



Because of the prohibition of gatherings, only a solitary member of the Black Sash (Mrs. M. Petersen) demonstrated at the top of Adderley Street, Cape Town, on 22nd May.

prevent the Sasher on vigil from feeling too lonely. Radio signals were flashed but they declined to answer when asked if they were sending for reinforcements! At one stage a loud debate was overheard on whether or not they should "vat die vrou nou." The question is: Shouldn't the police be arrested for intimidation?

Communist?

Writing in *The Cape Argus* on 22nd May, Mr. H. G. Lawrence, M.P., made the following comments:

"No criterion, so far as the public knows, has been laid down by the Minister of Justice for deciding whether a proposed meeting or gathering is 'in the interest of the continuation of normal activities.'

"A meeting in the Cape Town City Hall, sponsored by the Black Sash and arranged for last Friday night, was refused exemption from the ban.

"Presumably, therefore, it was not regarded as a continuation of normal activities, despite the fact that one of the subjects to be discussed was the pass

laws—something which the Black Sash organisation has been campaigning against for a long time.

"As this Black Sash meeting in the City Hall was banned through failure to obtain an exemption, it must be concluded from the terms of the preamble to the banning order in the *Gazette* that Mr. Erasmus believes such a meeting would further the achievement of the objects of Communism!

"As a matter of profound public interest, therefore, let me put these direct questions to the Minister of Justice:

- (1) Does he consider that the proposed meeting would have furthered the achievement of the aims of Communism?
- (2) If so, does he regard the Black Sash organisation as a Communist instrument; or, if not, does he regard criticism of the pass laws as being likely to promote the Communist cause?

"These questions are pertinent at the present time. A frank answer to them may help some people to decide whether or not there should be jubilation among Whites and non-Whites now that we are about to become a republic and leave the Commonwealth."

A National Convention

THE declaration by staff members of the University of Cape Town, calling for a multi-racial meeting of leading South Africans to work out agreed principles prior to the holding of a national convention, was supported in a statement issued by the Black Sash.

Mrs. E. Stott, national president, said: "In common with other bodies and individuals the Black Sash believes that the only way to save our country from self-destruction and danger from within is to find the way in which all our people can live in harmony and all our resources of intellect and goodwill can be drawn upon.

"From their public pronouncements and our own personal knowledge of non-White leaders, we know that there is still a spirit of goodwill and a genuine desire for peaceful negotiation.

"In this knowledge and belief, the Black Sash has for some time been working for mutual discussions; and we believe that, for a meeting such as that called for now to be fruitful, each section must be represented by leaders chosen by their own people and by no one else.

"The Black Sash reiterates its offer of its services for the calling and organization of such a meeting either on a local or national basis."