

THE BLACK SASH

DIE SWART SERP

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Eerlose Oorwinning

NIETEENSTAANDE sy lengte en hier en daar 'n ingewikkeldheid van taal is die vonnis van die Kaapse Hooggeregshof in sake die geldigheid van die Senaatwet in beginsel eintlik baie eenvoudig. Wat die regters uiteengesit het is dat die wyse waarop die samestelling van die Senaat verander is, volkome wettig is terwyl die voornemens of bedekte beweegredes die saak glad nie raak nie.

In hierdie gevolgtrekking is daar niks merkwaardigs nie.

Dis 'n bekende regsbeginself dat waar die bewoording van 'n geskrewe wet heeltemal duidelik is, die howe dit moet vertolk soos dit geskrewe staan sonder om 'n poging aan te wend om die betekenis te wysig deur in ag te neem wat die bedoeling van die Parlement op die tydstip kon gewees het. Die hof kan voornemens bespreek alleenlik wanneer die bewoording van die wet onduidelik of dubbelsinnig is. Hierdie besondere vonnis is in die opsig heeltemal duidelik. „Regters,” so lees ons, „word nie gevra om hul mening oor 'n gesonde beleid te gee nie, om die ware betekenis van die wetlike woorde te wysig nie. . . . Beskouings oor 'n gesonde beleid en redelikheid lewer geen gegronde rede om af te wyk van die duidelike betekenis van die woorde nie.”

Kortliks, die wet is in letterlike sin gehandhaaf en, hoewel appèl aangeteken is in Bloemfontein en die saak dus nog hangende is, bly die wet in sy letterlike sin staan.

Hollow Triumph

IN spite of its length and the occasional intricacy of its language, the judgment of the Cape Supreme Court on the validity of the Senate Act is really quite simple in principle. What the judges have said is that the method of changing the constitution of the Senate was perfectly legal and the intentions of the Government, or the ulterior motive, had nothing to do with the matter.

There is nothing remarkable in this conclusion. It is a well known principle of law that when the wording of a statute is absolutely clear, then the courts must interpret it as written, without trying to vary the meaning by considering what the intention of Parliament might have been at the time. The courts can only discuss intentions when the wording of a statute is obscure or ambiguous. This particular judgment is quite clear on that point. “Judges,” it reads, “are not called on to apply their opinion of sound policy so as to modify the plain meaning of statutory words . . . Considerations of sound policy and reasonableness do not afford valid reasons for departing from the plain meaning of the words.”

In short, the letter of the law has been upheld and, pending an appeal to Bloemfontein, the letter of the law stands. The “packing” of the Senate—a phrase freely used during the hearing and in the judgment itself—has been found a perfectly legal procedure.

The Black Sash Movement, however, is only incidentally interested in the legal niceties of

Die „packing” (vergroting) van die Senaat, ’n sinsnede wat baie gebruik is gedurende die verhoor en in die vonnis self—is soos bewys is heeltemal wettig.

Die Swart Serp Beweging stel slegs terloops in die wetlike fynhede van hierdie kwessie belang al mag dit vir die geleerdes van die staatsreg van lewensbelang wees. Die Swart Serp is juis gemoeid met die bedoelings en beweegredes wat die regters verhinder was om in aanmerking te neem. Waar die regters ophou, daar neem die Swart Serp oor. Al was daar glad nie ’n saak vir die Verenigde Party om voor die hof te bring nie, al was daar nooit ’n uitspraak oor die wetlike geskilpunt nie, sou die Swart Serp Beweging tog geprotesteer en ’n veldtog aangevoer het, want dis juis die Regering se bedoelings wat hierdie Beweging tot stand gebring het.

Die beweegrede van die Regering, openlik genoeg deur sy eie woordvoerders verklaar, was om een of ander manier te vind om die verskanste klousules te ontwyk en sodoende die sluitsteen van die Grondwet te verwyder.

Die „vergroting” van die Senaat was niks anders as ’n wyse om die doel te bereik nie—’n doel wat die Swart Serp as noodlottig en skandelik beskou. Die manier wat gekies is al sou dit ook honderd maal as wettig bewys word, was veragtelik en die doelwit op die manier bereik is ’n verraad van ons nasionale eenheid.

Daar is egter nog ’n gevolg van die Regering se handelwyse wat op die lang duur selfs nog noodlottiger mag wees as die tegniese tot niet maak van die Grondwet. Hierdie uitbuiting van ’n verborge uitweg het die peil van die politieke moraliteit in Suid-Afrika tot so ’n mate verlaag dat elke ordentlike Suid-Afrikaner beskaamd is. Hierdie soek na ’n uitvlug, die uiteindelijke ontdekking van ’n wettige plan om die werk van die stigters van die Unie tot niet te maak, is slim planne wat ons almal in die skande steek.

In ’n uittreksel van die Kaapse uitspraak lees ons: „Dit was nie ondenkbaar mits ons in ag neem dat dit die Britse Parlement was wat die Suid-Afrikawet bekragtig het, dat die kontroles van goeie trou en van die kiesers doeltreffend sou wees.”

Die Britse Parlement was egter verkeerd. Dit is nou bewys dat goeie trou nie doeltreffend was nie, en vir die doeleindes van die

this issue, vital as they may be to the constitutional lawyers. The Black Sash is concerned with those very intentions and motives which the judges found themselves barred from considering. The Black Sash takes over where the judges stopped. If there had been no case at all for the United Party to take to court, if there had never been any judgment on the legal issue, the Black Sash Movement would still have campaigned and protested, for it is exactly those intentions of the Government that brought the Movement into existence.

The intention of the Government, proclaimed frankly enough by its own spokesmen, was to find some way of circumventing the entrenched clauses and thus removing the keystone of the Act of Union. The “packing” of the Senate was nothing but a means to that end—an end which the Black Sash considers disastrous and shameful. The method adopted, no matter if it is proved legal a hundred times over, was shabby and the objective attained by that method is a betrayal of our national unity.

**SEE THAT
YOU ARE
ON THE
VOTERS ROLL**

But there is another result of the Government’s action which in the long run may prove even more disastrous than the technical wrecking of the Act of Union. This exploitation of an obscure loophole has lowered the standard of political morality in South Africa to such an extent that every decent South African feels ashamed. This hunting for subterfuges, this final discovery of a legal device for undoing the work of the Founders of Union are manoeuvres which disgrace us all.

There is one passage in the Cape judgment which reads: “It was not inconceivable, bearing in mind that it was the British Parliament that passed the South Africa Act, that it considered that the checks afforded by good faith and the electorate would be adequate.” Well, the British Parliament was wrong. It has now been shown that good faith was not adequate, and

(Continued at bottom of page 4)

LIGHTER MOMENTS

THE greatness of our cause does not bar, I think we will all agree, an occasional letting-up of the solemnity; the introduction of that essential sense of humour that throughout life holds the balance between exaggeration and truth; even, sometimes, between sanity and insanity. Black sashing is often inspiring, sometimes nerve-racking and frequently exhausting. But that it also has its humorous side must be apparent to all who have taken part in haunts and vigils, and probably it is the trivial but essentially human episode that lives on after the rest is forgotten.

It has always been a matter of interest to me to know what is passing through the minds of our women as they stand, sometimes for long periods in inclement weather. What are their thoughts as the minutes tick away?

Many, as we know, pray. This indeed is a sound approach, and should be a habit with all of us, even if our prayer is just a matter of moments. It puts our perspective right; it provides both courage and serenity.

Others work out problems, simple or complex according to their natures. A school teacher I know told me that she used up the silent minutes by making sure that she knew all her tables. This did not, however, involve a simple recitation of these mysteries up to twelve times twelve. No, this doughty soul began at thirteen times thirteen and carried on into some frightful mathematical complexity that makes me come over cold even to think of it.

I do not believe that many feel actively angry or militant, because, although our cause is just and so many of the things that are happening in our country today are deserving of the deepest anger, it is hard to be consistently angry when one's attention is concentrated upon how best to shift the weight from one foot to the other.

WHEN YOU HAVE
READ THIS COPY
PASS IT ON TO
YOUR NEIGHBOUR.
SHE MIGHT FIND
FOOD FOR THOUGHT THEREIN

The most common reaction, probably, is just a delightful hotch-potch of divers thoughts and feelings; a human and homely blend of the serious and the frivolous, the sublime and the common-place. I once took careful note of my own thoughts and feelings when on vigil, and wrote them down immediately afterwards, and I found that they ran something like this.

"Here am I, standing in this rather curious attitude when I really ought to be at home attending to my household chores, because I genuinely believe

that my rights as a citizen are at stake; because I know that unless someone does something about it my children's future in this country is imperilled. I am going to stand here for a long time, so I may as well get down to it properly, and do some intelligent thinking on the whole subject, but before I begin I wish I could remember if I put out the potatoes for lunch."

I then, perhaps, get through a few minutes of concentrated thought on constitutional as opposed to arbitrary government, democracy versus totalitarianism, when I become aware of a pair of legs that are standing close to me. In our part of the country we take our vigils very literally and stand with downcast eyes, and so I cannot find out what the legs are attached to higher up, and because I cannot do so, I want to very much. I want to know, for instance, why this particular person wears shiny black shoes with white shorts. I felt that if I can get a glimpse of his face I shall find out the answer. As I struggle with myself, he moves on, and I return to higher thought.

I consider the National Convention, the great men of the past who made Union; I think of the liberty of the individual, the freedom of thought, the freedom of Speech, the need for tolerance, of government by consent. I am really warming to my subject, and losing myself and the consciousness of my surroundings, when I suddenly become aware that a fly has settled on my nose.

There is no reason, of course, why I should not brush it off, but another pair of legs has just moved up close to me, and for the honour of our Branch I feel I must wait till he has moved on again. Alas, this person decides that his right and proper reaction to the Black Sash women is to laugh, long and derisively. He stands opposite me and does it, and I am reminded of hyenas and insane persons, and wish I could tell him this. Fortunately he sees a buddy further down the street; he leaves my vicinity, I gratefully brush off the fly and start again.

I consider Parliament; the parties who are sitting facing each other for all the world like a lot of schoolboys, and sometimes, perhaps, behaving a little like them. I wonder if they are really engrossed in what they are doing or whether they are waiting, like other workers, for the closing hour. I try to remember the Bills they have passed, and their effect upon ordinary people's lives.

Finally, I think of South Africa; a young, vigorous, and despite all, a fundamentally happy country. A teenager among the Nations, hotheaded, unbalanced, foolish, and lovable. I think of the troubles that confront her, the people that condemn her, the cynics who wait for her downfall, the enemies who bide their time. I send her my love and my sympathy, and promise that I will try to stand by her.

It is then I remember that I have not only forgotten to put the potatoes out for lunch, but that this is Monday morning—washingday—that I have forgotten to separate my nylons from the general wash, and that even now Annie is probably scrubbing them on a stone.

N.P.W.

Thoughts on Union Day

NOTHING indicates more clearly the basic lack of interest taken in the idea of a united nation than the fact that this day, which should have been kept with the religious fervour of Kruger Day and the deep joy of a Swiss National Day, is just another holiday to most South Africans.

Myself a daughter of a burgher of the old Transvaal Republic, who defended his country against aggression in the old bad days of the Anglo-Boer War, I was early taught to delight in my enlarged inheritance—the gift, so my father told me, of a generous enemy after victory ill-liked.

This gift—this lovely large exciting land—we travelled over, delighting in its beauty, its variety, its differing tongues and cultures.

Later, travelling overseas, it was exciting to discover that in one's homeland were beauties as enchanting as any of the publicised glories of Europe.

Through the years, the land remains the same, but the people are NOT one people. Where before was courtesy, friendliness and unity, there is now discourtesy, hate, and dissension—and why? Because one political group seems determined to claim credit for all that the entire community has given to South Africa. This is greedy, ungenerous, and unjust.

Yet this group is small. Its power is only given to it by the apathy of the many. This power will come to an end when the rest of South Africa decides that it has had enough!

Let us, the people, this Union Day of 1956 remember with gratitude the men who founded the Union of South Africa. Let us strive to hold fast and to perpetuate the spirit which imbued all their actions.

Let us not betray their faith in our destiny as one people. Let us strive with more earnestness than we have shown in the past, to teach our children to be citizens and South Africans, sharing and enjoying equally this great inheritance. Let us not lose our Nationhood by accepting the dictates of those whose first interests are NOT the NATION, but themselves.

ONS VIR JOU SUID-AFRIKA!

D.R.

EERLOSE OORWINNING (Vervolg)

Senaatwet het die Regering 'n manier versin om sonder die kiesers klaar te kom.

Dit word berig dat toe die nuus van die Kaapse vonnis in die Volksraad bekend gemaak is die Ministers en die ondersteuners van die Regering hul genoë nie kon verberg nie en seëvierend geglimlag het. Hulle moet egter onthou dat die Grieke 'n woord gehad het vir so'n oorwinning—'n Pyrrhus, oorwinning. Hulle mag lank genoeg leef om bitter berou te hê. Watter soort oorwinning is dit waar jy jou doel bereik ten koste van jou siel?

The Black Sash, May, '56

FANTASIE EN FEIT

FANTASIE:

Uittreksel van die Tomlinsonverslag (Volle verslag, Boekdeel 3, Bl. 56): „Alle individue van alle bevolkingsgroepe (in die Unie) is voor die reg gelyk, en word deur die reg gelyke beskerming verleen . . .”

FEIT:

Hoe ver van die waarheid af die bogenoemde aanhaling is, word bewys deur die drie feite wat hieronder genoem word:

- (1) Die Wysigingswetsontwerp op Naturelle (Stadsgebiede) wat gedurende hierdie Parlementsitting deur Dr. Verwoerd, Minister vir Naturellesake, ingevoer is, gee aan Munisipale beamptes die mag om Naturelle van uit hulle gebiede te verban, sonder verhoor en sonder om redes te verskaf.
- (2) Die Naturelle (Verbod op Interdikte) Wetsontwerp, ook deur Dr. Verwoerd ingevoer, maak dit onmoontlik vir 'n Naturel om vooraf by die Hof appél aan te teken teen verbanning, verwydering of 'n onwettige bevel. Die meeste wat die Hof kan doen is om 'n onwettige bevel ongeldig te verklaar, nadat dit uitgevoer is, maar teen daardie tyd het die Naturel tog sekerlik sy woonplek verloor, en heel moontlik ook sy werk.
- (3) Behalwe hierdie wetsontwerpe, is daar baie sake van die grootste belang vir Naturelle, soos vir alle menslike wesens, soos die reg om in stede te woon, die reg van kinders oor agtien jaar om by hulle ouers te bly woon, die reg om werk aan te neem, almal sake wat nooit voor die Hof kom nie, maar wat deur beamptes besluit word. Die Bantoebevolkingsgroep is ook aan 'n hele reeks wette en beperkings onderworpe, waarvan die Paswette maar net een voorbeeld is, waaraan die blanke bevolking gladnie onderhewig is nie. Die noodwendige gevolg van hierdie wette en beperkings is dat die Nie-blankes in veel groter mate in hegtenis geneem kan word as die blanke groep.

Dit is dus alte duidelik dat alle individue in Suidafrika nie voor die reg gelyk is nie, en nie deur die reg gelyke beskerming verleen word nie.

HOLLOW TRIUMPH (Continued)

for the purposes of the Senate Act the Government found a way of doing without the electorate.

It was reported that when the news of the Cape judgment was brought into the House of Assembly, Ministers and Government supporters could not conceal their delight and smiled in triumph. But they should remember that the Greeks had a word for that kind of triumph—Pyrrhic. They may live to regret it bitterly. What kind of victory is it that gives you your objective at the cost of your soul?

Conference at Bloemfontein

WATCHING the delegates take their places on that first morning in the assembly room of the lovely City Hall of Bloemfontein, I was filled with a sense of wonder.

Here were women from every part of South Africa—many of them had had to overcome great difficulties in order to attend this first National Conference of the Black Sash—and I asked myself, looking at the rows of expectant faces—**WHY** have they come? What do they **SEEK**? What driving need has found its ending—and its beginning—in this gathering here in Bloemfontein? During the two days of this historic Conference my questions were abundantly answered.

Mrs. Foley's opening address mentioned a fact that we of the Black Sash find almost commonplace—the sacrifice of individual pleasure, comfort, time and money by all members. (I thought again—for **WHAT**?) In the closing words of her deeply moving speech, one phrase leapt out—"that justice may prevail!" I looked at the listening faces turned to the speaker, and I was answered. **THERE** lay one great need, one hunger, drawing us together from all parts of the Union—**THAT JUSTICE MAY PREVAIL!**

Mrs. Sinclair's report, covering the early history of the Black Sash and its subsequent activities, drew the attentive ear of an already attentive audience. Most earnestly they heard "Although it was the Senate Act which brought this Movement into being, this was but the final straw in a long pattern of repressive legislation that this government had put on the Statute Book since 1948. There has been no respect for the rights of minorities. Our personal liberties have gone one by one; there seems to be no morality in government whatsoever. The women of South Africa will not stand for this any longer. We shall go on protesting against the government's attitude to government, until we have honesty and decency in public life. We shall oppose any bill which diminishes personal liberty, or which discriminates against any section of the population, no matter what race, colour or creed." Again I saw the response—"UNTIL WE HAVE HONESTY AND DECENCY IN PUBLIC LIFE"—here was another hunger, unappeased, clamant.

Arising from the Agenda

The Conference, as is the way with Conferences the world over, settled down to the business of the day. We listened to reports, made recommendations, agreed to amendments, and generally conducted our affairs in an atmosphere of good will and deep sincerity. Unlike all other conferences which I have attended in the past, and quite unlike all Parliamentary sessions, few words were wasted, discussion was seldom allowed to drift from the point at issue, and a useful amount of preliminary business was got through during the daylight hours of Thursday.

Over the teacups and the luncheon plates, experiences were exchanged, ideas were discussed, delegates began to know and like one another, and even more important, to understand each other's differing Regional problems.

I learnt with amazement that the truly magnificent lunch and teas which we consumed voraciously the first day were brought to the Conference by the women of the Westminster Branch, 86 miles from Bloemfontein, and that some of **their** members had travelled many miles to bring in to Westminster the heaped platters of mouth-watering food, which we all attacked with such fervour. One of the members of this delightful delegation explained "that they were just simple farmers' wives and housewives, and this was so very little a contribution to make to this wonderful gathering!"

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.

Artificial Barriers Attacked

One extremely interesting fact emerged during the afternoon's debate—the—for want of a better word—"insularity" of our thinking. I had long suspected that the emergence of a National being called a South African was being delayed, not only by self-seeking politicians, but also by Provincial "insularity"; and in the most friendly fashion in the world, over a debate on the education of our children, this was made clear. Transvaal and Free State delegates spoke with deep bitterness on the deliberate forcing of our children into separate "camps"; of the indoctrination of the Afrikaans speaking child; of the resentment and hate which such a policy, pursued to the end, will bring about.

Delegates from Natal and the Cape were not really awake to the disastrous consequences of such a policy, and at first felt that the Black Sash should not widen its scope to include this field. However, delegates from those areas most affected made it clear that in a stand for honesty and decency in public life we cannot afford to neglect our Schools. The future citizens of South Africa pass through

them, and what they there learn is of vital and tremendous importance to the future of South Africa. It became clear as the afternoon progressed that gatherings such as this one, contributed greatly to racial harmony—at least of the two white sections—and that the more often we meet in such a mood and with such ends in view, the more easily we shall be able to solve our problems.

The Meaning of Political Morality

We returned to the Conference Hall in the evening after a hurried dinner at our hotel.

The evening meeting, to discuss Johannesburg Region's Resolution "That this movement stands for one and only one standard of political morality for all the inhabitants of South Africa" resulted in an interesting and lively discussion on the meaning of such a statement, and its full implications. It is quite apparent, in the long tiring months of our protest, that much thought has been given by members of the Black Sash to this matter; and the most exciting moment of the whole Conference to me was when it became apparent that a group had at last emerged in South Africa with courage enough to FACE uncomfortable facts. What can be done about these facts is a matter still for the future. It is enough that moral courage and honesty were proved to be the very foundation stones of our movement.

RE-WRITING SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY

TWO APPROACHES: FACT AND FICTION

HISTORY teachers have for many years complained of the absence of a true and unbiased account of South African History suitable for use in our schools. It is generally accepted that the existing books are by and large faulty: Facts are often incorrect, grave omissions have been made, and conclusions drawn are often biased.

A step in the right direction was taken last December, when the History teachers of the majority of Church Schools in South Africa met in Johannesburg to consider the question of producing a new text book. As a result of their deliberations, it was decided to write a new text book of South African history, which would be factually complete and accurate, and which would, within the very strict rules of historical method, be unbiased.

The Transvaalonderwysersunie met recently in Pretoria to consider the same problem. According to the Press reports of their deliberations it is quite clear that this organisation has no intention of solving the problem in the same way as the Church Schools. On the contrary, these "teachers of History" do not seem to think that the existing books are sufficiently biased or incorrect. They have therefore decided to produce an even more incorrect version than those in existence. This book will exclude anything to do with "Imperialism," "Liberalism," and the part played by the British in our history. They are, in other words, consciously setting out to write a text book from a certain point of view. This, together with the fact that this book

Through the next long day, and except for brief intervals for food, and time off for an evening public meeting of two hours, we had a Constitution to hammer into shape. Clause by clause it was considered, amended, passed; and at the stroke of 12 the last "i" was dotted and the last "t" crossed. A very general measure of agreement was reached by all the delegates, and it was felt that an enormous piece of work had been accomplished with the greatest possible satisfaction for all.

Winding Up

Saturday, with elections to the Central Executive to be made and resolutions to consider, was too busy a day for any comfort. With all the pressure, there were still resolutions awaiting consideration and reports from Regions to hear, that had to be held over until another time. Nevertheless, an enormous amount of work was dealt with in 2½ days, and delegates returned to their respective regions, revived, enthusiastic, and filled with new ideas.

So ended our first fully representative National Conference. As I left the airport, only one question remained unanswered. WHY, at this eleventh hour in our history there should have been this sudden tide of resistance to EVIL when for so many years distrust and fear had had their way in our South Africa? The enigma still remains unsolved, but one can only feel a deep thankfulness that the women of South Africa have been so strangely moved.

is to be used in schools, is both reprehensible and immoral, and cannot be resisted strongly enough by all parents.

One wonders why these "History teachers" so keenly desire to perpetuate the tradition of the old, bad books. The answer seems to be that they wish to continue to warp, twist and suppress the truth to suit a certain creed. The creed seems to be Afrikaner Nationalism, which has, regrettably, been nurtured on half truths, untruths and omissions. The effect of a true account of our History on this creed would not be good; therefore, have a bad book—this appears to be their reasoning.

Perhaps some members of the Afrikaansonderwysersunie will read this article. To them I say: If you have the interests of our country sincerely at heart, it is your undoubted duty to try to produce a true, unbiased account of our history on which future generations of South Africans may be nurtured. It is not moral to do what you propose. I say further, that if Afrikaner Nationalism is strong, it is surely strong enough to be examined in the light of Historical truth, and it is your duty to your pupils and your country to teach the truth.

The late George Orwell's book, "1984" is most apposite in this connection. He draws a truly horrifying picture of the results of suppressing the truth and writing history to suit a certain idea. Those readers who have not yet done so should read this masterly book.

IAN CALDER

FROM OUR POSTBAG

THE TOMLINSON REPORT

To the Editor: With reference to your article "Women Ask, Will the Tomlinson Report Work?" I should like to point out that integration or "total apartheid on a plate" seems to be the main issue involved in the report. Obviously Prof. Tomlinson was commissioned to report on the practicability of total apartheid with this in view. I feel we must not rush to condemn him: he has sincerely carried out research on a given subject and reported his findings. We cannot presume that his findings are his personal opinions. The real villains of the piece are none other than Mr. Strijdom and Dr. Verwoerd, who gave birth to the monster apartheid.

My opinion is that total apartheid—or apartheid in any form—cannot work. Complete apartheid is the pipe-dream of men who are immature, unrealistic and are prepared to see the destruction of the Europeans' status in the country for their personal aggrandisement.

A country, surely, is the people who live in it and it is high time we thought broadly along these lines. For too many years we have considered only the welfare of the two European races, never realising, in our mania for white supremacy, that WE (the two white races) have become a nation within a nation—and a hopelessly divided one at that.

It is through repressive legislation that the Bantu races have been denied advancement, with the result that the vast majority of urbanised Bantu have lost their tribal differentiations and have now been welded by adversity into one people. With their thirst for knowledge and improvement they have become a nation to be regarded with respect. Progress they will, in spite of anything that Mr. Strijdom and Dr. Verwoerd attempt to do to halt them.

Surely these two Nationalist giants cannot expect a people whom they consider fit only to be ruled by "Chaka's rule" to have the Christian virtue of turning the other cheek? Must they meekly submit to virtual banishment from the cities which they have helped to build with so much sweat and toil?

We have no right to expect Prof. Tomlinson's report to work. £104,000,000 may solve purely practical matters, but I am certain that it will not buy the expected subservience, gratitude and goodwill of a young and virile nation born out of squalor, lack of opportunity and the deprivation of human dignity.

Total apartheid is not the gift of a benign Government, but the death knell of our nation's inheritance.

FAN-MAIL!

(This is an extract from one of many letters we have received expressing approval of the Newsletter).

To the Editor: May I express my profound and unstinted admiration at the courage and determination of your Committee in producing the Black Sash magazine. I think it was an amazing thing to do! The quiet way in which you all just walk up to the problem (the thorny nature of which is enough to

scare most experts with specialised knowledge and great financial backing) and carry it triumphantly to a successful conclusion leaves me gasping.

I feel ashamed that I did not get up at the Conference and try to express a little of my admiration and appreciation, but I find the greatest difficulty in expressing myself spontaneously in public and the Conference rather over-awed me. I have been a great admirer of the little paper from the start and I know our Branch thinks it about the finest propaganda they can get. I know I am speaking for them too in asking you to accept our homage!

NORTH SHEPSTONE SUBSCRIBER.

OUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

To the Editor: In reply to the writer of the article entitled "Will the Tomlinson Plan Work," may I state that while I agree to some extent with her conclusions, I think that her premise that men are the visionaries and women the practical executors of these visions, contains far too much of generalisation. What of such visionaries as Olive Schreiner, Vera Brittain and Eve Curie? What of the men like Albert Schweitzer who carry out a plan rather than draw up a visionary blue-print?

May I say what I consider the trouble is with our country? Those men and women who have practical ability (and knowledge of how to do things) as well as vision have neglected their country. They have jibbed at the idea of battling with red tape, political platforms and the difficulties of democracy and have either selfishly given their ability to building up a successful private venture in farming, engineering or business or have given their energy to charitable work, which at best is only patch-work, because the social organisation of the community has failed in the care of its citizens.

We South Africans, especially English-speaking South Africans, have failed our country in denying it the devoted service that generations of privileged people in the older countries have been ready to give their community in exchange for the advantages conferred by good education and high economic status.

Before it is too late and our country is in a state of chaos, let us start and maintain a tradition of service in which there is room both for wide vision and practical ability to carry out schemes. Let us work out our schemes, not as drawing office plans to impose on the population from above, but worked out with the co-operation and agreement of all people to be affected by these schemes. Then there may be some chance of improving conditions in the country. But let us beware lest our Fagan and Tomlinson Reports are not just selfishness scientifically wrapped up; selfishness cannot expect to be a success as a grand vision or as a practical plan—it may succeed temporarily as the law of the jungle, but it will only end in disaster. N.G.

MEET THE BLACK SASH

More Members of the Johannesburg Regional Executive

MRS. BETTY TAYLOR, the Chairman of the Country Branches Sub-Committee of the Johannesburg Regional Executive, was educated at the Johannesburg High School for Girls, and took her B.A. Eng. Hons. at the University of London. During the war she taught at St. John's College in Johannesburg. Since her marriage she has lived on various mines and also in Kimberley. She has four young children. Mrs. Taylor is one of our many bilingual speakers and is in great demand at town as well as country Branch meetings of the Black Sash.



MRS. TAYLOR.



MRS. KENT.

MRS. PAM KENT, a member of the Johannesburg Executive, who has been in the movement from the beginning and did a great deal of valuable work in the days before we had a paid secretary and a Johannesburg office. She is a member of the Demonstrations Sub-Committee, has two children and describes herself as an ordinary housewife, which is what most of us are.

* * *

MRS. ANNE LONG is another of the hardy ones who endured two nights in the open at Pretoria nearly a year ago. She is a member of the Johannesburg Executive and was mainly concerned with Demonstrations, but is now coping with the distribution of the Newsletter. Formerly a photographer, she is now the mother of two children.

MRS. NINA PENNY is a South African of Afrikaans descent, who would have slept at Pretoria, had not one of her three children unfortunately fallen ill at that time. She is Johannesburg Executive's fund-raising expert, a fact which is probably due to her business training before her marriage, when she ran a most successful gift and florist's shop.



MRS. LONG.



MRS. PENNY.

* * *

MISS TERTIA PYBUS is one of the original six women who thought up the women's protest at a Sunday morning teaparty. She has been on the Johannesburg Executive ever since, where she now manages the financial side most capably. By profession she is a trained nurse, and her presence at the rear of the Cape Town convoy was a source of comfort to all the frail creatures who set out on that long trek.



MRS. PYBUS.



MRS. CONRADIE.

MRS. CLAIRE CONRADIE, another mother of three little ones, is a member of the Johannesburg Executive. She had four years of war service, and ended as a sergeant in the S.S.S., which if you don't know, means Radar.

MRS. DOROTHY HACKING went to Germany after she left school and was studying German at the University of Berlin, when Hitler came into power. She met her future husband in Berlin and married him a year later at the age of 19. They lived in Germany for two years and travelled widely all over Europe and America before returning to England. In 1935 they settled in South Africa, but still continued to travel. Mrs. Hacking, the mother of a Cambridge University graduate and two school-girl daughters, was one of the first members of the Black Sash and is now the energetic Chairman of Johannesburg Region's Demonstrations Sub-Committee.



MRS. HACKING.



MRS. BOND.

MRS. PENELOPE BOND, a member of the Johannesburg Executive with four children, is also on the League's panel of speakers. She is a teacher by profession, and comes of an old Free State family. Her great-grandfather was the first civilian to settle in Bloemfontein, her grandfather was the last Surveyor-General of the old Free State Republic, and she is the great-niece of Mrs. Sophie Levisieur, the oldest League member, just turning 98.

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE

MRS. RUTH FOLEY, *President*
 MRS. CHERRY VAN SELM, *Vice-President*
 MRS. JEAN SINCLAIR, *Chair*
 MRS. NELL GREEN, *Vice-Chair*
 MRS. DORA HILL, *Second Vice-Chair*
 MRS. DOPPY DIETRICH, *Secretary*
 MRS. PEGGY BRITTEN, *Treasurer*
 MRS. QUEENIE FOUCHE
 MRS. JEANETTE DAVIDOFF
 MRS. MARY DEY
 MRS. MURIEL FISHER
 MRS. DOREEN RANKIN

FACT AND FICTION

FICTION:

Extract from the Tomlinson Report (Summary, Page 32, Par. 27 (ii): "All individuals of all population groups (in the Union) are equal in the eyes of the law and receive equal protection from the law . . ."

FACT:

How far removed from the truth the above quotation is, is shown by the three facts given hereunder:

- (1) The Natives (Urban Areas) Amendment Bill, introduced by Dr. Verwoerd, Minister of Native Affairs, during this session, gives municipal officials power to banish Natives from their areas without trial and without giving reasons.
- (2) The Natives (Prohibition of Interdicts) Bill, another piece of legislation introduced during this session by Dr. Verwoerd, makes it impossible for a Native to appeal to the Courts beforehand against banishment, removal or wrongful order. At most the Courts can invalidate a wrongful order after it has been carried out, but by then the Native will certainly have lost his accommodation and possibly his employment too.
- (3) In addition to these Bills, many cases of the utmost importance to Natives, as to all human beings, such as the right to live in towns, the right of children over eighteen to continue living with their parents, the right to seek work, do not ever come before a Court, but are decided by officials. The Bantu population group, too, is subject to a vast number of laws and restrictions, of which the Pass Laws are only one example, to which the white population is not subject. As an inevitable result of these laws and restrictions, Non-Europeans can suffer arrest to a far greater degree than the European group.

It is obvious, therefore, that in South Africa all men are not equal in the eyes of the law, nor do they receive equal protection.

OBITUARY.

Springs branch has suffered an irreparable loss in the sudden death, on Monday, 4th June, of Mrs. Torry Jackson, wife of Dr. O. A. E. Jackson, Consulting Metallurgist to the Union Corporation. Mrs. Jackson was an indefatigable worker for the Black Sash movement and a few days before her death attended the Anniversary meeting and demonstration in Johannesburg. All who knew her will continue to be inspired by the remembrance of her unfailing good nature, her devotion to this cause and her utter selflessness. Our deepest sympathy goes to her husband and two children.

THREADS FROM THE SASH

WE salute the solitary Black Sash member of **SOUTHPORT**, Natal, who donned her sash on the ill-omened 13th January and stood at the bridge, a silent reminder to passing cars that the women of South Africa, at least, feel shame at the Nation's dishonour.

* * *

WE also salute the members of **OFCOLACO** branch, Transvaal, who, in spite of a rough reception at Gravelotte on the occasion of their first Black Sashing, returned at a later date to a second vigil. The chairwomen writes: "Our second stand was quite uneventful—but then of course there were NINE of us!"

* * *

KIMBERLEY'S branch news for April was sent in Afrikaans. We hope other Regions will take note and follow suit! It will be good to have news in both our rich languages.

* * *

AT a meeting of the **PORT ALFRED** branch on 4th May it was decided to keep a vigil of four every second Friday of the month. We think this excellent idea could be copied by other branches, and would like to congratulate this very new branch on its energy and enthusiasm.

* * *

ON the occasion of a vigil in a **NORTHERN TRANSVAAL** town a passer-by handed one Black Sash woman an envelope. On opening it she found a slip of paper with "In complete sympathy" in Afrikaans. "It is also very noticeable" she writes, "what interest and sympathy is shown to individual 'Sashers' in the shops after a vigil."

* * *

AT a public meeting recently in **MIDDELBURG, CAPE**, a man came up to the speaker after the meeting and said that this was the first time that an organisation had been formed that could do the essential work of criticising all political parties, and he was delighted at its emergence.

* * *

AT BENONI, a Black Sash delegation to "welcome" Mr. Naude (having learned its lesson from the behaviour of Dr. Verwoerd at a previous Black Sashing occasion) took the precaution of covering the second entrance to the City Hall—"just in case." Sure enough, the Minister's car did arrive at that entrance, a delivery van unfortunately in the way was quickly sent off and—Mr. Naude walked through a Black Sash reception committee!

* * *

AN interesting suggestion comes from **EAST LONDON**. They want an historian of the calibre of Sir Winston Churchill to write an account of the Boer War. This war, they say, is a notorious counter in the game of spreading hate and enmity between the two White races of South Africa. Facts are distorted, ignored, or even wholly suppressed. East London also asks that an investigation be made

to find out what history is being taught in all our schools—this Branch feels that the way should not be left wide open for any teacher to air individual views.

* * *

WE would like to welcome two newcomers on the roster of Regional office bearers—**Mrs. S. Osborne**, chair of **Durban**, and **Mrs. M. Fourie**, chair of the new **South-Eastern Transvaal Region**. The rather tired brooms of twelve months strenuous effort welcome two new ones and wish them "good sweeping".

* * *

SPRINGS correspondent writes: "While helping on Black Rose Day here, one of our members was much moved by the reaction of an elderly Afrikaans-speaking man to whom she handed a pamphlet and rose. After perusing the pamphlet he became so excited that all he could say was, "Dankie, dankie, baie, baie dankie, mevrou!" His astonishment and gratitude reveal again how little sincere and honest reading matter seems to come the way of our Afrikaans-speaking citizens.

* * *

WE would like to welcome and thank heartily our new Newsletter correspondent from **EAST LONDON**. She writes: "Most of the Queenstown members have subscribed, and I shall take every opportunity of going to other branches, as my husband has to go all over the Transkei and Border occasionally. We say again, "Thank you most heartily."

* * *

MR. Swart's evil star seems to have been in the ascendant since he was first Black Sashed at **BRAKPAN**. Our correspondent from East London writes: "We all went out to Cambridge (a suburb of East London) and stood close together along the low front wall of the new Police Headquarters, which he was to open. The ceremony of the key, and opening the door, took place at a lower level, so we turned as he went down the steps, and during the speeches he had a silent gallery of Black Sash women staring straight down at him. He might have been opening the new Police Barracks at Brakpan all over again!"

* * *

ONE EAST LONDON member of 82 sends her Newsletter to Devon, Essex, Yorkshire and Birmingham in England; to Canada, Australia and Tasmania; and to Gwelo and Bulawayo in Rhodesia. She sends strict instructions as to whom they are to be passed on; eventually, when the last rags of them are left, they must go to the Free Library. This, we feel, is a magnificent one-woman effort on behalf of the Black Sash. We wonder how many members half that age have done as much!

UNIEDAG-31 MEI 1956

SES-EN-VEERTIG jaar gelede is die eerste Uniedag in Suid Afrika gevier. Die babetjie wat op 31 Mei 1910 gebore was, is vandag 'n middeljarige man. Laat ons bietjie kyk wat tot dusver in sy lewe gebeur het en wat geword het van die groot verwagtinge wat almal destyds vir sy toekoms gekoester het. Soos in elke normale huisgesin, waarvan liefde en geluk die kenmerk is, is die geboorte van 'n nuwe baba die geleentheid vir groot geluk en hoë verwagtinge. Maar, omdat die mens maar altyd onvolmaak is, bereik daardie baba, as hy volwasse is, selde of ooit daardie hoë peil van verwagting, en daar is altyd teleurstelling onder sy familieleden.

So het dit ook met ons Unie gegaan, maar hoewel daar teleurstelling bestaan, is daar ook groot hoop.

Sowat ses jaar na die einde van die Boere-oorlog, toe die smart en lyding nog vars in die geheue van elkeen was, het die Nasionale Konvensie bymekaar gekom met die doel om uit die vier verdeelde State in die land een verenigde volk te vorm. Boer en Brit was daar teenwoordig, die oorwinnaars en die wat die neerlaag gely het, plattelanders en stedelinge, almal begerig om die verlede te vergeet en met een gees besiel, om 'n nasie te bou.

Die taak was geensins maklik nie, en dikwels het dit gelyk of die pogings van die Konvensie maar moes misluk. Maar wat die stigting van die Unie uiteindelik moontlik gemaak het, was die wonderlike gees wat daar onder die afgevaardigdes geheers het, „die konvensiegees,” 'n gees so sterk en so opreg dat die nuwe Suid-Afrikaanse nasie, nog Boer nog Brit, op 31 Mei 1910 die lig van die dag gesien het.

Vandag bestaan daar onder ons Suid-Afrikaners, wat ons land liefhet, 'n gevoel van diepe teleurstelling en weemoed, byna van moedeloosheid. Ons sien 'n verdeelde volk, gebroke beloftes, 'n geskonde Grondwet. Watter hoop is daar vir die toekoms, as ons gedurende ses-en-veertig jaar so ver kon afgedwaal het van die pad wat die leiers van ons volk destyds vir ons aangewys het?

Laat ons eers die saak kalm beskou. Eerstens moet ons nie die tydfaktor vergeet nie. Waar ses-en-veertig jaar meer as helfte van die lewe van 'n man is, is dit in die geskiedenis van 'n volk maar 'n betreklike kort tyd. Ten tweede, kyk wat het alles in daardie tyd gebeur. Twee wêreldoorloë, elk met die onvermydelike gevolge van oorlog, lewensverlies, geldverlies, algemene onrus; 'n wêrelddepressie; die atoombom. Onder sulke omstandighede is dit baie moeilik vir 'n jong nasie om ten volle te groei en ontwikkel.

Maar selfs uit daardie ongelukkige oorlogsjare het iets goeds ontstaan. Tweemaal in vyf-en-twintig jaar moes Suid-Afrika veg om vryheid en beskawing te handhaaf, en elke keer het die manne en vroue van ons land bewys gelewer dat daardie „harte-unie” uit die dae van die Nasionale Konvensie nog hier is onder die kinders en kleinkinders van die manne wat daardie groot taak van nasiebou onderneem het.

Daardie taak is nou ons taak. Op die fondament wat hulle gelê het, moet ons 'n nasie bou. Waar

ander verkeerd gebou het, moet ons afbreek en, met geduld en liefde en verdraagsaamheid, weer opbou. 'n Jaar gelede het die vrou van die Swart Serp met daardie werk begin, want hulle het besef dat 'n nasie soos 'n kind is, hy het moedersorg en vroueteerheid nodig. Wat die vroue wil afbreek is daardie lelike skeidingsmure van onkunde en bitterheid wat die partypolitici tussen ons mense en tussen ons kinders opgebou het, en dan wil ons opnuut begin bou. Ons bakstene mag klein wees om mee te begin — 'n Swart Serp Tak wat eenmaal in die week 'n Afrikaanse klas bywoon, 'n groepie Afrikaanse vroue, wat na 'n Engelse buurvrou se huis gaan om na 'n spreekster te luister, en 'n koppie tee te geniet. Die bakstene is klein, maar as tienduizend vroue, twintigduizend vroue, met nederigheid en liefde in hulle harte, daardie bakstene begin aandra, dan mag ons met nuwe hoop vooruitsien na 'n grote toekoms vir ons land, Suid-Afrika.

M. E. FISHER.

Hierdie paar gedagtes is in Afrikaans geskrywe deur 'n vrou wie se huistaal Engels is. Dit is haar baksteen en sy vra verskoning vir enige taalfoute.

THREADS (Continued)

A SPECIAL word of praise should be said for the members of the **WELKOM** branch of the Black Sash, who have been “working like beavers” ever since the branch was first formed, and who have shown an energy and courage which could well be copied in other “difficult” parts of South Africa.

* * *

MISS ENID WHITTAKER, a blind member of the Black Sash in East London, has sent me some extracts of letters she receives. She took part in the Convoy demonstration to Cape Town. From Canada: “Your Black Sash movement is given great publicity over here and is so admired.” From a friend in Matatiele, on the Convoy demonstration: “Your letter gave me more of an insight than the papers have done—I was reduced to tears with pride—I hadn't thought of weariness or the aching feet, but I can well imagine it now.”

* * *

RELUCTANTLY attending a first Black Sash meeting at **PORT ALFRED**—and only because a close friend had particularly asked her—firmly convinced in her own mind that the Black Sash was puerile and useless, one woman came away thrilled and inspired, feeling “that this movement was the only thing in South Africa to-day that had ‘got something.’” We congratulate the Chair of the East Cape Region—she had undertaken the trip from Port Elizabeth in the worst possible weather—cloudbursts and ankle-deep mud were the rule, so we hear—what encouragement this must be for her! And for us!

HOW OUR COUNTRY IS RUN

This is an article addressed to young women about to turn twenty-one. It should, in fact, interest all girls in their late teens.

WHEN you turn twenty-one, you have, in the English idiom, come of age. If your home language is Afrikaans, you become "mondig," which is a better expression, because it means that you may use your "mond" or mouth to express your opinion as an adult citizen. And one of the ways of expressing that opinion is to use your vote in the election of people to represent you in your Municipal Council, in your Provincial Council and in Parliament.

Before you can use your vote, however, you must become a registered voter. "Must" is the operative word, because the penalty for failing to get your name on to the Voters' Roll is a fine of £50. Therefore you must acquire an application card (green for a woman, white for a man) either from the Electoral officer of your town or from one of the political party offices, fill it in clearly and correctly, have it witnessed by another voter, and return it to the Electoral Officer. From May to July this year it will be easy to register yourself, because Government enumerators are swarming all over the country for the purpose of compiling a new and complete Voters' Roll.

I think it unlikely that any young woman of any intelligence at all will take up the attitude of a young man who once said to me when I was registering voters, "Oh, I suppose I'll have to do it—but what a bore!" He was slightly crestfallen when I pointed out to him that only a moron could so regard the privilege which each registered voter in a democratic state has of making his contribution to the running of his own country. That young man was, in fact, not adult enough to have a vote. He was too selfish.

In due course you will receive from the Electoral Officer an acknowledgment of your application. If you don't receive it, make it your business to find out why.

Now you are a registered voter of the Union of South Africa. How are you going to use that vote, which, it may interest you to know, your mother probably did not have at your age. South African women were given the franchise or vote in 1930, and that only as the result of the efforts of the Suffragettes in England.

Apart from Municipal elections, which will be discussed later, a General Election (which means Parliamentary) will probably be the first occasion on which you will vote. Whether or not you have become a member of a political party, you possibly have a shrewd idea for which party you will vote. Or is it such a shrewd idea? Many people vote for a party merely because their parents and grandparents voted that way, which is as silly as wearing leg-of-mutton sleeves and high boned collars today. Find out for yourself to what **principles** each political party adheres, and what the effect would be on the

country of that party getting into power, and then make up your **own** mind how you want South Africa governed.

Parliament in South Africa consists of two Houses, the House of Assembly or Lower House, consisting of 159 Members of Parliament presided over by the Speaker, and the Senate or Upper House, which, until the passing of the Senate Act in 1955, had 48 Senators and now has 89.

The Head of the State is the Governor-General, who is not elected, but appointed by the Queen of England, on the advice of the Government of South Africa.

The job of the voters (or electorate, if you like long words) is to elect the 159 M.P.'s.

(To be continued)

M.E.F.

WHAT OF TOMORROW?

THERE is an old Spanish proverb which says:

"Take what you want," says God—
"Take what you want—and pay for it."

If you want an evil thing strongly enough to pay the certain and terrible price—fair enough—that is between yourself and yourself. But in South Africa we have given this proverb a hideous twist.

"Take what you want," says God—
"Take what you want—and let your children pay."

Perhaps you think this accusation is exaggerated and false? Yet if you consider soberly the implications of the Acts of OUR present Government which WE put into power, the one section driven by false fears and hopes, the other sunk in apathy and indifference, can you not feel how true the accusation is?

Our children are being, and have been, deliberately separated into opposite camps. Not only do the schools teach a separate language, but an entirely different way of life and thought. WE still enjoy precarious "unity", legacy of the honesty and greatness of the founders of Union—but our children are strangers one to another, and this deliberate destruction of an overall National feeling will be punished in THEIR day, not ours. Is this not true?

Have we not taken away their freedom of choice?

The taking away, without consultation, of the rights of the Coloured voters; the passing of Acts which deprive the Non-European of fundamental rights and liberties—these things bring resentment, hatred, a burning sense of injustice. To-day, we do what we will; to-day we enjoy peace—but **WHAT OF OUR CHILDREN'S TOMORROWS?**

D.R.

REGIONAL REPORTS

CAPE EASTERN

Since my last report, which was written for the conference held in Port Elizabeth a scant five months ago, we, in the Eastern Cape can look with much satisfaction on the progress we have made. Our membership has increased, many new branches have been formed, and we have addressed meetings throughout our region. We have found that very little difficulty is experienced in the formation of branches in our country districts once we have explained to them the aims and objects of the League.

Walmer was the first suburban branch formed and since its inception has very successfully carried out its duties.

CENTRAL.

This is the latest branch formed and consists almost entirely of business women. A very valuable branch, as through its members we are hoping to recruit many more working girls, who up to now have been virtually "untapped ground."

Meetings have already been arranged on our return from the Conference to form branches in Mill Park, Newton Park, Glendinningvale, Kabega Park and Westview.

UITENHAGE AND DESPATCH.

Since its formation this branch has gone from strength to strength. The enthusiasm of these women, most of whom have full-time jobs to keep their families fed and clothed, is notably illustrated by the fact that when we were preparing the Convoy to Cape Town, they borrowed a car and raised sufficient money to enable four of their members to accompany us.

ADDO.

Until now this branch has been wonderful at financial support. Since Mrs. Davis addressed a meeting there last week, it will undertake further activities on behalf of the League.

GEORGE.

On our return from Cape Town Mrs. Pirie addressed a meeting and formed a branch. Since then they have increased their membership.

KNYSNA.

Formed by the Port Elizabeth contingent on the way to Cape Town. The meeting was attended by 65 women all very enthusiastic. It is noteworthy of report that although this branch had only been established for six days, on our return from Cape Town its members supplied accommodation for the night for the whole Eastern Cape Convoy.

FORT BEAUFORT.

Twenty women travelled 29 miles to attend a meeting held in this district, all of whom signed membership cards and returned to form their branch.

SOMERSET EAST.

The formation of a branch in this town can be considered a real triumph. We have been trying

for months to find a contact here to call a meeting. Last week when we reached Somerset East for the meeting we were told that the women had only come to the meeting as a courtesy to us as we had come so many hundreds of miles. We were also informed that they were not interested in the movement and that they would not form a branch. We were most surprised, however, to see about thirty women at the meeting, many of them Afrikaans speaking, and two of whom definitely belonged to the Nationalist Party. The result of the meeting was the formation of a branch, a good sale of badges and newsletters and an eager enquiry as to when the next Cabinet Minister would be visiting them.

GRAHAMSTOWN.

Continues to increase its membership and has always given us very necessary support in anything we undertake.

ALEXANDRIA.

Until a few weeks ago the membership was too small for the formation of a branch. I, however, addressed a meeting there at which 45 women signed membership cards and so was able to form a branch. The members here are always willing to do a vigil and always accompany us to any demonstration.

BEDFORD.

One of our strongest country branches with a membership of over 100 women. This is a very active branch and we can usually rely on them to help out with black-sashing ministers anywhere in that part of the country.

ADELAIDE.

Continues to grow and increase its membership. This is a small branch, but sent a car and four women to Cape Town, so enthusiasm is certainly not lacking.

DAGGABOERNEK and MORTIMER.

These two places are just a very small settlement comprising about 100 people. The branch there does invaluable work by distributing our literature and magazine to the women of a large National Road Camp near by.

NEW BRANCHES FORMED SINCE THE LAST CONFERENCE.

WITTEKLIP and THORNHILL.

This is a very small and isolated farming community. The small branch we have here is most enthusiastic and the members come a long way to join P.E. in vigils and demonstrations.

SALEM.

A small village branch with enthusiastic members most of whom are farmers' wives.

SANDFLATS and BUSHMAN'S RIVER MOUTH.

This branch, too, consists mostly of farmers' wives, who also are working hard and distributing literature to women at a nearby road camp.

BATHURST and PORT ALFRED.

We have combined these two towns into one branch as they are only a matter of six miles apart. One of our newest branches but already proving a valuable asset.

A.P.

DURBAN

When Mrs. Foley visited Durban in September, and addressed a gathering of women in Miss Killie Campbell's home, it was decided to form a Branch, elect a Committee, and send a Representative to the informal Conference in Johannesburg, which took place shortly afterwards.

Since then, there has been a slow but steady increase in membership, and activities. We do not receive as many visits from Cabinet Ministers as some centres, but we have tried not to let any of them escape unattended, despite their efforts to elude us—such as during one of their visits, driving over an unopened bridge, and boarding a plane forty minutes before time, rather than walk through our ranks.

We have maintained a weekly vigil of four members at the Post Office—scene of the very first meetings of the National Convention which drafted our South Africa Act, since September, except for the period recently when we were asked to suspend vigils because the Senate Act was sub judice.

We held an all-day vigil there on the anniversary of the first meeting of the National Convention.

NEW MARITZBURG BRANCH.

We were very pleased when, after a visit by one of our members, Maritzburg not only formed its own Branch, but became a separate region, taking over from us the responsibility for the Northern areas of Natal.

At the swearing in of the new Senate on 13th January, we maintained vigils at five points in Durban, and other vigils were arranged by other Branches. But our biggest effort of all has been the convoy to Cape Town, when Durban sent five car loads of women—all along our route we were met by groups of Black Sash women, who shared in vigils with us—we did ten in Natal. All who went, shared the thrill of a great experience, culminating in the impressive drive along Adderley Street, and the vigils outside the Houses of Parliament.

OTHER NEW BRANCHES.

More recently, we have been pleased to note the rapid growth in the **Hillcrest-Kloof-Botha's Hill** area which since 1st March, has been constituted as a separate sub-region, and we look forward to co-operating with them under the able Chairmanship of Mrs. Barry Smith. Another promising development is the recently formed **Port Shepstone and Area** Branch, which, within less than two months has gathered 70 members, scattered over a wide area, who nevertheless maintain constant contact with each other.

Two Durban members recently visited Port Shepstone and addressed an enthusiastic meeting. Many members had come long distances over bad roads,

and we were greatly impressed by their fine spirit. We have also sent speakers to **Park Rynie** on two occasions, and their branch is progressing despite difficulties.

We also have small branches at **Mt. Edgecombe, Durban North, and Westville-Pinetown.**

SILENT MARCH.

When the Senate was dissolved, we arranged a silent march of women, headed by women drummers, and this, despite rain, was an impressive and moving occasion. Such great interest was aroused, that it was even suggested that eight Black Sash women should be elected as Senators to carry on the protest inside Parliament itself. But as the political parties were divided on the issue, we had to ask our supporters to drop the idea.

We have had consistently good publicity from both morning and evening papers, and this has helped us considerably. The Durban region has its own problems, which have prevented any spectacular or meteoric progress; nevertheless, we feel there has been much valuable work done, and we are grateful to all who have contributed to it.

MRS. J. F. HILL.

BOSVELD BRANCH

In September, 1955, I was asked to organise the area which lies between north of Pretoria and Pietersburg. It may sound fantastic when I tell you that this area covers more than thirty thousand square miles, but it must be remembered that much of this territory is located in the sparsely populated bushveld.

I think that we have made good progress—when the nature of the terrain we have to negotiate and the distances involved, are taken into consideration. What I have done, has only been made possible by the close co-operation of my secretary, Mrs. Pullinger, who (apart from doing her normal duties as Secretary) has never hesitated to make her car available, at any time, for Black Sash work.

The effective establishment of branches in our area necessitates a house-to-house canvass, and the maximum number of houses which can be effectively visited in one day of twelve hours, is limited to about sixteen. This involves travelling at least two hundred miles, once we operate away from our immediate locations—even in comparatively populated areas such as Settlers. The number of homesteads visited per day can be reduced to something like four or five, in more sparsely populated territory, such as North Waterberg.

Nevertheless, branches have been established at **Warmbaths and Vaalwater;** and at

SETTLERS-TUINPLAATS.

Under the very capable leadership of Mrs. Mitchell and Mrs. Weir, these areas have combined to form a very active organisation.

REGIONAL REPORTS (Continued)

MAASTROOM.

Maastroom lies some 170 miles north of Naboomspruit and I have every hope of forming a sub-branch there. Mrs. Hall, a woman of over 70, who was in Cape Town during our recent demonstration, was so impressed that she joined there and has since contacted me. I have supplied her with literature, and hope to visit this area in the near future.

Mrs. R. TURNER (Chair).

ORANGE FREE STATE

Ministers visiting the Free State have been "sashed" as opportunity offered. When Parliament opened on 13th January, vigils were held in 19 towns and considerable public interest was shown in the demonstrations. **Goldfields** has shown a heartening increase in membership.

In February, Free State members took their place in the Convoy to Cape Town. Seven women from Bloemfontein, fourteen from the Goldfields, and about the same number from the Eastern Free State joined the Convoy, and all were most impressed and heartened by the experience.

BORDER

VIGILS.

The weekly Saturday vigil has been maintained since October, apart from the three weeks suspension. On 13th January, opening of Parliament, vigils were kept in East London outside the City Hall and Post Office, as well as in **Barkly East, Queenstown, Umtata, Idutywa and Matatiele**. East London women went to **Berlin, Kingwilliamstown, Stutterheim and Komgha**.

On 4th March we had a Mass Demonstration outside the City Hall, East London, holding a banner on which was printed:

"The Constitution has been Broken—Die Grondwet is Vernietig."

CAPE TOWN CONVOY.

Seven cars, carrying twenty-one women, went to Cape Town representing the Border Area. Amongst these were women from **Queenstown, Berlin and Umtata**. The women were most enthusiastic and inspired by this trip. Our congratulations to Cape Town for the wonderful organisation of this terrific task, and also to Johannesburg for the arrangements of the actual Convoy to the Cape. On our return we timed our arrival in East London to coincide with the Saturday morning vigil. Having given the Press the news in advance, we drove down Oxford Street in convoy, arriving at the City Hall at 11 o'clock, and then joined the fifty-odd women in the last half hour of their vigil.

Taking advantage of this wave of enthusiasm, we arranged a Public Meeting on 22nd February. This was well attended, and nearly one hundred new members were signed up. One bright spot is **Tarkastad**, which gave us a most pleasant surprise by writing to say that they had thirteen signed-up members.

NEWS LETTER.

The News Letter has been very well received, and we feel that this has filled a great need.

Copies of the January and February newsletters were sent to every Border member, and we do feel that this is a very good way of keeping in touch with the activities of the Black Sash, particularly in the country areas.

PIETERMARITZBURG

News from MOOI RIVER is to the effect that at their last meeting, it was agreed to hold Vigils outside the Magistrate's Office once a month, the first Wednesday in the month, when their Stock Sale is held in the village and more people are about.

The Black Sash in PIETERMARITZBURG has held its weekly vigils this month, and apart from two executive meetings and a general meeting on 9th May, when sixty members and friends attended, the ordinary Black Sashes have had a quiet time. But not so our chairman, Mrs. Corrigan and Mrs. Russell! These two, together with Mrs. Durrant, and our two other branch representatives, Mrs. Henderson and Mrs. Newsom, had an extremely interesting, but also exhausting, four days attending the Bloemfontein Conference.

To my mind two of the most constructive decisions arrived at, were (a) the effort the Black Sash is determined to make to achieve greater harmony between the two White races. (The suggestion that members should have Afrikaans children to stay in their homes appeals tremendously. I sincerely hope that the wheels will soon be set in motion); (b) The other point which has also captured our imagination, is to educate our members!

We in Pietermaritzburg are urging members to join the Afrikaans classes held at the Technical College, as we feel these have everything to recommend them.

If the Black Sash does nothing more than awaken the ordinary woman to a wider political knowledge, and if every one of its thousands of members can say she is bilingual, then it has indeed served its country.

Both our representatives to the Conference remarked on the feeling they had had, that the women working for the Black Sash were inspired by a selfless devotion to their country.

MIDDELBURG (CAPE)

Progress in the Middelburg (Cape) region has been slow, and there is very little increase in the membership on that given at the Port Elizabeth Conference. **Craddock** has had a small membership for some months, but has not yet formed a separate branch. The other towns in our region, **Aliwal North, Beaufort West, Hanover, Richmond and Colesberg** have all been approached, but we have met with very little response.

One car was sent with the Convoy to Cape Town, and vigils were held in **Graaff-Reinet** and **Middelburg** on the first day of the Joint Sitting.

We have only had one opportunity of "haunting" this year, when Mr. Erasmus opened the Colesberg Show.

Mrs. Green paid a visit to the Region at the end of March, and addressed meetings at **Graaff-Reinet, Middelburg** and **Craddock**. M.C.

From The Scotsman, Edinburgh

THE first number of a newsletter from Johannesburg was received here to-day by a colleague. It is "The Black Sash", a publication intended to spread news of the activities of the South African Women's Defence of the Constitution League. This has become known in more familiar terms by the black symbol of mourning worn by members in silent demonstrations of protest against a Government regarded as "committing a grave spiritual offence against the soul of South Africa."

A curious new factor is being brought by the movement into South Africa's political life. It began only last May, with a dramatic march of women in Johannesburg to the City Hall, and a later presentation of petitions collected from 290 towns in the Union. The women of the country, it is claimed, have never before shown themselves so politically conscious.

"Black Sashers", though united in the common effort, belong to different political affiliations. Their emblem of mourning and their reproachful vigils at the public appearances of Ministers now symbolise an extended sphere of activities. Lectures, drawing-room meetings, the formation of branches, and the issue of pamphlets have become part of the programme.

The newsletter remarks that: "As long as the Government continues on its catastrophic course, so long will the Black Sash be seen as the emblem of the anger of the ordinary people of South Africa against a politically immoral regime." — Reprinted from **The Scotsman**, Edinburgh.

IN MEMORIAM

DIT was met 'n gevoel van diepe persoonlike verlies dat ons by die aanvang van ons Bloemfonteinse Kongres die tyding van die heengaan van Mevrou C. Pienaar van die Tak Welkom ontvang het. Meeste van ons het Mevrou Pienaar vir die eerste keer op weg na Kaapstad met die Konvooi ontmoet, en haar leer ken as 'n opregte, waardige Afrikaanse vrou en moeder, wat tegelykertyd diep belanggestel het in die probleme van haar land. Deur haar vriendelikheid en gasvryheid was sy algemeen bemind, en ons diepste medelyde gaan uit na haar man en kinders. Die Swart Serp en Suid-Afrika het 'n groot verlies gely.

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.

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C. Mrs. S. Osborne, 626 Essenwood Road, Berea.
S. Mrs. J. Hill, 27 Meyrick Avenue.

EAST LONDON

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

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

SOUTH-EASTERN TRANSVAAL

C. Mrs. M. Fourie, Marievale Mine, P.O. Mariesthaft, Nigel.
S. Mrs. S. Salters, 8 Excelsior Court, Boksburg.

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

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C. Mrs. M. Corrigan, Midhouse, Swart Road.
S. Mrs. O. Forsyth, 2 New England Road.

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

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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.

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