

notes personal insecurity and denies material advancement, a system in which they do not participate either as lawmakers or law-appliers, for although there are a few black magistrates there are no black judges.

My understanding of the black mood at present is that repression is as much an issue as discrimination. The recent implementation of the security laws has drawn attention to other, non-political, weaknesses in the system, as it affects blacks. A glaring example is the inadequacies of legal aid.

What few rights blacks have, are generally rendered unenforceable through lack of funds. It is common knowledge that black consumers are exploited by white businessmen, but they often do not have the financial ability to enforce the legal remedy. Except for *pro deo* defence in the Supreme Court, the State-run Legal Aid Board does not extend legal aid generously to persons charged with criminal offences. In 1975-76 only 790 applications for legal aid were approved in criminal cases while more than 10 000 were approved in civil. During this period almost 300 000 persons were imprisoned. Consequently many people are being jailed without legal defence.

Clearly the State Legal Aid Board in South Africa will not be able to extend legal aid adequately. Yet in the US and UK no person may be sentenced to imprisonment unless he has been legally defended, or at least offered a lawyer.

It is here that community service has a role to play. It cannot improve the law, but it could make the administration of justice more even-handed by the establishment of voluntary legal aid clinics. Such clinics could be set up in the precincts of pass courts to assist blacks charged under these laws. A voluntary clinic could be set up for black consumers in central Johannesburg at lunch-time and on Saturday mornings.

A local organization might provide funds for the care and education of dependents of banned people and prisoners of conscience. It might also collect funds for legal aid in political trials.

White South Africans tend to have a great fear of 'meddling in politics', but how can it be meddling in politics to assist a person charged with a criminal offence? Or to provide a black man with advice so that he may sue a furniture dealer for acting unlawfully under the HP Act?

Such forms of assistance would ensure that the legal system works properly, and give blacks new faith in both whites and the system. I cannot promise an organization that embarked on such a course a warm and welcoming response from the Government but it would be acting perfectly legally.

Where the future of South Africa and our children is at stake, we cannot place popularity with Government above our duty to counter repression — this great source of alienation in our society.

OBITUARY

DAISY SOLOMON

DAISSY SOLOMON was known to her friends by her first name, and in her public life it was never prefixed by a title. This is indicative both of the warmth and charm of her personality and of the importance of her contribution to the struggle for women's rights.

Born in Sea Point, daughter of Saul Solomon, famous member of the SA Parliament, she was early influenced by the liberal atmosphere of her home. Her interest in women's rights was fostered by her mother who was a forceful fighter for them.

Perhaps the best known episode in their lives was when they were arrested while taking active part in the suffragette movement in London. They were sentenced to one month's imprisonment in Holloway Prison.

Though reticent on the subject, Daisy did admit that forced feeding and other treatment called for great endurance during that time.

Overshadowed by this is the fact of her social work in the East End of London where she taught in girls' clubs.

After World War II she returned to South Africa to live with her brother Judge Saul Solomon in St James, Cape.

During that time she spent two years sorting and cataloguing family papers. Those of historical interest she finally presented to the SA Library.

She will be long remembered by the Black Sash for the balanced judgement she contributed when asked.

In her home she extended a loving welcome to a large circle of relatives and friends.

To all who knew her, her passing is a great loss.

M. J. GRANT