

BLACK SASH NATIONAL CONFERENCE MINUTES APRIL 1993

SESSION 1

Saturday 2 April 1993

Chair: Karin Chubb

1.1 DEDICATION

The Conference stood while the dedication was read.

1.2 WELCOME

Jenny de Tolly welcomed the conference. Special apologies were given from Noel Robb and Sheena Duncan who was on her way to London, having to miss her first conference for 28/29 years. Apologies were also read from Ethel Walt and Rosemary van Wyk Smith.

1.3 ROLL CALL

A roll call was taken of all those attending conference.

1.4 GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATAL MIDLANDS

Mary Kleinenberg gave out details of practical arrangements and welcomed everyone.

Mary Burton thanked Natal Midlands for their hospitality and Jenny de Tolly for her presidential address the previous evening.

STEERING COMMITTEE

It was announced that Sarah-Anne Raynham and Sue Joynt would act as the steering committee and any queries or requests about the agenda should be directed to them.

The RULES OF PROCEDURE were adopted.

CLOSED SESSIONS were announced. These were to be the first part of session 4 when there would be preparatory discussion around resolutions and statements, and the business sessions, 9 & 10.

EVENING MEETINGS were listed and additional requests were to be made to the steering committee.

B. Molteno made announcements about additional conference papers.

A complete index to papers and reports with corrected numbering would be sent to each region in due course.

1.5 HEADQUARTERS REPORTS

1.5.1 GENERAL HEADQUARTERS REPORT (paper 2)

Jenny de Tolly said that in the past year, headquarters had focused on CODESA, voter education and human rights. Other issues considered included violence monitoring and amnesty. She said that it is helpful to have issues based in the regions and that specific portfolios must increasingly be allocated to regions so that the workload and expertise is shared.

Mass action must continue to be discussed and expanding our membership base continues to be important.

The extended National Executive meetings had been successful and it has been helpful to have regional reps. visiting HQ and feeding in information about the regions, as the nat. exec. has only been able to do a limited amount of travel to the regions.

During the year the Conditions of Employment for staff had been adopted and management training workshops were held.

The Vision Statement had been considered as was the report from the Viljoen commission.

It was with regret that the resignations of Sheena Duncan as National Advice Office Coordinator and Beryl Stanton as National Financial Administrator was noted. They were thanked for the wonderful service they have given over the years, and Lacon Stanton was thanked for all his work.

1.5.2 NATIONAL TREASURER'S REPORT (paper 3)

Sue Joynt reported on financial problems being experienced. The membership levy had brought in less than predicted during the year as a result of regions "pruning back" unpaid up members.

Unexpected capital expenditure was incurred with the buying of a fax machine and a modem, and Telkom bills had increased beyond what had been budgeted. Thus the year ended with a R10 000 deficit and no money in the bank.

The budget for 1993 was R100 000 and an extra R20 000 would have to be found to meet this.

The conference would need to decide how to raise further funds.

1.5.3 MAGAZINE COMMITTEE REPORT (paper 4)

Birga Thomas said that the editorial committee had consisted of three members, but Shauna Westcott had sadly resigned and new committee members might have to be sought.

Costs were rising in line with inflation.

Regional communication could be improved.

The Eastern Cape team were thanked for their edition of the magazine, with special thanks to Lynette Paterson.

The most successful issue of the magazine this past year had been that on elections and the media.

More feedback was requested from membership, especially constructive criticism.

Domini Lewis thanked all those who had helped with production of the magazine through the year.

DISCUSSION ON HEADQUARTERS REPORTS

Discussion centred largely around financial issues. L. Pollecutt felt that budgets for region-centred portfolios on national campaigns should be included in the national budget and also asked whether regions should take total or partial responsibility for their portfolios. L. Pollecutt wondered whether we would consider employing people to work on some issues, and J. de Tolly suggested we employ someone to lobby on legislation issues.

S. Transvaal felt we could try harder to raise funds, e.g. get funding for national conference. J. de Tolly responded that we should continue to raise more of our own funds in order not to develop dependence on others.

H. Southall asked whether it would be possible to raise more money through the magazine, through means such as raising subscriptions or expanding its distribution. K. Chubb asked that this be pursued in the magazine committee meeting.

1.5.4 ADVICE OFFICE TRUST NARRATIVE REPORT (paper 5)

This was written by S. Duncan and was tabled and read by Marj Brown.

It was mentioned that TRAC had become independent of the Black Sash.

The Urban Removals office had closed but the link with Black Sash continues

All advice offices are seeing increasing numbers of destitute clients. The country has an inadequate social security system. There is concern at the increase in violence in the country and it was noted that there has been an increase in threats made in advice offices.

Voter education was underway with volunteers helping, but the training of local election monitors will become a priority. Several publications have been produced and are being widely used. Donors were thanked and the report concluded that we still have a long way to go towards democracy and justice.

K. Chubb thanked S. Duncan for her report. Sue Philcox later highlighted this report as being outstanding.

1.5.5 ADVICE OFFICE TRUST FINANCIAL REPORT (paper 5.1)

This was tabled and presented by Beryl Stanton.

Our income was examined: in 1990 we raised about R1 million
in 1991 we raised R1 800 000
in 1992 we raised R1 277 000

Our major donations dropped from R2 million to under R1 million in 1992 while expenditure increased. Also, in 1992, for the first time in years, we spent more than we had and had to cut into capital.

Costs were summarised, and it was emphasised that our chief expenses are staff related and there would be extra staff costs as the posts of National Advice Office Coordinator and National Financial Administrator were to become fully funded posts.

B. Stanton warned that some donors will not be able to match their previous donations. Ethel Walt is fundraising in the U.S.A. and we await results.

Every employer is being asked to complete the forms concerning pension funds.

The financial records would be computerised soon.

The 1991 audited accounts were available for inspection.

B. Stanton thanked all those with whom she had worked in the Black Sash. K. Chubb thanked her in return and said she would be missed.

The Viljoen Commission report was carried over to the next session.

SESSION 2

Chair: Jenny de Tolly

Regional\Advice Office\Fieldworker Reports

2.1 NATAL COASTAL

The REGIONAL REPORT (paper 10) was presented by Ann Colvin. Recognition was given to the Natal Coastal Advice Office: the commitment and dedication of the women was commended, especially for showing how well salaried staff and volunteers can work together.

After the AGM the regional council was properly constituted. The region has a good profile locally and is a founder of local consultative bodies. It hopes to gain in strength as a region in the future.

2.1.2 The ADVICE OFFICE REPORT (paper 10.1) was tabled and presented by Seema Ramburuth. She said that most of their time had been spent on job descriptions, training issues and communications. Workshops have been held, the next one will deal with voter education. 460 clients are being seen per month, about 77 of them being new. Labour-related problems were covered in the report. The office only does limited training due to a lack of personnel, and other organisations are involved in this area.

2.1.3 Discussion and Questions

A. Colvin drew attention to the additional paper from the region - Infobriefs on Dismissal (paper 10.2). Marj Brown expressed her concern about old age pension problems. There has been national research on the subject based on the few cases seen in the Johannesburg Advice Office. She said she was not exposed to the daily frustrations of office work and therefore needed good communication with the regions who would carry forward any future campaigns. S. Ramburuth commented that the bulk of their work was concerned with disability grants.

2.2 NATAL MIDLANDS

2.2.1 The REGIONAL REPORT (paper 9) was presented by Mary Kleinenberg. She reminded us that their region had read a paper in memory of 'Skumbuza in lieu of a regional report at 1992 national conference. More than 3 000 people had died countrywide in the continuing violence in the last 6 years. The murder of 'Skumbuza had been pursued and all three accused were acquitted after their case was held in camera. Issues considered in the region were research into regional violence, "You and the Constitution" and proposals into recycling which were accepted by the City Council. The Women's Coalition is doing well locally but was ridiculed by the Natal Witness. The region is networking increasingly and effectively, e.g. over the demolitions in the Happy Valley squatter area which had a successful outcome.

2.2.2 Bev Glennie spoke to the ADVICE OFFICE REPORT (paper 9.1). She introduced herself as a recently appointed temporary case worker, after two years as a volunteer. There are six volunteers and two full-time workers in the office. 4 000 cases had been seen in the past year and the queues were often very long. Pension queries mostly involve KwaZulu, and there are frequently delays of three months or more with the authorities settling the cases. District surgeons have different standards when it comes to qualifying applicants for disability grants. The numbers of domestic worker cases continues to increase and farm worker problems will increase with the new laws and procedures. Voter education is a major involvement, and there is much interest in the public defender system on which Gail and Penny had attended a conference. Unfair dismissals - about 700 in the year - continue to be of concern. Gail Wannenburg spoke to a research report on UNFAIR DISMISSALS which is included in the Advice Office Report. A package of infobriefs on dismissals is attached.

Discussion And Questions

- * A question arose about means test figures and Annemarie Hendrikz asked that the a.o.s check that their means test figures were equal for all races. She added that briefs on farm workers might be duplicating the work of others like the Legal Resources Centre
- * Penny Geerdtz will lead a discussion on paralegals which will have an impact on fundraising.
- * The security guard pamphlet has been translated and the Goldstone Commission is considering their role in the violence
- * A book is being written by the Women's group on rape.

2.3 ALBANY REGION

- 2.3.1 REGIONAL REPORT (paper 12) was presented by Lynette Paterson. The region had channelled most of their energy into CODESA and the E. Cape issue of the magazine. Their major concern with Codesa was the representation of women. As for the magazine, they found it a great opportunity for research, working together and celebration. The Daikonia project of the ANC has been established in Grahamstown and it is an inspiration

Structural comments: The workshop had pulled the region up short. It needs to restructure as it no longer has one omni-competent leader, but many leaders with varying expertise. The region and advice office are run by separate committees which is not helpful. Glen Hollands is doing a large amount of B.S. work.

- 2.3.2 FIELDWORKER REPORT (included in paper 12) was presented by Glen Hollands. In 1992 he focused on monitoring and mediating where he assisted in about six major disputes. The Grahamstown committee is well perceived by the local people. Development forums are popular and effective. The first voter education workshop is currently being held. The Local Government\Joint Administration option issues are very important.
- 2.3.3 ADVICE OFFICE REPORT (included in paper 12) was presented by Viv Botha. There are many cases of people seeking to change their dates of birth on their ID's in order to qualify for a pension. There are about 22 volunteers in the regions which is very healthy, and they assist in file reviews. The management workshop raised issues which are being followed up, like volunteer job descriptions.

Questions And Discussion

- * L. Pollecutt raised the issue of the appalling wages being paid to domestic wages in the area - many cases of less than R100 per month for a full-time domestic, and one case of R65 per month.

2.4 NORTHERN TRANSVAAL REGION

- 2.4.1 REGIONAL REPORT (paper 6) was presented by Durkje Gilfillan. She emphasised that the B.S. must put para-legals back on the map. Their region would like to hold the national portfolio on the abolition of the death penalty. They were involved in a death penalty issue in Bophutatswana.

A highlight for the region was a visit from Anneke van Gijlswijk before she had to leave the country.
The region is involved with Education for Democracy.

2.4.2 Martha Olifant commented on the FIELDWORKER REPORT (part of paper 6.1). She mentioned that their campaigns included domestic workers and voter education.

2.4.3 Laura Best spoke to the ADVICE OFFICE REPORT (paper 6.1). She commented on maintenance cases.
LHR is doing case studies on three advice offices for a report on the role of paralegals for the Law Society.
A recent focus has been domestic workers.
Submissions have been made to the Department of Manpower.
The N. Transvaal region of the B.S. has had much media exposure, some of it irresponsible.
Voter education is taking increasing time.

Questions And Discussion

Mary Burton commented on the importance of fundraising initiatives, including keeping volunteers and members involved.

2.5 SOUTHERN TRANSVAAL REGION

2.5.1 The REGIONAL REPORT (paper 7) was presented by Laura Pollecutt. She mentioned that they had fewer active members in the region.
Many members are involved with Peace Action, which is a member of NIM. NIM may help with coordinating the work.
The preparation for the book "Priorities for Women's Rights" was very worthwhile.
Demilitarisation: Jackie Cock spoke about the post World War 2 programme to reintegrate into society those trained for war.
The region has been very active in the Campaign for Independent Broadcasting which is involved in monitoring the new system for SABC Board nominations. We should be involved in nominating women to the Board and lobbying for them.
TRAC: it is hoped that TRAC will be reporting back at regional B.S. meetings.

2.5.2 The ADVICE OFFICE REPORT was read by Marj Brown, the National Researcher. She introduced the new advice office coordinator, Zodwa Masina.
Private pensions are a major issue, but unemployment is an overwhelming problem.
The report combines some national and some regional work.
Advice offices are hugely important and we need to draw up a document emphasising their role in development, empowering people and shaping future policy.
There is an exciting voter education programme for the clients in the queue, presented by Dan Shabangu.
Much work has been done on legislation.
Marj is on a new regional welfare forum set up by the ANC.

Questions and discussion

- * Karin Chubb commented on the book "Open the Doors, We're Coming through" and said that it was produced by both S. Transvaal and Cape Western regions. She acknowledged the work of Dot Cleminshaw and Candy Malherbe.

- * Glen Hollands raised a query as to why The B.S. focused more on Peace Action than NIM. It was explained that the B.S. had initiated Peace Action, a network of NGOs, in order to coordinate monitoring work. Jenny de Tolly commented that it had been decided on a regional basis. Further discussion followed, until Mary Kleinenberg asked for monitoring to be discussed later.

2.6 EASTERN CAPE REGION

- 2.6.1 Angie Hamlet spoke to the REGIONAL REPORT (paper 13). Their region is fortunate to be experiencing little violence. A concern is the low membership, and the lack of deep involvement of members. They are seeking to popularise the org. so as to draw in more members. The focus of the region is on the advice office which is well run, and on training and research.
- 2.6.2 The TRAINING REPORT (paper 13.3) was presented Judy Chalmers. Training in the region is done by Debbie Mattheus who travels widely. In 1992, 44 people were trained. The trainer works closely with the advice office to their mutual benefit. The present training period is 3 weeks long and a longer period for fewer people is being considered. The programme encourages women from the little dorps to come. They are glad to be able to help the drought stricken rural areas.
- 2.6.3 The RESEARCH REPORT (paper 13.2) was presented by Lynn Texeira. The U.I.F. system is under investigation. She is working on a booklet on Marriage Laws and a fortnightly article in the local newspaper. Information is being collected on the government food aid programme - NNSDP (National Nutrition and Social Development Programme). In February 1992, 600 NGOs were allocated huge sums of money. Local committees were set up and in June staff were appointed as coordinators. But planning is bad, and food parcels are being given to organisations with no research about need or agreement on criteria. The programme is having a divisive effect in the communities, and it seems geared to win support for the government. Operation Hunger is also very concerned about NNSDP. It is clear that independent monitoring of the programme is needed, and this is where B.S. should play a role.
- 2.6.4 The ADVICE OFFICE REPORT was given by June Crichton. The training sessions have been very valuable and there is follow-up contact. Social pension queries comprise the majority of cases. Children being held in cells and cases of police assault have also been important issues. The detention of children in cells led to regional working groups being set up country wide. However, June's presence on this committee has been obstructed. There is much double-talk from the police investigation unit on police assault and this should be documented. The region would like to consider coordinating both these issues.

SESSION 3

Chair: Else Schreiner

Regional\Advice Office\Fieldworker Reports contd.

INTRODUCTION: The session began with Else Schreiner reading a letter from the Natal Midlands' Women's Coalition, congratulating the Black Sash on their conference, and expressing their support, appreciation and best wishes.

REPORTS:

3.1 BORDER

3.1.1 Before reporting from Border, Penny Geerdts read a statement on her position at this conference, as requested by the regional management forum. The statement read that the advice office fieldworker's presence at the conference was considered important, but that there had been funds for only one "delegate" from the region. The hope was expressed that the delegation might be extended with financial assistance from the national headquarters. She stated that as an advice office coordinator she had no voting rights at the conference, and argued that, as there were 27 paid-up members in the region, she should have been accorded voting rights.

3.1.2 ADVICE OFFICE REPORT (paper 11.1): the advice office in East London was in the process of reevaluation and change. Some disillusionment was being experienced, but there were also positive factors. The management structure had been strengthened and become more participatory. Contributions to Black Sash issues continued to be made. Case statistics: the statistics compilation was difficult, for although 2 154 new cases were listed, this did not give an indication of the real number of cases dealt with. It was suggested that a standard procedure for statistics compilation be adopted by all regions for easier comparison and analysis.

Increasing poverty and unemployment has lead to an increase in the number of advice office cases, and Border had come to the conclusion that B.S. doesn't have the resources to take on developmental work. Activities: The advice office had been active on a number of forums: the Voter Education Coordination forum; East London Gender Focus group; Domestic Worker Action Group. Their field worker had been active in civic service organisations and preschools.

Visitors: there had been increasing interest from international visitors (about 60), from visitors representing various organisations, monitoring, as funders etc.

3.1.3 Discussion:

Mary Burton said that the decision to collapse the region was regretted, but it was pleasing to note that it had been possible to maintain the advice office management committee by consensus where possible, and that no sessions were closed. Regional delegations could be funded where necessary, but criteria for selection had not yet been developed. Black Sash believes that advice office coordinators should attend, but this could not apply to all workers. There followed an exchange on Penny's status at the conference. In discussion, it was explained that where there is no formal operating region, there is informal, as opposed to formal, representation at conference. There was some confusion about the status of Border region, and some discussion on the position of fieldworkers, but this discussion was curtailed and held over for

another time.

4.2 KNYSNA

4.2.1 Sylvia Reid reported for KNYSNA REGION (paper 8.3), saying that they had concentrated on women's issues.

Activities included:

- a workshop on the empowerment of women
- involvement in the start of the local Women's Coalition. There was some confusion in this and it was felt that women had not really been consulted and that there was some tension between the apparent two streams of women's issues in the area.

Advice office issues:

- The a. o. was collecting information about staff abandoned by building sub-contractors.
- domestic worker problems
- cashiers at garages and the bakery having money deducted from their salaries. Police action had been threatened.

FIELDWORKER (paper 8.5): Phumlani Bukashe had been working in 10 different areas and had expressed concern about the lack of coordination among service organisations in the region, and that it was possible that funds were being poured into badly run projects.

4.2.2 Discussion

Else Schreiner clarified the government's Women's Bureau involvement with Bills on women's issues. There had not been real consultation, but rather an attempt at cooption of other women's organisations. Annemarie Hendrikz commented on the deductions by garages. As this illegal, it is possible to complain to the main company, e.g. Shell, and they would take away the franchise from the offender.

4.3 CAPE WESTERN

4.3.1 Ann Hill reported for CAPE WESTERN REGION (paper 8), saying that with the changing environment, membership and volunteer participation were falling in numbers. The region had decided to look for particular foci. These were:

- a.o. work, in particular destitution
- monitoring, and a constitution/legislation which performs a watchdog function
- Education for Democracy Forum.

Action: Protest action had fallen. However there had been

- a public meeting on CODESA
- a petition after Boipatong
- participation in alliances
 - Tutu's Citizen's Alliance
 - voter education group
 - Cape W. Women's Group
 - National Children's Rights Campaign
- a letter on the death penalty
- Gender Advocacy Project
- Membership questionnaire: 92 out of 500 of which were returned.

The video was considered successful; the morning market was disappointing; participation in the Viljoen Commission was valuable; and workshop management skills were gained.

Annemarie Hendrikz reported on the Mowbray ADVICE OFFICE (paper 8.2), saying that their work was linked to the regional council's work. There were 40 casework volunteers and the number of cases had risen by 67%. The earlier suggestion of uniform statistics was endorsed. Promises were being made by CPA officials, but the results were not being seen by the community. The relationship with the authorities needs to be discussed. Research and analysis had been lacking and two research projects were being aimed at this year.

FIELDWORKER (paper 8.4): Thandi Gaqa had been working hard in the Karoo area. She had been able to interact with CPA officials, especially with regard to social pensions. She had also been involved with human rights education. It was noted that L.H.R. in the area wish to second Thandi.

MONITORING: A. Hendrikz mentioned Paula Cardoza's Monitoring Coordinator's report (paper 8.6). The comments about the Goldstone Commission enquiry in the area were interesting, and some serious problems had been identified.

Discussion:

Mary Burton commented that the press had reported poorly on the Goldstone Commission enquiry. For instance, Helen Zille who had coordinated work by organisations around the taxi war had led evidence, but one party had called her a "biased and reckless" witness, and this was what was reported. There was further discussion and it was asked whether anything had been done to publicise the issue. Gail Wannenburg said that it had been taken up in Natal.

Ann Hill said that maintenance was one of Cape Western's projects, but that they couldn't take on the "You and Maintenance" booklet. A separate report on Cape W's Education for Democracy would be copied for general distribution.

Else Schreiner complimented the a.o.s on their work.

Some announcements were made and this part of the session concluded.

VILJOEN REPORT

This part of the session was introduced by Mary Kleinenberg, who gave some of the background on the Viljoen report. The motivation for the report was the concern of some regions, like Border, which led to an investigation into the Black Sash management structures, human resources and finances. Many interviews had been held and the overall sampling had been reasonably representative. The style of management had been described as "participatory management by objectives"

M. Kleinenberg then outlined the objectives. It is important to focus more clearly, especially for funders. The Black Sash is seen as driven by membership, yet there are 50 paid staff. Formal management is required for this.

Recommendations for the Advice Office Trust:

It was found that there was a lack of communication to the extended national executive meetings.

- all minutes should be widely distributed
- there should be a trustee from each geographical region
- all decisions taken by individuals should be formally ratified at the next Trust meeting
- budgets should reach national executive by November
- the agreement of three trustees is the minimum necessary for a financial decision to be taken
- unplanned payments should be avoided
- worker's forum to be consulted on changes.

Recommendations to the national executive:

- this conference should be the final policy-making body
- those attending funding meetings should come well prepared
- the nat. exec. takes decisions on Trust funds
- the regions should retain their autonomy and there should not be top-down management
- Worker's Consultative Forum very necessary
- choices should be made with "grass roots" reps.

M. Kleinenberg thanked all those who gave of their time to be interviewed.

Discussion:

J. de Tolly opened the discussion by giving some of the most pertinent responses of the national executive to the report:

- the responsibility to a.o. Trust was taken seriously and it was agreed that this was a priority
- support for the appointment of three paid positions
- The Viljoen Commission recommends that the A.O.T. remain as a separate body in order to avoid a possible R400 000 tax. This structural separation, however, causes problems such as accountability. There was concern at the perpetuation of the split, and a suggestion that there be one Trust to manage all donations, with trustees from all the regions.
- It needs to be clarified what work the A.O.T. can fund, and different projects should have separate accounts. Tax experts need to be consulted further. A common kitty would obviate problems such as who could be funded for conferences.
- Must be careful not to alienate the voluntary sector which could become atrophied. Consistent management is needed throughout.

She concluded by asking what structures would meet further needs? Would the conference mandate the integration of A.O.T. with the Black Sash?

Marie Dyer supported integration. In Albany the regional work was separate from the advice office. Reps attending conference are not necessarily involved in advice office work, and this does cause structural problems.

J. de Tolly suggested the formation of a working committee to sort out the issues.

Mary Burton reported on Raymond Tucker's letter pointing out incorrect information on the taxation issue in the V.C. report, viz. "tax exemptions on donations". This needs to be documented.

RESOLUTIONS

Mary Burton suggested the following two resolutions:

Resolution 1:

That this 1993 National Conference of the Black Sash accepts the Viljoen Commission recommendation that, in addition to the position of National Researcher, two further positions should be established - those of National Advice Office Coordinator and National Financial Administrator. It supports the action taken by the National Executive to draw up job descriptions and advertise these two positions, and formally authorises the employment of persons to fill them.

Furthermore, since these two officers of the organisation will work closely with the National Researcher, a new job description should be drawn up for, and in consultation with, the existing holder of that position, Marj Brown.

Resolution 2:

This National Conference adopts the report of the Viljeon Commission, noting the responses which have been tabled as valuable working documents to assist the organisation to achieve more coordinated processes, more streamlined structures and better management systems. The Conference mandates the National Executive to take steps to carry the process forward.

The first resolution was adopted with one amendment - "further positions" to read "further paid positions".

The second resolution would be written up and distributed for a decision to be taken on the Sunday of this Conference.

SESSION 4

Chair: Mary Burton

Preparatory discussion on Resolutions, Vision Statement and Contested Human Rights; Discussion on Natal Violence.

- 4.1 **DEATH PENALTY:** Isie Pretorius spoke to this statement from N. Transvaal region. There was discussion about the wording and Mary Burton suggested that the relevant wording be altered and the statement be re-presented on Sunday. A working group was formed to take this forward.
- 4.2 **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION:** from S. Transvaal region. It was suggested that the statement be shortened. A working group would alter the wording. Laura Best to speak to the statement on Sunday.
- 4.3 **DRAFT MOTION ON THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN:** to be dealt with on Sunday. Jean Osterloh to take this forward.
- 4.4 **VISION STATEMENT**
The National Executive had put together a draft version (Draft no. 1) which contains all the responses received. Sarah-Anne Raynham explained how the draft had been drawn up. Mary Burton spoke to the statement.

Discussion followed and a group volunteered to rework the wording - Lynette Paterson, Marie Dyer, Sarah-Anne Raynham and Fidela Fouche. N. Transvaal region offered to translate the final Vision Statement into Afrikaans and Sotho.

Tribute was paid to Sarah-Anne for all the work she had done in drawing up the Vision Statement.

Kerry Harris raised the issue of the wording "so help us God" in the Dedication of the Black Sash. It was decided to incorporate this into further discussion of the Vision Statement.

5 NATAL VIOLENCE

A panel consisting of Thomas Hadebe, John Aitchison, Jenny Irish and Gerry Mare were introduced by Georgina Hamilton. They addressed the conference on the ongoing violence in Natal.

Jenny Irish - active in monitoring in Natal.

Since January 1993, 319 people have died in Natal. This is not a realistic representation of what is happening as statistics do not take into account the human suffering on many different levels that is being experienced in this region.

She has been involved in violence monitoring in the region since mid-1990, and a trend that she has seen is that since the unbanning of the ANC in 1990, there has been a great deal of political posturing for propaganda purposes by all the parties involved, and a great deal of energy spent trying to claim political affiliations of the victims. On the basis purely of statistics it makes it very difficult to say who are the "goodies" and who are the "baddies". There has recently been a great increase in the violence in Natal but it is debatable that this is because there is a decrease in the violence in the PWV area. What is disturbing is the increase in sophistication of the attacks and weaponry. In 34% of the incidents recorded by Jenny's office in 1992, attacks were carried out by small groups of heavily armed men, usually wearing balaclavas, who were able to move into and out of the area very swiftly. They also targeted a particular home or homes, no matter who was in the home. The question arises from the nature and pattern of the attacks whether this is a hit squad's.

There has been a dramatic increase in assassinations of high profile political activists in the region, and attacks on returnees. Ambushes are also on the increase, and intimidation, especially in rural areas, is rife.

There is a proliferation of automatic and other fire arms and allegations have been made that the security forces are supplying weapons to the people involved in violence. The Kwazulu government also has the power to issue G3s and shotguns to Kwazulu chiefs, headmen, indunas etc, many of whom are caught up in the violence. A clampdown of weapons must be of a general nature and must involve all sides.

The lack of free political activity continues to be a problem, e.g. ANC being refused permission to hold political meetings in certain areas, people not being allowed to bury their dead.

There is a common perception that the violence would come to an end if only Mandela and Buthelezi could settle their differences as the state has constantly denied any involvement. However there have been numerous revelations concerning senior government and security force members being involved in covert operations, and unlawful assaults and unlawful shootings by the security forces are continuing to happen, reminiscent of the state of emergency. On many occasions the security forces have been alerted to an imminent attack and have not arrived, and on others have stood by while atrocities have taken place in front of them. Investigative

procedures seem to be biased with atrocities aimed at the IFP being thoroughly investigated, while those aimed at the ANC seem to receive, at best, inadequate attention. The KwaZulu police appear to be the biggest stumbling block to peace in the region. Finally, there is frustration that the Goldstone Commission can only make recommendations but does not have the right to prosecute, and where recommendations have been made, the government has failed to implement them.

John Aitchison

Points raised at a 1988 meeting of the Natal Midlands region of the Black Sash still remain relevant.

- 1 South Africa continues to remain governable but not manageable
- 2 Political violence has been deeply embedded since 1988. Statistics of the violence were presented for the period from 1984 onward. There is a strikingly rhythmical pattern to the outbreaks of violence, characteristic of military type activities requiring strategic and logistical planning. There are indications that when the violence erupts in Natal, it slackens off in the Transvaal, and an hypothesis is that certain fighters are exported to the Transvaal and/or Natal for particular campaigns.
- 3 At one time violence distracted people's attention from the apartheid state and kept pressure off the government. Now structures like the Goldstone Commission and National Peace Accord are diverting attention from what we need to do to solve the crisis we are in.
- 4 No money has been given from the government for reconstruction and for refugees. R6 million was set aside for reconstruction in early 1990, but disbursement was made conditional on the violence ceasing. This is an appalling case of blaming the victim.
- 5 There is nobody addressing the problem of the long-term losers in the political conflict - probably the IFP. There needs to be a programme of aid and education and protection for these people.

At the 1988 meeting, ways were suggested of what the Black Sash could do. These points follow.

- 1 Pressure must be kept on the state to take responsibility for the violence. This can be done by disseminating information and by "pressurising the pressurisers", whether the business community or the international community.
- 2 Encourage peace moves by NGOs such as churches, civic bodies etc. to keep a watchful eye on what is happening. Peace could also be encouraged through economic reward - e.g. Imbali set up a rehabilitation centre but have received no money to assist them from international donors or the government.
- 3 Pressure must be kept on the police to investigate properly and speedily so that the most effective deterrent, that of being caught, becomes a certainty.
- 4 Pressure must be brought to replace corrupt, unrepresentative and sometimes murderous local authorities with democratically chosen bodies.
- 5 Counselling the traumatised victims of the violence and addressing the human needs of the people through appropriate education, leadership training, support for youth structures, self-employment etc.

Thomas Hadebe

Peace in Natal (PIN) was first established in Natal as a monitoring group under the Democratic Party, but has become a non-political independent trust which monitors violence and facilitates peace initiatives. There are only two fieldworkers and they work mostly in the areas around Pietermaritzburg.

(From here I will quote from the Conference issue of SASH which summarises this session so well).

"Some peace 'agreements' are not agreements at all, as, for example, at Table Mountain, where violence has ceased because the IFP, with the aid of the security forces, has driven out ANC supporters, who now live as displaced persons. A common tactic of the security forces is to destabilise an area and then send in the internal stability unit (I.S.U.) to arrest persons active in starting peace initiatives, thus making it difficult for PIN and other peace-promoting organisations to gain headway. The ISU has its own investigators and, having the authority to demand and remove police dockets, can cause evidence to disappear. There is great distrust of the police.

The quality of leadership in any area determines if lasting peace is possible. Rural areas differ from townships in that it is important to know protocol and to understand the nature of the community's relationship with adjacent farming community. It is alleged that partisan farmers supply arms to preferred groups, and rural communities are suspicious of farmers' 'helpful' suggestions, for example, for neighbourhood watch systems.

Occasionally, with the cooperation of well-disposed members of the SAP, peace agreements between ANC and IFP can be signed, opening the way for community development. Monitoring provides information about communities and their needs, and development should go hand in hand with the peace initiative to make it work, showing that peace brings substantial rewards.

Patient negotiation is required so that, eventually, displaced persons can return to their homes."

Gerry Maré

The other obstacle to negotiation in the country besides violence is regionalism. At the moment South Africa is divided into four provinces and ten bantustans, while the proposal for the future from the National Party is that there be seven regions, and from the ANC that there be ten. Both parties agree that there be a delimitation commission to decide on the drawing of borders, but Chief Buthelezi rejects the idea that others draw up KwaZulu's boundaries and decide on its powers as it has explored constitutional possibilities over a long time.

(Again to quote from SASH) "Historically this began in 1951 when the Tribal Authorities Act laid the foundation of the bantustan system. In 1959 the Promotion of Self-Government Act established eight (later to become 10) bantustan areas and tribal authorities were to become regional authorities. In 1970 the Zululand Territorial Authority was established, and became the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly (KLA) in 1972: Zululand was now a self-governing territory with certain powers. Inkatha was formed in 1975. By 1977 the powers of the KLA included control of education and the KZP, all with the approval of the ANC in exile.

Buthlezi's establishment of the region during the 1980's was for him a stepping-stone into national politics - a stepping stone compounded of violence, of setting up administrative structures and of research. The most obvious component of the last was the 1982 report of the Buthlezi Commission, ... in which prominent academics, politicians and business people were involved. His next goal was to consolidate the bantustan with the whole of Natal."

In 1986 the government abolished provincial elections, ending regional autonomy at that level. "...Buthlezi indicated that he did not want non-existent provincial power, but bantustan power across the whole region. A strange picture emerged here, of a possible powershift in which the bantustans would be the new power regions in South Africa and the provinces, whittled away and impotent, run by functionaries appointed in Pretoria. In August 1987 a joint executive authority (j.e.a.) was established to consolidate cooperation between the Natal authorities and the government of the KwaZulu bantustan.

Towards the end of 1992 the Kwazulu government devised a constitution and presented it to the KLA which formally accepted it. The constitution establishes a strong state. At present it applies only to KwaZulu, but if it goes to the joint executive authority, and if the JEA approves it, the JEA becomes the transitional authority for the whole region. The next step would be to test the opinion of the citizens of the region in a referendum, and acceptance would turn it into the constitution for the entire region.

In other words, this past and projected chain of events will create federalism from the bottom up. This region and its constitution will have to be recognised nationally by the negotiators and those working on a constitution for the whole country, and the potential for dissatisfaction and disagreement among those opposed to federalism and strong regional power bases is very great.

Georgina Hamilton thanked the speakers for their valuable contribution on such a disturbing subject.

SATURDAY 3 APRIL

SESSION 5

Chair: Jenny de Tolly

Because the speaker from UWC, Andre Roux, who was to have presented his paper at 8.30 a.m., missed his plane, the programme had to be readjusted. What was to have been Session 8 became Session 5.

PARLIAMENT - PRESENT AND FUTURE

Mary Burton introduced this session.

Sue van der Merwe and Candy Malherbe, the conveners of the work on CODESA and legislation initiated during the negotiations period, had played a valuable monitoring role.

Legislation introduced since the second half of 1992 included the Further Indemnity Bill, The Draft Charter of Fundamental Rights, the Draft Bills on Women and the Bill for the Basic Conditions of Employment. S. van der Merwe and C. Malherbe had watched the process of the enactment of the Bills on Gatherings and Further Indemnity. There had been national cooperation in B.S. in work done on legislation. B.S. had applied for an extension of the end of March deadline for representation on the Women's Bills. Comment had been given by Laura

Pollecutt.

M. Burton considered our present position in the constitutional process: Multi-party forum discussions were in process and we were moving towards the beginnings of a transitional government of national unity. Alex Boraine had seen the transitional government as "the only sensible choice". M. Burton agreed that while it might be so, it was not necessarily ideal; of the 26 party group, many members would be lacking in legitimacy and it would be difficult to sustain accountability. The priority would be a democratically elected constituent assembly. She pointed out that we needed to follow the process of the Further Indemnity Act and establish, for example, who had applied, whether application had been granted, who sits on the board that decides on the granting of indemnity, and whether people in prison are requesting indemnity. Monitoring and the exertion of pressure on legislation needed to continue.

Thisbe Clegg reported on the Women's Advocacy Education Pilot Project in which she was involved in Sept.\Oct. 1992.

Along with six other women from the Western Cape, she took part in the first stage of the project which involved exposure to two different methods of lobbying around women's issues: in Washington to lobbying from "outside" of government and in Zimbabwe to lobbying from the "inside" through the Women's Desk in the government.

Lobbying from "outside": There are about 8 000 registered lobbyists in Washington and about 80 000 unregistered. Lobbying around specific issues works well in the U.S. as individual senators and House of Representative members are not tied to party voting as in South Africa, and since they can vote independently they are more approachable individually. Moreover they are voted into office through their state and are therefore more vulnerable to pressure from their constituents. T. Clegg was placed in the lobby group called Common Cause which, like the B.S., focuses on ethical issues and also has a large volunteer component. She was impressed by the "dynamic" handouts, e.g. on how to write to the legislators. Among the lessons in strategy B.S. could learn from Common Cause were: the importance of lobbyists being visible; of having a standing committee of lobbyists to thank those parliamentarians who have supported their cause; correct timing; and knowing when members and secretaries can most effectively be confronted. The president of Common Cause, Fred Wertheim, emphasised the need to ensure the recognition of human rights in legislation, the need for thorough research if there is to be credibility, and the need to have at least someone in a powerful position on one's side. In New York en route for Harare, Thisbe addressed the U.N. on the position of white women in South Africa.

Lobbying from the "inside": In Zimbabwe the lobbying process has been less successful because the Women's Desk became increasingly marginalised and cut off from the more traditional Women's League. This happened when the Legal Age Majority Act was passed which gave women status as majors from 18 years of age, and which has been especially controversial in rural areas. T. Clegg concluded by saying that B.S. could become a very effective lobbying group from "outside" government.

Mary Burton paid tribute to Sheena Duncan's ability to analyse legislation.

Responding to Thisbe Clegg's contribution on lobbying, she emphasised that B.S. should make careful, strategic decisions about specific areas of its work. It was a matter of selecting priorities. She saw lobbying as one of B.S.' major areas of work for the future. This accorded with the Viljoen Commission's findings and was confirmed as a major area of work for the organisation by the conference.

Sue van der Merwe spoke to the resolution tabled by the Constitution and Legislation group of the Cape Western region of the B.S. The group's experience indicated the direction B.S. should take. She emphasised the importance of identifying the most relevant legislation. This involves going through the order papers and the agenda for the week and getting correct information on when MP's are to deliver speeches. Success depends on good communication and interaction with the press gallery and the standing committees. The government printer is a valuable source of information, and it is enormously valuable to have the relevant legislation to put in front of academics and professional people when they are consulted. It will also become increasingly important to keep abreast of events in parliament.

DISCUSSION:

- Laura Pollecutt supported the idea of a B.S. lobbyist.
- Durkje Gilfillan asked that advice offices be informed when legislation is promulgated so that they are kept up to date.
- There are no recognised full-time lobbyists in parliament, and such lobbying as is done takes place among pals, in bars and on golf-courses, and it comes especially from the business sector.
- It was asked whether regions could lobby their MPs, and it was emphasised that lobbying at local level is of crucial importance, especially with the the increased strength given to debates on local government.
- S. van der Merwe reminded delegates that parliament is in session for six months of the year and that over recent months there had been two sessions a year. The system continues to operate through standing committees scattered all over the country. Next week, for example, there will be provincial debates in the Pietermaritzburg City Hall. A good communication system is needed for effective monitoring.
- The resolution from the Constitution and Legislation Group of Cape Western region was put to the vote and was carried unanimously.

SESSION 6

Chair: Sue van der Merwe

ECONOMICS OF A BETTER SOCIAL WELFARE SYSTEM

Speakers: Francie Lund
Marj Brown

Panel: Francie Lund, Marj Brown, Andre Roux.

Sue van der Merwe introduced the session and apologised for Andre Roux not having arrived as he had missed his flight from Cape Town

Marj Brown spoke on her paper "Welfare and Development in South Africa: addressing the cracks" (no. 20) - a copy is available in each region. There is a need for an investigation of the dole system for people falling between the cracks of the present social welfare system.

There are two kinds of welfare in South Africa

- social insurance welfare to which employees, employers and the state contribute. This includes UIF and Workmen's Compensation which are slightly subsidised.
- social assistance, namely public services, old age pensions, disability grants, foster care etc.

There are discrepancies such as the fact that disability grants are bigger than Workmen's Compensation. In the case of old age pensions, the means test often discriminates against people who have saved for their old age and taken out a private pension. If they earn R256 from their private pension they are not eligible for the state old age pension, yet the state old age pension is greater. People who suffer from a disability like epilepsy do not qualify for UIF yet are not sufficiently disabled to qualify for a disability grant. The marginalised and the less privileged are the victims. The homeland system and race divisions add to the fragmentation. State policy puts the market first, the family second and the state third as welfare providers. The Mouton Commission's findings are that the state should be the primary provider. The targeted groups for social welfare should be the working poor and the unemployed. There should be calls for increased spending, parity of spending and a closure of the gaps. The following need to be addressed:

- * an adequate administrative system
- * the affordability of a dole system
- * public works programmes

At a workshop in Cape Town, Andre Roux had considered the present budget in terms of a five year scenario. He concluded that little could be changed but that there was a need to identify priorities and effect restructuring. In the case of the Health budget, for example, to build the 1 300 clinics needed would increase the deficit. However, the establishment of community health centres would be a cost effective alternative.

As to the affordability of the dole, Roux pointed out that it needed to be considered in relation to public works programmes: instead of giving 2 million people a R300 p.m. dole and thereby increasing the deficit by R7 million, public works programmes which also pay R300 p.m. could be introduced. They would increase the GDP, increase the deficit less drastically and also deal more effectively with the problem of unempoyment. The idea of a dole system should not, however, be scrapped. Instead it should be tightly targeted and its affordability would depend on whether we have a high or a low economic growth.

Marj Brown, in addressing the issue of public works programmes, presented a summary of Iraj Abedien's paper entitled "Why a labour-based national public works programme for South Africa?" In this paper Abedien shows that rapid growth of the formal sector economy will absorb skilled and semi-skilled, but not unskilled labour. The informal sector is unable to absorb marginalised people and, moreover, its vitality depends on the state of the formal economy. The alternative is a direct, targeted, labour-based approach, which could range from short-term relief, to sustained, long-term programmes. We need tax incentives for businesses to provide labour-intensive projects and in-service training. Incentives must also be given to educational institutions to change curricula so as to commit themselves to labour-based developments in the long-term. This means that a labour-based ethos should permeate society.

A public works programme would provide a catalyst for development. In targeting the poor in an enabling way it would supersede the dependence and indignity associated with most social welfare schemes. Programmes should be targeted around the needs of the community. Public works programmes are affordable - a mere R2 billion is needed to kick-start the scheme (at least R5 billion is lost through corruption). It is also a most viable way of attracting foreign aid.

Different stages in a public works programme would include:

- 1 popularising the concept, informing the public about its management and structuring
- 2 building up political credibility - e.g. by having a credible forum consisting of NGO's and community-based organisations with the government's role limited to providing finance
- 3 running pilot schemes
- 4 teaching management skills.

Public works programmes can fail because of:

- 1 remaining too small and being limited to a few ad hoc projects
- 2 a lack of technical competence and engineering and management skills
- 3 weak organisation
- 4 an imbalance between central and local administrative involvement
- 5 a tendency to bureaucratisation

M. Brown underlined the need for consultation, especially with the youth of whom 90% are unemployed, in the setting up of public works programmes. Skills taught in such programmes should be simple life skills such as punctuality and being able to work an eight hour day. There can be no short-term measurement of the success of these programmes. At least ten years is need to establish sustainable employment, and Abedien suggest S.A. needs 25 year programmes.

See p.5 of "Welfare and Development in S.A.: addressing the cracks" for COSATU's initiatives.

Black Sash should lobby for public works programmes to be set up quickly, especially for the most needy such as the youth, single mothers, the disabled. For the over-fifties in need of social assistance, B.S. could lobby for an extension of UIF.

The idea that social services are unaffordable needs re-examination in the light of all of the above.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

* M. Brown asserted that the old age pension system is still the best system. It subsidises children's education and families survive by virtue of it, but it is not enough. There are also those who do not have access to an old age pension, and extending UIF benefits will only benefit those who have worked.

* D. Gilfillan commented on labour intensive schemes which could mean the waiving of the wage regulation act. She denied that labour intensive schemes are more expensive than capital intensive schemes. The informal care sector provides a role for persons who voluntarily care for the aged etc.

* M. Brown, commenting on a study of the impact of 1920's public works, said that the skills learned, the access to work and the dignity gained were not to be under-estimated.

* S. Philcox asked how the 90% of the black population who are under 26 were to be targeted and what kind of public works programme could be devised for them.

* F. Lund replied that they are the most difficult to target because they harbour the most resentment, and have the most suspicion towards public works. The chances of new job seekers getting work is now 0 - 3%.

FRANCIE LUND spoke to her paper "Called to Account" (paper 21)
Her first point was that the word "dole" should be dropped in favour of
"social assistance", because of it's negative connotations.

Her thesis is that economic and social policy are essentially
interactive and only when they are not seen as inseparable can we come
up with policies which will help the poor and be good for women.

In her conclusion, she emphasised we should stop concentrating on social
welfare as being too expensive and dependency-creating, and call for an
accounting system for fiscal welfare and for occupational welfare (i.e.
government civil service pensions and golden handshakes). She also said
we should embrace the existing pensions and grants system but improve it
(see the reasons given on p. 8 of Lund's paper). While the system is
corrupt and inefficient it buys the right for children to go to school
etc. It is therefore not only consumptive, but also productive.

DISCUSSION:

- * F. Furniss - a very high percentage of the health budget goes to the
private sector and this is irrationally skewed.
- * S-A. Raynham - we need to see things in a different way and be able to
communicate with those entrenched in the old way. We need
resources to solidify our understanding of both frames of
reference.
- * F. Lund - reading material could be circulated e.g. Debbie Budlender's
paper on unpaid labour presented at a National Council of Women
workshop in April. We could also invite speakers from abroad to
address us.
- * P. Geerdts - the concept of development should not be dropped and
there is a need to be proactive in different ways.
- * F. Lund - What does it mean to be involved in (a) welfare, (b)
development? We need to look at the potential of the scheme at
Mabaleni in Natal. Pensions and grants can be used as a wedge to
find out how to into development programmes. It is necessary to
find out how local economies work. What would it mean for Sash to
get involved in development? Finding paths out of poverty is
important. We must also vigorously build up a new model of skills
training.
- * M. Brown - one of our strengths could be in promoting access to public
works, and our monitoring and lobbying roles could inter-relate
with this.
- * S-A. Raynham - Sash can play an important role in promoting the
dignity of the work ethic
- * H. Southall - We should be wary of the World Bank stressing the
relationship between health and development as the left is
stressing this equally.
- * B. Klugman - if we target the most needy, such as teenage mothers,
will this not encourage teenagers to become mothers?
- * M. Brown - the single-parent grant in England did, in fact, encourage
single parenthood.
She added that the watchdog role was still very important for NGOs.
- * F. Lund - Vigorous non-government monitoring remains essential. There
should always be suspicion of government. The World Bank is
changing, partly because of its experience with the USSR countries:
it seems to realise that the true position is somewhere in the
middle. In East Germany there was an erosion of women's rights
through the social welfare system.

With regard to being wary of the World Bank, they are keen on becoming involved in South Africa and we can set up our conditions for dealing with it. With local control we can guard against its appalling record elsewhere in Africa.

- * M. Brown - We need to become educated about the pros and cons of public works programmes. National economic forums must be made accountable.
As part of public works programmes whole villages should be re-settled where they used to be, and we must look at the viability of new settlements.
- * A. Hendrikz - is there any practical possibility of B.S. focusing on public works programmes for women, and female youth, given that women are the informal contributors? There is possibly less resistance to such programmes from females than from the male youth.
Further, what is our position in lobbying for old age pensions for women not to be increased to 65?
- * M. Brown - the lobbying is continuing. A concession could be that women get smaller pensions from 60 years. As to women under 26, COSATU has undertaken to consult on how R2,5 million is to be allocated.

DISCUSSION ON EMPLOYING B.S. WORKERS

- * K. Chubb - the gender portfolio has no coordinator. She suggested that a volunteer group be looked for and a budget be provided for administrative expenses and flying to meetings.
- * G. de Vlieg - emphasised the need for accountability. She suggested that voluntary workers tend to be less accountable, and priority accountability could be demanded if jobs were paid.
- * D. Gilfillan - volunteers are important but we need a coordinated and efficient approach.
- * A. Hendrikz - strongly questioned the idea that people have to be paid in order to be committed, for example those who voluntarily and very efficiently put out the magazine. There is also a huge commitment to women's issues in the B.S.
- * M. Kleinenberg - Natal Midlands would like to take on the coordination of the gender portfolio, even though no specific person has offered to do so.
- * L. Pollecutt - if portfolios are taken over by different regions, the burden on the national executive would be lessened and money would be freed.
- * M. Burton - in Cape Town the work has been done on a voluntary basis, but a request for money could be put in. There is, however, a problem about revising the funding issue.
- * M. Kleinenberg - a budget has not been thought about. However, if the coordinator has to fly to a meeting, presumably national could be expected to assist with funds.

Chair: Karin Chubb/Domini Lewis

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

Marj Brown and Gille de Vlieg gave an enthusiastic rendition of the rap song written by S. Transvaal region called "The Vote Game" (paper 22). It was received with wild applause!

Karin Chubb introduced the session. She pointed out that voter education addresses the importance of voting and not just how to vote. No-one in South Africa has ever participated in a truly democratic election, thus non-party political education for all is important.

The other area in education for democracy is election monitoring. There are B.S members who are experienced in election monitoring and can play a vital role here. In Namibia, the success of the elections was to a great extent due to the presence of well organised local election monitors as well as international monitors (who might, on their own, be seen to be only rubberstamping a corrupt process).

The regions reported on their activities:

1 NATAL COASTAL

Not far advanced in voter education, but have a workshop planned in the advice office.

There is a grouping called the Natal Forum, to which B.S. belongs, which originated with Diakonia and consists of a number of organisations who pool, and exchange ideas. The Forum has a four phase plan of action for the year.

This region of the B.S. is committed to discussing violence related to democracy; the meaning of a secret ballot; losing an election - an audio-visual programme to be produced for this. Once these discussions have taken place the mechanics of voting will be addressed.

The region believes that the advice offices are the primary sites for voter education and the training of monitors. There is much to be done by this region on monitoring. Natal Coastal region would like to educate whites for democracy because they are very poorly prepared for this.

2 NATAL MIDLANDS

They have limited resources and are mainly concentrating on campaigns and research.

They are devising strategies to reach rural populations as they are particularly difficult to access for political reasons and because of the violence

3 ALBANY

The region is planning and developing a working coalition in Grahamstown. Their focus is on educating trainers. They are doing only the bare essentials as they have only a small membership, even though their resources are considerable.

4 NORTHERN TRANSVAAL

Their sandwich board advertising and distribution of booklets have been a great success.

They are joining in the C.D.S. workshops.

The region is concentrating on persuading people to apply for identity documents (I.D.s) many are reluctant to apply for I.D.s from Bophutatswana. The Dept. of Home Affairs seems to be acting unilaterally - it is not liaising with or asking for cooperation from other organisations.

5 SOUTHERN TRANSVAAL

The publication and distribution of "You and the Vote" has been the main thrust of S. Transvaal's programme. Fifty thousand copies have been printed in English, and it is being translated in to Zulu, Tswana, Venda and Xhosa. The budget for these publications is R800 000. The bulk of this work has been such that another secretary has been appointed to carry on regular office work.

The region has identified five targets for their voter education;

- * membership is the primary target - encourage every member to become involved in voter education
- * Business. They need to be approached personally and Spar has already asked for a voter education workshop for its employees.
- * domestic workers
- * rural women's movement
- * Lawyers for Human Rights in various centres

6 CAPE EASTERN

The region has been concentrating on basic voter education with the assistance of two visitors from Danchurchaid, Lotte and Kirsten. A voter education kit and manual had been produced. It was demonstrated to conference and was received with enthusiasm. This kit was being regularly used in Cape E. advice office with excellent effect. A copy of the kit would be given to each region of the B.S. They have a regular column on the leader page of the E.P. Herald. Three thousand "You and the Vote" booklets have been distributed and there have been many for more.

7 BORDER

The region hosted Lotte Roed from Danchurchaid for five months who developed and tested the voter education kit in the advice office waiting room and rural areas. She also trained workers in the use of the kit.

The voter registration programme by the Dept. of Home Affairs in the rural areas and squatter camps of the Border region is especially unsatisfactory.

It was suggested that B.S. should look to elections in other African countries such as Malawi or Eritrea, and perhaps send observers to be part of the monitoring teams.

8 KNYSNA

A voter education package in the form of a play, and with an emphasis on the secrecy of a woman's vote, was being widely used, especially in the schools.

Home Affairs contacted B.S. with regard to I.D. registration. B.S. advertised widely that Home Affairs would be coming out in mobile vans and a great number of people arrived to register.

9 CAPE WESTERN

Concentrating on voter education in advice office - a half hour play was being presented to the waiting clients four mornings per week. Weekend workshops to be held to train women to train others in their communities.

K. Chubb mentioned that a question had been asked in parliament about the numbers of I.D.s being processed weekly etc, but no reply was yet forthcoming. She urged delegates to watch for this kind of information in the press.

Comments from the floor:

- * A B.S. member in a rural area found many local people had no I.D.s . She contacted Home Affairs and they came out readily, were well-equipped and processed applications quickly. They were to return for three successive days.
- * A member from Natal said that Home Affairs personnel will not go into the Natal rural areas because of the violence. It seems that the Department reacts differently in different areas
- * S. Transvaal remarked that they had enough workers to have no difficulty conducting voter education in the advice office concurrently with normal case work.

MamLydia Kompe (Rural Women's Movement) from S. Transvaal spoke of education for democracy in rural areas.

There are huge problems in voter education for rural women. They are used to being "minors" and subject to their menfolk. They have never voted and need guidance . They have many fears and questions, and training is desperately needed from B.S. and IDASA. Concrete ideas are needed, especially for the illiterate and isolated

A disturbing voter education campaign was reported to have been started by farmers who told local people that the correct way to vote was to put a cross next to the name of the candidate they disliked the most. The farmers justified this with the explanation that a cross signifies wrong.

Husbands and even older children intimidate women into voting for the candidate of the husband's or family's choice. Thus women need to be trained to know more than just the mechanics of voting. They need to be able to overcome intimidation and threats; to be convinced of the secrecy of the ballot; and to know they have the right to vote for the candidate of their choice.

One of the women's big fears is how they vote if they cannot read, and in such circumstances who will help them?

There are also practical problems, such as transport, which worry the women.

Domini Lewis spoke about election monitoring.

She spoke about her very recent experience monitoring the elections in Lesotho under the auspices of Catholic Justice and Peace. Forty monitors from S.A. had been assigned to constituencies throughout the country.

Many of the polling stations were inaccessible because of the mountainous terrain. In some instances there were practical difficulties such as voting materials(e.g. ballot boxes, ballot papers,) being inadequate or lacking, resulting in delays in voting. Computer problems also caused delays in voting procedure.

However, the process was free and fair. The citizens were very proud to be able to vote and their behaviour was patient and quiet. Each voter had the procedure explained to her\him individually before voting and despite the technical problems, the electoral officers were

exemplary, being patient, kind and thoughtful. 26
There were rumours of a coup after the elections, and the support from the international community was very necessary during this period when tensions were running high.

Delegates then broke into five groups to consider the following questions:

- 1 How much can we be involved in voter education? Who should be doing it and through which structures should it be done?
- 2 Where else can we be most effective? What should, or need, we not be involved in?
- 3 How can we best share resources and experiences? The groups reported back as follows:

Group One

They felt we should be training trainers, particularly women. We can best share resources through networking.

Group Two

Noted that the regions are already working in education for democracy where they can. We could be effective in collating and commenting on materials used in voter education. Radio is an excellent medium for voter education - we should lobby for more extensive use of it.

Group Three

All training involves training trainers and the advice offices is where this is taking place. One way to reach the aged is via the pension queues, which the civics are already doing. The clinics could be a valuable site for training.

Diakonia is concentrating on education for democracy. B.S. members should make themselves available for discussions with other organisations

Group Four

Kerry Harris related her experiences in Pretoria while handing out "You and the Vote" booklets. Railway stations are a particularly successful venues.

Group Five

They stressed the importance of getting into rural areas and ensuring access to all political parties

Chair : Sarah-Anne Raynham

A REINTEGRATION OF THE BLACK SASH : SETTING SOME GUIDELINES

1 Sash projects and their funding

There are assumptions that B.S. wishes to remain membership driven and volunteer based. But we don't generate enough funds to support all our work. All our projects should be funded, not only our service work. The Trust could fund other projects as the Trust document allows a broad range of activities. But other projects will need separate fund-raising. Tax is still a problem. An investigation needs to be done into how the Trust can receive funds and adapt existing structures to meet today's needs.

Discussion followed:

- The Sash must decide what it needs and the Trust must be flexible enough to meet these needs.
- The Trust deed can be changed but care must be taken so as not to lose the tax exemption.
- Centralised funding will ease problems but members who put so much energy into raising funds for their regional projects may feel irrelevant.
- Must guard against members losing their sense of involvement. Membership could be made responsible for specific aspects of funding such as funding a region.
- Standard procedures for applying for funds must be applied nationally. It was decided to set up a temporary technical working committee comprising Durkje Gilfillan and members of the national exec. and Trustees who have already been involved in management discussions, to further investigate the structure and function of the Trust and the tax exemption. The extended national executive meetings with regional representation and with trustees is the appropriate forum for properly motivated funding applications to be considered.
- Regional and advice office work needs to be reintegrated
- It was thought that the regions' budgets would include budgets for a.o. projects.
- Funding is not necessarily dependent on how much money the Trust can afford, but also what a particular donor is prepared to support.
- The ability of the regional reps to be truly representative of their regions needs to be developed.
- If there is an urgent application for funding between extended nat. exec. meetings, the Trust has been empowered to make decisions for amounts below R5 000.
- Organisations start to fall apart when the regions are allowed to set their own projects. Thus national policy must take precedence.
- Suggestion that the national advice office workshop should be held immediately prior to national conference to allow for more integration of work. Think of looking for funding for national conference.
- Penny Geerds raised the problem of what happens when a smaller region collapses and the regional committee and management committee become one body. To whom is this body accountable? What is a minimum quorum? What is the minimum involvement of members for it to continue to be a Sash project? Can staff members nominate members of the committee and who gives the mandate?

- Sue Philcox replied that management committees are accountable to their regional councils, and they are in turn accountable to the Trust. Paid staff provide continuity and they are making decisions about themselves.
- A question was asked how we can justify a Karoo advice office when it is not a B.S. region. It was explained that the advice office is run by a field worker managed by Cape Western region.
- Questions about the volunteer component of the smaller regions and whether they could be non-members were deferred to the following day.
- Mary Burton asked if the constitution was serving its purpose or if it should be redefined.

Sunday 5 April

SESSION 9

Business session: concluding discussion on resolutions and statements

Chair: Jenny de Tolly

9.1 J. de Tolly introduced this session. She emphasised that well motivated proposals with clear budgets must be brought to extended nat. exec. meetings and national conference for decision.

9.2 The question of who should attend these meetings is still to be decided. There is a need to consult more broadly with the regions, so nat. exec. will write an explanatory paper on how the situation is at present, to inform discussion in the regions

- 9.3 The 1993 Advice Office Workshop is planned for September in Port Elizabeth. At one time it was held immediately before conference, and it is being suggested that we consider doing this again. This way we could get as many advice office people as possible to attend at very little extra cost.
- If we are trying to integrate the two sectors of our work, this is an excellent idea.
 - If the a.o. workshop is to be for only one day before conference, this will be insufficient time to address all the issues. But it will also be too time-consuming.
 - Perhaps we need to rethink the labels "conference" and "workshop" and rather look at ways of integrating the two.
 - People not involved in a.o. work get bored when the nitty gritty of such work is discussed. But the a.o. workshop has taken on an additional dimension of discussing very broad issues arising out of the nitty gritty.
 - We need to rethink logistical issues and perhaps consider venues where we could run parallel sessions.
 - A. Hendrikz pointed out the importance of people like the National President attending the a.o. workshop. If this was held back-to-back with conference, it might make it impossible for her to do so. The workers would be able to manage it, and it has been very valuable having every a.o. worker at the workshop in the past. But we can't close all our advice offices for a full week, and the alternative is to find volunteers and interpreters to run them for that week. We would also need to give the workers time off for the weekend worked.
 - Working women in Sash would have to ask for three or four days off, which could be problematical.

- J. de Tolly pointed out that the Viljoen Commission found out that a lot of staff don't know what the B.S. is about, and attending conference would help inform them of the direction of the organisation. One can anticipate enormous logistical problems, but parallel sessions are a possibility for some topics.
- Parallel sessions mean choices, and a.o. people are usually involved in everything
- It couldn't be longer than four days. Leave the planning of a feasible agenda to a steering committee.
- Suggest we try running them back-to-back and then assess it to see if it is worthwhile repeating.

It was decided by conference that there would be no a.o. workshop this year, but that it will be held with national conference in 1994.

9.4 Coordination of projects.

How do we allocate these, how do we budget and who raises the funds?

Allocation of portfolios:

9.4.1 Death penalty:

N. Transvaal offered to take this on. They will absorb the costs as much as they can, but will bring a budget to the extended nat. exec. meeting if this can't be done.

9.4.2 Women's portfolio:

B. Klugman said that a job description was drawn up at a tea-time meeting, and the sort of back-up needed, like access to office equipment, discussed.

- Estimate that six to eight airfares be required per annum: the national coordinator will need to attend several nat. exec. meetings as well as the three extended meetings.
- Natal Midlands has discussed raising money through organisations like Oxfam, Global Fund for Women.
- Proposal that Natal Midlands take on the portfolio and draw up a budget to present to extended nat. exec. meeting. Confirmed.
- Data base of women to be coordinated by the national coordinator.
- The job of nat. coordinator may be too big to be taken on by a volunteer, and we may need to make the portfolio a paid post.
- Agreed that each region decide on a specific person to be the contact person on women's issues and to take responsibility for feeding information to the national coordinator. It is important that there be continuity of representation at national meetings of at least a year.

Natal Midlands accepted the portfolio with delight, but emphasised that they are not taking responsibility for doing all the work, only the coordination of the work that is happening in the regions. A request was made that the coordinator instruct the regions on how to best communicate information.

9.4.3 Constitution\Legislation portfolio.

Cape Western region happy to continue coordinating this. Accepted

9.4.4 Education for Democracy

This is a campaign involving various tasks. Domini Lewis and Karin Chubb drew up a job description of the work involved thus

Sash campaigns and tasks**Training**

- a.o.s as sites of training
- focus on rural people especially women

(campaign for) access

- to rural people, especially farm workers
- to women, urban and rural
- to resources, skills, information

Materials

- assimilation and critique
- updating
- publicising and disseminating
- avoid duplication

Lobbying

- Home Affairs re I.D.s
- for other forms of voter I.D. in accordance with IFEE decisions
- for representation of women, e.g. on Electoral Commission

Networking

- through IFEE:
- strengthen links, improve communication
- establish IFEE regionally

(campaign for) Political tolerance

- through workshops, political and other platforms, - - media as part of broader education about democracy - before during and after elections

Monitoring

- training through IFEE structures
- independent and non-party political
- linking with international groups and experience
- pre-election, election and post-election monitoring of voter education programmes

Karin Chubb recommends that this work be coordinated nationally on a full-time basis, as a contract post.

The issue of whether the portfolio should be coordinated by a specific region or whether it should be a full-time paid position, was raised. If it is to be a paid position it will have to be advertised.

- If we are talking about avoiding duplication of work. we need to look at the portfolio in relation to IFEE.
- The portfolio would be strictly one of coordinating regional work, but would also involve things like visiting the Minister of Home Affairs (as K. Chubb has done).
- Concern was expressed that we are thinking about creating yet another paid post in the light of our budget deficit. Suggested that we need to prioritise our work before creating paid positions. It was pointed out, however, that there is money available for specific projects, and especially for education for democracy.
- B. Klugman expressed concern that money may be needed by regions urgently, and if we have to wait to discuss budgeted proposals until the next extended nat. exec. meeting, we won't start fundraising before July. She asked for in-principle approval on the basis of the budgets having to be approved by the national executive and Advice Office Trust. She raised the issue that trust

money has been allocated for a "You and...." publication that we have not discussed and agreed upon. She emphasised that there must be standardised, non-negotiable procedures for applying for funding.

- M. Burton said that there were such procedures, and we need to work out how to rectify what has gone wrong. There isn't a pool of money available that the Trust is not making accessible. She asserted that we must be careful not to do work just because there is money for it. She asked if conference could ratify in principle the decision to fund regional budgets for education for democracy.

The decision was ratified and budgets were asked to be submitted by the end of April 1993

It was suggested that the smaller regions need proportionally more funding to bring their work in line with the bigger regions. The small regions need to concentrate on networking and push the churches and regional forums for a share of national resources.

It was decided by conference that the national coordinator be a paid post. But the location of the post is important. - should it be located in HQ? Cape Town not demographically ideal, Johannesburg more suitable as this is where the greatest rural women's project is. Confusion over whether this should be coordinated by a region. Regions haven't discussed this. Take forward to next session

SESSION 10

Business\Resolutions\Statements continued

Chair: Mary Kleinenberg\birga thomas

Education for democracy portfolio contd:

Laura Pollecutt motivated for S. Transvaal to take on the portfolio as they have already done a lot of work in voter education. They will work closely with the regions and have a good liaison with N. Transvaal. There is also a strong voter education group already in place to give support to the coordinator if she were in the region.

Anne Hill motivated for the portfolio to remain in Cape W. as Domini Lewis has effectively taken over Karin Chubb's work as national coordinator. It is important to remember that the work of the region will not be taken over by the coordinator. It may be better to not have the post in the S. Transvaal.

- Durkje Gilfillan pointed out that the coordinator would need to draw on government resources, therefore the PWV would be a more suitable location as it is closer to the seat of government.
- Mary Burton suggested that the two regions offering to take on the portfolio should say how they would run it.
- Jenny de Tolly re-emphasised that a funded position has to be advertised.
- D. Lewis was asked to explain how she saw a coordinator in Cape W, taking on the portfolio, and she referred conference back to the job description drawn up by Karin Chubb and herself. She did not see proximity to central government as crucial
- K. Chubb said that lobbying of government from Cape Town had been very successful. Closeness to major groupings with whom one has day-to-day dealings is an important factor. There is a problem with most

- of the resources being concentrated in the bigger regions as these resources are needed by the smaller regions to get going.
- L. Best suggested that looking at the job description, we should consider whether the portfolio could be split
 - L. Pollecutt affirmed that there is a need to reinforce regions where human resource are less. She said that the portfolio did not just entail coordination of resources and having a spokesperson, there was a need to recognise broader issues too.
 - D. Gilfillan suggest we reconsider a split portfolio, but there was a strong feeling that all the responsibility needs to be with one person
 - D. Lewis expressed her misgivings about rushing the decision, but M. Burton emphasised the importance of taking the decision while we were all together

A vote was taken with Cape W. and S. Transvaal absenting themselves.
 S. Transvaal - 11 votes in favour
 Cape W. - 7 votes in favour
 Thus S. Transvaal to take on the education for democracy portfolio.

RESOLUTIONS AND STATEMENTS

10.1 Statement on farmworkers and new Conditions of Employment submitted by Natal Midlands and Albany was carried unanimously. Agreed that the subject warranted urgent attention

10.2 Resolution on abortion
 After some discussion on wording, decided to remove clause 3 and tidy up the introduction. A freedom of choice Bill should be part of a Bill of Rights.
 A vote supporting the resolution in principle was called for, despite the fact that some rewording was needed. A majority voted for the resolution and there were two against.

10.3 Resolution on affirmative action
 Affirmative action should be entrenched in a Bill of Rights. The question of how to define affirmative action was raised - J. de Tolly suggested it is a proactive programme; S. Philcox suggested it is a redressing process.
 There was some argument over whether time limits on affirmative action could be included in a Bill of Rights, but the general feeling was that they must be.

An in-principle vote on including affirmative action in a Bill of Rights was taken and the result was unanimous in support.

10.4 Statement on violence
 It was pointed out that we can't commit ourselves to "ending violence" but rather to "seeking ways to end violence".
 A. Hendrikz felt we were focusing on a particular form of violence when patriarchy and institutionalised forms of violence are also destroying the fabric of our society.
 The supplying of arms by Kwazulu police to headmen, by the S.A.P. to black councillors etc. was questioned. Even though this is legal, we should nevertheless object to it.

Some wording was changed and the statement was accepted unanimously.

Mary Kleinenberg asked that it be recorded that there should be a national violence portfolio

10.5 Statement on the Death Penalty

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Accepted unanimously.

Isie Pretorius asked for a list of representatives from each region for this portfolio whom she could contact.

10.6 Report on paralegals

A request that something on the role of paralegals be circulated to the regions for discussion. The minutes of the meeting to discuss the role of paralegals, held at conference, will also be circulated.

10.7 Vision statement

The final version as brought to conference was accepted unanimously and with enthusiasm.

M. Burton gave a vote of thanks saying she felt hope, and she expressed gratitude to all those who contributed to the drawing up of the vision statement.

Unfinished Business:

10.8 Changing the wording of the dedication

K. Harris asked that the words "so help us God" be removed to make it non-denominational.

M. Dyer gave a background history to the dedication, saying some of the wording referred to the betrayal of the promises made in the Act of Union. The wording should be updated or the dedication should be consigned to the archives as part of the history of the B.S.

M. Burton replied that it would be difficult to change it without rewording it completely. Our Vision statement looks towards the future and perhaps this is more apt for us at the moment

Conference agreed unanimously to consign it to the archives. The decision will be written up with sensitivity in the next magazine

10.9 Nomination of new Trustees

Without consultation:

Lynette Paterson said Albany nominated Rosemary Smith and Hilary Southall.

Ann Colvin nominated Di Oliver from Natal Coastal

Laura Pollecutt nominated Beryl Stanton from S. Transvaal.

Kerry Harris said that we should try to have a rep from each region.

10.10 Moving of headquarters

This was to have been discussed in all regions, but there are nevertheless no new nominations for 1993 and 1994. S. Transvaal cannot take it on. E. Cape should consider it. Headquarters should not be permanently in one region

Cape Western region nominated unopposed

10.11 Nominations for national executive:

President: T. Clegg nominated Jenny de Tolly. Unopposed and accepted.

Vice-presidents: Sarah-Anne Raynham

Mary Burton

Elected members of nat. exec.:

Sue van der Merwe

Sue Joynt

Karin Chubb

Domini Lewis

Magazine reps: birga thomas, Domini Lewis

Laura Pollecutt drew our attention to the call for nominations to the SABC Board. We need to put forward names, especially of women, urgently. Must have the nominee's acceptance and submit a C.V. J. de Tolly said that we have known of this since November 1992 and it should have been put forward as an item for the conference agenda.

Di Oliver thanked Karin Chubb and Domini Lewis for all their work on education for democracy so far.

10.12 Date and venue of next national conference:
Eastern Cape offered to host the conference in Port Elizabeth. The date was discussed and it was suggested that during the school holidays would suit members who teach. b. thomas said that the disadvantage of having conference in April was that the magazine could only be published in June, which is a long gap from the January issue. M. Kleinenberg suggested that Cape E. decide on a date in consultation with nat. exec.
J. de Tolly thanked Natal Midlands for hosting conference.