURG, since taking over northern Natal from DURBAN, has two vigorous branches, HOWICK and IXOPO, to its credit. The established branches of ESTCOURT and MOOI RIVER continue to grow in strength. "Sleepy Hollow" seems to have produced some very wide-awake South Africans!

* * *

JOHANNESBURG Region, while organising the 13th January vigils, added five new branches to its mounting roster: POTCHEFSTROOM, LICHTENBURG, MACHADADORP, KLERKSDORP and GROBLERSDAL. One always expects Johannesburg to produce a certain number of miracles, and so far they have duly been produced. There are 22 local branches, WITBANK, COALVILLE, VEREENIGING, VANDERBIJL PARK, RUSTENBURG, CHRISTIANA, MIDDELBURG, the five new branches already listed, and 14 Reef branches make a truly grand total of 48 branches to date. Special mention must be made here of the REEF

branches—all 14 of them. The courage of their women in staging demonstrations, where strong and venomous opposition could be expected, cannot be over-emphasised. The close proximity to the big city of Johannesburg has meant that the Press has not given their activities the attention they deserve. The Reef branches have been and still are an example to all smaller towns where opposition is strong and sometimes unscrupulous.

The JOHANNESBURG region is to be divided into two. The second region will be called the South-Eastern Transvaal Region and will possibly operate from SPRINGS. We wish it every success.

* * *

BLOEMFONTEIN is perhaps most to be congratulated on the steadfastness of its active demonstrations. The women of the Black Sash have suffered more from baiting by ignorant bystanders in the Free State than in any other part of the country. Sad and strange—the old Free State had an excellent record for courtesy. Six good branches are an excellent beginning. WESTMINSTER and WELKOM in particular must be a source of pride.

* * *

DURBAN has had a sudden upsurge of activity. Membership has mounted steeply, and HILLCREST-KLOOF-GILLITTS-BOTHA'S HILL have hived off into a separate branch, with a large membership. HILLCREST and KLOOF expect eventually to become separate branches. PORT SHEPSTONE is electing its committee, and PARK RYNIE is flourishing.

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EAST LONDON has not reported recently on regional activities. In September it had six branches to its credit: BERLIN, UMTATA, BARKLY EAST, QUEENSTOWN, MATATIELE, TABANKULU. We look forward to later news.

* * *

PORT ELIZABETH has over 500 branch members and 13 outside branches—UITENHAGE, DESPATCH, ALEXANDRIA, SANDFLATS, GRAHAMSTOWN, SALEM, BEDFORD, MORTIMER, ADELAIDE, DAGGABOERNEK, ADDO, SOMERSET EAST and FORT BEAUFORT.

* * *

PRETORIA with whom JOHANNESBURG has a close rapprochement, has been doing trojan work in country districts and bore with fortitude and courage the heat and burden of the long months of vigil and Black Sashing before the Government moved to Cape Town. Four branches have been formed — at MUNNIK, BANDOLIERKOP, RADIUM and HAENERTSBURG — and there are the LOWVELD and the BOSVELD branches which cover a number of small towns and rural areas.

MIDDELBURG (Cape)—one of our oldest regions. It has a magnificent membership and two country branches, at **GRAAFF REINET** and **STEYNSBURG**. The Region has the problems that go with scattered membership — long distances, ignorance and fear. If Middelburg can help us to solve these problems, it will have helped South Africa enormously.

* * *

LAST, but indeed not least, comes **CAPE TOWN**, scene of the magnificent Operation Joint-Sitting, organiser of sixteen flourishing local branches and four country branches at **HERMANUS**, **ELGIN**, **SOMERSET WEST** and **STELLENBOSCH**. Now

THE CHOICE BEFORE US

THE Black Sash movement was a natural outcome of the anger of thinking women in South Africa at the stupidity shown by a group of men since their election to office in 1948.

The mounting tally of their acts of unreason was disrupting the tranquility of the country, spreading suspicion everywhere. The women were sick of a growing spirit of hate, tired of false fears, bored with constitutional crises.

They had long waited for men to give them a lead; but the men, it seemed to them, merely argued on the sidelines, all but a few avoiding the main issues.

The female, whatever her species, has a lively sense of danger, for the family perishes if she be without percipience. This sense of danger has grown to such clamorous insistence in those women of South Africa who were not completely insulated by self-interest, that they set temporarily aside their manifold duties in their homes—to take up the heart-breaking task of arousing the rest of the country from apathy and indifference before it was too late.

STRAIGHT THINKING

IN the attempt to do this, there has of necessity had to be much straight thinking in the long months since May, 1955. Prejudices have been sorted out and called by their right names. The microscope has been put on accepted beliefs and ideas. Women began painfully to acquire knowledge—and they accepted the limitations of women cheerfully and humbly.

In a stand taken on moral grounds one must oneself acquire and maintain standards of morality and integrity—if one is not to be accused of hypocrisy. The Black Sash movement has borne this steadily in mind. Everything done and said so far has had to face the scrutiny of those who cannot compromise on principles. The Movement arose because the women were angry and tired of being angry. It is based on moral strength and uprightness.

As the slow months went by and we “got to thinking” we went a step further. It seemed to us that our indignation should not be directed solely against the latest of a long list of measures that had whittled away our freedoms, but that the atti-

that the great demonstration is over, we would like to have some news of the country branches and we would like to congratulate **CAPE TOWN** on the imagination, energy and organisation the Region has shown since the Parliamentary Session started.

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IN concluding this brief report, we should like to emphasise that it is hoped to use the Newsletter as a link between all our Regions and Districts. Monthly reports of all activities are essential if we are to keep in touch with each other. We should also be very happy to receive letters and articles for publication in the Newsletter. Please keep them short, relevant and factual.

tude of mind which had not only permitted but encouraged these pieces of legislation should be wholly condemned.

This attitude of mind was in ourselves as well as in those whose policy we had observed with such misgivings. If political morality was almost altogether absent in the legislation of the last years, the fault lay partially with us. We had, by remaining passive before such legislation, condoned it. And we had condoned it because we did not think it concerned us personally. Acts directed against minorities or politically impotent peoples—British immigrants, Non-Europeans — were not directed against us.

But note women of South Africa that the free and great people of Germany permitted discriminatory laws against Jews, Roman Catholics, Trade Unions—and that as a result the whole German people was enslaved.

FUTURE

EVERY woman in South Africa to-day, Nationalist and non-Nationalist, career woman, mother and grandmother has now to make her choice. Will she join with us and use every means in her power to turn the Government from its course, and make the future safe for the children of South Africa or will she allow disaster to come to us because she couldn't be bothered?
she was too busy?
she didn't understand?

D.R.

CAPE TOWN SIDELIGHT

THIS was spotted in a city street. A big grey car with a far-away registration plate had been parked the wrong way in a one-way street, about three feet from the kerb and in a prohibited area. It must have shattered about half-a-dozen local by-laws.

At its back was plastered the now familiar label carrying the message: “Eerbiedig ons Grondwet”.

Immediately below this someone had added, in polite, respectable copperplate writing: *En ons verkeerswette ook, asseblief!*—Cape Times, 18th February, 1956.

DIE PLEK VAN DIE VROU

VOLGENS die Engelsman is die plek van die vrou in die huis, volgens die Duitser is dit in die kombuis. Soiets word natuurlik lag-lag gesê; dis 'n grappige manier om die lewenswyse van 'n nasie weer te gee. Maar vir die ou oom in een van die Vrystaatse dorpieë waardeur die Swart Serp konvooi gereis het op pad Kaapstad toe, was dit geen grap nie. Toe hy vir die vrou „Gaan huistoe en kook die kos” toegesnou het, het hy uit die diepte van sy hart gepraat, want volgens sy lewensopvatting is die plek van die vrou in die huis, of miskien ook die kombuis.

Ag, liewe ou oompie, so diep geskok deur wat u daardie dag gesien het, daardie honderde vroumense op pad Kaap toe om hulle in die politiek te gaan inmeng, u sou werklik verbaasd gewees het as u kon geweet het hoeveel van daardie vroue met u saamgestem het. Want daar was in daardie hele lang konvooi geen enkele vrou wat nie voel dat haar plek in die huis is nie. Vra dan maar vir uself af, oompie, watter ernstige saak vir soveel vrouens, soveel doodgewone vrouens, uit hulle huise en kombuisse en tuine gelok het om daardie lang en vermoeiende reis te onderneem, wat hulle gedwing het om eggenote en kinders te verlaat en hitte en koue en gevaar te gaan trotseer.

DINK maar terug aan die Voortrekkervrouens, oompie, meer as 'n honderd jaar gelede, en daar sal u die antwoord kry. Die plek van daardie vrouens was ook in die huis, maar toe hulle dit nodig geag het, het hulle in hulle honderde hulle huise verlaat en 'n lang en gevaarlike tog aanvaar. En die rede daarvoor is een en dieselfde—ons nasie staan in gevaar, ons vryheid is op die spel.

In die hart van elke vrou, hoe knap, hoe bekwaam, hoe geleerd sy ook al mag wees, is daar maar net een begeerte—sy wil 'n man en kinders en 'n huis van haar eie besit. Haar plek is in die huis en

sy is trots daarop, want daar is geen groter of edeler werk op die aarde vir die vrou as om die middelpunt van die gelukkige huisgesin te wees nie. En juis omdat sy besef dat haar die plig opgelê is om die sedelike standaard van die huisgesin te handhaaf, besef sy ook dat die sedelike standaard van die hele nasie ook haar verantwoordelikheid moet wees.

As oorlog uitbreek, dan gaan veg die man op sy manier, te perd met sy voorlaaier of in 'n tenk of 'n vliegtuig met die moderne geweer van vandag. En die vrou bly by die huis.

MAAR vandag in ons land is daar 'n gevaar nog groter en leliker as oorlog. 'n Tyd het aangebreek waarin beloftes gebreek word en goedertrou verdwyn. En nou vra die vroue, die moeders van die land: „Moet ons opsy staan, moet ons toelaat dat dit gebeur? Nee, tienduizendmaal nee! Ons moet veg, nie met geweer of tenk of vliegmasjien nie, maar met die wapens van 'n vrou. Ons moet protesteer teen die euwel, ons moet pleit, ons moet waghou, ons moet die gewete van die nasie word.”

En dus, oor die lengte en breedte van die land, in die stede en die dorpe en op die plase, het die vroue van die nasie ontwaak. Eers tien, toe 'n honderd, toe 'n duisend, toe tienduizende, soos die bron, die stroompie, die vloeiende rivier. Niks sal daardie vloed kan keer nie, totdat die vryheid, die eer en die erfenis van ons nasie en ons kinders weer veilig is. Dan en dan alleen, sal ons met vrede en tevredenheid in ons harte na huis en kombuis en tuin terugkeer, want . . . die plek van die vrou is in die huis.

M.E.F.

REGIONAL CONFERENCE IN JOHANNESBURG

ON 27th October an article appeared in the Cape Argus entitled “A South African Returns to Find Sashes in the Wind.” The writer, widow of the late Dean of Cape Town, had returned home, saddened by press reports of what was happening in the beloved country, and eager to see and hear for herself.

She writes: “The Founder of Christianity spoke of a mysterious wind that blows where it wills, whose source and destination alike are unknown. It was like this, He said, that the Spirit of God moved. And at this hour so fraught with dangerous possibilities, so heavy with portent, it seems to some who love South Africa as if at last the imagination of those who disagree with Government policy has been caught by this invisible power.”

She says further: “Criticism and opposition should be of no matter. It is the cause that counts, and

the courage. So it should be, and indeed seems to be with those whose black sashes are now stirring in this mysterious, newly-risen wind. That there is a spiritual quality in the wind, the wearers of the Sashes would be the first to declare.”

SITTING through the proceedings at the Conference of the Johannesburg Region on Tuesday, 13th March, I was reminded forcibly of this article written so many months ago. It seemed to me, looking back at the previous conference in November, that a long and exciting step forward had been taken; that we had grown in stature since then; that courage to think and act with honesty and forthrightness had paid dividends in clarity of vision, and that the new integrity was exceedingly becoming to the delegates. I left it, knowing that if we continue as we have started, there is nothing that we cannot achieve.

WHY I BECAME A BLACK SASH WOMAN

I STOOD on a station platform bidding farewell to a friend who was about to sail for England—for good.

She had sold her beautiful home in the Cape, and, although South African to the third generation, she had uprooted her aged mother and was proposing to settle in the south of England or even in Europe, if a suitable place could be found. Myself a country person given to browsing among plants and animals rather than national affairs, I found the situation puzzling.

"Exactly why are you taking this step?" I asked.

"Because of the political position in South Africa," she replied promptly. "Mother is old and doesn't want to leave her home, but I feel it's best to go now rather than wait for the final bust-up. We are just making a clean break."

"Don't you think you're being rather pessimistic?"

"No, I don't. South Africa is finished. It's no place to live in now, and we're going."

I SAID my good-byes and walked away rather sadly. Even supposing her extreme views were not exaggerated, it seemed to me a tragic thing that the undisputed citizen of a country should be willing to give up her rights like this, without making a supreme personal effort to defend them. It was a surrender without a fight.

Besides, there was love of the land itself. Was not South Africa for her own sake worth battling for, worth keeping, worthy of being called home no matter how many fanatical men sought to possess and dominate her for one section of the people alone? As I walked, a vision of the country as a whole rose before my eyes: the fair face of Africa that has called exiles back from all over the world, that has made its nostalgic appeal felt to the ends of the earth.

MY own home is in the Transvaal Lowveld, the bewitching bushveld that is still in thrall to the ancient gods, the spirits of the wild: but the call comes from other parts no less strongly, and it is a call that should not be denied.

The Cape, with its historical associations, its traditions, its scenic splendours; surely those who were born there feel a love deep enough to make them say to political tyrants, "This is my home too; I belong here; you shall not take it from me." The old town dreams under the flat-topped mountain, the gabled homesteads nestle among the vineyards, the Hottentot's Holland, ethereally beautiful, edge the skyline like the blue walls of heaven. Inland, there are the oak avenues of Newlands, the peace of Constantia; the rose-coloured Hex mountains that look out in eternal grandeur over the great Karroo.

The hinterland, with its breadth, its freedom, its vision; the rolling grasslands of the Transvaal highveld; the lonely farms, the mirages, the cattle moving into the sunset. The beauty of Pretoria, with its violet haze of jacarandas; the long, lovely

lines of the Union Buildings, that crown the brow of the hill. The Rand, with its sparkle, its freshness, its eternal air of elation; the mine dumps glistening under pale, rain washed skies; silvery by moonlight, cerise beneath the stars. The middleveld, the luxuriant bush country that lies below the Berg; the bauhinia galpini sprawling by the roadsides, the aloes and euphorbias standing sentinel between the rocks. My own lowveld, the country of the gods; the marulas, the kiaats, the sekelbos, the jakkalsbessie. The turgid rivers, the fantastic fever trees; the scented leaf, further North, of the elephant bush; the fish eagles crying over the Limpopo. The bullfrogs by night, the cicadas by day; the magic, the mystery, the thrill: the heart of all Africa.

THE Free State, wind-swept and austere; the windmills, the haystacks, the sturdy homesteads set down amid willow-trees and poplars. The fairy-tale beauty of the Maluti Mountains shimmering in the distance. Clarens with its Golden Gate, Ficksberg with the mountains of Basutoland rising behind it like towers, the yellow-browed kopjes of the "Conquered Territory", the dog-roses and brambles that grow wild in that keen, pure air.

The great walls of the Drakensberg; the superb loveliness of Mont-Aux-Sources, the Tugela river foaming down the gorges, the Sentinel Peak, aspirant to heaven, propping up the azure sky. The green luscious plains of Natal; the Kopjes with their tales of ancient courage and endurance, the blood that is in their stones. The exotic, colourful port of Durban, the turbulent seas, the palm-fringed beaches, the hills of sugar-cane . . .

NO, I thought: I will never run away from South Africa. And that was the beginning of it, for me.

M.P.W.

Lowveld's Considerable Progress

BRANCHES have now been established at NELS-SPRUIT, BARBERTON and SABIE and, owing to the heroic efforts of some enthusiastic members, the numbers are now 63, 57 and 81 respectively—and still growing. These numbers, within four weeks and in scattered communities, can be regarded as highly satisfactory.

Together with White River and the sub-branch in Elands Valley, this brings the membership for the Region to 336.

On 13th January vigils were held at six centres—Barberton, Plaston, Karino, Nelspruit, Sabie and White River. On 13th February vigils were held at Barberton, Nelspruit, Sabie, Pilgrims Rest, Kiepersol and White River, with a considerable number of members taking part. In Nelspruit 35 women demonstrated—the youngest being 23 years of age and the eldest 87.

Nine members from the Region, travelling in three cars, took part in the Cape Town Rally.

MEET THE BLACK SASH National Executive Who's Who

MRS. RUTH FOLEY (President).—Mrs. Foley was born in Johannesburg and educated at St. Andrew's School for Girls, Bedfordview. After a three-year's course at Bedford Physical Training College, England, she returned to South Africa and taught P.T. in Pietermaritzburg and Johannesburg. After her marriage she was fully occupied for some years with raising a family (has three children ranging in age from 20 to 11) but went back to teaching at Potchefstroom during the war years.



Mrs. Foley has for many years taken an active interest in politics, having been secretary of the Houghton Division of the United Party and a member of the Witwatersrand Provincial Head Committee of the Party for seven years. She was for several years chair of the St. Andrew's Old Girls' Association and was last year elected a member of the Witwatersrand Central School Board. Her remarkable gifts as a public speaker have brought her to the fore in any movement with which she has been associated. Astonishingly enough, Mrs. Foley manages to maintain her interest in some of these movements in spite of her whole-hearted devotion to the Black-Sash cause.

* * *

MRS. JEAN SINCLAIR (Chair).—Mrs. Jean Sinclair was born and educated in Johannesburg. She took a Teacher's Training course in Domestic Science at the Technical College, Johannesburg, and taught this subject for some years before her marriage. Does not look as if she could possibly have a married daughter, but actually has and is also the proud mother of another daughter, who is studying Domestic Science, a grown-up son who is studying in London and two other boys who are still at school.



She has been an enthusiastic member of the United Party for many years and usually found herself cheerfully involved in the most difficult of the sewing and catering jobs for Party functions. Chair of the Parktown Women's Branch of the Party for some years, apart from helping magnificently in work parties during the war, has made politics her first interest outside of the home. Elected a member of the Johannesburg City Council in 1954, Mrs. Sinclair has earned the regard of members of all parties in the Council by her forthrightness, her clear thinking and her sincerity.

MRS. EUNICE KIRKNESS (Vice-Chair). — Mrs. Eunice Kirkness was born and educated in Pietermaritzburg. She trained as a nurse at the Addington Hospital, Durban, and remained there in a responsible post after she qualified. After her marriage she settled in Pretoria, where she has somehow managed to combine the running of her home with serving a number of charitable causes and with helping her husband in the running of a small farm, 12 miles out of Pretoria, on which they breed pedigree Ayrshires.



Desperate 'phone calls about various crises on the farm have not interfered with the work she has done on the executive committees of both the "Save the Children Fund" and the Tumelong Mission. She served with distinction in the Women's Voluntary Services during the war years and was a director of the Pretoria Caledonian Market. Has one son, aged 17. Mrs. Kirkness had taken no previous interest in political matters until she felt impelled to take a hand in the Black Sash movement. She is the only Pretoria member on the National Executive of the Black Sash and all meetings of the Pretoria Committee are held in her home.

* * *

MRS. NELL GREEN (Vice-Chair). — Mrs. Nell Green was born in Potchefstroom, at that time the capital of the Transvaal, and educated at the Potchefstroom Girls' High School, where the majority of the pupils were Afrikaans-speaking. Her last two years of schooling were spent at the Durban Young Ladies' College, among predominantly English-speaking girls. As her home language was High Dutch, she was, as a result of this upbringing, completely trilingual at the age of 16. She spent one year in Amsterdam studying French and German before returning to this country to take her B.A. degree at Wits. University. She taught for one year, during



which time she saved assiduously, and then left with her sister for Java, where the two of them made an excellent living by undertaking translations for business firms and individuals. Was not long back in Johannesburg before she married.

In spite of the fact that her engineer-husband's work has often taken him into isolated and unlikely places and that much of her early married life was consequently spent on the move, has managed to rear a delightful family of two sons (both at University) and a daughter, now studying for Matric. For 7 years helped to run the Iterele School, Orlando

and was an executive member of the African and European Women's Committee. Was one of the founders of the Liberal Party, the League of Civil Rights and the Institute of Citizenship. Honorary secretary of the Black Sash since its inception until December, 1955.

* * *

MRS. DORA HILL (Hon. Treasurer).—Mrs. Dora Hill was born in this country of a family which has its roots planted deep in South African history, the Kotzes, who arrived in South Africa in 1680. Both grandfathers were tried for heresy by the Dutch Reformed Church and Judge Kotze's resignation in protest at Kruger's interference is now history. She shows the same independence of thought and action in following the dictates of her conscience as did her forefathers. Educated at the Johannesburg High School for Girls, she is a B.A. of both the Wits. University and of Cambridge. Mrs. Hill returned from Cambridge to lecture in Geography at



Wits. University, did a great deal of Social Welfare work and was secretary to the Board of Charities for three years.

She was married in Johannesburg, has four children and has always managed to do a good deal of public service, both in the way of work for war funds when living on the mines and by serving on the Board of the Non-European Blind Society for eight years. Was Chair of the Durban Deep branch of the United Party.

* * *

MRS. "DOPPY" DIETRICH (Hon. Secretary). — Mrs. Dietrich was born and educated in Johannesburg. She took a B.A. degree at the University of Cape Town, choosing the unusual combination of English and Mathematics as her major subjects. Joining up on the outbreak of war, she served for 5½ years in the W.A.A.F.S. as a Captain, and was stationed at 22 Air School, Vereeniging.



While in the army Mrs. Dietrich took a degree in Social Science and when she was demobilised became a social worker in Vereeniging. She has a small son and daughter. Captain of the Hockey Team at the University of Cape Town, she was for three

years President of the International Federation of Women's Hockey Associations and still does a great deal of selection and coaching in the hockey world. Never particularly politically-minded until now. For the past year she has been one of the most determined workers in the Black Sash movement.

MRS. ERNESTINE FOUCHE.—Mrs. Fouche was born in Johannesburg and educated at Roedean School, Johannesburg. After matriculating studied mathematics privately and then taught Maths. at Pretoria Girls' High School. Married Dr. Leo Fouche, who was at that time Professor of History at Pretoria University and later held the same position at the University of the Witwatersrand. When her children were young (she has one son and one daughter) she did some private teaching, but took on no job or public post. When her husband was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary, first to Holland and later to Belgium, she spent several fruitful and exciting years backing him up in his distinguished career and acting as official hostess.



They returned to this country and, after her husband's death, she identified herself with many aspects of service to the community. Inter alia she helped to start the first African Nursery School in Johannesburg. This was in Sophiatown and there are now 8 such schools in Johannesburg. She has been for 20 years one of the Board of Directors of Roedean School and was for 6 years Chair of the Parkview Branch of the United Party. Mrs. Fouche, who joined the Black Sash on the day it was formed and, apart from her position on the National Executive Committee, is Vice-Chair of the Johannesburg Executive Committee, is at present enjoying a well-earned 5-months vacation overseas.

* * *

MRS. DOREEN RANKIN.—Mrs. Rankin was born in Johannesburg. Her education was cosmopolitan, to say the least of it, the most settled periods in an otherwise scattered schooling being 4 years in Natal, 2 years in Switzerland and 2 years in a private school in England. Took a course in nursery-school teaching at Derby Training College, and when she returned to this country joined forces with another teacher in East London and opened her own school, "Ambleside", which she ran happily and successfully for 3 years.



She was married in East London and very shortly afterwards found herself caught up in the urgent problems created by the acute depression of the thirties, notably by the need for supplementary feeding for school-children. Came to live in Johannesburg shortly before outbreak of war and very soon became involved in war work. Two of her most important contributions to the war effort were volunteering as a field-worker investigating the conditions of those who made application for relief to the National War Fund, and working as one of a

small group of women who pledged themselves to make 20 garments a week for children of bombed-out families—and kept the pledge.

One of the founders of the Oaklands Women's Discussion Group and, through the Group's studying the political scene, she became interested in politics herself, worked furiously for the United Party in the 1948 elections and was secretary of the Melrose Branch of the Party for 3 years. She has found time in this welter of good works to rear two most attractive daughters, one a fully-qualified architect, the other a student at Wits. Doreen Rankin was the author of the petition scheme, from which the Black Sash movement sprang.

* * *

MRS. JEANETTE DAVIDOFF. — Mrs. Davidoff was born in Johannesburg and educated partly in Johannesburg and partly at Riebeeck College, Uitenhage. She took her B.A. degree at the University of the Witwatersrand, her major subjects being history and ethics. A keen and active member of



the Debating Society and also of the University Dramatic Society, she also played hockey for the University. She worked for two years before going overseas for 3 years, six months of which she spent in Palestine and the remainder of the time working and lecturing in the United States. On her return to Johannesburg, she married her M.P. husband,

who is also a lawyer. Her first concern, outside of her home, has been the furthering of his political career. Is consequently very well informed herself on political matters.

Photography has always been Mrs. Davidoff's No. 1 hobby and she has contributed both photographs and articles to many overseas journals, including the National Geographic Magazine, the Sphere and Tatler. On the outbreak of war she joined up in the Photographic Section of the S.A.W.A.S. and served throughout the war years, but was later transferred to the Casualty Section of the Defence Liaison. Mrs. Davidoff has been an indefatigable worker for the welfare of the Jewish community. She was chair of the women's section of the Torch Commando. In 1948 she did another lecture tour abroad, this time right through Canada. For the past 8 months she has worked part-time as a travel-agent and is loving the work. Elected an Executive member at the first meeting of the Black Sash, she was for some time the publicity and information officer to the organisation.

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MRS. MARY DEY.—Mrs. Dey was born and educated in Johannesburg, worked for 2 years after leaving school and then married. The arrival of her own two delightful children seems to have served

as a spur to her own artistic ability, because it was while they were very small that she started to design children's clothes. Soon she was not only turning out all the designs but was supervising the actual manufacture of the garments and had built up a very tidy business. In time it became too all-absorbing for a woman with young children and she switched her energies to the running of an art gallery. Her interests have always lain in the



direction of art-theatre-music and for over a year she worked on the administrative and back-stage side of the Munro-Inglis Company (Nan Munro is her sister-in-law). She worked enthusiastically for a long time for the African Self-Help movement. Until the formation of the Black Sash Mrs. Dey had taken very little interest in politics: is now a very definite force within the movement. Has the reputation of being the "enfant terrible" of the National Executive.

FREE STATE IN MARCH

THE chief event in March for the Free State was the holding of a Regional Conference in Bloemfontein on 10th March, in preparation for the National Conference to be held in April. The Conference was well attended by 24 members drawn from the five existing Branches. Resolutions for the National Conference were drawn up and the following delegates were appointed: Mrs. H. O'Connor (Chairman), Mrs. R. Kruger (Secretary), Mrs. W. Wood (Chairman, Westminster Branch), and Mrs. E. Muller (Chairman of the Goldfields area).

All felt that it had been of advantage to meet and discuss common problems. Educational campaigns are being planned in some areas, and Harri-smith has already had lectures on constitutional matters.

NOT many Ministers have visited the Free State, but members of the Black Sash were at the Bloemfontein airport to meet Mr. Swart when he arrived on 7th March, and the Goldfields sashed him when he went to open the jail at Ventersburg. It is reported from Ventersburg that women of the Black Sash are being used as bogies to frighten children. Two conversations were overheard in which women claimed that their children had been terrified at the mere sight of the Black Sash women and had fled from them.

On 11th March an appeal was received from Colesberg, where there is no Branch, for women to go to meet the Minister of Defence who was opening the Agricultural Show there on 14th March. They were referred to the Middleburg Headquarters and it is hoped that Middelburg was able to respond to their appeal.

When Mr. Swart was on his way to Ventersburg he was asked if he expected the Black Sash women to be present, and he replied confidently, "Oh, no; not in Ventersburg." Alas for his complacency; twenty-four women haunted him there for four hours.

THE INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AMENDMENT BILL

By F. A. W. LUCAS

THE Industrial Conciliation Amendment Bill which Parliament has been debating is another instalment of the Nationalists' apartheid policy. The old legislation played a useful part in preventing or mitigating industrial disputes. The new measure, while making some minor improvements in the working provisions of the law, is concerned mainly with enforcing apartheid in trade unions and protecting white workers against competition from non-whites. The Minister of Labour is reported to have said that "the Bill would be a guarantee to the white man that he would never be ousted". As with the apartheid policy in other connections, fear is the impelling motive behind this Bill.

EXCEPT in the provision against strikes, the measure excludes Natives from its scope. It applies only to Europeans, Coloureds and Asiatics. It lays down that in future there shall be no new mixed-race trade unions. At present there are 125 unions which are mixed, that is, have both white and non-white members. In those mixed unions there must in future be separate branches for Europeans and for Coloureds, which must hold separate meetings. The executive body of a mixed union must consist entirely of white persons.

In a mixed union a majority of one of the members of a particular race may decide to break

away and form a union for that race. There will then cease to be a mixed union. The break-away body can then demand a share of the funds of the original union. There will then be two unions of employees. That may easily mean rivalry from which the public may well suffer, to say nothing of the fact that the interests of the whites will almost inevitably be placed above the legitimate rights of the other section.

No trade union is to affiliate with or in any way support any political party.

A VERY dangerous provision is the one that any type of work or occupation can be reserved for employees of a particular race. This is obviously meant to entrench European workers in particular jobs, no matter how great the skill of Coloured workers may be. Apart from the injustice thus made possible, the result of such a fresh colour bar may well be injurious to the trade and industry of the country as a whole.

In so far as the Bill promotes the policy of apartheid it is bad. For the rest it is innocuous and hardly necessary.

(The Hon. F. A. W. Lucas, a retired Judge of the Supreme Court, is now a Judge of Appeal of the High Commission Territories. He was one of the Transvaal's legal advisers at the National Convention).

REGIONAL CHAIRS AND SECRETARIES

BLOEMFONTEIN

C. Mrs. H. O'Connor, P.O. Box 245.
S. Mrs. S. Kruger, 5 Friend House, West Burger Street.

CAPE TOWN

C. Mrs. Cherry van Selm, High Rising, Weltevreden Road, Rondebosch.
S. Mrs. M. Henderson, Cranborne House, Salisbury Road, Wynberg.

DURBAN

C. Mrs. D. W. Barker, 65 North Ridge Road.
S. Mrs. M. Scott, 77 Ridge Road.

EAST LONDON

C. Mrs. D. Curry, 3 Carisbrooke Road, Stirling Ext.
S. Mrs. B. Spence, 20 Conniston Court, 30 St. Peter's Road.

JOHANNESBURG

C. Mrs. B. Barker, 16 Porter Avenue, Melrose North.
S. Mrs. B. Cluver, 18 Connaught Avenue, Sandringham.

KIMBERLEY

C. Mrs. M. Hitchman, 2a Dalham Road.
S. Mrs. K. Smith, 11 Lodge Road.

PIETERMARITZBURG

C. Mrs. M. Corrigan, Midhouse, Swart Road.
S. Mrs. G. Wildman, 419 Prince Alfred Street.

PORT ELIZABETH

C. Mrs. S. Pirie, 68 Westview Drive.
S. Mrs. D. Davis, 196 Main Road, Walmer.

PRETORIA

C. Mrs. N. von Geusau, 44 Lawley Street, Waterkloof.
S. Mrs. A. Howse, 342 Giovanetti Street, New Muckleneuk.

LOW VELD

C. Mrs. Sandenbergh, Eastry, Plaston.
S. Mrs. B. Tracey, Pleasant Hill, P.O. Box 17, White River.

MIDDELBURG (CAPE)

C. Mrs. M. Gilfillan, Glen Heath, Conway.
S. Mrs. S. Southey, P.O. Schoombie, via Middelburg.

THREADS FROM THE SASH

WE have had many financial contributions to the League which have both surprised and gratified us. None, however, has moved us more deeply than the gift from an elderly lady in very straitened circumstances. Sending us a postal order, she wrote: "I wondered what to buy myself with this gift, and could think of nothing more exciting than giving it to the Black Sash." Our thanks come from the very depths of our hearts.

* * *

A MEMBER writes from POTCHEFSTROOM: "It is very fine of the Black Sash to do all you are doing in the interests of *every individual* in South Africa." We would be unwilling to lay claim to such an enlarged version of our aims—but it would certainly be a help if some of our apathetic citizens roused themselves to a show of anger at the current state of affairs.

* * *

A SMALL girl, taken by her parents to the cinema, saw a newsreel of the Queen arriving at a reception in full regalia. "Look, look, Mummy," she said excitedly, "even the Queen wears a Black Sash."

* * *

A UITENHAGE member is the wife of a man in Government employment and the mother of seven children. She is proud to wear her black sash, and he his black ribbon, and to be publicly associated with the League. We salute husband and wife.

* * *

THERE are rumours that members of the Black Sash are finding that they are not on the voters' roll. It might be a good idea occasionally to call and check one's name.

* * *

AT a recent "sashing" in MESSINA, there was a good deal of interest and questions were asked about the "occasion". "It shows how little interest people take in the affairs of the country," writes my correspondent, who had come over from BANDO-LIERKOP. "The questioners were totally unaware that it was the beginning of the Joint Sitting."

* * *

THERE was an interesting episode during the **WHITE RIVER** vigil on 27th February. After the women had donned their sashes, an elderly, Afrikaans-speaking gentleman came up and insisted on shaking hands with as many of them as possible. He told them that he was an Oudstrijder and that he had the greatest admiration for the Black Sash women. He did not approve of the things that were being done in Parliament, he hoped that the protest would continue and he wished the women luck. Shaking hands all round for the second time, he departed, watched by many young Nationalists.

* * *

MY correspondent in LOUIS TRICHARDT writes that the vigil undertaken at the beginning of the Joint Sitting created quite an impression of strength in the small centre. Several men doffed their hats

and congratulated the women on the stand they were taking. Antagonism was manifest only in a few derisive smiles.

* * *

OUR CAPE TOWN correspondent writes that "while not in favour of actual formal prayer at ordinary meetings, we are all agreed that with the object we have at heart, none of us can fail during our silent vigils to concentrate solemnly on our objective which is in itself prayer."

* * *

TWO Cabinet Ministers recently avoided their attendant silent women by embarking in the hangar at JAN SMUTS AIRPORT. This seems to be going to extreme lengths to avoid the representatives of reproach.

* * *

MY correspondent from the **LOWVELD REGION** reports that **NELSPRUIT** has been forging ahead recently. This agreeable part of the world blazes into activity wherever the organisers go. One or two of our slower-moving Regions should ask the secret of this amazing vitality.

* * *

WHITE RIVER writes: "These country places are very uphill work because of intimidation and fear of victimisation. We are discovering every day what an appalling hold these have on the country—it is quite shocking." Let us be glad that we have, even at this eleventh hour, revolted against fear and hate before they altogether paralyse the country.

* * *

WITBANK has been chuckling quietly because a town councillor and a school teacher used back entrances to avoid Black Sashers in attendance on a Minister. Is this a case of imitation being the sincerest form of flattery?

* * *

WE take off our hats to the **MIDDELBURG** town councillor who wore his hat so that he might doff it to the Black Sashers on a recent occasion.

* * *

MR. MARGARET BALLINGER, M.P., told her listeners at a lunch-hour meeting of the Black Sash in Cape Town during the Joint Sitting: "You women may know that you have staked your place in History" and "If you attack a man you attack one person only; if you attack a woman you attack the whole family."

* * *

THE two organisers of the **KLOOF-HILLCREST** area are heartily to be complimented on the results of their untiring efforts. There seems to be much in common between themselves and **WHITE RIVER**.

* * *

IF we gave prizes for valour, they would go without any doubt to the courageous women of the **FREE STATE**. A man from Johannesburg, who was present by invitation at the opening of a works at

BLOEMFONTEIN, was so impressed by the bearing of six Black Sashers under a pelting of rotten eggs (which fortunately did not find their mark) that he took a photograph of them. There are certainly no signs of flinching.

* * *

A MEMBER sends this delightful story: "Many months ago, when we first put Eerbieding ons Grondwet stickers on our cars, I drove up to the local post office with stickers prominently displayed on rear and front glass. A very pretty blonde appeared on the steps and looked intently at the car. My eyes lit up at this potential recruit. As I leapt from the car, she said brightly, 'You are advertising the Easter Show early this year, aren't you?'"

* * *

POTCHEFSTROOM writes: "This inspiring movement is bringing into its ranks all those capable of fine thought and acts. It arouses gratitude in the hearts of all who love justice and hate iniquity."

* * *

ALL husbands, children, grandparents, sisters, brothers and **NEIGHBOURS** who helped to make the convoy demonstrations possible by taking over the duties of those who went to Cape Town—please receive our heartfelt thanks. The convoy could not have begun to succeed without your splendid help.

* * *

A JOHANNESBURG member recently received a couple of fine photographs of the convoy as it entered **CAPE TOWN**. The man who sent them wrote: "Please accept these as a small tribute of admiration and thanks for your gallant effort in coming so many miles to register your protest on behalf of us all." She had exchanged a sentence or two with him during a brief halt by the convoy.

* * *

DURING a membership drive in a small Transvaal dorp, a woman with a small child was twice offered a pamphlet. She finally shrugged and said, "I'm not interested." Came the reply, "But **WE** are, in every South African citizen." The woman's expression changed. "I realised once again," writes my correspondent, "how desperate a need there is for enlightenment and education in South Africa to-day."

* * *

A NOTE from the **BOSVELD** Branch indicates some of the discomfort our members face with equanimity and even humour: "Just a short note to let you know of our stand on Monday. There were no incidents. We managed to stand in Potgietersrust, Nylstroom and Warmbaths. I should imagine everyone stood in rain. We did for a whole hour, having had to negotiate two rivers in flood before we reached Nylstroom. Returning home we seven women had to push our cars through the rivers and arrived home looking rather like drowned rats. There is a wonderful spirit of enthusiasm here."

SASHER.

FEIT EN FANTASIE

DIE FANTASIE: Alleen deur die stigting van 'n republiek sal ons vrede en eenheid in ons land verkry.

DIE FEIT: Ons moet eers uitvind watter soort republiek die Goewerment van plan is om te stig. Hulle het ons al daarvan vertel. In 1942 toe dit gelyk het asof Hitler die oorlog moes wen, het die Nasionale-koerante die grondwet gepubliseer van die republiek wat hulle gehoop het Hitler sou vir hulle gee. Dit is met goedkeuring van Dr. Malan uitgegee en geen Nasionale leier tot dusver het dit verwerp nie.

Wat het hierdie grondwet bevat? Die President sou aan God alleen verantwoordelik wees. Sy bevele sou goedgekeur word deur 'n magtelose Volksraad gekies deur die nasionaalgesindes alleen, 'n kieserslys wat elkeen uitsluit wat nie met die gesaghebbendes saamstem nie. Al die ander blanke bewoners sou tweedeklas en stemloos wees. Engels sou die tweede taal wees, nie op gelyke voet met Afrikaans nie, maar dit kon gebruik word waar die regering dit wenslik geag het. Miskien sou julle in Natal toegelaat word om amptelike sake in Engels te bespreek, maar dit sou maar net 'n bewys van julle minderwaardigheid wees.

Natuurlik sou daar dan eenheid en politieke vrede wees, dieselfde soort eenheid en vrede wat Hitler en Mussolini behaal het, 'n vrede en eenheid op dwang en vrees gebaseer.

VRA nou vir uself af, hoe kan ware vrede en eenheid bestaan wanneer helfte van die blanke bevolking stemloos, magtelos en aan die willekeur van die herrenvolk onderworpe moet wees?

Ons, die afstammeling van Holland en Engeland, ons kan nie maklik verslaaf word nie. Ons het 'n eeue-oue tradisie van vryheid, onafhanklikheid en demokrasie, wat beteken dat die Staat ons bediende en nie ons meester is nie. As hierdie Broederbond-Republiek op ons afgedwing word gaan ons dit ewe kalm en sonder teenstand aanneem?

U, leser, weet wat die antwoord is. Ten minste helfte van ons blanke bevolking (en dit beteken nie net die Engelssprekendes nie) sal dit met hand en tand beveg en dit nooit aanneem nie. Gaan dit eenheid en vrede bevorder?

Die regering beweer dat die Engelssprekendes met een voet in Engeland staan. Dis nie waar nie, maar as hulle hulle republiek behaal, mag dit wel waar word, want die Suid-Afrika waaraan die Engels-sprekende Suid-Afrikaner getrou is, sal nie meer bestaan nie. Kan ons hom kwalik neem as sy lojaliteit na die geboorteland van sy voorouers verplaas word?

Nee, nooit sal hierdie republiek vrede en eenheid kan behaal nie. Dit kan alleen vrees, haat en bitterheid veroorsaak. Kyk hoe hang die donker wolke nou oor 'n sonnige land vanweë die stappe wat die regering alreeds nader aan hulle republiek gebring het. As die kleinere stappe sulke onenigheid veroorsaak, hoe kan die grootste stap, die stigting van die republiek, kasting vrede en volks-eenheid teweegbring?

FROM OUR POSTBAG

THOUGHTS ON GOOD FRIDAY

To the Editor of the Black Sash/Swart Serp.

I HAVE for some years been greatly perturbed at the lack of political morality in the government of this, my country. I have therefore followed with increasing interest and respect the development of your movement because it seems to me to begin to fill a long-felt want in our life and I should be grateful for the opportunity to briefly express my views on it.

The spontaneity with which 100,000 signatures were collected impressed me enormously, but I nevertheless felt that this original vitality would soon disappear and that a potentially powerful group would soon die because it, like so many earlier groups, lacked an essential more basic than enthusiasm; namely, morality.

However, as I watched the development of your movement into an organisation which has daily become more vocal and more militant, I realised that my original opinion was wrong. I realised that your pressure group was the first to seriously concern itself with the question, "Is it moral?" All similar groups in the past have said, "Is it politically desirable and expedient?" or "Is it legal?" The United Party considers any measure in the light of its expediency; the Nationalist Party does the same, but, being by definition totalitarian, is not seriously concerned about the objections of the people, while the law courts decide upon the legality of any question.

But who, on earth, debates the morality of any question? This fundamental aspect is, by common consent—by tradition, sad to say—ignored. We have for too long rendered up to Caesar his due, without for one moment considering the more fundamental necessity of rendering up to God what is His due.

The Black Sash movement is the only organised group that is attempting to question the morality of any measures. And yet, the members of this organisation are neither philosophers nor theologians, but housewives. I believe that your protest against immoral government is based not upon learning, but upon intuitive thinking. It is indeed wonderful to think that basic morality (which is Divine Law) has not been forgotten by the mothers of this and future generations of South Africans. Any organisation which does not conform to Divine Law is either totalitarian or immoral or both: our Government is both, and it is because we have favoured Mammon that we have the government we have in this country.

Fortunately, your group has realised this, and is strenuously fighting to re-establish a true morality in political thinking. You have unnumbered sup-

porters, male and female in this country, who are once again beginning to realise the truth of the saying by Him who died so long ago on this day, "I am the way, the truth and the light: Follow me."

May your crusade to purge, not whitewash, our political life succeed. Your movement is on a plane with the protests of such men as Professor Keet, Fr. Huddleston and many scholars against immoral government.

Lincoln's words at Gettysburg in 1863 are pertinent in this connection. He wished that the nation, "under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, shall not perish from the earth." May God defend the right.

IAN CALDER.

Johannesburg.

* * *

TO-DAY'S THE DAY

To the Editor of the Black Sash/Swart Serp.

ALTHOUGH I feel that the Black Sash is doing a magnificent job of work, I can't but feel extremely angry that such a movement should ever have been necessary—that women should have had to take the first step in the time of national crisis before any one of us could awaken to our danger. What have our parents been about that they allowed false hatreds and so-called language differences to drive us apart?

I am a South African of English and Afrikaans stock on both sides of my family, with grandparents who fought, lost and won, and forgot the Anglo-Boer War. Now because my name is "English" and English is my home tongue, I must be avoided and despised by my Afrikaans cousins! What future can my children have in such a country? If they are taught hatred of all but their own "people", "tongue" and customs; if this is dinned into them in the nursery, and sometimes even in the classrooms and in the pulpit, how can they ever gain the wisdom to cope with all the terrible problems that our parents and ourselves will leave them with, through our pigheadedness and PRIDE?

I hope all South Africans will have the courage to finish the job that the Black Sash has started and will remember that *Vandag is die Dag*—the time for saying *Môre is nog 'n dag* is long past!

YOUNG WIFE.

FACT AND FICTION

THE FICTION: That once a Republic has been established there will be peace and unity in our country.

THE FACT: Let us first find out what kind of Republic the Government intends to establish. They have been kind enough to tell us about it. In 1942 when it looked as though Hitler must win the war, the Nationalist newspapers published the Draft Constitution of the Republic which they hoped Hitler would grant them. It was published with the approval of Dr. Malan, and no Nationalist leader since then has repudiated it.

What did this draft Constitution contain? The President was to be responsible to God alone. His orders were to be rubber-stamped by an impotent Volksraad elected by the *nasionaalgesindes* only, a voters' roll excluding everyone who did not agree with the ruling caste. All other white citizens were to be second-class and voteless. English was to be the second language, not on an equal footing with Afrikaans, but permitted on sufferance when it so pleased your rulers. Perhaps you people in Natal might be allowed to have official matters discussed in English, but only as a sign of your inferiority.

Naturally there would be unity and political peace, the same sort of unity and peace which Hitler and Mussolini achieved, a unity and peace based on force and fear.

Now ask yourself, how can there be true peace and unity when half of the white population are voteless, voiceless and subjugated to the whims of the herrenvolk?

Whatever our origin, be it English or Hollands, we are not the stuff of which slaves are made. We have a long tradition of liberty, of freedom, of democracy in the sense that the state is our servant, not our master. If this Broederbond Republic is forced on us, are we going to accept it calmly and without complaint?

You know the answer. At least half of our white population (and this does not mean only the English-speaking people) will be bitterly opposed to the Nationalist Republic and will never accept it. Will this promote peace and unity?

The Government complains that the English-speaking people owe an allegiance to Britain. This is not true, but if they attain their Republic, it may well become true, because the South Africa to which the English South African owes allegiance will have disappeared. Will he be to blame if he transfers that allegiance to the land of his forefathers?

No, this Republic will never achieve peace and unity. It can only lead to fear, hatred and bitterness. Look at the clouds which have come over a happy land because of the steps towards their Republic which the Government has already taken. If the lesser steps provoke such strife, how can the greater step of establishing the Republic be supposed to create peace and national unity?

OUR "Fact and Fiction" articles have created so much interest, probably because our readers find therein "ammunition" for their political battle, that we have been asked to print the feature in both languages in future. By special request we reprint hereunder the translations of the "Fact and Fiction" articles in our first and second issues.

THE FICTION: This Government's not so bad—after all, what have they really done that's so terrible?

THE FACT: Well, that depends upon how you define bad. If you think that it's not a bad thing deliberately to warp the minds of little children—and your little children maybe—so that they will forever hate their fellow citizens in the sacred cause of Strijdom and his clique; if you think that it's not a bad thing for the Minister of the Interior to have the power to refuse or cancel you passport, without appeal to the Courts; if you think that it's not a bad thing to carry a pass, as they have to do behind the Iron Curtain; if you think that it's not a bad thing for the cost of everything you have to buy to go up and up, while the Government fritters away your money on things like the Population Register, and State Information Offices which tell an unbelieving world what a wonderful, marvellous, beautiful thing the Strijdom Government is; if you think that it's not a bad thing to affront and alienate your friends in a dangerous world; if you think that it's not a bad thing to sack the country's best soldiers or make it impossible for them to go on being soldiers; well, then, you are quite right, this Government's not so bad after all, and, heavens, how you deserve just such a Government!

ONS „Fantasie en Feit” artikels het soveel belang gewek, waarskynlik omdat ons lesers daaruit „ammunisie” vir hulle politieke stryd verkry, dat ons gevra is om voortaan die reeks in albei tale te publiseer. Op spesiale versoek gee ons hieronder die vertalings van die „Fantasie en Feit” artikels in ons eerste en tweede uitgawes.

DIE FANTASIE: Die Grondwet is nie ons Grondwet nie. Dit is deur die Britse Regering op ons afgedwing.

DIE FEIT: Gedurende die jaar onmiddellik na die Boere-oorlog het die staatsmanne van alvier kolonies hoe langer hoe meer aan die vereniging van daardie kolonies begin dink. Gedurende 1908 is 'n Nasionale Konvensie van verteenwoordigers van die vier kolonies byeengeroep. Daar was geen afgevaardigde van Groot-Brittanje teenwoordig nie.

Dit was hierdie Konvensie wat die Zuid-Afrika Wet opgestel het. Dit was hierdie Konvensie wat al die probleme opgelos het wat opgelos moes word: of die vereniging 'n vaste Unie of 'n los federasie sou word; waar die hoofstad sou wees; hoe die twee tale beskerm moes word; hoe bestaande stem-

regte verskans kon word.

Dit was hierdie Konvensie wat uitgewerk het dat taal- en stemregte alleen verander kon word deur 'n twee-derdes meerderheid van albei Parlements huise in 'n verenigde sitting.

Na die Zuid-Afrika Wet deur die Nasionale Konvensie opgestel was, is dit deur die Volksrade van die Kaapkolonie, die Oranje-Vrystaat en Transvaal en deur 'n referendum in Natal aangeneem. Daarna, aangesien daar geen gesaghebbende liggaam was wat die wetsontwerp kon aanneem om dit tot uitwerking te bring, behalwe die Britse Parlement—want u moet onthou dat al vier kolonies deel van die Britse Ryk was—is die wetsontwerp deur die vier kolonies aan die Britse Parlement voorgelê en sonder amendement aangeneem.

Die Zuid-Afrika Wet was dus die werk van Suid-Afrikaners alleen, deur Suid-Afrikaners geskep en met oorweldigende meerderhede aangeneem deur die vier kolonies wat nou die Unie van Suid-Afrika vorm.

Om te beweer dat die Grondwet 'n vreemde Grondwet is wat deur die Britse Regering op ons afgedwing is, is 'n onwaarheid.

BRYANSTON'S ONE IN THREE

THE Bryanston Branch of the Johannesburg Region which covers a very large and scattered area, has achieved what must be a record for South Africa—one woman in three living in the district is now a member of the Black Sash, and a very high proportion of these are active as Sashers—and “thinkers”.

ENTHUSIASM IN KIMBERLEY

KIMBERLEY'S monthly meetings are being well attended and members are highly enthusiastic. At the request of business women, we have decided to hold meetings in the evening.

Our weekly recruiting drives take place on Fridays when, alternating between morning and afternoon, two members recruit at different points in the city. Our membership is now 182.

We sent out 150 contact letters last month to women in the district, and replies are coming in expressing a wish to become members or asking questions. It has been decided to ask members to send personal letters to friends in the district, appealing to them to join us or to co-operate.

* * *

APPEAL TO READERS

MANY of our new members have not seen the first issue of “**The Black Sash**”, which, unfortunately, is now out of print. Would readers who have spare copies of the January issue kindly return these to the Johannesburg office, so that they can be distributed to our new Branches?

CUT THIS COUPON OUT and post to MRS. D. HILL, 41, VALLEY ROAD, WESTCLIFF, JOHANNESBURG.

- (a) I should like to receive copies of this monthly newsletter, and I enclose the sum of (one year's subscription is 6s.).
- (b) I should like to become a member of the Women's Defence of the Constitution League and I enclose my annual subscription of 2s. 6d.
- (c) I endorse the stand the W.D.C.L. is taking, and I enclose a donation of

Name

Address

Please make all cheques payable to THE WOMEN'S DEFENCE OF THE CONSTITUTION LEAGUE.

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