

**REPRESSION PORTFOLIO REPORT
FEBRUARY 1990 to FEBRUARY 1991**

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As can be seen this portfolio incorporates many areas of involvement. The extent of the work we do and what we can be involved in depends on the number of people who can give of their time, it depends on YOU!

1 POLITICAL IMPRISONMENT

1.1 Workshops, resource book and lists, "Now We Are Free ..."

In my report last year, I mentioned our involvement in the interim Committee Against Political Imprisonment. I was involved in organising a regional workshop (attended by service organisations, lawyers, ex-political prisoners and family of prisoners) aimed at identifying problem areas and needs of on-trial, serving and released prisoners and finding ways of effectively addressing these. This was followed by several meetings where ways of carrying forward the work were discussed. Shortly after the unbanning of political organisations on February 2nd, participation at these meetings dwindled. However work that Sash identified and took forward from these workshops and meetings included the production of a Resource Book for Political Prisoners - Western Cape (produced in conjunction with LEAP) Regional Resource Lists (for N. Tvl, S. Tvl, Natal/PMB, Natal/Dbn, Ciskei and Border, Eastern Cape) and the counselling guide for released political prisoners and their families: "NOW WE ARE FREE ..." (produced in conjunction with OASSSA and ESG).

Background to "Now We Are Free ...": From the input made by released prisoners and families at the various workshops it became apparent that there were many post-release problems related to interaction and communication between the released person and family, friends and organisations. I discussed the idea of a counselling booklet that would address this with members of OASSSA and they agreed that such a book was needed and they were keen to work on it. The material for the book was drawn from the input made at the aforementioned workshop, from additional interviews with ex-prisoners and family members of prisoners and from input made at counselling sessions that Emergency Services Group hold with released prisoners. The accessible format of the book - which allows for the voices of those with the experiences to come through - was arrived at as a result of suggestions made by Kathy Kell and a group from Community Education Resource Unit at UCT and the subsequent employment of Bridget Pitt who then reworked our draft copy and did the illustrations. Black Sash Cape Western paid R1 000 towards the printing costs and National contributed a further R600. The initial print of 700 copies was immediately taken up. 110 of these, together with the appropriate regional resource list, were distributed by post by Cape Western to released political prisoners countrywide. Cowley House are now distributing packages containing the book and resource lists, directly to prisoners on their release. The Advice Office Trust had already responded favourably to a motivation for the funding of a further reprint when a donor, who wished to remain anonymous, made a cash donation of R2 000 to E.S.G. for a reprint. We would like to take a rain cheque on A.O.T.'s offer in the event of a revised edition or 3rd reprint of the book.

1.2 Repatriation - Mary Burton reports:

The State President's announcements in his opening of Parliament speech have cleared the way for major developments this year, but at the time of writing this report (3 February), the matter of the repatriation of exiles remains a serious obstacle to the process of negotiations between the government and the liberation organisations.

Following the establishment of the National Coordinating Committee for the Repatriation of South African exiles (NCCR) in Johannesburg, a Regional committee was set up in the Western Cape, as in other regions. The committee is made up of representatives from the religious denominations and the liberation movements, and can co-opt other people with specific skills. The Western Province Council of Churches has made its office premises available for committee meetings and has seconded one of its staff to work full-time on the repatriation programme. Iman Solomon is similarly committed to the work, and serves as the regional representative on the National body. The Rev. Mxolisi Daba has been seconded to the programme by the Anglican church (CPSA).

Several "task forces" have been created to handle different aspects of the programme: Health, Welfare and Counselling; education and training; reception and registration; accommodation; and matters concerning documentation, indemnity and so on, to be handled with the assistance of lawyers.

In the Western Cape there are reports that some people who have been in exile have in fact returned without going through either the government's channels or contacting any of the organisations involved in the Repatriation Coordinating Committee. This is a matter for concern, as they may experience problems with identity documents and/or passports, and some proof of identity will be required for education and employment.

Sheena Duncan has sent all our Advice Offices a memorandum concerning the government's guidelines for the return of exiles and the release of political prisoners, published in Government Gazette of 7 November 1990. Advice Office volunteers will be willing to assist where needed.

The various task forces meet regularly, and there are joint meetings of other convenors. There are also occasional meetings for all members of other task forces - a useful way to keep everyone informed on progress.

The task force with the most immediate and urgent work is that dealing with accommodation and this is the one on which I have been serving. Planning is at an advanced stage to enter into an arrangement with Cowley House to lease from it the building across the road which was until now occupied by St Ann's Hostel. Cowley House has been raising funds in memory of Moira Henderson, to be used to extend its work into larger premises, and hopes to acquire the use of this building. There is a great deal of work to be done in preparing for the arrival of - we hope - hundreds of people.

1.3 Cowley House - Liaison committee for the release of political prisoners in the Western Cape

Since August LOIS HARLEY has been Sash rep on this committee and has been very involved in arrangements for the reception of released political prisoners at Cowley House. Amongst the tasks she undertook was the organising and co-ordinating of precooked meals donated by Sash members - the response from our members was so good that she was able to fill Cowley House's two freezers.

1.3.1 Releases

Since the Groote Schuur minute releases have been erratic and unpredictable. It has been difficult to make out how the government is determining who will be released when, but the majority of those released so far appear to have served two-thirds of their sentence. The uncertainty surrounding these random releases has caused a great deal of stress amongst prisoners. For many this meant being unable to settle down to studies and many did not write their exams at the end of the year. In most cases very short notice is given to those due to be released and very often their families, legal representatives and Cowley House are given no advance information at all. Concerned about the traumatising effects of this, Black Sash faxed a letter to the Commissioner of Police in August, stating our concern and requesting that notice be given of impending releases (See Appendix 1).

There was an initial indication that such representations might have had an effect since the next group of prisoners, as well as Cowley House and their families, were given twenty four hours advance notice. However this was shortlived and in December as little as fifteen minutes notice was being given to those being released. The prisoners themselves and health care workers associated with released political prisoners put forward requests to the prison authorities for pre-release counselling. These requests met with negative responses. As a result a comprehensive report "Political Imprisonment, Release and Mental Health: The Case for Pre-Release Counselling" was compiled to expose the manner in which releases were taking place and to give substance to the call for pre-release counselling. This report was released at a press conference on 25 January. Black Sash attended and submitted a press release in support of the call (see Appendices 2, 3 and 4).

2 REPRESSION MONITORING GROUP (R.M.G.) AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (H.R.C.)

The Court Monitoring Group and R.M.G. have worked cooperatively for many years, sharing and benefitting from each others resources and information. R.M.G. has been responsible for the fact sheet "The Week That Was", a monitor of detentions, political cases and State repression.

CASSANDRA PARKER, Sash rep on R.M.G. this past year reports: R.M.G. has spent much of this year working on their transition into the Cape Western Region of the H.R.C. We have been one of the consistently present organisations in this difficult transition process. The Black Sash is a subscribing organisation of the

H.R.C. and Mary Burton has been voted one of the two Cape Western commissioners. H.R.C. puts out particularly good fact papers and reports on repression. Copies of these are kept in the regional office and can be borrowed by the membership for reading.

3 COURT MONITORING

3.1 Role and current status

Court monitoring has to a large extent been a forerunner to much of the repression monitoring work undertaken e.g. Anne Greenwell's monitoring of Mitchells Plain in 1989 (see Court Monitoring Report National Conference 1990) and Helen Neale-May's coverage of Hermanus, Strand and other small towns (report below). It has sensitized us to the harshness of existing security legislation by exposing us to the reality of its implementation. It has raised our deep concerns over police action and liability. The monitoring of political trials has enabled us to contribute meaningfully in work around political imprisonment and has led to our interaction with service organisations and other political groupings working in this area. This 'on the ground' direct involvement work is essential for our credibility as an organisation as we speak out on issues and protest injustices. A reduction in political cases in the Peninsula courts over the past year coupled with a desperate shortage of monitors, resulted in our decision to fold the regular court monitoring work at the end of October. There is still a very real need to be monitoring courts in the small towns beyond Cape Town (e.g. Strand, Stellenbosch, Hermanus and the Boland towns). In fact the continuing repression in these areas calls for a broader focussed repression monitoring group but this is only possible if we have volunteers - more of this under my motivation for a monitoring group at the end of this report.

Muriel Crewe reports that our records show that in the four years from October 1985 to October 1989 we monitored 436 cases in which 1 815 people were involved. For us this involved 955 court visits - by now these would number well over 1 000! Muriel and I give heartfelt thanks to all those monitors for their commitment in carrying out this work. In turn we thank Muriel Crewe for launching this group and remaining its "backbone" over the past five years. We wish her well in her plans for writing a book on the terrorism trials held in the Western Cape. Muriel reports that the records we have gathered over the past five years will be stored in the Sash office where they may serve their purpose as research material.

New Nation weekly newspaper have asked us if they may publish extracts from "The Law Courts and You" in the 'Learning Nation' section of the newspaper.

3.2 MURIEL CREWE reports on some of the cases monitored this past year:

The most dramatic case has been the Yengeni terrorism trial, which started in Wynberg in March 1988 and has been in progress in the Supreme Court since February 1989, and which is due to continue this year. It has run a roller coaster course, following the fortunes of the ANC ... with hope raised and deferred over and over again. It has developed into being part of the bargaining process ... an expensive exercise in prolonging with tedious repetition the whole process of deferring any verdict in the hope that it will eventually enjoy a political solution. Application for indemnity has been made. But it has been interesting too to watch the changing scene in the court and in the attitude of the police. At the beginning the place was like a battle zone. The tone gradually calmed down and is now incredibly laid back. One delightful example of this was the present sent to Jenny Schreiner of a jar of jam made for her by the small daughter of one of the policemen. And there was the other policeman who, on two occasions, brought Mrs Schreiner a card saying, "I thought you might like to send a note to Jenny. I'll take it to her."

Other terrorism trials still in progress:

- (i) S. Qila, a colleague of Petane who was given 17 years in 1988 for conviction on the same charges. Qila was given bail at R3 000. It is interesting to note here how bail is used punitively - all the trialists in the Yengeni case were also granted bail of R3 000 except Yengeni and Schreiner whose bail was R40 000 each.
- (ii) R. Martin, a 4th-year UWC student was held under Section 29 in April 1990. After several appearances bail was permitted. Indemnity has been applied for and his case is likely to continue to be postponed until the indemnity issue is resolved.
- (iii) Shirley Gunn, charged with being in possession of a Makarov pistol, was held under Section 29. Bail was subsequently allowed and indemnity has also been applied for.

"Already under criticism for virtually demanding a confession from each person seeking indemnity, observers now accuse the system (of indemnity) of being a state ploy to hold the accused as "political hostages" while the government engages in manoeuvres with the ANC."
(*Weekly Mail*, January 18-24, 1991)

In the cases mentioned above the alleged offences were committed before the state president's cut-off date for indemnity and as such should obviously qualify for indemnity. Application for indemnity for the Yengeni trialists was made in early November but they are still waiting to hear if they have been successful. Meanwhile the accused "must continue to live under tough bail conditions. The Cape Town trial will soon resume involving court time, enormous financial implications, and the personal trauma of sitting in the dock ..." (*Weekly Mail*, January 18, 1991).

Claims against the Minister of Law and Order:

- (i) The marathon case in which 21 KTC residents and the Methodist Church of Africa claimed R312 000 damages for "burnout" at KTC in June 1986. By June 1989 it was clear it could drag on another two to three years and at this point Justice de Kock called for an out-of-court settlement. Legal costs had already exceeded R3 million. On 5 March 1990 a settlement of R2 million was announced: to provide assistance for development programmes for the affected areas and for ex-gratia compensation to those who suffered loss.

The mind boggles at the millions of rand of taxpayers money used by the state in this case alone.

- (ii) Willie Hofmeyr (lawyer and UDF activist) brought a R100 000 damages action vs the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Law and Order for the manner in which he was detained at Pollsmoor in 1988. In judgement, granting R50,000 damages plus costs Justice King said he was satisfied Hofmeyr had indeed endured deprivation of his rights, impairment of his dignity, mental anguish, discomfort and humiliation. What emerged in this case was the prison's attitude of subservience to the Security Police. The judgement therefore became a watershed judgement in principle - that the Prison Service acted unlawfully by allowing the security police to dictate the conditions of Hofmeyr's detention. It made clear that political detainees have rights and should be able to explore them. This would appear to open the door to many more clients by other detainees.

3.3 HELEN NEALE-MAY reports on monitoring in the Strand, Stellenbosch, Hermanus and Calendon courts:

This past year saw us monitoring repression and courts from Paarl to Hermanus. We had 4 to 5 members assisting.

Approximate cases covered

Paarl:	10	(2 ongoing)
Stellenbosch:	2	(ongoing)
Strand:	10	(1 ongoing)
Somerset West:	2	(ongoing)
Grabouw:	1	(ongoing)
Hermanus:	9	(5 ongoing)
Villiersdorp:	1	

We have noticed an increase in repression in some of the areas we have covered. In Hermanus the SAP showed no political tolerance with the newfound freedom of the local community. The S.A.P. overreacted on many instances by using excessive action and provoking peaceful situations. In April 1990 two youths from Hermanus were detained under Section 50 of the Internal Security Act when nationally detainees were being released and repressive legislation changed.

With the unbanning of organisations, communities could now organise themselves and we saw the participation of the Civics, parents and teachers actively involved in the affairs of student/police confrontation and negotiation. We noticed the increase by the S.A.P to randomly charge people with public violence in early 1990. Lately we have seen a new trend in charging people under municipal by-laws for trespassing, failing to obtain permission for protests and breaking and entering etc.

Hermanus

We started monitoring in Hermanus in April 1990 when it came to our attention that lawyers for the accused (10 Heyco youths) were having trouble trying to consult with their clients and were being threatened by the S.A.P that if bail was obtained, their clients would be re-arrested for further investigation. The lawyers found the S.A.P to be very unco-operative. The magistrate informed the attorneys he was unavailable the whole weekend. The 10 Heyco youths were charged with public violence, arson and other charges. The lawyers managed to get bail of R100 each after showing that there was insufficient evidence for withholding bail. However, the state set the following bail conditions:

- a) Not to interfere with the state witness,
- b) They had to report to Hermanus police station from 18 April to 20 April 1990 between the hours of 7.30 am and 8 am.

Some of the youths were at school elsewhere and were unable to attend classes. Two of the youths were detained under Section 50 of the Internal Security Act (removing trouble makers from the community), hence their cases are still ongoing. Their advocate obtained the charge sheet late in 1990 and it appears the 10 youths are now being charged only with "stone throwing".

On Tuesday 17 April family members and friends of the Heyco youths were on their way to court, singing as they walked. They were surrounded in the Hermanus Main Road by a casspir and police vans, and baton charged. They allege that no warning was given. They were all arrested for illegal gathering. The attorneys for the Heyco youths then spent the rest of the day trying to bail out family and friends. Later that afternoon, a group of residents of Zweitsna were teargassed most received bruises and a two month old baby was hospitalised suffering from the effects of teargas.

It does not take much to provoke a confrontation in Hermanus, as I experienced myself. On Mon 23 April, while monitoring the first appearance of the Heyco youths, we were followed by the S.A.P. from the court into the township. Myself, the accused, and their family members gathered peacefully outside the back door of the home of one of the community organisers, when suddenly two S.A.P vans appeared through the washing lines and the police, teargas guns at the ready, gave us two minutes to disperse.

Cases monitored in Hermanus were for illegal gathering, public violence and "graffiti" on stadium walls (malicious damage to property). On many occasions the accused, having appeared in court, try to leave and the S.A.P. rearrest them, supposedly for other charges. We have also been involved in monitoring the demolition of shacks in the townships, monitoring the launching of the Civic, and general support work.

We noted the S.A.P. political intolerance for the ANC, illustrated by the apparent tendency to keep members of the Anc in jail for up to 48 hours for totally minor irrelevant issues, causing alot of inconvenience to their lawyers. For example the "wheelbarrow case" Mr Ponoane (about 60 years old) was accused of stealing his own wheelbarrow. In the statement that the SAP had written out it stated that he is a member of the ANC. That old man had spent a whole day in jail; having voluntarily gone to the police station to clear up any misunderstandings, he was arrested. The detectives informed us that he would be held for 48 hours for further investigation. Again the lawyers spent alot of time trying to have him released. The charges have since been withdrawn.

The community of Zwelihle have experienced numerous problems with kitskonstabels. Sunday 2/9/90, a kitskonstabel allegedly shot a resident. The resident, Vizumzi Ndzinga alleges that he came across kitskonstabels trying to drag another resident away with them. When he enquired what was happening, he was shot in the face. Vizumzi is badly injured. He claims to have lost an eye. His jaw is wired closed and he cannot eat. He drinks fluids with a straw. He has had bone grafts to build up his cheek. According to the SAP report, kitskonstabels attempted to arrest a man smoking dagga and were surrounded by 50 other men. The report goes on to say that about four of the men were armed with knives and attacked the two policemen and threw one of them to the ground. The other policeman fired a shot from a shotgun at the attacker, hitting him in the chest. No arrests were made.

LEAP and I took down alot of statements for the lawyers, and the residents' version of the incident differs from that of the SAP. In the SAP report they claim to have come across a man smoking dagga. However residents claim that the SAP found no dagga, and beat up residents while doing a house-to-house search for a gun stolen from a Greenfly in a shebeen on the previous Friday evening. In contradiction to the SAP report, residents claim they were threatened if they came near the kitskonstabels searching the shacks, so they stayed away. In all the statements taken, the use of knives was denied by residents. The report states that no arrests were made. The Hermanus police would in the past not have hesitated to act on such an incident. Charges against the SAP by residents who were assaulted were being lodged. On 15 October 1990 Vizumzi appeared in court. While walking to court, his witness, Velisile, was arrested by a kitskonstabel for "possession of dagga" and escape from lawful custody, supposedly on the day that Vizumzi was shot 1 1/2 month previously. Velisile then spent nearly three weeks in prison before lawyers managed to get bail for him.

Mbekweni Board. Paarl East residents protesting against high rents were also arrested for a "standin" at the local rent office.

In most of the above cases the residents are being charged with trespassing under the Municipal regulations.

Stellenbosch

Two cases are presently being monitored by our Stellenbosch members. A security policeman allegedly raped a young girl while she was being held in custody. The attorneys are waiting for the decision of the attorney general re the prosecution of the policeman.

The other case is an interesting one. Leslie Durr and others were arrested while protesting against the housing conditions in Kyamandi. They were charged with trespassing and failure to obtain permission for their protest. Technically they have had to plead guilty and their case is continuing on 7 February 1991 when Prof. Lourens du Plessis from Stellenbosch University will give evidence for the defence.

Conclusion

Due to the vast geographical area our branch covers, we found it difficult to cover all cases properly with our limited manpower, Paarl being one of the problem areas. There is definitely a need to monitor cases in the rural areas, even if they are remands as we have experienced - the lawyers do not attend those hearings and the accused are in the hands of the police. Incidents have happened as reported earlier in my report.

REPRESSION AND VIOLENCE

Affidavit/Statement-taking

Following incidents of repression and violence, Sash responded to requests from the ANC on two separate occasions to collect statements from those affected. The workshop on affidavit and statement taking held earlier in the year (organised by Membership Education Portfolio) had equipped several people with the necessary skills for this task. The approach from the ANC was interesting in that it indicated that they valued our credibility as a non-aligned organisation in recording of events.

4.1.1 Montague/Ashton

The background to the repression and violence in this area in June/July last year is referred to by Annemarie Hendrikz in her fieldwork report. Cassandra Parker liaised with the ANC and arranged for two groups of Sash monitors to go out - one to Ashton on 5 July and one to Montague on 7 July. Of the Ashton visit Val Goldschmidt reports that she and three other Sash members went to Rev. Michael Weeder's house where the ANC had arranged for those giving statements to meet. Approximately 30 statements were taken. Cassandra reports seven Sash members went to Montague but that few people turned up to give statements. Cassandra accompanied a community person and took photographs of the sites of violence. The ANC subsequently brought out a report in July

1990 entitled "Violence in the Boland". We have been unable to ascertain to what extent the statements have led to charges being laid or claims made.

4.1.2 Khayelitsha

Tensions in Khayelitsha between the Civic body and the local authorities came to a head in November last year, following an attack on Civic leader, Michael Mapongwana's home. In the attack his wife was killed and he was injured. A subsequent march calling for the resignation of Hoza and his councillors was met with force from the police and a number of people were killed and injured, allegedly as a result of police shooting. In response to this the ANC called a meeting which Val Rose-Christie attended as the Sash representative. Also present were representatives of NADEL, LEAP and the Civic Association.

VAL ROSE-CHRISTIE reports: At the meeting the general situation in the township was discussed and the importance of taking statements from victims or family members of victims, as well as eyewitness accounts of events during the recent violence, was stressed. These would serve the dual purpose of seeking legal redress and provide information for the compilation of a report by the ANC on the tragedy. Black Sash undertook to put together a team of members to take statements, with the assistance of LEAP. The ANC undertook to ensure that the affected people would be present at the Khayelitsha Advice Office the following Sunday. When I arrived there with six other Sash members it appeared there had been a communication problem as only two people had arrived to give statements. By going to Site B we managed to trace another two people. Out of a total of an estimated 115+ either injured or killed it was obvious that four statements was a hopelessly inadequate figure. A further meeting was therefore called, attended by myself, NADEL, LEAP and ANC representatives, at which the importance of getting people to the next statement taking session was emphasized. In consequence the following Sunday the seven Sash members, reinforced by four UCT law students, went out to Khayelitsha only to find no support system had been organised (Advice Office locked, no interpreters). Despite this, 14 statements were taken. The content of some of these were horrific and served to bring home very forcefully the terror and tragedy people had experienced.

We are presently in contact with the ANC to ensure that the 18 cases handled will be taken further by legal representatives. It is of particular concern to us that this is done as soon as possible as those who have given statements have done so with hopes raised that focus will be brought on police culpability. There is also a prescriptive period in which claims must be lodged. We are concerned that these cases are not just lost and that those who made the statements are not further disillusioned about accessibility to the law. It is also important that the community does not end up feeling that Black Sash let them down, when this was in fact an ANC initiative.

4.2 DISCUSSION FOCUS ON CURRENT REPRESSION/VIOLENCE

We ensured that discussion took place at regional council on pertinent current issues related to repression.

4.2.1 Harms Commission

Copies of an article by Professor André du Toit entitled "The Death Squads: The truth must come out" were circulated to all regional councillors as background reading prior to the planned RC discussion. The discussion centred on the Harms Commission, the possible effects of its limited terms of reference and the need for a full exposure of alleged hit squad / CCB activities. The discussion led to the decision to have a Sash campaign around the issue: a lunch-time public meeting followed by a group picket.

4.2.2 Representation for amendment to the Internal Security Act

Following on the Pretoria Minute, the government announced that it would consider such representation. To this end we circulated copies of the Human Rights Commission document on the Act to all regional councillors. This document reveals the shocking extent to which the Act currently denies us so many universally accepted Human Rights. A special meeting was arranged at Mary Burton's house on September 5 to discuss the Act in terms of possible representation. Sadly the meeting was very poorly attended (four of us). However Mary carried forward the task and sent a letter of representation to the Director-General of Justice on behalf of National Black Sash. Two excerpts from her letter:

"We have no doubt that the Internal Security Act must be repealed in its entirety, and that until this can be done by Parliament its implementation should be immediately and totally suspended. The Act inhibits the ability of political organisations to mobilize and organize; political actions such as meetings and demonstrations are criminalized; political leaders and activists are detained; and the process of negotiation so urgently needed is thereby jeopardised."

"We do not say that no provision is necessary for dealing with real emergencies and for securing public safety. We do believe, however, that government proclamations must be subject to legal challenge and that the courts must be empowered to review the regulations promulgated in any emergency, and to exercise rigorous control over the actions of the security forces."

4.2.3 Transvaal Violence

Discussion was held during its early stages to try and gain some clarity on the causes. Having something of an understanding of the issues that underpinned the violence in the Transvaal might help us in recognizing the warning signals here.

5 CAMPAIGNS AND LOBBYING

5.1 A multi-organizational march calling for the release of all political prisoners and supporting the demands of Robben Island hunger strikers, held in March 1990, was prevented from taking place by a heavy police contingent. As Sash rep. on the planning committee I was aware of the careful attention that was given to organization for a controlled and peaceful march: lawyers on standby, marshalls with loud hailers, a first-aid team, speakers. Municipal permission was obtained and there was liaison with traffic authorities about suitable routes. However magisterial permission was not sought, the feeling being that we should claim the democratic right of peaceful protest. The police responded by arresting any placard-bearing person who arrived to assemble on the Parade. The balance of protesters assembled in the Methodist Church Hall off Greenmarket Square. Police helicopters flying overhead drowned out the voices of the speakers and a large police contingent outside were agitating for the gathering (albeit indoors) to disperse. Lawyers negotiated with the police that those gathered be allowed to disperse without interference. Police reaction to this march made it clear that they would not tolerate marches or protest gatherings where magisterial permission had not been obtained. A few weeks prior magisterial permission had mysteriously been granted for the February 2nd march although none of the organizers applied for it. Was this because of the size of the march and because with the opening of Parliament, it would be very much in the eye of the foreign press?

5.2 HARMS COMMISSION - Public Meeting and Stand

As a result of the discussion held at a Regional Council meeting, our region planned a public meeting and group stand to draw attention to the CCB and it's alleged unlawful "death squad" activities and to the implications of a possible cover-up of these activities resulting from the existing terms of reference of the Harms Commission. The lunchtime meeting, held in the St Georges Cathedral Hall on 19 June, was addressed by Molly Lubowski (mother of assassinated Anton Lubowski), Prof Hugh Corder, Prof André du Toit and Laurie Nathan (allegedly one of those on the 'hit list'). Karin Chubb chaired the meeting and in her opening address voiced our concerns and demands. The well attended meeting was followed by a group stand involving about 30 Black Sash members. Pamphlets printed in English and Afrikaans describing the disturbing facts and our consequent demands were handed out to the public. (For a more detailed report see SASH Magazine, September 1990.)

In organising this campaign we enjoyed the effectiveness of the different portfolios working together: Repression Monitoring, Stands, Membership Education, and Office Administration with the welcome involvement of the broader membership. The Newsletter effectively picked up on the issue and focused on some of the shocking facts and revelations (see June newsletter). Thank you to Dot Cleminshaw (Civil Rights League chairperson) for her invaluable ideas and suggestions.

**5.3 HARMS COMMISSION - Involvement with Northerns Group Campaigns.
VAL ROSE-CHRISTIE Reports:**

Background: At the beginning of last year, after the revelations of Nofamela and Coetzee on Death Squads, a group of people in the Northern Suburbs, consisting of mainly academics and business and professional men, got together to start a campaign calling for a judicial inquiry into Death Squads. Many organisations, including Black Sash and others ranging from the ANC to the DP, were invited to join the campaign. A protest march to Tuynhuys on the eve of the opening of Parliament was planned. However this was called off at the last minute when F.W. de Klerk announced the intention to set up a commission of inquiry into the issue of Death Squads headed up by Justice Harms. During the planning of our Sash action around the Harms Commission in June we made contact with the Northerns group.

I became Sash representative on the group and as such was involved in the planning of two further protest actions that they held. One continued the focus on the restrictive terms of the Harms Commission; the next was held after the findings of the Harms Commission and focused on the "burying" of accountability. The wider Sash membership took part in these.

As a result of Justice Kriegler's recent judgement in the *Vrye Weekblad/Weekly Mail* - Lothar Neethling case, the group planned further action to exert pressure on the State President. A lunchtime public meeting, addressed by Tian van der Merwe, Dullah Omar and Prof. Louwrens du Plessis, was held in St Georges Cathedral Hall on January 30th. This was well attended. On the evening prior to the opening of Parliament a march was planned from the Parade to Tuynhuys, where the State President was hosting a formal function. Unfortunately the march was only permitted to the top of Adderley Street where it was met by a representative of the State Presidents office who was handed a statement by the Northerns Group. The march was poorly attended and only four Sash members took part. This was a great pity since there was a good press contingent including several foreign press people.

5.4 Vigil for Peace - Val Rose-Christie reports:

As a result of the widespread violence in the country and Walter Sisulu's call to whites to inform themselves of the situation and adopt greater responsibility, a Black Sash national campaign for peace was mounted in October 1990. Several regions participated, staging whatever action was felt appropriate in the local context. In the Western Cape a decision was taken to hold a vigil at the Rondebosch United Congregational Church, lasting from 8 p.m. to midnight. During the vigil the Human Rights candle was lit and several speakers, including Mary Burton and representatives of various denominations, addressed those keeping vigil. A register was kept and a wide range of pertinent material on the whole aspect of violence in the country was made available.

5.5 Stand - LIFT EMERGENCY IN KHAYELITSHA

The imposing of an emergency or "unrest area" in Khayelitsha prompted us into responding with a Black Sash six-person picket, to coincide with the ANC campaign on the local authorities issue. In deciding how to respond we were aware of the difficulty of finding a way to be relevant and constructive in a situation where we need to be protesting injustices and repression while guarding against being drawn into political party strategies we might not favour. We decided that the picket was appropriate and necessary. Placards read "Listen to grievances lift emergency", "Democracy not Repression", etc.

6. PROPOSAL FOR A REGIONAL MONITORING GROUP

Our "on the ground" direct involvement work is essential for our credibility as an organisation as we speak out on issues and protest injustices. The advice office work, rural/fieldwork, court monitoring, repression monitoring (monitoring of marches, affidavit / statement taking) are all areas which give us direct insight into current issues and enable us to determine in an informed way which issues to speak out on, campaign around etc. Now, more than ever, this firsthand experience is essential to give us clarity on issues which have become complicated as a result of the political jockeying that is going on during this time of transition.

These factors, together with the events of the past year - the violence, allegations of a destabilising "Third force", a police force that in general has a reputation for acting above the law, the continued use of the Internal Security Act, and even municipal by-laws to suppress attempts by groups to organise politically, the continued repression in Boland towns - all point to the need for a regional monitoring group.

It is envisaged that such a group would be drawn from the broad membership. The monitoring demands could be matched to the time people have to offer, e.g. a few hours during a weekday morning - monitoring a gathering /in-town court case; a full weekday morning - Stellenbosch/Paarl court cases or a township monitoring call; a full day - responding to a call from the fieldworker/rural towns; a morning or afternoon over a weekend - affidavit/statement taking. There should be more skills training workshops: marshalling (for insight into crowd control methods and precautions), affidavit/statement taking, paralegal advice / court procedures.

The monitoring group would need co-ordinators on regional council and contact people in the regional office or easily contactable by the regional office.

ANY member with a few hours to offer either on weekdays or weekends can be part of this necessary work.