

The Black Sash and the Future

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Sh. Duncan:

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1. Keynote address by Mrs. Sheenah Duncan  
- what it dealt with. - apartheid & reform
2. No need to present a body like the Black Sash or an audience like this with a long list of events & developments which reflect & more than prove the seriousness of the crisis in which we find ourselves  
look ahead &
3. In my address I would like to deal shortly with the question of the Black Sash and its future. Why not looking further ahead — talk about long-term goals & plans? Simply because in all the conflict & confusion reigning at present I find it very difficult to make any prediction or indicate specific directions of expected developments. Why this uncertainty & unpredictability? Because:

- 3.1 - Too many national issues have remained unresolved or unattended to for too long <sup>anger, ~~frustration~~</sup>
- 3.2 - Too many warning signs of conflict have been ignored or disregarded for too long
- 3.3 - Too many brutally oppressive legal, political, econ. & social measures have been applied for too long

~~That~~ → That is why I believe that the whole situation will become increasingly violent

## Effects?

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1. Almost total loss of respect for law & instruments of applying laws as well as for the moral authority to uphold the rule of law. That is why increasingly:
  - individuals & groups of people are taking the law in their own hands - crude justice
  - "necklace" killings, burning of homes, Kanyago camps.
2. Massive underground or low-profile activity largely unknown to the white community - catching them unaware. Time after time.
3. Confusion ~~is~~ will inevitably increase ~~among~~ within the white community because of a) lack of abysmal ignorance b) effective govt propaganda. But the following can in any case be said with a reasonable measure of certainty:  
Facing a period of:
  1. Increasing polarization: white & black - black & black and to a much lesser degree white & white
  2. Increasing radicalisation: As bombings, detentions, torturing, burning of homes, shootings, woundings & killing by security forces continue to increase (e.g. White River). The increasing activities of vigilantes (nationalists) are further going to fan the flames of resistance.

## 3. Increasing repression:

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- 3.1 - of ~~more~~ all forms of effective resistance, both non-violent & violent: e.g. bombings (2 UDF leaders), demonstrations (White River). No doubt that the state of emergency has become permanent - it does not need to be relaxed - it has become a permanent feature of the future until liberation comes.
4. Increasing organised liberatory action: Despite the brutality of the security forces, despite bombings & detention & charges the mood of the people being a diff message = #
  - students & youth
  - workers & trade unions
  - core organisation
  - political bodies (UDF, Azapo)
  - consumer boycotts
  - strikes
  - termination of all-black educationActing singly or in a combination of force all with one central aim: to destroy apartheid & to achieve liberation.
5. Fundamental change only as result of increasing economic, polit<sup>pressures</sup> & counter-violent actions  
E.g. release of UDF & polit. prisoners, return of exiles
6. Role of parliament & pol. parties will become more & more irrelevant: the vital ~~decisions~~ <sup>decisions</sup> affecting the future of our country are already being made outside parliament:
  - a) military & police
  - b) anti-apartheid committees

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7. Number of victims of conflict going to escalate =
- internal refugees (food & shelter)
  - sanctions
  - black upon black violence
  - white upon black violence

How ~~does~~ <sup>will</sup> all this affect a body like the Black Sash within the next year or two?

1. Urgent need to name & decide on your future position & role:
- mainly protest? Predominantly political? Informative & educational? (e.g. conscientizing white opinion?) Service role (lectures of apathy)?
- Have to take following into consideration:

1. Nature of future society - hardship
  2. Position of <sup>future or</sup> predominantly white orga-  
nisations like Black Sash.
  3. Relationship to liberation movements
2. Urgent need to find new objectives & new priorities for immediate future.

→ Mood of anger, defiance