

HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST MARGARET NASH REMEMBERED - SABC NEWS, 9 AUGUST 2011

Human rights activist Margaret Nash remembered August 09 2011 , 7:05:00

Human rights' activist Doctor Margaret Nash was remembered at a memorial service in Cape Town yesterday. Nash has been described as a fearless speaker of truth and a champion of the poor. The 82 year-old Nash died in Cape Town last week and was cremated on Friday.

Nash was a human rights activist in organisations including **Black Sash** and Gun-free South Africa. She was also a senior member of the Christian Institute and the United Women's Congress. A report she authored in 1980 on forced removals caused a ripple effect that saw the banishment of what was one of the most inhuman practices by the apartheid government.

The privileges that came with her white skin are said to have been of such torment that Dr Nash dedicated her life to champion the cause of those who lacked any privilege on the basis of their blackness. She was governed by the maxim 'to live simply so that other can simply live'.

To those who knew her as an activist - the most enduring memories are those of Nash going to squatter camps when they were being demolished and standing in front of bulldozers.

"Dr Nash had a deep concern for the under-privileged. She was prepared to stand up for what she believed in and also put her body in the way of what wasn't right," said Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane. "She had an uncanny ability of really getting to core of problems and she was not interested in superfluous and material things," added Nash's former colleague, Diana Andrews.

MARGARET NASH: HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST - SUNDAY TIMES, REVIEW 07 AUG 2011

MARGARET Nash, who has died in Cape Town at the age of 82, was a human rights activist who in 1980 authored a damning report on forced removals, which the apartheid government promptly harmed. In 1984 a church delegation took a reworked version of her report to the United Nations, Britain and Europe ahead of a tour by South Africa's then president, PW Botha.

It was a devastating document, caused severe embarrassment for Botha and added to international pressure to stop forced removals. Nash worked out that between 2.5 and 3 million people had been forcefully moved from their homes out of an intended 6 million. She also wrote comprehensive reports on the demolitions of squatter camps in the Western Cape. She was a valuable source of information for church groups opposing apartheid in Germany, who used her information to ratchet up public pressure on SA. Nash was born in England on March 1 1929 and came to Durban with her family in 1931. After matriculating she went to Rhodes 'University in Grahamstown at the age of 16 and worked as a teacher.

She joined the Liberal Party in 1960, then the Black Sash and the Christian Institute, which — until it was banned in 1977 — provided a welcome outlet for her need to be more actively involved in opposing apartheid. A committed Anglican, she was on the Anglican Board of Social Responsibility for many years and worked for the SA Council of Churches, on whose behalf she wrote many of her reports. Nash was appalled by the apartheid government's assault on human dignity but did not confine her sense of outrage to reports. She went to squatter camps when they were being demolished and stood in front of bulldozers in brave but futile attempts to stop the process. She was a person who was not afraid of anything or anyone.

She could be combative and was no "queen of tact", as a friend put it. Nash never hesitated to take on church leaders if she felt they were not responding loudly or strongly enough to the demands of the moment. She returned to university in the early 1970s to study theology at the University of Cape Town, and in 1975 published a doctoral thesis on "the ecumenical movement in the 1960s". She was a driving force behind the movement. After apartheid fell she became energetically involved in the campaign for a gun-free South Africa,

which was launched in 1994. Nash had a sharp intelligence and the ability to lay out her arguments with a devastating logic which those disagreeing with her learned to dread.

Sharing a committee room with her was seldom a relaxing experience. Her outstanding characteristic was probably her persistence. She was not loud or aggressive, but she was persistent. If she was set a task or project she would finish it, come hell or high water. She was a person who did not know how to give up. Nash, who never married, is survived by her sister Eleanor Nash, a former professor of psychiatry at Groote Schulte' Hospital. — Chris Barron STRONG VVILLED: Margaret Nash

TRIBUTES CELEBRATE THE LIFE OF SOCIAL CAMPAIGNER AND THEOLOGIAN MARGARET NASH - CAPE TIMES, 3 AUGUST 2011

'She was a champion of the marginalised and voiceless'. Social activist Margaret Nash died early yesterday at St Luke's Hospice after a long illness. She had devoted her life through writing and involvement in ecumenical work — to improving the lives of those less fortunate and fighting apartheid laws. She was 82.

Funeral arrangements have not yet been confirmed. Former Archbishop of Cape Town, Njongonkulu Ndungane, said she had been well-informed on issues of justice and an outstanding theologian. He described Nash as a champion of the marginalised and the voiceless". Ndungane recalled Nash being encouraging and friendly to him in his student days.

Gerald Shaw, author and former assistant editor of the Cape Times,, said he had known Nash for about 40 years. "She was a most courageous woman and a dedicated opponent of apartheid and race discrimination." Nash studied in the 1970s at UCT and her doctoral thesis, "The Ecumenical Involvement in the 1960s", was published by Ravan Press in 1975.

She was involved with the Christian Institute from July 1969 and was active on the Anglican Board of Social Responsibility for many years. Nash was associated with the Black Sash, where she was an active member in its Claremont branch, serving on its regional council and later on its national executive. Nash also spent time promoting projects at her local parish, St Saviour's Church, in Claremont. Nash was born in England on March 1, 1929, nearly two years before her family emigrated to Durban. She matriculated early and entered Rhodes University in 1945 at the age of 16 and later joined the Liberal Party of South Africa in Durban in 1960.

Civil and human rights activist Dot Cleminshaw said she had first met Nash while she was a "very impressive member" of the Christian Institute. The women had later worked together at the Black Sash. "She was a very a brainy and intelligent person. She was very anxious to do something for the poor people." Anglican activist Sid Luckett said Nash had been suffering for some time and, in a way her passing had been a blessing. "It is obviously really tragic, but we have been expecting it for a while. She was a significant figure. There is a personal sadness that she is gone." Luckett had worked closely with Nash for some time. "She was very feisty; that's the best way to describe her. She was passionately concerned about justice issues, particularly the issue of pass laws. We did a lot of work in that regard."

Former Cape Town mayor Gordon Oliver said he was deeply saddened to hear of Nash's death. "She was a brave, highly principled woman who has certainly inspired me over the years." Nash is survived by her sister, Eleanor Nash.

OBITUARY: MARGARET NASH: HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST - TIMESLIVE, 8 AUGUST 2011

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Nash, who never married, is survived by her sister Eleanor Nash, a former professor of psychiatry at Groote Schuur Hospital.

MARGARET NASH, A FIGHTER FOR JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS - CAPE TIMES 17 AUG 2011

I FIRST met Margaret Nash at the Christian Institute, Mowbray, in the early 1970s, and later at Black Sash meetings. We were close friends over a long period, unusually, in that although we shared liberal political views and were members of the Civil Rights League, the Black Sash and other organisations, our personal lives were

very different. I was married and had two children: she never married. She was a Christian. I was religious, but without adherence to any denomination. I joined the Christian Institute because I admired the antiapartheid speeches made by Dr CF Beyers Naude and the Rev Theo Kotze. Margaret opposed injustice and cruelty at every turn. She played a major role in the church, particularly in ecumenical organisations, including the Student Christian Movement and the SA Council of Churches; and while she joined the Liberal Party of South Africa in Durban in 1960, she was not active, but was definitely so as a member of non-party-political organisations like the Civil Rights League (which formed in the same year as the Afrikaner National Party came to power) and later, the Black Sash, the Women's Movement for Peace, Gun Free South Africa and, as a believer in conscientious objection, the End Conscription Campaign.

When South Africa turned to democracy, Margaret and I joined the ANC but I left soon after the leadership refused to accept the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I have a feeling that Margaret, too, allowed her membership to lapse, but we never discussed it. Margaret's first concern was for the poor and voiceless. We were members of a small group of activists who supported the people living in Crossroads. We met weekly in the office of their lawyer, Michael Richman. His firm allowed him many hours of unpaid service to find ways of preventing the demolition by officials of their shacks and their forced removal to remote rural areas. When any of the friends of Crossroads faced charges arising from our presence there and in other such camps, Margaret and other Black Sash members went to court to show support. On June 6, 1977, when I appeared with four priests for trial under the Publications Act over allegations of production, distribution and possession of "undesirable documents", Margaret was there. The prosecutor questioned me about the wisdom of criticising the actions of the authorities. I replied that it was part of my cultural heritage to do so. The prosecutor said: "Yes, but at a time of crisis?" I said: "What crisis was that? The Prime Minister said there was no crisis."

Prime Minister BJ Vorster had indeed made such a statement. Margaret was also a feminist, and when I raised in the Black Sash the right of women to have a safe, legal abortion in the first trimester of pregnancy, she and her sister, Dr Eleanor Nash, gave me and the Abortion Rights Action Group their support. Their opinion was persuasive in getting the support of the Black Sash throughout the country for this change in our law on abortion. Several years ago Margaret was diagnosed with a malignant intestinal tumour. In the ensuing years she continued her work. Someone once asked her when she was going to retire, to which she quickly said: "Not while Madiba is still working."

The cancer spread and finally she was moved to hospitals, first to St Luke's Hospice, then to Murambi House in Wynberg. I informed several of her friends, including Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu. He went straightaway to visit her and prayed over her, according to Anglican rites. The staff were excited and delighted to see him and Margaret would have shared their joy. Considering the social and one-time legally enforced separation of the races, I guess Margaret had more black friends than any other white person I knew. She died quietly on August 2. Margaret had a formidable mind and indomitable spirit. South Africa is the poorer for her death. DOT CLEMINSHAW MARINA DA GAMA

MARGARET NASH REMEMBERED AS GOD'S 'GREAT DISTURBER' - CAPE TIMES 09 AUG 2011

VETERAN anti-apartheid activist Margaret Alice Nash was remembered as one of God's "great disturbers" as friends and comrades paid homage to her at a small memorial service held at St George's Cathedral. Nash, 82, died last week after a long illness at a hospice in Kenilworth. In the 1970s and the 1980s, she had been a vociferous voice against forced removals, and was a member of numerous social movements, but mostly active in the Black Sash and the ecumenical Christian movement.

Among those mourning her death, were some venerable figures of the antiapartheid movement and social activists like Reverend Peter Storey, Father Michael Lapsley, Rachmat Jaffer, Mary Burton, Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane, Jim Cochrane and Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu. Nash had been so organised, that recently when Rev Peter Fox told her about plans for Kader Asmal's memorial service, she quipped, asking whether minutes had been taken. Fox said Nash was a "cendoo" person— someone who had been a key link to the anti-apartheid movement overseas. Burton, a former national president of the Black Sash, said Nash's

intelligence and her sometimes combative nature, covered a heart which was dedicated to the quest for justice for all. Lapsley told the service how Nash had grown disappointed with post-apartheid South Africa and the direction of the ANC in government.

A prolific letter writer and author of several reports, her writing highlighted the injustice of apartheid South Africa. "Her articles, letters and statements were known for the strength of character. They were put to good use by the organisations in which she was involved," Burton said. Storey remembered Nash as "a prod, ensuring that we turn our faces to where people were hurting the most". "Margaret never did anything by half, once she decided to support Gun Free South Africa, she gave it her all. She had a consistent, passionate, commitment to non-violence. "She gave the same effort to those who were victims of forced removals. She taught and lived, what she called 'assertive non-violence'," he said.

Over the years, Nash had been active in several organisations like the Christian Institute, Civil Rights League and the End Conscription Campaign in the 1980s. When she joined Gun Free South Africa in 1996, Storey said she encouraged activists to "think more deeply and to network more widely". "Margaret was always asking the pertinent questions. She held us all to God's vision of the higher world. "She was one of God's great disturbers. May she continue to disturb us, even as she enters her rest," Storey said. Ndungane remembered Nash as someone who didn't moderate the use of her voice when it came to protesting the injustices of apartheid.

FAREWELL TO A COURAGEOUS VOICE - 09 AUG 2011 THENEWAGE.CO.ZA - THE NEW AGE

At a memorial service for the late Margaret Nash, 82, in the St George's Cathedral on Monday, her family and friends described her as a "courageous voice on social justice".

Nash died last week in Claremont after a long illness. During the 1980s she courageously wrote about the forced removals in the province by the apartheid government.

According to a report by Nash, almost 3 million people were forcibly removed from their original homes. In the 1980s, she strongly opposed apartheid and forced removals.

She had a doctorate in theology, having focused her dissertation on the ecumenical movement in the 1960s. She was also involved in a number of organisations, including the [Black Sash](#) and the South African Council of Churches.

In a tribute to her yesterday, Rev Peter Fox said that her activism and compassion went hand in hand.

"She enjoyed travelling and camping. She also spoke widely about the role of the church in promoting social justice. And she firmly believed that our religion evaluated how we relate to life," he said.

Rachmat Jaffer, another close friend of Nash, said: "She was a woman of worth. She always asked: 'Why can't we live simply so that others can simply live?' She will be sadly missed by me and my family."

Mary Burton from the [Black Sash](#) said that Nash was in favour of justice for all and an end to racism. "Other members from the [Black Sash](#) learnt a lot from her. She stood up against apartheid and was concerned about the poor and voiceless people. Margaret was a friendly loyal person with a sense of humour. She had physical and moral courage and was a feisty fighter for justice and liberty.

The former Archbishop of Cape Town, Njongonkulu Ndungane, thanked Nash for her influence in society. "The first time I met her she made a valuable impression on me. She was also my point of reference when I once did research in Cape Town. I thank God for her influence in the life of our church," he said.

Margaret Nash was unmarried and is survived by her sister, Eleanor.

BLACK SASH 'STALWART WARRIOR FOR JUSTICE' - SUNDAY WEEKEND ARGUS, NEWS REVIEW 07 AUG 2011

Margaret Nash is remembered as a strong apartheid opponent, writes Wendyl Martin. Family and friends of late activist and Black Sash member Margaret Nash gathered at St Saviour's Church in Claremont on Friday for her funeral. She died of cancer at the age of 82 on Tuesday at St Luke's Hospice. Black Sash trustee and friend Di Oliver told Weekend Argus that Nash had been a determined person and a great warrior for justice. "She had clear ideas on everything. Her focus was bringing about justice. She was one of the strongest opponents of apartheid."

The Black Sash website says Nash was born in England at Milford-on-Sea in March 1929. Her family immigrated to Durban in January 1931. She joined the Liberal Party of South Africa in Durban in 1960. In a tribute on the website, it said she was an active member of Black Sash's Claremont branch, and served on its Cape western regional council and later on its national executive. Oliver said: "She was streets ahead of us. She had enormous devotion."

Oliver recalled times when Nash would carry around a bag containing A4 sheets of paper with information about apartheid, which she would hand out. "She had remarkable commitment, and although she was part of the organisation, she was also a strong individualist. "Her home was a meeting place. She would have supper ready and never minded having gatherings there."

The Black Sash tribute says Nash was closely involved with the Christian Institute from the time she joined in July 1969 and was active on the Anglican Board of Social Responsibility. Oliver said Nash also worked for the South African Council of Churches and that Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu visited her while she was at St Luke's and that Nash was thrilled to see him.

In addition to family and friends, Oliver said the funeral yesterday was attended by Trevor Manuel and members of the African National Congress, which she had links with. Oliver described her friend's condition before her death as frail and thin. "She knew she was at the end of her life. She was a committed Christian. She told me she was ready to go home." She is survived by her sister Eleanor Nash. Oliver said her ashes would be buried at the graves of her parents, at St Saviour's. A public memorial service will be held at St George's Cathedral at 1pm tomorrow.