

Repression Monitoring Portfolio Report for the Regional Council and Advice Office Committee; January-May 1994.

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1. Regional Monitoring:

This is an attempt, while I am still here, to report-back to Regional Council and the Advice Office Committee and bridge the gap between Paula CARDOSO leaving us and we hope the arrival of another coordinator for Sash Monitors as soon as conveniently possible.

This has been a very active, exciting, often socially rewarding, and, for the most part, joyous period for Sash Peace Monitors.

1.1. Voter Education;

Val GOLDSCHMIDT and Lu HARDING continued with their programme of Voter Education with residential workshops for rural and urban women at Faure and elsewhere up-country and locally for which Val will provide a separate report. Tragically, Lu had to drop out due to ill-health and has been so sadly missed from all our monitoring activities and meetings. A special thank-you to Norma NABE, Hylde DOIKANYO, and Thandiwe NGQAKAZA, from the Advice Office who helped with interpreting at these workshops.

Of particular pleasure to me has been accompanying Val and her helpers, such as, Scotty MORTON, Paula CARDOSO, and Jean GOODE, to the African townships often accompanied by overseas visitors, journalists, politicians, writers, and other Sash members, such as, Jenny de TOLLY, and Betty DAVENPORT, who later with Sue COOKE and probably others took Voter Education to the Southern Suburbs and elsewhere. Maureen HAMSE or Susan CONJWA, our friends from the Mothers of Crossroads, acted as interpreters for Val on township visits which was a mutually happy arrangement we hope will be perpetuated in the future for other needs.

1.2. Monitoring of ID Mobile Units:

While the above Voter Education was taking place in the townships I would be visiting ID Mobile Units in the area. These Units had been operating since July last year and Paula CARDOSO had been keeping an eye on them, but early this year when Rosalind BUSH was standing in for Paula, she spear-headed a special focus on this operation. From late January and up until Election week I systematically checked the ID Mobile Units in Langa, Guguletu, New Crossroads, KTC, Nyanga, Brown's Farm, Vietnam, Lusaka, Old Crossroads, and Khayelitsha criticising the lack of publicity

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enquiring into delivery dates of IDs which steadily gathered momentum, often applauding the positive, happy, and always helpful delivery of services, and from early March checking the issuing of Voter Cards as residents still flocked to the outlets. During the last month IDs were being delivered by Home Affairs Officials at the end of their working day to residents at their homes as the collection of IDs was very slow in practically all the areas except where party agents had been delivering books by hand in their areas. I was received with much warmth and friendliness particularly as I re-visited venues frequently and I got the impression that the interest I showed was much appreciated by people who worked long and often tedious hours which were sometimes busy but sometimes boringly slow but at all times they seemed entirely committed to enabling everyone to vote. Many of the officials were temporarily employed and some expressed their concern as to what would happen to them after the election period.

1.3. Distribution of 'You & the Vote' booklet;

At the same time that I made the above visits, I delivered hundreds of these booklets, the vast majority of them in Xhosa, as I only monitored a few ID Mobile Units in predominantly Afrikaans speaking areas.

The burden of responsibility for delivering these booklets to the public seemed to fall on Val GOLDSCHMIDT and I, and we found box loads of particularly Afrikaans booklets left at the Sash offices undistributed shortly before the election date. We did what we could in getting box loads out to places such as, Somerset West thanks to Gina PEET, Stellenbosch Lawyers for Human Rights, LEAP at UCT, and the ID Mobile Unit at Beacon House Mitchells Plain and the branch of NICRO out there, but much more could have been done about this earlier had we known that nobody else appeared to be shouldering the brief. I am not aware of this being a task handed to the Monitoring Group per se and indeed had a problem getting booklets released for distribution in the townships when they first appeared. It was extremely sad to find box-loads of booklets in the Sash passage/office still after the election date. I feel this was a task not adequately addressed by the Regional Council, and that if it was to be dealt with by the Voter Education/Monitor volunteers alone it should have been clearly stated.

2. Sash Monitors' Involvement with other Organisations/Networks:

2.1. NIM (Network of Independent Monitors);

More recent newcomers to the Monitoring Group, namely, Donna and Tom AMBROGI, Tammin BAKER, and Alison STENT, completed their three part training as NIM monitors in time for election duties. A course that in future will include a fourth part, 'stress management' component, for which some of us have been willing guinea-pigs. Useful material about this has been tabled in the National and Regional offices.

Hildegarde FAST was voted onto the Executive of NIM and heads the Strategy Group there. Jean GOODE spends a day a week helping in the office at NIM and our monitors are regularly deployed at marches, demonstrations, strike-actions, and more recently on the Grand Parade for the Presidential inauguration and subsequent appearance there to address Capetonians.

From the first week of March, UN (United Nations) and EU (European Unity) Observers were deployed in the Western Cape and in pairs covered a wide area of the African townships, outlying urban areas, and up-country rural areas until after the election. I accompanied Jasmin NORDIEN the NIM coordinator on an orientation presentation for some of them when they first arrived and as a result many of them came with me on further orientation

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trips to the townships as I monitored ID Mobile Units and also at times to observe Sash Voter Education in progress. These trips led to arrangements being made for them to employ the assistance of volunteer NIM field-workers from the African townships to act as guides and interpreters for them over the election period. During this period there were many political meetings, particularly the de KLERK and MANDELA 'roadshows', as well as, the more usual protests and marches to be monitored by Sash monitors as members of NIM along with the many RPC (Regional Peace Committee) and IEC (Independent Electoral Commission) monitors and overseas Observers.

2.2. NEON (National Election Observers Network);

Some of us trained as Trainers with NEON, and Donna and Tom AMBROGI went on to train many Sash members and others for duties in the Election Stations over the days of voting. Scotty MORTON served on the Regional Committee and shared with many the ensuing stress from disagreements and dissatisfaction with conditions from some of the Observers, a sad end to such an amazing joint effort to ensure truly democratic elections.

2.3. IEC (Independent Electoral Commission);

Near the end of January, Val ROSE-CHRISTIE, Rosalind BUSH, and I, attended a three day training for IEC Monitors. Val and Rosalind then signed on as Specialist Monitors full-time with Val heading the department. I joined their department for the week of the election serving on a JOC (Joint Operation Centre) at Nyanga on a shift system and in my spare time checking on Voting Stations in the Nyanga, Old Crossroads, Brown's Farm, KTC, and Mitchells Plain area. My reports for both these assignments have been tabled with National Executive and the Regional Council.

2.4. Crisis Welfare Relief Committee;

Scotty MORTON and I attended weekly meetings of this committee out at the LPC (Local Peace Committee) offices at Nyanga Medical Centre last year over the period of the violence in Old Crossroads as an attempt to facilitate coordinated relief distribution to victims of violence with the help of the Red Cross, St. John's, SHAWCO, and the Trauma Centre at Cowley House. This committee will probably continue meeting monthly and the distribution centre at Topcor Centre Unathi Village will still be put to good use hopefully as a meeting place for the Mothers of Crossroads for their workshops and committee meetings, as well as, remaining a storage depot for the Red Cross at one end.

2.5. The Mothers of Crossroads/Women for Peace Movement;

We remain very interested and caring spectators of the development of this splendid initiative which grew out of the violence of last year in the Old Crossroads faction fighting as a result of the demand for further removals of families in the area. At a symbolic Peace Event at the Mfesani Community Hall Boys Town late in November of last year the wider Women's Movement for Peace was launched that will in time draw in women from a much wider area. Meanwhile, the Mothers of Crossroads have been attending a Red Cross First Aid course and about twenty of them received certificates for successfully completing this. A creche has opened in the Unathi area and plans are afoot to site two containers, one for the creche and the other for a Soup Kitchen for the pensioners in the area. Ideally, two containers will be sited in Lower Crossroads for the same purpose so that residents at both ends of Old Crossroads are served. Fran ANDERSON from the Peace Campaign has kindly agreed to motivate for these containers once sites have been agreed and secured with the Local Council. Happily some funding has become available and Scotty MORTON

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3. The Election Period:

Besides the individual involvement of members of the Monitoring Group our mutual thanks go out to the membership of Sash for responding to the call for IEC monitors and officials both in house and in the field, as NEON Observers and their trainers, as well as, to those fulfilling monitoring duties with NIM. If it has any of the hoped for effect of drawing together the wider membership with the Monitoring Group and its wider links with the Advice Office we will be only too delighted. It has been an utterly exhausting, sometimes frustrating and demoralising time for many but after a good break from it all, time to reflect, and restore adrenalin, we hope you will join and in some cases re-join us in our hope for the future as a group.

4. The Current Situation:

The Monitoring Group has had two meetings in the last fortnight to address our future. On the first occasion to consider our need or otherwise for a new coordinator, and to re-assess the current representation of Sash monitors in various roles on Sash's behalf which includes our Advice Office link-up, NIM, Joint Forum on Policing, Court Monitoring, Township Contact, and Crisis Relief. A list of those representing these interests will be attached to this report. On the second occasion we met to reformulate a job description for a new coordinator which will be forwarded to the Regional Council along with our motivation for the need for such a person.

Bastienne KLEIN, the Advice Office coordinator was present at both meetings and motivated strongly for a new Monitoring coordinator but without the additional role as Assistant Advice Office coordinator. She highlighted the need for the job to be more focused and realistically structured for the three and a half hours per day as it is budgetted for till the end of the year. She pointed out that our budget is very healthy, as our travelling expenses for the most part have come under Voter Education or NIM and, therefore, we could potentially employ the services of a researcher part-time, either additional to the coordinator's job if she is appropriately skilled, or to be found elsewhere. Bastienne welcomed the increasing link-up with the Advice Office and sees this as ongoing in the future particularly in terms of court monitoring maintenance and social violence cases, as well as, monitoring such things as pensions queues and social condition of living and employment.

Betty DAVENPORT, as Chairperson of the Advice Office staff, endorsed what Bastienne said and was equally positive in saying that the report-backs to Regional Council and the Advice Office Committee meetings were invaluable in terms of information sharing.

From the rest of us present the feeling was mutually positive in that there is still going to be much monitoring work to be done; strikes, marches, and demonstrations will still go on; social conditions will not improve over-night; the ministries of law and order will still have to be watched and even the judicial system leaves a lot to be desired and doubtless will not change over-night either but, if it does, we must be sure it is for the better. We recognise only too well the need for a coordinator for us to liaise with at the office, to share experiences, concerns, and hopes, and at times empathy and reassurance with, in mutual understanding of the nature of our voluntary work on behalf of Sash.

The second meeting chaired by Betty and guided by Tom AMBROGI was an attempt to fine down the requirements and description of the coordinator's 'job description'. Defining it clearly as an administrative role with some flexibility but high-lighting the need to report-back monthly to the Regional Council and Advice Office Committee Meeting, and fortnightly to

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to attend NIM Regional Council meetings. Otherwise, attention to outside monitoring or other interest group meetings would be up to the individual on a voluntary basis as other members will be representing and reporting-back to the coordinator on these.

5. The Way Ahead:

The membership of the Monitoring Group as will be seen from the accompanying list of their chosen areas of interest and representation, and their up-to-date telephone numbers, amounts to ten, with only one person with close commitments. Lu HARDING, Rosalind BUSH, and I, do not appear on the list as the first two are unable to be involved at present and I leave for an extended trip at the end of May until about November. There are, potentially, three newcomers to the group but this has yet to be confirmed. We welcome Tammin BAKER and Alison STENT, as the most recent newcomers and wish them well. It will be sad to say farewell to Donna and Tom AMBROGI in November as they are both wonderfully supportive and skilled.

I would like to personally thank both Norma NABE and Hylda DOIKANYO, who along with David VITHI in the Advice Office are an ever increasing source of support as information gatherers and sharers on our behalf. If they feel they would like to in turn attend the first part of our Monitors meetings in future to continue this in the future I know it would be very much appreciated by our members.

My personal wish would be for an ever closer contact and liason with such groupings as the Mothers of Crossroads/Women for Peace Movements in the African townships and the ongoing opportunity for employment of some of them as guides and interpreters for Sash Public Relations and Advice Office support.

I dare to hope there will be an ongoing closer link with the Legislation Watch cementing what has begun with our meeting with Candy MALHERBE and Martha BRIDGEMAN over Nana NILSEN's 'Taxi-war Report'. We thank Candy most sincerely for the interest she has shown in taking it up and we have hopes of something coming out of it in the near future!

My 'dream' is, of course, that Sash will employ a female African Monitor/Field-worker in the not too distant future! Meanwhile, I leave you all with many happy memories of my time spent with Sash and thank you all for the many very valuable opportunities you have afforded me particularly, of course, over the past joyous and miraculous month. My best wishes and hopes for the future go with you.

Anne Greenwell.

List of Sash Monitors representing Sash at other Forums:

		<u>Home Tel.</u>
Donna AMBROGI:	Advice Office Helper; AO Monitor of Pension queues; Nana Nilsen's Taxi-war Report Group;	470756
Tom AMBROGI:	<u>Joint Forum on Policing;</u> NIM Strategy Group; Court Monitoring Police/Political; <u>Analysis of Sash Monitors' Reports;</u>	470756
Tammin BAKER:	<u>Newsletter Contact:</u>	5310331
Hildegaaarde FAST:	<u>NIM Executive;</u> <u>NIM Strategy Group;</u> Joint Forum on Policing;	479436
Val GOLDSCHMIDT:	<u>Advice Office Helper/Court Monitoring;</u> <u>PAID Group;</u> Township Contact;	7943204
Jean GOODE:	NIM Liason/Office; Court Monitoring;	611639
Scotty MORTON:	<u>Crisis Relief Committee;</u> Township Contact; Court Monitoring Police/Political;	4621864
Val ROSE-CHRISTIE:	<u>Regional Peace Committee;</u> Joint Forum on Policing; Township Contact;	5314034
Alison STENT:	NIM Strategy Group; Court Monitoring Gender/Family Violence;	476681
Paula CARDOSO:		

Those under-lined have responsibility to report-back.