

# CIVIL RIGHTS

PC16/2/1/4/13



News Letter

(Box 3807, Cape Town)

January, 1958

## A Good Beginning

The meeting held in the Cathedral grounds of Cape Town on December 10 in celebration of the ninth anniversary of the acceptance by the United Nations General Assembly of the Declaration of Human Rights, though small, was dignified, effective and, we hope, the forerunner of greater things in future years. We are most grateful to the Dean for allowing the meeting to be held there; to him and the other speakers (Dr Rollo and Mr D. van der Ross) for their contribution; and to all those who helped with preparations. Local papers also gave good publicity to the meeting. One of the speakers hoped that December 10 would become as widely celebrated as November 11.

We give below the Preamble and the main points of the Declaration.

### Preamble

"Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

"Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

"Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse as a last resort to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rules of law,

"Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

"Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

"Whereas member states have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

"Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realisation of this pledge,

"Now, therefore, the General Assembly proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for

all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for those rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of member states themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction."

Main Points (with acknowledgements to the Liberal Party)

- a) Equal protection of the laws, without discrimination based on race or colour (Articles 2, 7, 10).
- b) The right to vote and to share in the process of government (Art. 21).
- c) Protection against arbitrary arrest, detention or exile (Art. 9).
- d) Protection against arbitrary interference with privacy, family, home or correspondence (Art. 12).
- e) Freedom of movement and residence within the limits of one's country, and the right freely to leave the country and return thereto (Art. 13).
- f) The right freely to marry and found a family (Art. 16).
- g) The right to own property, and protection against arbitrary deprivation of property (Art. 17).
- h) Freedom of opinion and expression (Art. 19).
- i) Freedom of peaceful assembly and association (Art. 20).
- j) The right of equal access to the public service on the basis of merit alone (Art. 21).
- k) The right to free choice of occupation and employment (Art. 23).
- l) The right of parents to choose the kind of education that their children shall receive and the official language medium of such education (Art. 26).
- m) The right of access to the Courts of Justice for the protection of the individual's rights and freedoms (Arts 8, 10, 11).

The "Argus" in a leading article on December 10 pointed out that Articles 13, 16 and 21 (e, f and b above) were mainly responsible for South Africa's failure to ratify the Declaration because they are contrary to government policy. The paper says: "It is the denial of these rights that is the foundation of the United Nations campaign against the present Government of the Union. The reply, of course, is that the Union cannot be held guilty of an infringement of the declaration, because it is not binding on her; but this is a lawyers' argument which does not satisfy those who contend that the reason why South Africa does not ratify the declaration is that she

denies the human rights of non-white persons."

The "Argus" further says, rightly, that "the purpose of the declaration is not to lay down a body of principles to which all governments are bound to conform but rather to set up an ideal standard which all governments should strive to attain". The need, it says, is for "real agreement on a universal moral code. Though intended to express such agreement, the declaration must be understood not as the achievement of it but as the first step towards it."

So we have plenty to aim at in 1958!

### Wake up, South Africa!

But are any of the rights we have listed above enjoyed by all South Africans irrespective of race or colour? Moreover, South Africa to-day denies some of these human rights not only to non-whites but to whites as well. Which merely confirms the truth that if a government restricts the rights of some of its citizens, it is sooner or later bound to restrict the rights of all. None of us to-day are not limited in some of the freedoms which the United Nations has laid down as the standard for every individual citizen. No wonder South Africa did not ratify the Declaration!

Help us, as a League, this year to open the eyes of our fellow-citizens to the seriousness of the position into which South Africa has allowed herself to drift. We need your help.

### New Publications

We would draw our readers' attention to two new publications which are appearing this year.

1. "Contact", a fortnightly newspaper aiming to give "the news behind the news". First issue, February 8. Annual subscription, £1 rent free; individual copies 9d. Address, 403 Parliament Chambers, Parliament Street, Cape Town. Sold by C.N.A. This promises to be a most worth-while paper and deserves the support of all our readers.

2. "Civic News", a monthly newspaper dealing with civic affairs. Subscription, 5/- p.a. Address, Box 4444, Cape Town. Worth reading for information about our local government and its problems.

### Group Areas and Municipal Autonomy

The proposals which Dr Dönges laid before the nine major municipalities of the Union in November 1957, as reported in the Press, constitute the most serious threat yet made to the independence of local government. Briefly, the Minister proposes to compel municipalities to establish townships as provided for under the Group Areas Develop-

ment Act of 1955. If the municipalities are not prepared to do so, the Minister wishes to have the power to establish a Townships Board in their area. This Board would be empowered

(i) to establish townships both within and without the municipal area;

(ii) to charge the municipality concerned with the cost. Further, the Board would not be subject to the legal restrictions and safeguards ordinarily imposed on local authorities in the interests of sound town planning.

The Cape Town City Council sent two delegates to the conference. Its General Purposes Committee has reported that the proposed amendment is "another case of the dangerous principle of one law for the ruler and another for the ruled". It would strike at the very roots of local autonomy, and would make serious inroads on the right of local authorities to control and utilise their own resources and facilities in accordance with their own wishes. The Committee says:

"The establishment of townships is clearly a stage at which the Government finds difficulty in the implementation of the Group Areas Act, and the amendment is designed to transfer the responsibility to local authorities by compulsion ...

"The staggering effect upon local authorities of the exercise of powers on the lines contemplated in these clauses is sufficient in itself to justify the strongest possible opposition to the measure as a whole. Such powers cannot but have a demoralizing influence upon local government throughout the country ...

"It is clear that the Minister is determined to seek powers of compulsion which were never envisaged at the time the original Group Areas Development Act was discussed and passed in 1955."

Every major municipality except Pretoria is completely opposed to this proposed amendment of the Act. Municipalities were given until the end of 1957 to submit amendments. We hope that there will be the strongest opposition throughout the country to what one of our Councillors described as an "Act designed to destroy local government".

Archbishop Clayton's Pamphlet

Have you got your copy yet? 1s.2d post free.

Finance

We enclose our annual accounts and information about your sub. Thanks to all who have already paid!

MOYA

CIVIL RIGHTS LEAGUE (CAPE TOWN)

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR

ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1957

BALANCE 1ST JULY, 1956 293.13. 6

RECEIPTS 155.15. 1

Donations and Subscriptions 96.16. -  
Interest 8.19. 1  
Contribution re printing of pamphlets 50. - . -

£449. 8. 7

PAYMENTS

Secretarial Charges and Disbursements 103. 2. 6  
Printing, Stationery and Advertising 10.19. 9  
Bank Charges 3. 6. -  
Rental of Post Office Box 2.10. -  
Sundries 6.18. 6  
South African Institute of Race  
Relations (I ) 6. - . -  
Share of Conference Expenses  
Interdenominational African Ministers'  
Federation - Donation 15. - . -

147.16. 9

BALANCE ON HAND      30TH JUNE, 1957

Standard Bank of South Africa Limited, A.B.C. Branch, Cape Town	7. 2. 7	
South African Permanent Building Society, Savings Account	289. 2. 3	
Cash on hand (banked July/August)	5. 7. -	
	<hr/>	301.11.10
		<hr/>
		£449. 8. 7
		<hr/> <hr/>

I have to report to members that I have audited the books of the Civil Rights League (Cape Town), and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the above account reflects a true statement of the Receipts and Payments of the League for the year ended 30th June, 1957, as shown by the books.

(sgd) A. H. DOBLE,  
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT (S.A.)

CAPE TOWN,

30th September, 1957

MOYA

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* To our Members: According to our records your last \*  
\* payment was \*  
\* £ 5:5 :- covering 1956 - ? \*  
\* \*  
\* If you do not agree, or if you meant it to cover more \*  
\* than one year, please let us know. Minimum sub. is \*  
\* 5/- per calendar year. If not already sent, your \*  
\* payment would be much appreciated. Please let us \*  
\* have any change of address. \*  
\* \*\*\*\*\*

P.M. Shown