WOMEN WORKERS

1995

Gardeners 'promised pay rise'

PRETORIA — President Nelson Mandela promised public service gardeners higher wages after the new Budget was passed, presidential spokesman Joel Netshitenzhe said yesterday.

Mandela had addressed more than 100 gardeners at his official residence, Mahlamba'ndlopfu, earlier in the day, assuring them he knew some were earning a "pittance" of R800 a month.

Netshitenzhe was commenting on claims by leaders of the SA Health and Public Service Workers' Union (Sahpswu) that Mandela had promised the gardeners a minimum monthly wage of R1 500 by March 31.

Sahpswu general secretary Silas Baloyi objected to Mandela "running behind our backs to talk to a section of our members instead of responding to the union".

Sahpswu members went on strike for four days last week to press for a minimum wage of R1 500 a month and a 15% pay rise for public service workers.

Union leaders claimed on Thursday gardeners working at Mandela's residence had also gone on strike. This was denied by his office.

On Friday Sahpswu suspended the strike for two weeks to give the government the opportunity to respond.

According to Netshitenzhe, Mandela had explained to the group that the current Budget had been inherited from the previous government.

The new Budget in March would bring about salary adjustments for public servants, resulting in pay rises, particularly for the lowest-paid workers.

Netshitenzhe said there was "no way" Mandela would have mentioned figures to the workers as he was fully briefed on the talks on public servant salaries.

Netshitenzhe said the group was made up of gardeners working on government grounds housing the official residences of the President, Deputy Presidents and Cabinet Ministers.

Sahpswu national organiser Success Mataitsane claimed that most of the gardeners were Sahpswu members.

If the government failed to respond positively to Sahpswu's demands before Friday next week, "it will be do or die for us", Baloyi said.

"We will resume and intensify our strike action throughout the country."

Mataitsane said Sahpswu leaders had asked Mandela meet them tomorrow. They were awaiting a response. — Sapa.

Women face rights challenge

Sowetan 30/1/95

SOUTH African women faced a critical challenge to ensure human rights vital to society's transformation are entrenched in the constitution.

This was said in Cape Town yesterday by Ms Sandy Liebenberg of the University of the Western Cape Community Law Centre during a conference on a gender perspective of South Africa's interim and final constitutions.

She said women not only bore the brunt of unemployment but earned lower than average in the formal sector. An important feature of economic and social reality in South Africa was the substantial number of women working in the informal sector. Another was that many women "hid" themselves because they feared officialdom and their husbands and partners. "Fear of officialdom is particularly strong in the South African situation because of the country's history of apartheid," said Liebenberg.

Poverty, illiteracy and deprivation impacted disproportionately on women, especially black women who were racially discrimination against.

"The oppression women experience in the home, in many cultural and religious contexts and their economic deprivation and exclusion, are inextricably interwoven. Thus women are trapped in a web of subordination in our society."

This had spiralling implications for women's' enjoyment of all other human rights, said Liebenberg, adding that the progressive realisation of social rights by the State would benefit South African women. Enshrining social rights in the final constitution would serve four main purposes:

- Preventing violations of social rights by public and private authorities;
- Establishing a framework for Government to adopt suitable legislation, such as a National Housing Rights Act;
- Ensuring that rights, such as property ones, are not interpreted by the courts to protect vested interests at the expense of basic social needs; and
- Providing the basis for South Africans to demand they be afforded adequate remedies if their social rights are violated by authorities. — *Sapa.*

Social rights 'critical' for women

SOUTH AFRICAN women faced a critical challenge in ensuring "social rights" were entrenched in the final constitution, a University of the Western Cape academic said yesterday.

Ms Sandy Liebenberg, of UWC's Community Law Centre, was speaking at a conference on a gender perspective on South Africa's interim and final constitutions. (35SA)

She said women bore the brunt of unemployment and earned less then men where they had formal sector jobs. In addition, substantial numbers of women worked in the informal sector.

Poverty, illiteracy and deprivation had a disproportionate impact on women, and especially black women. CT 30/11/95

"The oppression women experience in the home, in many cultural and religious contexts, and in their economic deprivation and exclusion, are inextricably interwoven. Women are trapped in a web of subordination."

This had spiralling implications for womens' enjoyment of all other human rights.

"By confining our final Bill of Rights to civil and political rights, we will be reflecting the interests of those already vested with power in our society," Ms Liebenberg said. — Sapa

Unions 'to target huge wage gap'

(385A)

ARGUS 4/2/95

JOHN VILJOEN
Business Staff

UNIONS are likely to target gaping wage differences between management and workers in "aggressive and adverserial" wage negotiations this year, says labour relations consultant Andrew Levy.

Andrew Levy and Associates predicted a repeat of 1994's high levels of industrial action at a seminar for representatives of Cape Town companies.

Union growth would continue, with industrial action keeping pace with it, Mr Levy said.

South Africa's trade union movement lacked maturity and control over members who took a short-term view, believing that militant action could secure their demands.

Industrial action would begin earlier and run later, he predicted.

According to their research, 79 percent of companies expected difficult wage negotiations.

These companies were budgeting for wage increases of between seven and 13 percent and expecting to settle at between 9½ and 10½ percent.

More than 60 percent of companies expected wage settlements to be higher this year, 20 percent expected them to be the same and 16 percent optimistically expected smaller increases.

Half the companies surveyed expected industrial action.

Although many union officials were new to the job and lacked experience, Mr Levy said the effects of the so-called Cosatu "brain drain" had been overstated. "Does Cosatu have a leadership crisis? I don't think so."

More significant than any brain drain, he suggested, was the eagerness of new leadership to impress their following as competent.

This, combined with heightened worker expectations, was likely to lead to bargaining being more adverserial, confrontational and aggressive in the year ahead.

Cosatu's strategy was likely to focus on the issue of differentials between worker wages and managerial salaries.

This was a new argument in which union officials said: "There is a huge disparity between workers' wages and those of management. This is a result of exploitation and oppression during the apartheid years. It must now be corrected."

The argument was popular among workers and was an effective counter to rational issues — such as the CPI — raised by management during wage talks, Larry Palk said.

Mr Levy criticised Cosatu's argument on worker/management wage differences as "simplistic and somewhat vacuous".

It was impossible to talk about wage differentials in this regard without examining the contribution which labour made in relation to the wage, and there was nothing to indicate empirically what the correct ratio ought to be.

"Nevertheless, these arguments will be raised before management and, accordingly, they need to be prepared to meet them."

Mr Levy advised employers that the more information they had to hand, the better they would be prepared to "face the opponent" around the negotiating table.

Apart from the rate of inflation and settlements being reached elsewhere, information on labour productivity in their industry and particularly their factory would be valuable to employers.

Mr Palk said there was no doubt that pressure for centralised bargaining would continue. Central government appeared to view centralised bargaining as good for the country and believed it would promote stability, among other benefits.

Bargaining among white collar workers was a growing area for union organisers.

This could be explained by affirmative action and appointments, promotion and progression through the ranks and the fact that people in white collar jobs felt threatened, insecure and annoyed at bearing the brunt of lower percentage increases than the bargaining unit for the last few years.

Although bargaining at the white collar level had not really taken off to a large extent, there was no doubt that the next two to three years would see major inroads into this area.

Referring to the media, the consultants said the time had come for managements to review their traditionally "tight-lipped" approach to Press comments during strikes.

There was much to be said for an aggressive and open attitude toward putting the facts on the table.

Unions would tend to do this in any event and managements would look lame if they did not respond. The consultants suggested reconsidering any traditional policies of limiting public comment during strikes.

Whatever happened to gender commission?

WM 10-16/2/95 (355A)

Gaye Davis in parliament

ANC women MPs have reacted angrily to assertions that they left it up to opposition MPs to get the ball rolling on setting up a Gender Equality Commission as required by the interim constitution.

The commission, a body geared to promote gender equality and to advise the national and provincial legislatures on any laws affecting the status of women, must be created by Act of parliament.

Democratic Party spokesman on women Dene Smuts said this week it remained "a mystery" to her "why the ANC, which has so many women MPs" had "failed to get moving" on the commission — especially as the idea originated with the ANC and Justice Minister Dullah Omar was also an ANC member. "It's now February and the commission should have been up and running already," she said.

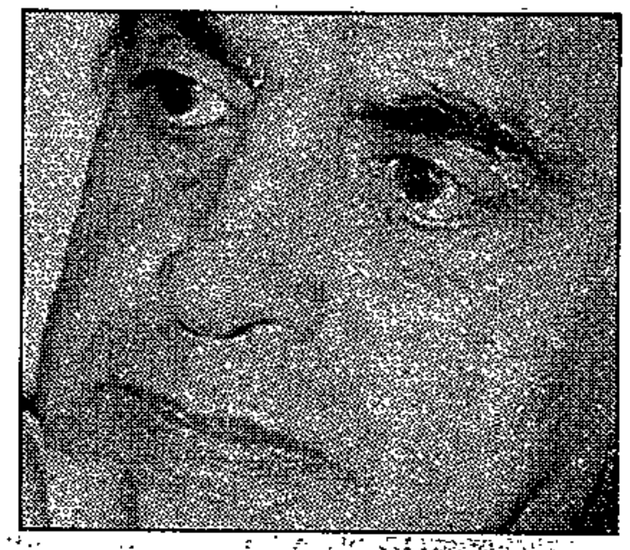
Acting independently of each other, she and NP MP Sheila Camerer had both written to Omar urging action. They also brought a motion in parliament for an ad hoc committee on the Gender Equality Commission to be set up.

The first meeting of the ad hoc committee, to elect a chair and set its terms of reference, failed to meet this week for lack of a quorum. Smuts said its scheduled time — 8am on Monday — was difficult for women who had to drop children off at school or for MPs returning from Johannesburg.

ANC MP Baleka Kgositsile said the delay was caused primarily by the fact that an unpublished bill prepared by the former ministry of justice — when Camerer was deputy minister — was totally unsuitable. (A memorandum to the unpublished bill indicates the drafters were unsure of what was intended with a Gender Equality Commission and noted an overlap with other law creating a Human Rights Commission.)

Kgositsile said: "Maybe this is how some people see politics — as a question of being able to say I did this, rather than going ahead and doing things for the benefit of all women."

Once up and running, the committee will call for submissions and hear evidence.



Dullah Omar: Urged to take action

Thursday February 16 1995 SOWETAN

BUSSINESS NSB donates R1 million

New award for women in the liquor business

355A
sowetan 16/2/95

By Isaac Moledi

THE National Federated Chamber of Commerce has launched a new award to encourage businesswomen in the organisation to realise their full potential.

Nafcoc-United Bank Business Woman of the Year Award, was announced in Soweto this week following the launching of the Women in the Liquor Trade Forum.

The forum will enhance and advance women's interests in all the sectors of the organisation.

Announcing the award, Nafcoc assistant general secretary Elizabeth Maklein said women were in the majority in the liquor business but their contribution was disregarded by the male-dominated Nafcoc.

"We want to ensure that all sectors of Nafcoc have women's forums to ensure that women's issues are represented," says Maklein.

All seven Nafcoc sectors will take part in the competition and the overall winner will receive R10 000. The victor will be announced during Nafcoc's annual conferences.

An additional R5 000 will come from the South African Liquor Traders Association, an organisation which was born out of a merger between the National Taverners Association and the United Taverners Association of South Africa.

Salta chairman David Mokoena invited women liquor traders to apply for scholarships from the organisation as there was money available for this purpose.

About R1 million was donated by National Sorghum Breweries last year. Thirty percent of the money was to be used to train liquor traders in Nafcoc, says Mokoena.

Nafcoc set to honour women

(355A)

By Isaac Moledi Sowetan 23/2/95

NAFCOC has been chosen by United Bank to run a competition that will honour black women whose achievements have gone unnoticed by the country.

The Black Business Woman of the Year Award competition will help recognise those successful women who have had to overcome "almost insurmountable obstacles to rise above the responsibilities of caring for their families and communities to become top achievers."

The winner will receive a R10 000 cash prize in a United Bank business account and a R5 000 donation to her business.

The first runner-up will receive a R5 000 cash prize in the United Bank business account and the second runner-up R3 000 in a similar account.

The winners will also receive floating trophies and a year's free subscription to the *African Business* publication.

The bank will levy no charges on their business accounts for 12 months.

Semifinalists will be selected from different business sectors: manufacturing, retailing, transport, farming, taverners, professional occupation and informal business.

The winners will be announced at the annual Nafcoc conference in Sun City in July.

Official entry forms will be inserted in the March edition of the *African Business* and copies can be obtained from Nafcoc offices.

Members of the public can also nominate candidates for the competition.

Danish expert argues for SA gender quotas

ARG 25/2/95 (355A)

■ Never mind the liberal constitution and the Bill of Rights, South African society is still extremely sexist, says the head of the Danish Equal Status Council, Nanne Gret Holmsgaard.

ROGER FRIEDMAN
Weekend Argus Reporter

ALTHOUGH South Africa has made great strides in getting women appointed to powerful positions — 26 percent of our parliamentarians are women — there are still compelling reasons to impose gender quotas on government and business, says a visiting Danish authority.

"Quotas are sometimes necessary mechanisms — not principles — to uplift women. When you no longer need the quota you can always get rid of it," argued Nanne Gret Holmsgaard, head of the Danish Equal Status Council, in an interview this week.

"The real breakthrough is when you get through the 50 percent barrier and people realise there are no earthquakes or catastrophes," Ms Holmsgaard said.

"Then nobody thinks of it any more because it is natural to have 60 percent women — or 45 percent."

Former Danish MP Ms Holmsgaard was invited to South Africa by Justice Minister Dullah Omar to speak to his department as well as the constitutional theme committee dealing with gender issues and the *ad hoc* committee on the establishment of a commission of gender equality.

The Danish Equal Status Council advises the Danish government on policy, both in terms of existing laws and creating new legislation.

Ms Holmsgaard said although Scandinavian countries were light years ahead of South Africa on gender equality, many gender issues were common to all countries across the globe.

"The oppression of women is a structural problem. To have real equity, it is not enough to say we have laws affording equal rights to all. Those laws will not move women into decision-making positions.



Picture: ROY WIGLEY, Weekend Argus.

□ **DANISH VIEW:** Nanne Gret Holmsgaard, Danish equal rights activist, says: "It is vital that women organise across party and colour lines."

"The structural problems are largely due to familial obligations. For decades society has been divided into a public life (for men) and family life (the sphere of women)."

The advice she could offer South Africa was threefold:

■ The Human Rights Commission should not remove gender issues from the human rights sphere. Rather, women's rights should be viewed as inalienable human rights.

■ A gender commission, independent of party politics, should be established to work "close to the president". It should be a body to "proactively advise government on policy matters and should be attached to the president's office for maximum power and influence." It should act as a watchdog and a advisory body.

■ A strong women's caucus in parliament is a priority. "Women will have different opinions on many questions, but then there are many questions which unite women. For example, no one ever asks a male MP how he is coping with his children".

And Ms Holmsgaard's advice to women: "Organise. You will get nowhere if you are not organised.

"The Women's Coalition should be revived. How else will women in the rural areas have a voice that reaches government?"

argues for SA gender quotas

Danish Expert

ARG 25/4/95 (355A)

■ Never mind the liberal constitution and the Bill of Rights, South African society is still extremely sexist, says the head of the Danish Equal Status Council, Nanne Gret Holmsgaard.



Picture: ROY WIGLEY, Weekend Argus.

□ **DANISH VIEW:** Nanne Gret Holmsgaard, Danish equal rights activist, says: "It is vital that women organise across party and colour lines."

ROGER FRIEDMAN
Weekend Argus Reporter

ALTHOUGH South Africa has made great strides in getting women appointed to powerful positions — 26 percent of our parliamentarians are women — there are still compelling reasons to impose gender quotas on government and business, says a visiting Danish authority.

"Quotas are sometimes necessary mechanisms — not principles — to uplift women. When you no longer need the quota you can always get rid of it," argued Nanne Gret Holmsgaard, head of the Danish Equal Status Council, in an interview this week.

"The real breakthrough is when you get through the 50 percent barrier and people realise there are no earthquakes or catastrophes," Ms Holmsgaard said.

"Then nobody thinks of it any more because it is natural to have 60 percent women — or 45 percent."

Former Danish MP Ms Holmsgaard was invited to South Africa by Justice Minister Dullah Omar to speak to his department as well as the constitutional theme committee dealing with gender issues and the *ad hoc* committee on the establishment of a commission of gender equality.

The Danish Equal Status Council advises the Danish government on policy, both in terms of existing laws and creating new legislation.

Ms Holmsgaard said although Scandinavian countries were light years ahead of South Africa on gender equality, many gender issues were common to all countries across the globe.

"The oppression of women is a structural problem. To have real equity, it is not enough to say we have laws affording equal rights to all. Those laws will not move women into decision-making positions.

"The structural problems are largely due to familial obligations. For decades society has been divided into a public life (for men) and family life (the sphere of women)."

The advice she could offer South Africa was threefold:

■ The Human Rights Commission should not remove gender issues from the human rights sphere. Rather, women's rights should be viewed as inalienable human rights.

■ A gender commission, independent of party politics, should be established to work "close to the president". It should be a body to "proactively advise government on policy matters and should be attached to the president's office for maximum power and influence." It should act as a watchdog and a advisory body.

■ A strong women's caucus in parliament is a priority. "Women will have different opinions on many questions, but then there are many questions which unite women. For example, no one ever asks a male MP how he is coping with his children".

And Ms Holmsgaard's advice to women: "Organise. You will get nowhere if you are not organised.

"The Women's Coalition should be revived. How else will women in the rural areas have a voice that reaches government?"

POLITICS Accusations and denial swirl around controversial leader's head

Sexual abuse in army

sowetan 1/3/95

355A

By Vuyo Bavuma
Political Reporter

THE South African National Defence Force has ordered women recruits to train separately because of sexual abuse problems in the army, General Siphiwe Nyanda said yesterday.

Addressing a parliamentary joint standing committee on defence, Nyanda said authorities quickly processed the women and sent them for training to different camps to avoid this problem.

In the past, women have complained of sexual abuse while waiting to be placed. Nyanda said that despite this issue the behaviour had improved significantly at camps with few disciplinary hearings being held.

On February 15, 12 500 members from the PAC's Azanian People's Liberation Army and the ANC's Umkhonto we Sizwe, including 996 officers, were integrated into the SANDF.

This includes 90 in the air force, 270 in the navy and 550 in the medical services. Top officers integrated include two lieutenant-generals, nine major-generals and 37 colonels.

Nyanda said authorities recently took steps to solve problems at the camps. These included supplying tents with floors and furniture, installing lighting and providing beds.

Communication between soldiers and authorities was also reported to have improved. However, the SANDF still faced the problem of recruits over the age of 50 years and some soldiers complained of not getting their salaries.

Kriel chided by women

Political Staff

CT 3/3/95

CHAIRPERSON of the Western Cape provincial committee Ms Hilda Ndude castigated Premier Mr Hernus Kriel for officially accepting a charter on women's rights but failing to refer to women once in his parliamentary opening speech.

"We gave you this charter so that you could study it and decide how your government would meet the challenges," she said.

Over a dozen women from a range of organisations presented Mr Kriel with the charter late last year.

Call to open up council hiring

335A

CT 9/3/15

MUNICIPAL REPORTER

TRADITIONALLY male jobs in the city council — as traffic officers, firefighters or ambulance staff — need to be opened up to women, affirmative action project director Mr Gavin Pieterse has said.

The city should also ensure the "macho environment" in such jobs was not unfriendly to women.

He said 74% of a total of over 16 000 council employees were coloured, and only 2% black.

It was inevitable that more blacks will be hired, as council boundaries were about to change to include the iKapa areas.

"25% to 28% of our clients will be black," he said. "Our staff complement should reflect that."

But there could be no compromise on the principle that those selected for jobs must be competent.

He did not favour racial quotas, but said each branch of the council should set its own affirmative action goals.

NEWS Celebrating internationally and locally

Red letter day for SA's women

3357
sowetan
9/3/95

By Betsy Spratt

FOR THE WOMEN of South Africa, yesterday was a day of firsts — the announcement of the first South African Women's Day and the first post-election celebration of International Women's Day.

The event, held at Soweto's Sechaba Training Centre, kicked off the last 155 days to South African Women's Day on August 9.

International Women's Day began on March 8 1913 when women factory workers in New York walked off the job in protest against discriminatory working conditions.

Since then, women around the world have gathered together to come up with ways of combating discrimination.

Yesterday, a panel of women politicians and community leaders discussed ways of combating continued oppression.

■ GREAT IDEA 'Everyone is networking,' says Mabaso:

Political education and involvement were among the ways suggested by Gauteng MEC Loretta Jacobus.

"There's a need to ensure that what we have been fighting for is implemented," Jacobus said. "Local government will ensure that the Reconstruction and Development Programme is implemented. It is the level of government at which bread-and-butter issues will be handled."

The day not only marked the first post-election celebration, it was also the first time women from diverse backgrounds participated in International Women's Day without the fear apartheid-style reprisals, said South African Council of Churches' Miss Brigalia Bam.

Bam encouraged the audience to continue to come together as way of healing past wounds.

Co-panelist Ms Natalie Stockton of the Women's Bureau of South Africa agreed: "What we've been suffering from in this country is not just economic poverty, but mental poverty.

"It's a condition that came about by us not speaking to each other, by not joining hands."

Bridging communication and understanding were the goals of the event, said Mrs Masechaba Mabaso, Sacheba's chief executive officer.

"This was a great idea," Mabaso said. "Look how everyone is networking."

Govt serious about women

Cape Town — The Cabinet, more than any other government body, was taking the emancipation and upliftment of women seriously, President Mandela said yesterday.

The Government was committed to ensuring that obligations regarding the emancipation of women were upheld, he said while marking International Women's Day.

"In no other body of government has the question of the emancipation and upliftment of women been taken more seriously than in the Cabinet of the Government of National Unity." (355A)

The Government would ratify the UN Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Mandela urged women's organisations to suggest ways to establish a gender commission. — Sapa.

Star 9/3/95

'Let South Africa's women bring democracy home'

SL 12/3/95

BY NOMVULA KHALO

THE Women's National Coalition (WNC) has appealed to women to be actively involved – both as candidates and organisers – in the forthcoming local government elections.

At countrywide celebrations of International Women's Day on Wednesday the WNC called on women to "bring democracy home" and keep the ideals of democracy alive by promoting power-sharing, responsibility and accountable government on a local level for the benefit of all.

WNC national convenor Jean Ngubane urged women to take the lead in voter registration and voter education.

"It is crucial for women to recognise their responsibility in the transition at a local level, as it will affect people in a very concrete and immediate sense," said Ngubane.

The elections would affect people in terms of basic services that they take for granted or expect to be improved, she said.

Ngubane said the redistribution role that local government would have to play in order to abolish severe inequalities and imbalances would have a particularly dramatic impact.

There must be effective community mobilisation around issues such as housing, payment of services and the illegal actions of certain groups to ensure stability in government on a local level, she said.

The WNC also appealed to women to take a lead in the government's Masakhane (building together now) Campaign.

"Women must be seen to be taking an active role in the community and paying for services and housing, keeping a check on crime and committing themselves to building together a bright future for their children."



CONCERNED . . . Esther Nyembezi helped the disadvantaged.

Day for women's leader

BY NOMVULA KHALO

TODAY the Black Housewives' League celebrates Esther Nyembezi Day.

Esther Kebaoetse Nyembezi, who formed the Black Housewives' League in 1953, initially called the African Housewives League, died in 1980.

Her aim was to try to keep women together, organise social functions for them and help them, particularly when they were depressed.

The celebration will be held at the Methodist Church, Block A, Mabopane, in Pretoria and the activities of the day will start with a commemoration service. Later a speaker from Powa will speak on domestic and child abuse. The day will end with a party.

Stella Mohlamme, general secretary of the league, described Nyembezi as a caring and loving person who, were she alive today, would be helping the disadvantaged.

CT 16/3/95

Cabinet to draw lower salaries

~~474~~ ~~428~~ 3554 ~~256~~

LOWER salaries for President Nelson Mandela and his cabinet were disclosed yesterday in the budget.

Mr Mandela will now get R552 000 a year, including a R115 000 car allowance, compared to R690 000 last year.

The two deputy presidents will now be paid R480 000, including R80 000 car allowance, while ministers will get R424 000, including R70 560 car allowance.

Deputy ministers will now get R345 000 a year, including a car allowance of R57 350.

(355A)

Call on gender commission

CT 17/3/95

EVIDENCE from the public has been called by the parliamentary committee investigating the proposed Commission on Gender Equality.

Mrs Ruth Mompati, chairperson of the ad hoc committee, said in a statement yesterday that all people and institutions who wanted to make representations should do so before March 24.

Mrs Mompati said all correspondence should be addressed to the Secretary to Parliament, PO BOx 15, Cape Town, 8000, Fax: (021) 461 7969).

Subsidy bias to end for women

Political Correspondent

STEPS are being taken to end discrimination against married women in the state housing subsidy scheme, says Public Service and Administration Minister Zola Skweyiya. 355A

Replying to questions by Mike Ellis (DP) in the national assembly, Dr Skweyiya said married women were excluded from the scheme unless their husbands were permanently medically unfit.

Allowances given to single women were forfeited if they married. ARG 20/4/95

The implementation date for an amended scheme was being negotiated, but retrospective compensation for married women was not.

Numsa demands a better pay deal

Sowetan 22/3/95

THE National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa is to table a 15 percent across-the-board pay rise for workers in the engineering, road vehicle and tyre industries, general secretary Mr Enoch Godongwana said yesterday.

The union will demand a further five percent rise for the lowest-paid workers, he said.

Numsa would also demand a minimum of 160 hours a year for adult basic education during paid time and additional training in operational skills.

Godongwana said these decisions were taken at a central committee meeting at the weekend.

"To close the apartheid wage gap our lowest-paid members must earn no less than 60 percent of an artisan's wage."

The union would also table a demand for a 40-hour working week.

"Our members and the employers in the motor manufacturing sector have led the way with a 40-hour week. Our demand this year is clear — employers in the other sectors must follow that lead.

Follow auto industry

"Employers in other sectors must also follow the auto industry lead by contributing five cents an hour to a work security fund. The purpose of the fund is to give training to retrenched workers to enable them to get new employment when retrenchment is unavoidable."

Godongwana said the central committee agreed that a quarter of workers' wages on September 24 be contributed to the reconstruction and development programme.

"Employers must, in exchange, contribute one per cent of their wage bill to the programme."

Negotiations on wages in the engineering industry take place towards the end of April, with other sectors following later in the month and in May. — *Sapa.*

Gain for women

(355A) (330)

THE abolition of gender discrimination in the tax regime represented the first really significant gain in practical terms for women under the new constitution, the Democratic Party said yesterday.

"The equality clause in its specific application to women was their doing and the insistence that it be applied immediately to tax is also their credit," the DP's spokesperson on women's rights, Ms Dene Smuts, said.

CT 16/3/95

Reports by Political Staff, Reuter

Women still lose out

CT 23/3/95 (355A)

POLITICAL STAFF

WOMEN teachers are still losing their housing subsidies if they get married, despite a provision in the constitution outlawing gender discrimination.

In reply to a question in Parliament yesterday, Minister of Education Prof Sibusiso Bengu said women teachers stopped receiving subsidies when they got married.

He said the rationalisation of disparities in conditions of service was on the agenda of the Education Labour Relations Council.

"On the issue of the home-owners' allowance, the employer has made an offer for the gradual phasing in of the elimination of disparities."

Prof Bengu could not say whether these steps would be retrospective, as "this will depend on the outcome of negotiations".

The Deputy Minister of Education, Mr Renier Schoeman, said the issue was "very sensitive" and the department was examining the implications carefully.

FRIDAY
MARCH 24, 1995

Muslim married women 'single'

ct 24/3/95 355A

BY BARRY STREEK
POLITICAL STAFF

MUSLIM married women teachers do not lose their housing subsidies when they marry because Muslim marriages are not legally recognised.

Muslim women are, therefore, officially regarded as single, even if they are married by Muslim rites.

But women married by Christian rites or state-recognised marriage officers immediately lose their housing subsidies when they marry.

This was confirmed this week by the Minister of Education, Professor Sibusiso Bengu.

Married women in the civil service also lose their subsidies — whether Muslim or not.

"This really bugs me," one civil servant said yesterday. "It will bug me for the rest of my life."

DP fights for women teachers

(355A)

ANTHONY JOHNSON
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

GT 27/3/95

THE Democratic Party threatened at the weekend to go to the Constitutional Court to overturn discrimination against married women teachers and civil servants.

The Public Servants Association has calculated that women denied house-owners' allowances, housing loan schemes and certain pension benefits can lose as much as R700 000 over 20 years.

The association's official journal, The Public Servant, has also complained that departments repeatedly refused women in the public service maternity leave, forcing their resignation.

DP spokesperson on women's affairs, Ms Dene Smuts, said: "Now that an equality clause in the constitution is in place, it is unconstitutional for the state to discriminate against female employees, whether they are teachers or fall into other categories of civil servants."

Commission on gender equality

BD 5/4/95

(355A)

CAPE TOWN — The commission on gender equality should not merely comprise "dislocated radical feminists", one businesswoman submits. Another group insists it includes only women with a history of promoting "gender equality and women's rights".

The National Assembly ad hoc committee on a commission on gender equality has already received 14 written submissions from individuals and organisations. The committee agreed yesterday it would finish hearing submissions on the proposed commission by mid-May. Draft legislation to set up the commission should be tabled before the end of June. — Sapa.

Academy for winning women

(355A)

THE Executive Women's Club of Southern Africa this week launched the Academy of Business Women of the Year — for all the winners of this award.

The objective of the academy is to acknowledge previous winners of the Business Woman of the Year Award and their continuing success, and to add prestige and status to the award and value to the club itself. BD 6/4/95

The academy is to play an advisory role in areas of policy and strategies for the award and the club.

Markinor MD and club president Sue Grant said the priority for the year ahead was to position the club for growth, expanding its membership across all sectors.

The two major opportunities for the club were affirmative action and the trend towards participative management.

"Affirmative action, if correctly applied, will ensure more women are accepted in the ranks of senior management — as they should be — and that opportunities open up in the professions and for women entrepreneurs.

LLEWELLYN JONES

"This wave of new achievers will come from all cultural groups and means the club will become more representative of the country as a whole."

She said the swing to participative management styles would help the growth of the club.

"Women make good listeners, are sympathetic and approachable — managerial virtues which were ignored in the days when management almost followed a command."

First National Bank publications and communications senior GM Norman Aitken said the bank was proud to be associated with the club, which it had sponsored since its birth in 1979 as the Barclays Executive Women's Club.

"Women in management do not have the advantage of the 'old boy network' and need a vehicle for networking to level what has been an unlevel playing field. Furthermore, the club is a platform for excellence, giving recognition to outstanding performers through its Business Woman of the Year Award."

South African women, still under-represented in the commercial and political mainstream, joined their American sisters to thrash out a strategy to redress the imbalances. Arlene Getz reports for The Star Foreign Service

Strategy to redress imbalances

(355A) Star 12/4/95



United front . . . 'Women must challenge and confront a society long-dominated by male traditions and values.'

In an ornate chapel straddling the border between Manhattan's vibrant upper West Side and the impoverished tenements of Harlem, a group of high-powered South African and American women joined forces in the battle to rebuild South Africa.

The women, delegates to a conference entitled "Transformations: Women and Change in South Africa", spent two days over the past weekend in the Milbank Chapel at Teachers College, Columbia University, seeking ways to redress a legacy of race and gender discrimination that still excludes black people and women from the commercial mainstream.

The gathering, the second in a series arranged by Johannesburg-born California academic Monica Menell, saw speakers ranging from Wits University affirmative action advisor Dr Maki Mandela to African American Institute president Vivian Lowery Derryck stressing the importance of economic liberation for women on both continents.

"The battle is not over just because South Africa has become free," said Lowery Derryck, a former deputy assistant secretary of state in the Carter and Reagan administrations.

"Africa remains economically marginalised. It has the lowest investment rate of any continent, the lowest literacy, the highest infant mortality, a decaying infrastructure.

"All of the indicators of social development are going the wrong way," she said.

As Derryck urged South African women to expand their sisterhood by supporting women's organisations in both countries, Mandela and other speakers warned that the political gains of the last few years had not brought corresponding economic advancement to those who suffered most under apartheid.

Nomsa Daniels, executive director of the Professional Development Programme — an initiative allowing black South African managers to spend six months working at major New York corporations — cited a study in which the University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Business found women comprised less than 7% of middle and upper management in 70 companies surveyed last year.

Traditional homes

Blacks also held less than 1% of senior management positions nationally and owned less than 10% of shares on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, she said.

Mandela, keynote speaker at the conference, stressed that constitutional guarantees of gender equality had not given black women an equal say in traditional homes which still saw men as heads of the household.

"The constitution is wonderful," said Penny Andrews, a University of Natal graduate who is now an associate law professor at the City University of New York.

However, she cautioned, conditions would not change without a sympathetic judiciary and continued vigilance by women's groups to ensure proper implementation of constitutional rights.

Delegates to the conference, which took place against the backdrop of a raging debate over the effectiveness of American affirmative action programmes, agreed that education was one of the keys to correcting past inequities.

Adult illiteracy had to be addressed and women had to be informed of their new rights. Strategies suggested included low-tech literacy education such as night schools and the harnessing of the private sector to a national adult education campaign.

"Urge young people to achieve through education," said Derryck. "Each one of us should be a tutor and encourage each of our friends and co-workers to do likewise."

Less easy to resolve was the question of whether African traditional law, a male-dominated system also protected by the new Bill of Rights, could be reconciled with a modern legal system.

Black women, she said, still faced tremendous pressure from parents and grandparents accustomed to seeing the man as head of the household. In her own home, her educated mother "stamps her foot" when she finds her son-in-law helping with chores such as cooking and ironing during her visits.

"I have to respect that as an African woman who respects her elders. So my husband has an easy time when my mother is around," said Mandela.

South African delegates chuckled over these unexpected personal revelations. But most also nodded in sympathetic recognition of a cultural dilemma that may yet prove as difficult to resolve as South Africa's other, more obvious, social problems.

Commission on gender equality

BD 5/4/95
(355A)

CAPE TOWN — The commission on gender equality should not merely comprise "dislocated radical feminists", one businesswoman submits. Another group insists it includes only women with a history of promoting "gender equality and women's rights".

The National Assembly ad hoc committee on a commission on gender equality has already received 14 written submissions from individuals and organisations. The committee agreed yesterday it would finish hearing submissions on the proposed commission by mid-May. Draft legislation to set up the commission should be tabled before the end of June. — Sapa.

THE CAPE

Women's issues hold the floor

Labour Reporter

WOMEN enjoyed much of the limelight at the South African Municipal Workers' Union's fourth national congress held at Tongaat in Kwazulu-Natal.

The congress at the weekend debated at length steps to empower women in the union and in the broader, societal, context.

Among the resolutions agreed to were the establishment of special training courses for women shop stewards, that the union should fight for a balance in the number of men and women in municipal employment, and that the union should develop clear policies on sexual harassment.

Recognising the critical importance of local government as "a focal point of delivery of basic goods and services", Samwu resolved to urgently embark on a voter registration campaign.

It was agreed that the union would attempt to take steps to ensure that all municipal workers were released from normal duties on April 18 and April 26 to assist in registering people for the election.

The congress stated strongly that local government was "not a servant" of provincial government — and pushed for the establishment at national cabinet level of a Ministry of Local Government.

On the implementation of the RDP, Samwu noted the fact that local government was best positioned to deliver basic services effectively.

"Samwu would therefore strive to play a leading role in RDP structures."

It was also resolved that a new grading system be introduced, one that promoted career paths for municipal workers and rewarded higher skills with appropriate wages.

"Production systems should be reorganised and jobs redesigned to provide more rewarding employment. Adult basic education must also be placed on the agenda of the government, employers and the union," secretary Roger Ronnie said.

● Petrus Mashishio was re-elected as president of the union for the fourth consecutive term. Sandile Mqaka was returned for a second term as vice-president along with treasurer Joseph Mopharing. Jimmy Mohajane was elected as assistant secretary.

said accommodation at the Wilderness National Park, the Addo Elephant Park, the Tsitsikamma National Park, and Langebaan Lodge in the West Coast national Park were fully booked.

However, Ms Van Rensburg said a number of camping and caravan sites were still available at the parks.

Spread bacteria 'not Aids'

CT 12/4/95

MARITZBURG: The highly infectious material spread in the maternity ward of Madadeni Hospital by striking workers last week did not include Hepatitis B and Aids viruses, kwaZulu/Natal Health Minister Dr Zweli Mkhize said.

They spread bacterial cultures, which could cause a variety of conditions such as diarrhoea, in the ward, he said.

Staff had broken into the laboratory and spread live cultures and infectious material through the maternity section and two wards.

Dr Mkhize called their behaviour criminal and said police were investigating the incident. — Own Correspondent

jee said. still occur."

Sweaty briefs sexy 'turn-on'

TOKYO: For men who can't seem to attract women despite the right aftershave, flowers or cologne, Japanese scientists have developed a new weapon for the olfactory arsenal — underpants laced with sweat, synthesized sweat, anyway, and without that gauche locker room smell.

Millions of tiny capsules in the fabric contain a synthesized pheromone found in the sweat of a man's underarms. Friction causes the capsules to break, releasing the scent.

Apparel and cosmetics maker Kanebo says it has recreated the effect of the pheromone — a kind of natural attractant secreted by several kinds of animals — without any unpleasant odour.

An added musk scent doubles the effect, says spokesman Mr Kazuhiro Miyoshi.

However, the power of the pheromone fabric is fleeting. Kanebo estimates about 10 washings. — Sapa-AP

Women earn about 40% less than men — report

CT 12/4/95 (355A)

PARIS: Women earn on average 40% less than men of the same age and with the same education level, a report by the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) released yesterday showed.

Part of the reason for the disparity is women are more likely to work part–time, said the survey produced yearly by the 25-member nation think-tank.

The gap is biggest in Switzerland, the Netherlands and Britain, where on average women's pay is less than half that of men. In Italy and Finland, the gap is smallest, with women on average earning 76% of men's salaries. The gap is largest for least-educated women.

OECD countries spend on average 6,1% of their gross domestic product on education, with Finland and Canada leading the way. Germany, Japan and the Netherlands invest the least.

Male university graduates in all countries earn on average between 45 and 75% more than men with a senior school education. But in Italy, the Netherlands and New Zealand, the advantage of a university education is much less.

The overall pattern is much the same for women. However, they gain least financial advantage from a degree in Austria, Denmark and Italy and most in Portugal and Britain. In Britain, a female graduate earns twice as much as a woman with only a senior school education, the report said.

Most countries in the survey agreed mathematics and the native language should form the core of the school curriculum.

The report showed education "is the key but no longer a passport to a job", OECD education director Mr Thomas Alexander said.

The jobless rate is least among people with a university degree. It is 12% in France and eight percent in the US. — Reuter

Women earn about 40% less than men — report

CT 12/4/95 (355A)

PARIS: Women earn on average 40% less than men of the same age and with the same education level, a report by the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) released yesterday showed.

Part of the reason for the disparity is women are more likely to work part–time, said the survey produced yearly by the 25-member nation think-tank.

The gap is biggest in Switzerland, the Netherlands and Britain, where on average women's pay is less than half that of men. In Italy and Finland, the gap is smallest, with women on average earning 76% of men's salaries. The gap is largest for least-educated women.

OECD countries spend on average 6,1% of their gross domestic product on education, with Finland and Canada leading the way. Germany, Japan and the Netherlands invest the least.

Male university graduates in all countries earn on average between 45 and 75% more than men with a senior school education. But in Italy, the Netherlands and New Zealand, the advantage of a university education is much less.

The overall pattern is much the same for women. However, they gain least financial advantage from a degree in Austria, Denmark and Italy and most in Portugal and Britain. In Britain, a female graduate earns twice as much as a woman with only a senior school education, the report said.

Most countries in the survey agreed mathematics and the native language should form the core of the school curriculum.

The report showed education "is the key but no longer a passport to a job", OECD education director Mr Thomas Alexander said.

The jobless rate is least among people with a university degree. It is 12% in France and eight percent in the US. — Reuter

Attitudes undermine equality

WOMEN SEE FEW CHANGES

Women make up the largest single group in the country, but now, at the new South Africa's first birthday, has life changed in any way for them? **GLENDA DANIELS** reports that gender inequalities have not improved.

1 YEAR LATER

During the periods of revolution and transition South African women believed they should "fight side by side with their men" for political change, and then later tackle gender oppression.

But did this strategy work, or has the struggle for gender equality been betrayed?

The Government in South Africa is no longer new. It is one year old and women, the largest single group in the country, comprising 53% of the population, are asking themselves if there is cause for celebration.

It would appear that while new laws have been put in place the old realities remain.

Stereotyped gender roles have remained the same in South Africa according to Dr Cathi Albertyn, co-ordinator of the Gender Research project at the Centre for Applied Legal Studies, who gave an inaugural lecture at a National Council of Women meeting this month.

"We cannot think about legal reform without addressing the need to change the way in which society thinks," she said.

"Even where women have full legal status, legal rights to maintenance and a legal prohibition against sexual harassment, such legal rights mean little in the face of attitudes that constantly undermine or rubbish these rights," said Albertyn.

The problems women have experienced have been wide ranging because there are different classes, races and ages, but there is common ground across all these barriers.

Black working class women are still fighting for better living conditions, better pay, better child-care facilities and affirmative action at work. Rural women need water, electricity and primary health care to make their lives bearable.

Student women are still lobbying for better security on their campuses so that the high incidences of rape and sexual harassment decrease.

Academic women want more recognition and equal pay at universities which remain traditionally white male enclaves.

Ordinary women of all races together with progressive feminists took part in campaigns around the country, beginning in 1991, similar to the Freedom Charter campaigns of 1956. These culminated last year in the Women's Charter for Effective Equality.

Some of the demands in the Charter collected from thousands of women include changes in the following areas:

Changes to the law regarding taxation, abortion, credit, land ownership and allocation; greater representation of women in political life; abolition of gender discrimination in the workplace; violence against women stops; better maternity benefits; the right to free and accessible primary health care; adult basic education; and a relook at lobola and what it represents.

Most of these demands have not been addressed. Besides pregnant women getting free health care, changes to the tax laws (but this benefits only women earning less than R80 000 a month) and the ordination of Anglican women priests, there have been no other real changes for women.

Women are still marginalised from mainstream commercial life. Political parties have not taken the abortion issue any further. There are still too few women MPs in Parliament. Poor rural women do not have access to literacy programmes.

It would seem that the battle for gender equality has only just begun and if women do not wake up to this reality soon and start challenging the slow or lack of implementation of non-sexist policies then, sadly, they will be following the trend that most revolutions in Africa and the rest of the world have taken — to accept second class citizenship in a country they fought to democratise.



Coping with difficult situations . . . women's lives have not changed.

Star 27/4/95

385A

TOMORROW:

Forget the trains, boats and planes. Travel light with world renowned esoteric teacher Dr Douglas Baker.

W Mail & G. May 5-11/1995

legislature — but they're finding it an uphill struggle fitting into the 'old boy's club'. **Gaye Davis** reports

on to the agenda



Aluta continua: A call to action in a post-independence poster from Namibia

to give the okay, says Kgositsile.

South Africa's female parliamentarians are a diverse group. They come from different political parties, cultures and backgrounds. Levels of education and experience vary — a woman with a master's degree may sit alongside a woman who has difficulty reading, but who knows all there is to know about organising a rural constituency.

Is there a basis for sisterhood among the women in Parliament? "I'm not sure," says Schreiner. "I'm not saying we can't get together on issues. We can mobilise, but class, race and ideological divisions run far deeper than the unity provided by us all being women."

Yes, there is, says women's rights activist Brigitte Mabandla, now Deputy Minister of Arts and Culture, Science and Technology. "We can't pretend there aren't differences — but there is a meeting place, and that's gender. Women can bond on issues like violence against women, for example. As women, we have a basis for talking. We need a multi-party women's caucus because there are experiences unique to women."



ANC MP Jenny Schreiner with her three-year-old son Nikita PHOTOGRAPH: ANNA ZIEMINSKI

Many black female MPs bring to Parliament a range of skills and understanding that are either ignored or under-valued by their white counterparts, says Govender. It leaves women feeling inadequate, alienated or both.

"It's not enough just to open up opportunities and allow women in," says Kgositsile. "It's a question of creating an atmosphere that's conducive to their feeling empowered and able to cope rather than just wanting to return home."

Says Mabandla: "There's an assumption the ANC women here are from an elite, which isn't true. There are women here who cannot write, who want to return to their constituencies where they feel of more use." And the contribution of women not proficient in English, who make their speeches in Sotho or Xhosa, often goes unnoticed, she says.

Yet, despite the challenges, women are making an impact on Parliament. Their influence has been especially noticeable in the various parliamentary committees. Says Mabandla: "Women (on committees) have played a very important role in terms of inputs, direction and the quality of their participation."

The ANC's Thenjiwe Mtintso, for example, serves on the defence committee. It was she who led a call for the defence budget to be slashed — during a briefing by Minister of Defence Joe Modise. Govender, on the finance committee, was instrumental in blocking a recommendation that the child rebate be abolished, arguing that this would hit single women who head households — an indicator of poverty.

"We're beginning to grapple with being here. We're working out our way around Parliament, our relationship to its processes, to each other and to civil society," says Govender.

"I don't think the time spent has been wasted. People have learned an incredible amount and are now in a far better position to define themselves and the issues."

Attitudes are also changing. Says Mabandla: "I think when we came here there was a resentment, an unsureness on the part of men over how to treat us — as ladies or as mamas. But women have been complimented (in the House) on the contribution they have made. In the committees we're taken seriously, they listen quite carefully and don't shut off anymore."

Says Manzini: "I think people have now started to respect us on the basis of who and what we are. Just our presence here means you no longer find people expressing themselves in overtly sexist ways."

Where is the Gender Equality Commission?

WOMEN in Parliament have a doubly loaded agenda. They bear the hopes and dreams of millions of South African women wanting a better life — and the responsibility for making sure the constitution's great-sounding new clauses become more than just paper guarantees.

Yet, a year down the line, they still lack the basic research and administrative back-up they need. And although a measure of consensus on a national machinery for the advancement of women was reached during negotiations, it is still a long way from reality.

Women's rights activists outside government have applauded the fact that South Africa now has significant numbers of women in Parliament, women in the cabinet, women sitting on the Constitutional Court and the Land Commission.

But they also feel there has been more talk than action. Where, they ask, is the Gender Equality Commission provided for by the interim constitution — a key component of the national machinery mooted to enable the advancement of women?

Intended to promote gender equality and to advise the national and provincial legislatures on any laws affecting the status of women, the Gender Equality Commission was provided for in the constitution to balance the interests of women on the one hand and traditional leaders on the other.

It must be created by an Act of Parliament. After an initial delay — an unpublished Bill for its establishment, drafted by former Minister of Justice Kobie Coetsee's office, was thrown out in the face of women's opposition — the process of setting it up is now under way.

ANC MP Ruth Mompati heads the ad hoc committee guiding the process. "It would be a powerful lobby group which monitors each government ministry as well as big business in terms of the progress they are making in addressing the gender question," she says.

It would need a research arm to fill the statistical black holes where data on women are concerned, but its funding, staffing and powers all have to be determined.

The ad hoc committee has a significant number of male members. Says Mompati: "Gender equality is taking so long because it is seen as women's business. We're saying, let the men come in. Let them build together with us today so that, tomorrow, it's not just the women's commission, but ours."

It's a strategy that has succeeded in the past. Says ANC MP Mavivi Manzini: "Bringing men on board is critical. In the ANC, (men) saw us as women who were impossible until we started with workshops and training ... A lot of them have come and said, 'you have really educated us'.

"If the ANC women's caucus had not been organised, we would not have had Frene Ginwala as speaker. We lobbied to ensure all women would vote for her — then it was an easy matter to get the men on board."

Constitutional Assembly members must decide whether the Commission should be entrenched in the final constitution and, if so, in what form.

In her submission to the committee, Dr Cathi Albertyn, head of the Gender Research Project at the Centre for Applied Legal Studies at Wits University, argues that it should be — in broad terms, with details left to the law.

This would protect it — a constitutional amendment requires a two-thirds majority — "from the political and economic contingencies of the day". Albertyn points out that in many developing countries, gender structures are often the first to go "when economic troubles surface".

It should not duplicate the functions of the Human Rights Commission, she argues. Women's rights should be seen as part of human rights, not separate from them.

On May 10, the ad hoc committee will start public hearings on the Commission. Anyone wanting to make submissions or give evidence should contact Rita Schaafsma on (021) 403 2827 or write to her at the Committee Section, Room 506, 100 Plein Street, Cape Town.

Unfair advances in the workplace

Star 15/5/95 (355A)

THERE IS NO GUIDE

Few South African companies have a policy on sexual harassment. That could be about to change, as an international conference focuses on the controversial issue this week. **GLENDA DANIELS** reports.

Sexual harassment is widespread and a major problem in the workplace in South Africa, yet there is little awareness of it, says labour lawyer Rod Harper.

He has experience in handling sexual harassment cases, and will speak at the first international conference on the issue, to be held in Johannesburg tomorrow.

One reason that sexual harassment can flourish, says Harper, is that companies give insufficient acknowledgement or attention to the syndrome.

One narrow definition of sexual harassment is when a woman or man is expected to engage in sexual activity to obtain or keep employment or favourable working conditions.

A more wider definition could be: any unwanted sexual behaviour or comment which has a negative effect on the recipient.

Fifty sexual harassment cases were processed in South African courts in 1994, an increase of 75% over the previous year, says conference organiser Lesley-Ann van Niftrik.

A recent study shows that only 7% of South African companies have a formal policy on sexual harassment yet seven out of 10 working women experience some form of this offence in their working lives.

Sexual harassment is an unfair labour practice in terms of the Labour Relations Act, says Harper, adding that it is more about abuse of power than sex.

"Unfortunately, South African women do not have an individual rights consciousness, unlike in western Europe. Often they submit to advances when they don't want to," Harper says.

Sexual harassment usually occurs when a superior makes makes unwanted advances to a subordinate employee.

In his experience, the most common reaction is that the person harassed does not complain, but instead attempts to live with the problem until it becomes unbearable. At this point a complaint is often made, for example, to a senior manager of the human resources department and then an investigation is often instituted on an informal basis.

"There have been cases where managements' have refused to accept that there's a complaint at all," says Harper.

This reaction may be because the offender is in a senior position, or on a more fundamental level, his peer group consists of other males who rally around him.

Few companies, Harper says, have instituted policies on the subject. And while some have conducted workshops and training, these normally happen after managements have had to deal with such disputes.

Harper says the issue is serious, but one should not lose a sense of humour. He relates a story which would have been funny, were the possible consequences not so serious.

At a social gathering, around a swimming pool, a manager undressed himself and hid behind a bush. When he spotted the object of his desire, a woman secretary, he grabbed her and threw her into the pool — the first step to what he thought was to be a wild sexual encounter. Unfortunately the woman couldn't swim and she nearly drowned! She sued successfully for damages.

Harper says that this incident can be seen as part of the "loverboy syndrome".

The "boy" is sufficiently narcissistic to believe that women are flattered by his approaches. He often thinks that the women wants him but she is playing hard to get.

Harper says that often women prefer to reveal all the details of their harassment to another woman because the issue is so sensitive.

"We have also found that we get 10% of the information initially but as trust grows, what first appears to be minor harassment is, in fact, major harassment."

Normally, he points out, after a dispute is declared, the harassed person feeling demoralised or leaves the company. Then the person often sues for damages in the industrial court. She or he is normally successful in claiming damages.

Harper concludes that while there is a growing awareness of the issue it is still in its infancy and a lot more needs to be done.



Handling disputes . . . labour lawyer Rod Harper who has dealt with many cases of sexual harassment says it is not given enough attention by South African companies. PICTURE: DEBBIE YAZBEK

Keep a record of incidents

What to do if you are sexually harassed?

- Say "no" as soon as possible — if the attention is unwelcome.
- Keep notes of the events just in case it goes to court and you need to have all the details at your fingertips.
- You may confide in a friend because you will need the support.
- You should seek advice in order to assess the appropriate approach to adopt.
- You should go to a respected human resources manager if you think he or she will be sympathetic.
- If this comes to nothing go and consult a labour lawyer skilled in that field.
- Remember that sexual harassment is an unfair labour practice and you can sue for compensation in the industrial court.

Real policy guidelines expected

Tomorrow's international conference on sexual harassment will give executives the opportunity to hear what top international and local experts have to say on the subject.

The aim is to guide companies in formulating a sexual harassment policy. The open discussion at the end of topics will provide people with the opportunity to pose questions.

The list of speakers includes: American Bar Association member, Ralph Perez; mediator Charles Nupen; lawyer and researcher Cathi Albertyn; academic Lloyd Vogelman; Cosatu organiser Issac Mahlangu; constitutional court judge Yvonne Mokgoro and executive director of the Law Review Project Professor Louise Tager.

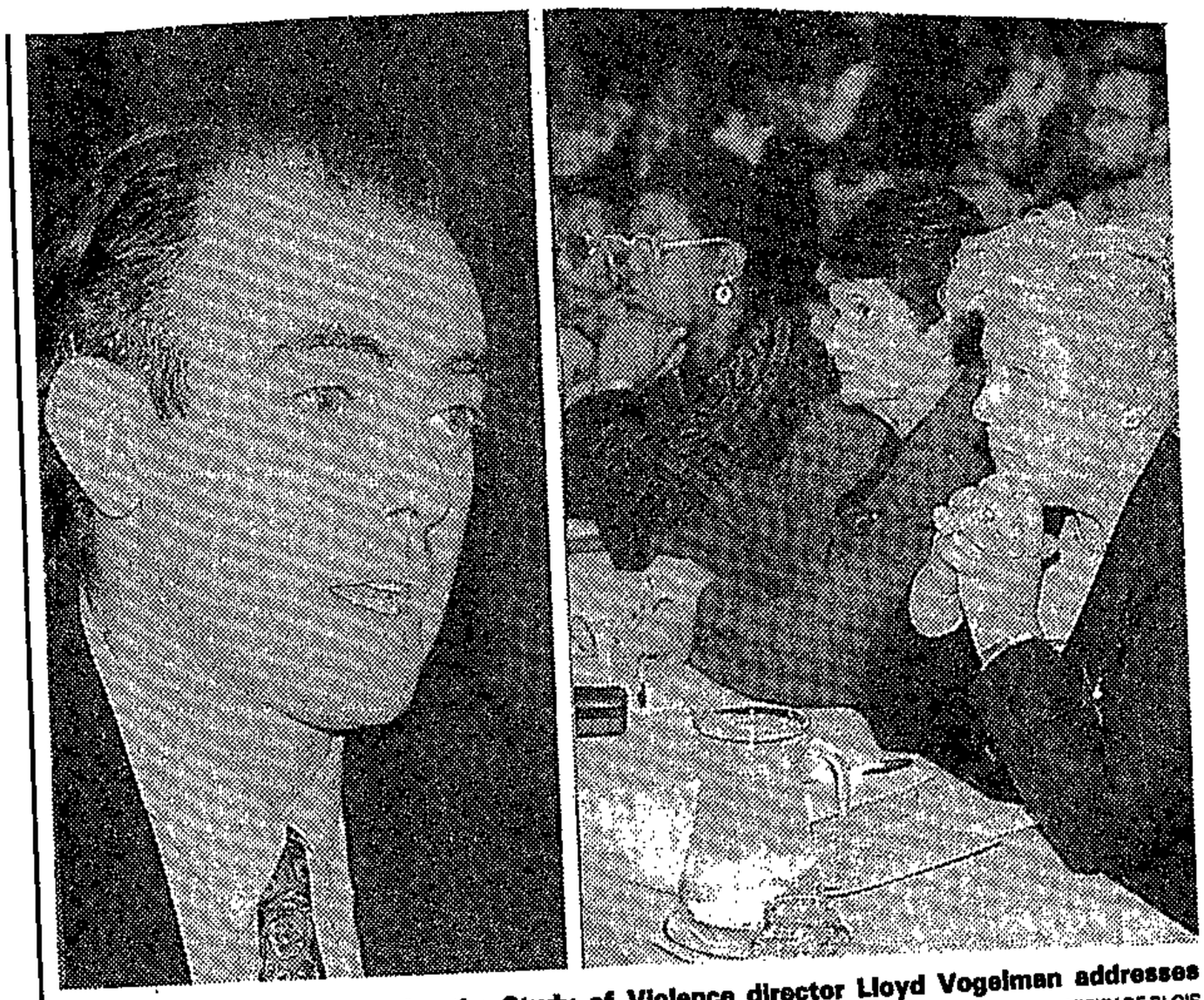
How you can benefit by attending:

- Learn how the new South Africa protects the rights of individuals in the workplace.
- Understand the legal, psychological, social and corporate implications of sexual harassment.
- Find out what international as well as local companies are doing in terms of drawing up a corporate policy on the issue.
- Receive guidelines about how to draw up a policy for your workforce.
- Learn how to deal with the problem in your workplace.
- How to protect the individual as well as the company from a "trial by media".
- How to implement a training programme within your company.

The sexual harassment conference takes place at the Johannesburg Garden Court on May 16 and 17. For more information, telephone Imago Africa at 880-1340.

TOMORROW:

A Kensington homeowner believes she was grossly overcharged by a plumber for a six-minute job in which a washer was replaced in her garden tap.



Wits University's Centre for the Study of Violence director Lloyd Vogelman addresses delegates at a sexual harassment conference in Johannesburg yesterday. Picture: NICKY DE BLOIS

Sexual harassment 'apartheid's legacy'

BD 17/5/95

355A

Renee Grawitzky

SEXUAL harassment in the workplace and in wider society was one of the remnants of colonisation and apartheid which had to be eradicated, Labour Minister Tito Mboweni said yesterday at a conference organised by Imago Africa.

He said it was obvious from the structure of the labour market, where women were predominantly absent from the "corridors of power", that men viewed women as being inferior.

The Labour Market Commission, established to develop proposals relating to a comprehensive labour market policy, could deal with the issue within this policy.

Mboweni said that in dealing with sexual harassment, a clear definition and proper guidelines had to be formulated.

In seeking to build an economy, "we must get rid of these types of elements in the workplace and employers can no longer be silent about sexual harassment as if it does not exist".

Mboweni said a directorate of equal opportunities had been established by the Labour Department which, once operating, would address issues and support raising awareness around the question of sexual harassment.

He said: "We need to put on the agenda the issue of sexual orientation and how to deal with it, especially in the SA National Defence Force."

Cosatu representative Isaac Mahlangu said sexual harassment was also visited on men.

He said that in most cases women who were harassed responded by keeping silent for fear of losing their jobs. "Evidence suggests that it usually occurs where women are subordinates or in workplaces that are predominantly male."

Mahlangu said such harassment could affect performance, absenteeism and create a hostile working environment.

Submissions had been made to the Labour Relations Act Commission to highlight the issue and ensure it was addressed in legislation.

Cosatu was in the process of developing a code of conduct which would form part of a policy on sexual harassment, he said.

Advocate Kierin O' Malley, although acknowledging that real sexual harassment existed, asked whether sexual harassment was not becoming "the latest fad-issue which radical feminists are misusing".

O' Malley said he based this view on developments in the US and UK where "sexual harassment has unquestionably become a feminist issue" and had been "blown out of all proportion".

This view tended to ignore that surveys conducted in SA in 1992 found that more than 70% of women surveyed had been subjected to some form of sexual harassment, and if this issue was merely attributed to being a "radical feminist" issue it would not be addressed and dealt with.

Lynn Cawood of People Opposing Women Abuse in her presentation "The Silent Scream" outlined a case study of a women who worked for a small company in the motor industry and was repeatedly raped by her boss for nine months before she was dismissed by him for refusing to grant further favours.

Cawood said: "It is imperative that as men and women we create the conditions that will protect everyone from sexual assault and promote a society... in which the less powerful in society do not have to fear the more powerful."

MORE NEWS ON PAGES 8 AND 9

- Angry women storm post office — Page 8
- 'Dangerous child-criminals' freed — Page 8
- Teenager guilty of killing Ciska — Page 9
- 'Inadequate resources hinder justice' — Page 9
- Constitutional court debates jurisdiction — Page 9

'Vital' to stop harassment in workplace

CT 17/5/95 (355A)

JOHANNESBURG: The elimination of sexual harassment at work was vital to the economy because victims often suffered stress and low morale with consequent low productivity, poor work quality and absenteeism, Labour Minister Mr Tito Mboweni said here yesterday.

Addressing a workshop on the topic, he said there might be a need for legislation dealing with sexual harassment and called for suggestions to be submitted to the Comprehensive Labour Market Commission.

Describing sexual harassment as a legacy of apartheid and colonialism, Mr Mboweni said it would have to be addressed alongside affirmative action.

Definition

Black male managers were often culprits in sexual harassment cases because they were not liberated concerning issues of gender. Therefore, affirmative action would also have to address liberation regarding ideology.

However, a clear definition of sexual harassment was needed before policy-making guidelines could be set.

Mr Mboweni said he wanted legislation to improve labour relations for farmworkers and domestic servants, now excluded from the Labour Relations Act, to be in place by the end of the year.

Conduct

The elimination of discrimination in the workplace would form a key part of the commission's report due in September.

Congress of South African Trade Unions official Mr Isaac Mhlangu said the union planned to take a decision on a sexual harassment code of conduct by July.

The union's congress proposed to develop such a code last year, but no policy had been drafted.

Unions could lose female members by failing to address the issue, Mr Mhlangu said.

He suggested education, negotiations with the government and employees, and legislation as ways to deal with the problem. — Sapa

Employers urged to act on office sex pests

(355A)

BY GLENDA DANIELS

Sexual harassment was unacceptable and had no place in the type of political economy South Africa was building, Labour Minister Tito Mboweni said at South Africa's first international conference on the subject yesterday.

Representatives of 100 companies attended the conference which was organised by Imago Africa, in Johannesburg, to try and form guidelines for codes of conduct in the workplace.

"The responsibility to eradicate this form of exploitation rests with all of us. The fact that the majority of victims are women does not make it a women's issue," said Mboweni.

"Let us all be clear that sexual harassment is a fundamental human rights issue, namely the right to dignity and to feel safe and secure in the workplace and in society at large," he said.

Women today were still viewed as inferior to men in most sectors of society and this was obvious in the labour market, he added.

"We need to change these attitudes. Not only is this 'old boys club mentality' intellectually and morally unacceptable, it is irrational and undemocratic and a fetter to economic development."

Mboweni added that to deal with the problem there needed to be proper guidelines to assist policy formulation. In addition, employers should stop pretending that sexual harassment did not exist.

"There is no justification in protecting people who may be guilty of sexual harassment, or trivialising it.

"It is high time that employers took responsibility to ensure that all their workers are not subjected to sexual harassment."

He said it was in the employers' interest to do this because consequences of sexual harassment included low morale, absenteeism, stress, poor performance and low productivity.

Star 17/5/95

Five women go through the main topics affecting their lives

335A

W/End Star 18-19/3/95

Is feminine equality an issue?

IN RECOGNITION of International Women's Day this month, TRACY EDMONDS gathered together four influential South African women to look at women, men, power and the feminist question. In a lively format with more light than heat, this is what she learnt.

Tracy Edmonds: The issue s equality. Defend why we're here.

Haseena Mayet: We come from a society in which the fundamental right to equality is discussed in terms of race. Sexual equality was not fully incorporated into the liberation struggle.

Jean Ngubane: It's seen as threatening. For men, doubling their efforts in the face of female competition is threatening.

Michele Cohen: I'd like to address the competition question. What concerns me is that men are taught to deal with competition head on. They are suddenly confronted with competition.

Sheila Meintjes: Patriarchy is the norm here. We have to remind SA of that. We saw patriarchy in action when traditional leaders tried to exclude customary law from the Bill of Rights.

TE: Gloria von Steinem says if you aren't a feminist you're a masochist. Why is that such a dirty word?

MC: I don't think I need to put myself in a box like that to achieve. There are too few women in power. I think we need to assume individual responsibility, help two or three women.

SM: My feminism recognises that we live in a society permeated with all sorts of domination, whether it's based on class, sex or race. It's a pity the term has acquired bad press. It's not just a word, it's a vision.

HM: There's no word for a person who believes in inalienable rights.

JN: We acknowledge an oppressive cultural set-up in South Africa. The word needs to be much more inclusive. Enlarge the word feminism.

SM: The term is about empowerment.

TE: Are black women more oppressed than white women?

JN: They are not. There are issues, however, about the standard of education and access to resources. You know, maybe with white women, it's worse. They cling to a fantasy. Everything must be just so — children, marriage, house ... everything. And then look at the white notions of beauty. People don't polish their face every morning in the rural areas. Beauty is a foreign notion.

MC: Jean, in the rural areas, is it not a problem for the women when the husband dies?

JN: You'll be shocked! Most white women don't own their own home when their husband dies. It's just like the traditional laws enforced on rural women — that they are effectively still a minor without inheritance.

TE: What is the most serious problem, Sheila?

SM: Violence, unequivocally. Part of our task is to stand up and address rape and battery. This is what happens to women mostly inside their own home.

TE: Of what importance is "feminine beauty"? Does it help? Do you resent the question?

HM: I resent the question. Conventionally we only refer to beauty in the context of women. That should tell us something. Do we say "masculine beauty"?

TE: Masculine beauty was certainly important to the ancients.

JN: There are qualities that are feminine and beautiful. If you talk about gentleness and caring where it counts, that is just as important.

MC: When one speaks and has the inner quality of empathy and compassion, they become beautiful. But you have to use what you've got to get through those doors.

TE: Is the workplace a sexual theatre?

MC: When I walk into a room, I immediately have an effect because of my gender. It doesn't matter what I look like. Men will still flirt because I am a female. They expect it of each other.

HM: As a professional, I should be in control of certain situations as an attorney. It's acceptable for clients to flirt. It's a power thing and I'm continually addressed as "sweetheart" and "darling", and it's patronising.

TE: I learnt long ago to depersonalise and desexualise those words by using them on everyone.

SM: I think what we are engaged in here is a sexual contract in civil society — that women are defined by their sexuality.

TE: Self-deprecation. It's effectively undermining the public perception of our competence.

HM: I never realised how often I prefaced my sentences with "sorry, but", until recently.

MC: We precede everything with "sorry, but, could I please, I hate to ask, but ..." because if we don't we're seen as aggressive. By the time we're finished we're almost wringing our hands. Polite and direct is the middle ground.

TE: I spend all day every day wringing my hands.

SM: Individual women must come together and challenge these structures. It has to be a groundswell. The Rural Women's Movement is a case in point.

MC: I think we can effect change individually. Like "window dressing" by appointing a woman to a board. I don't care if the intent is to dress the window. I am the last woman to choose for that purpose.

SM: We wouldn't be where we are today in South Africa if it weren't for collective movements.

MC: But individuals within those structures wielded and harnessed power.

TE: I'm pro-pornography as long as it's soft. I really see it as a non-issue. It's a tribute to beauty, an enhancement to sex and it's always been with us.

SM: It demeans. I see it on a continuum of how women are seen. It creates a sexual norm around women.

JN: It makes women a kind of brand product.

HM: Pornography promotes the tendency to see women as exclusively sexual objects — available and always ready for sex.

TE: It's a testimony to power in those other realms.

MC: What about toyboys? Mention that for fun, and watch men. It's reversing the roles, asking men to be young, glamorous, sexy, fun, and to perform.

TE: What do we have to teach men about our ways?

JN: We need to re-educate and reorient them. We can teach them a new moral order.

MC: We can be more interactive with them. If we're militant, they retreat.

SM: We can offer men the joys of sharing sex roles. Full communication. This is a joy that's denied to men. We offer them liberation and transformation by sharing roles and being partners.



FEMINIST GET-TOGETHER: Journalist Tracy Edmonds (centre) in discussion with Jean Ngubane, Michele Cohen, Sheila Meintjes and Haseena Mayet. *PHOTOGRAPH: THYS DULLAART*

■ **Michele Cohen** is former executive director of the American Chamber of Commerce and is now sole proprietor of Michele Cohen and Associates, an international trade and development liaison company.

■ **Jean Ngubane** is chairwoman of the National Women's Coalition and deputy director of New Africa Investment Ltd. She is also on the board of directors of Learn and Teach.

■ **Haseena Mayet** is a partner in Mayet, Nurick and Associates. She is an attorney specialising in environmental and commercial matters.

■ **Sheila Meintjes** is a feminist activist and professor in the political studies department of the University of the Witwatersrand.

SOWETAN Monday May 22 1995

Dire need to train women

(45B) (35SA)

By Betsy Spratt

WHETHER they work in rural areas, suburban kitchens or city offices, the work lives of many South African women could be summed up in one word: bleak. Soweten

Whatever the venue or occupation, they often lack technical skills, are poorly paid and face sexual harassment. The South African Non-governmental Planning Committee intends raising the matter at the fourth United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing.

The conference will be held from August 30 to September 15. To offset the cost of attending, the group will hold a fund raiser on May 24 at the Carlton International Trade Centre in Johannesburg. 22/5/95

Businesses can purchase sites to display goods or services at the conference in Beijing, said Sibongile Bongwe, a member of the employment themal and Congress of South African Trade Unions. Employment is only one of the issues that will be addressed at the conference. Other themes will be equality, peace and development as well as the sub-themes of health and education.

"These are issues we have to address as part of the Reconstruction and Development Programme," says employment theme coordinator Sibongile Nene.

During a recent meeting at the National Women's Resource & Service Centre in Braamfontain, the group discussed plans to present at the conference a project to increase the technical capacity of women as a way of improving their economic situation.

"Women continue to dominant the lower rungs of occupations," Nene said.

"It seems women just don't have the skills — social or occupational," she said.

In addition to a lack of technical skills, women's economic advancement is often hindered by repeated pregnancies and the triple pressures of work, family and community activities, Nene said. These responsibilities leave little time for the development of skills.

For rural women, economic advancement is further hindered by migration as they arrive in the city with few marketable skills, Nene said.

Domestic service is often the only work available, an occupation in which sexual harassment and low wages abound, said Nana Moabi, a member of the planning group and National Council of Trade Unions.

Although some women have Standard 8 certificates, they often lack the self-confidence to demand more for themselves, she said.

"Some of these women are quite literate," Moabi said. "But they are from the rural areas and that was the only job they could get. They quietly go into domestic work. We have to find a way to help them improve their English and self-development."

The Technical Capacity Building Project should address this need by improving women's technological skills and by making community work and women's experiences part of standard education, Nene said.

The project's goals are to steer female drop-outs onto business paths and to establish a National Women's Technology and Business Institute to look into policies and curriculims that will empower women, Nene said.

Top women forget sisters

HARARE: Successful women often worked against the interests of other women trying to rise to top positions, Zimbabwe's Deputy Information Minister Ms Oppah Rushesha said yesterday.

"Most women who have made it to the top often forget to foster the interests of their own gender," Ms Rushesha said at a seminar for women journalists.

Women journalists often worked against their own interests and joined men in misrepresenting women in the media.

"How many times have we heard women complain that women bosses are more oppressive than their male counterparts?" she asked.

Ms Rushesha appealed to women in Southern African to fight obstacles which impeded their progress in the workplace and to change their working habits, to prove that they were equal to their male counterparts. —Sapa

A new perspective on the minimum wage debate

3 (355A)

STEPHANIE FLANDERS in London BD 26/5/95

THE British Labour Party last week decided to fight the next general election on the principle — not the details — of introducing a minimum wage. The party's promise to introduce a legal wage floor in the UK remains one of the clearest dividing lines between Tony Blair's revamped "New Labour" and the Conservatives.

On Tuesday, Blair helped convince the party's powerful joint policy committee to put off setting the level of the proposed minimum wage until after the election. Assuming it is set at the right level, proponents of the minimum wage say it would help reduce poverty and income inequality at the same time. Not only would it raise the incomes of the lowest-paid employees, it would also narrow the gap between their pay and that of those further up the scale.

Critics argue that, far from helping the poor, a minimum wage is more likely to leave them worse off. Raising unskilled wages will mean that employers take on fewer workers, pushing up unemployment and raising poverty. And raising low pay will do little to reduce family poverty since relatively few of the lowest-paid workers are from poor families.

Until recently, most of the evidence seemed to confirm the first fear. Especially during the 1980s, there appeared to be a strong correlation between many European countries' relatively high minimum wages and rising unemployment, especially among young people.

In the UK, which has never had a national minimum wage, government has largely removed the wage controls that used to set pay for 2,5-million employees working in sectors such as retailing and catering. Every other European Union country has kept some form of legally enforceable wage floor, though some have amended their approach in response to worries about the effect on jobs. The Netherlands, for example, has sharply lowered the minimum for youth workers.

The standard economists' model of the labour market says that if the price of workers is artificially increased by a minimum wage, demand will fall and unemployment rise. A low wage floor will do less harm to employment than a high one — but any minimum wage is likely to do some damage.

However, this orthodoxy has been challenged by David Card and Alan Krueger, two Princeton University economists. The US has had a federally imposed minimum wage since 1938, which has lost over 30% of its real value since the 1970s. President Bill Clinton has proposed an increase from $4,25 an hour to $5,15 over two years, to help stem the growing poverty of low-paid workers.

When the minimum wage was raised by $0,45 an hour in the early 1990s, Card, Krueger and their colleagues studied the impact of the last two such increases. They found no measurable impact on employment in a range of very low-wage sectors, traditionally considered most vulnerable to a minimum wage rise. In several cases, they found that job numbers had even increased.

Recent research in the UK has echoed these unexpected findings. For example, Stephen Machin and Alan Manning, at the London School of Economics (LSE), did not find any increase in employment following the abolition of wage councils (similar to SA's Wage Board).

The new evidence has not gone unchallenged. The Employment Policies Institute, a Washington think-tank partly funded by restaurants and retailers, has produced a barrage of studies disputing the new findings and the research techniques used. In the UK, the government argues that while employment may not have risen, abolishing the wage councils has greatly improved the efficiency of the sectors concerned.

Despite finding little connection between a minimum wage and employment levels, the revisionists do not believe their findings are an argument for very high minimum wages. "There is little doubt that, at some level, minimum wages will damage employment," says Machin. In part, this is because a minimum wage could push up the wages of higher-paid employees. That may reduce employment overall, even if the job losses are not felt by minimum wage earners. "The higher the minimum wage is set, the greater such knock-on effects will be," he says. However, a very low minimum wage is vulnerable to critics' second accusation about the policy: it will not do much to reduce poverty.

This is because low wages are not the main factor behind the plight of low-income households: the lower the wage, the less likely it is to be a household's only source of income.

In the past, critics argued the minimum wage was a badly targeted weapon against poverty, since the majority of the low-paid were young people or working wives from relatively affluent households.

Recent trends have weakened this argument — particularly in the US, where "working poverty" has risen significantly in recent years. Lawrence Mishel, of the left-leaning Economic Policy Institute in Washington, calculates that over 60% of families affected by raising the minimum wage to $5,15 would be in the poorest 40% of households. However, that still means more than a third of those benefiting from a higher minimum wage would not be in the bottom 40%. About 25% of affected workers would be teenagers and about half would be part-timers.

In the UK, Richard Dickens of the LSE has calculated that well over half of employees who would gain from a minimum wage of £3,25 an hour would be from the poorest 30% of families.

But even if the majority of the beneficiaries of a minimum wage were in poorer households, few believe that raising low pay could have more than a marginal effect on poverty rates, because at least half the poor of working age are unemployed.

Some supporters of minimum wages argue that raising low pay will encourage more of the unemployed to take work. However, there may be more effective ways to make low-wage employment attractive without a minimum wage. The UK's family credit scheme tops up the income of families on low pay. And in the US, the earned income tax credit, which Clinton raised substantially in the 1993 budget, tops up low wages for low-income families.

Many argue that such schemes can tackle poverty without the risk to jobs of a minimum wage. But others doubt whether there is the political will to raise the public funds needed to extend such schemes and make them more generous.

"Even a 100% effective anti-poverty scheme only helps the poor if it is passed," says Prof Richard Freeman of Harvard University. He says it will be politically difficult to raise the earned income tax credit enough to lift low-wage families out of poverty if the proportion of low-paid US workers continues to rise.

In the UK, with some 1,3-million people now earning less than £2,50 an hour, the cost of family credit has more than doubled over the past four years, from £425m to £1bn a year. Further increasing benefits to top up low pay could be seen as encouraging employers to short-change their employees at the state's expense.

A modest floor on wages could then prove attractive, even for a Conservative government, if it stemmed the rise in the cost of family credit without lengthening the dole queue. The difficulty lies in defining a modest rate. Even the economists who favour a minimum wage are wary of naming a "safe" figure, but most would suggest erring on the side of caution.

Fewer of the poor would be helped by a very low wage floor, but it would at least lower the cost of in-work benefits and free resources for making the benefit system more effective at tackling poverty.

Labour market trends and the latest evidence on the minimum wage mean it is no longer economic heresy to talk of using legal wage floors to tackle poverty in this way. But, as Blair recognises, there are still plenty of devils in the details. — Financial Times.

Star 29/5/95

Focus on ill women and poverty link

International Women's Health Day yesterday focused on how poverty contributed towards the ill health of women.

Local health organisations joined the international campaign to highlight how poverty increased maternal mortality and morbidity.

More than 70% of women in Africa are illiterate and live below the poverty line, said the coordinators, The Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights.

The average maternal mortality rate is around 600 per 100 000, double the average of women in the northern hemisphere.

Women in Africa also face problems such as the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the effects of war, and the increase of domestic violence, which are all aggravated by poverty.

The campaign said women wanted to share family responsibilities, have equal opportunities and equal participation in society, and accessible health services of good quality.

'Women's desk' in Mandela's office

ARG 30/5/95 (355A)

The Argus Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. — A "women's desk" to attend exclusively to women's issues throughout the country would be set up in President Mandela's office soon, Deputy-President Thabo Mbeki said in Soweto.

Mr Mbeki was visiting the offices of the Inter-Denominational Women's Prayer League in Rockville as part of his national visit to non-governmental organisations.

After a lengthy meeting with the league's delegation, Mr Mbeki said he was going to see to it that a women's desk was established in the president's office. He said such a desk was needed "to handle issues that are women-driven".

"It is clear that there is a need for a continuous link between the government and the league," said Mr Mbeki.

Among the issues that were raised with Mr Mbeki was the plight of more than four thousand displaced families in Alexandra, who have been rendered homeless by the political violence that preceded the April 1994 election.

Mr Mbeki said he would take up the matter with the Gauteng government, the representatives of the displaced families and the league.

League president, Masechaba Mabaso said she was encouraged by the fact that Mr Mbeki's visit was an indication that grass-root organisations would have direct access to the government through the women's desk.

Gender discrimination 'must be addressed now'

Susan Russell
BD 30/5/95 (355A)

MEMBERS of the attorney's profession have criticised government for dragging its heels over the establishment of the gender equality commission provided for in the interim constitution.

An editorial in the June issue of the SA attorney's journal De Rebus said the tardiness in setting up the commission was particularly striking when compared with the progress which had been made in regard to "other building blocks of our new society" which were also provided for in the new constitution.

If affirmative action was necessary to help undo the results of racial discrimination, it said, then it was at least as equally necessary in the case of gender discrimination. "Something more than the bare declaration of equality and prohibition of discrimination contained in section eight of the interim constitution is required," it said.

The editorial said although the drafters of the constitution had made provision for a separate commission on gender equality, there had apparently been little progress made towards setting it up.

"It was only as late as last month that the ad hoc parliamentary committee on the establishment of the commission was due to begin public hearings on the shape it should take.

"Sections 119 and 120 of the constitution envisage an Act of Parliament to govern the commission, but no draft legislation has been published for discussion, although it was reported in the Press that an unpublished draft Bill had been rejected.

"There is a long legacy of gross discrimination which must be overcome if women, who constitute some 54% of the population, are to take their rightful place in the new order," De Rebus said.

Future health in SA 'will depend on outside factors'

(355) BD 30/5/95

Kathryn Strachan

MANY factors influencing the long term health of South Africans were undergoing profound transition, Medical Research Council community health director Derek Yach said.

Progress in improved health for all would depend on macrodevelopment policies outside the health service.

The first of the factors was educational transition which increased people's knowledge and made them more qualified to demand services.

Technological changes in biotechnology, information science and telecommunications would influence the ability to prevent, diagnose and treat disease.

The dissemination of rational explanations and technology had raised expectations of a better quality of life and willingness to accept modern medical treatment.

Political change had led to the recognition of health care as a right, resulting in it being embodied in the Constitution.

Transforming the economy would lay the foundations for household income growth which would accelerate changes in lifestyles that influenced health and would boost medical care demand: "It is this family of transitions that will determine long-term trends in health," Yach said.

Collating these factors it was possible to predict likely demographic trends, the prevalence of disease and disease profiles that together made up the epidemiological transition.

Changes in the age and the spatial distribution from 1991 to 2001 would have a marked effect on demand for health services, he said.

The key issue to emerge was that urbanisation would increase from 47% of the total population in 1980 to 79% by 2000.

The ageing of SA's population would have a direct effect on the need for disease services and hospitals. Ageing would also have a different effect in each province, with the biggest proportion of the elderly living in Gauteng and the smallest in the Northern Transvaal by 2011.

AIDS will also determine demographic trends. A study of the 15 African countries with the highest HIV prevalence showed the overall death rate was 100% higher in 35 to 44-year-olds as a result of AIDS. As SA was about five to eight years behind, the maximum effect of the SA epidemic was likely to be felt between 2010 and 2020.

The distribution of deaths by age in 1990 gave an indication of the future. The cause of death by age profile of Africans and coloureds was likely to approach that of whites and Asians over the next 30 years.

Almost a fifth of deaths among coloureds and Africans occured under the age of five years. It was likely government priorities would rapidly reduce child mortality within the next decade. The electrification programme alone, was likely to reduce deaths from acute respiratory infections, pneumonia and paraffin poisoning.

Thus, the policy implications were clear. Continued emphasis on reducing childhood communicable and nutritional diseases should remain the cornerstone of health policy and action at least for the next decade. Greater attention on TB control, HIV and sexually transmitted disease programmes, combined with violence control, would yield gains for adult health, and reduce social class and race inequalities in adult mortality and disease.

Mbeki promises Women's Desk

(355A)

■ BY ABBEY MAKOE
SOWETO BUREAU

Star 30/5/95

A Women's Desk to attend exclusively to women's issues throughout the country would be set up in President Nelson Mandela's office soon, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki said in Soweto yesterday.

He was visiting the Inter-Denominational Women's Prayer League in Rockville as part of his national tour of non-governmental organisations.

Mbeki said he would see to it that a Women's Desk was established in the president's office, as it was needed "to handle issues that are women-driven".

Among the issues that were raised was the plight of more than 4 000 displaced families in Alexandra, who have been rendered homeless by the political violence preceding the election last year.

Mbeki said he would take up the matter with the Gauteng government, representatives of the families and the league.

Single commission on 'equity' needed

'Gender issues are often confused with women's issues,' – Dr Mamphela Ramphele

ARG 3/6/95
(355A)

This country cannot afford a spate of commissions and committees argues DR MAMPHELA RAMPHELE, a director of the Public Information Centre of the Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa (Idasa), in a submission to the ad hoc committee on the establishment of a commission on gender equality.



IS setting up a commission to deal with gender equality the best way to ensure more equitable social relations between men and women in South Africa?

What are the problems such a commission is likely to encounter?

What other options are available to South Africans to enable them to live up to the intentions behind the constitutional provision of ensuring greater gender equity?

It is not unusual for gender equity issues to be confused with women's issues.

This confusion arises because clearly women are the most disadvantaged in a male-dominated society and tend to be the most vocal advocates of change.

But on closer scrutiny the position of women in a given society cannot change unless their relationships with men change too, be they wife/husband, mother/son, sister/brother, etc.

Men are both pained and privileged by sexism just like white South Africans were pained and privileged by apartheid.

Feminism is a necessary ingredient in the process of creating an awareness in women of the nature, course and complexity of oppression, just as black consciousness was important in helping black people to redefine the nature of their oppression, its causes and their role in liberating themselves.

But just as it has been essential for black and white people to work together to defeat apartheid, it will take both men and women to defeat sexism.

Hence the focus must be on gender relations and not simply women's issues.

The focus must also be on the concept of equity, which can mean both equal treatment and preferential treatment.

For example, women as bearers of children have certain demands put on their time and bodies.

They need preferential treatment to allow them to cope with biological demands.

Maternity leave, flexi-time at work and flexible career advancement are essential.

A failure to effect such preferential treatment would perpetuate the underrepresentation of women in the workplace, particularly in the skilled professions.

Another element of equity implies the need to set standards and reorganise working environments previously exclusively inhabited by men to ensure such environs become supportive of the development of both men and women.

One may not simply want to have an equal slice of the mad race in which men are currently participating, but a transformation of the values underlying the notion of work, leadership and human relationships.

Policies against sexual and other forms of harassment which poison the social milieu are crucial in this regard.

Is the Commission on Gender Equality the right instrument to achieve the goals behind the constitutional provision?

Gender equity in South Africa has to be reflected in a change in the status of women in all aspects of the nation's life, from the highest positions to access to opportunities and resources at grassroots level.

Age and geographic location are important factors in determining access to resources.

How would a commission for gender equality perform its duty in this regard without encroaching on rural development and youth development?

I wish to propose instead the establishment of an equity commission in the President's office.

Such a commission should aim to:

- Promote the transformation of South Africa into a more equitable society;
- Establish objective measures of equity taking cognisance of the present inequities along race, gender, age and geograpic location;
- Collate, and where relevant, commission research to establish base lines about socio-economic status, participation rates, and other relevant indicators of the social position of disadvantaged groups of people: women, youth, rural people and the disabled;
- Institute or organise educational campaigns promoting the concept of equity;
- Hold hearings and receive individual or collective complaints on issues of inequity with regard to race, class, gender, age, geographical discrimination or harassment;
- Establish mechanisms for monitoring performance on set indicators towards greater institutional equity in government departments, parliament, the private sector and other important social institutions;
- Give an annual report to parliament on progress along the set indicators.

This proposal will make the need to have a commission to deal with each of the areas of inequity in this country obvious, such as gender, youth, disabilities etc. It is clear to all those interested in good governance that we have inherited a huge legacy of government machinery which is consuming valuable resources, making them unavailable for development work to improve the lot of ordinary people.

A question arises about the extent to which the Human Rights Commission should be incorporated into this overarching Equity Commission.

Expanding the number of commissions has enormous implications for our national budget.

The experience of those in government who are trying to rationalise the fragmented administrative system points to the danger of us setting up structures under the Interim Constitution which we may want to dismantle later.

Once civil servants are in place, it becomes difficult to dislodge them.

It would be much more cost-effective to have a single equity commission with desks dealing with each of the problem areas: gender, youth, disability, rural/urban divide etc.

Greater co-ordination and rationalisation of resources would be an added advantage over and above the philosophical logic I have tried to sketch out above.

■ *Dr Ramphele is director of the Public Information Centre of Idasa.*

Women 'in short supply'

Ingrid Salgado 355A

THE Human Rights Commission was a powerful body but its effectiveness in dealing with gender inequality depended on whether it included skilled women, advocate Janet Kentridge said on Friday.

Speaking at a Constitutional Assembly public workshop on the advancement of women, Kentridge warned that too many structures dealing with gender issues could compromise women's representation on other structures.

A number of structures dealt with the issue and the constitution's proposed commission on gender equality could detract from the functions of these bodies, as women in leadership positions were already spread thinly, she said.

One such structure, the public protector, would only fulfill its functions if it took women seriously and this would occur only if skilled women filled its offices, she said.

RDP gender co-ordinator Mmatshilo Motsei told the workshop that women's positions within rural water committees, primary school nutrition projects and land restitution projects had to be emphasised.

Constitutional Assembly chairman Cyril Ramaphosa said submissions on women would be taken "very seriously" and would go a long way towards shaping the constitution.

Women 'in short supply'

Ingrid Salgado 355A

THE Human Rights Commission was a powerful body but its effectiveness in dealing with gender inequality depended on whether it included skilled women, advocate Janet Kentridge said on Friday.

Speaking at a Constitutional Assembly public workshop on the advancement of women, Kentridge warned that too many structures dealing with gender issues could compromise women's representation on other structures.

A number of structures dealt with the issue and the constitution's proposed commission on gender equality could detract from the functions of these bodies, as women in leadership positions were already spread thinly, she said.

One such structure, the public protector, would only fulfill its functions if it took women seriously and this would occur only if skilled women filled its offices, she said.

RDP gender co-ordinator Mmatshilo Motsei told the workshop that women's positions within rural water committees, primary school nutrition projects and land restitution projects had to be emphasised.

Constitutional Assembly chairman Cyril Ramaphosa said submissions on women would be taken "very seriously" and would go a long way towards shaping the constitution.

Draft Bill on sex equality

BD 13 16 95

CAPE TOWN — Draft legislation spelling out the structure and powers of the proposed commission on gender equality has been distributed to MPs for discussion. (355A)

The draft will be debated at tomorrow's meeting of the parliamentary committee looking into setting up the commission.

The commission's powers will include monitoring and reviewing gender policy and practice in public and private sectors.

It will also evaluate laws affecting gender equality and women's status.

Commission members, it suggests, should be appointed by the president after nominations have been approved by at least 75% of parliamentarians at a joint sitting of the National Assembly and Senate. — Sapa.

Draft law gives teeth to gender rights

WM 0 - 14/6/96 (355A)

Rehana Rossouw

DRAFT legislation spelling out the powers of the Gender Equity Commission has been prepared by the Department of Justice, giving the body the same teeth as the Human Rights Commission to perform its tasks of ensuring gender equity in Parliament and society.

The Parliamentary Commission on Gender Equity met on Wednesday to grapple with the scope of its functions and powers. The commission, chaired by African National Congress (ANC) MP Ruth Mompati, was established by women parliamentarians who were concerned about the advancement of women.

National Party MP Shelia Camerer said a Commission on Gender Equity would be more effective than a Womens' Ministry as these had failed dismally across sub-Sarahan Africa.

A commission could be given power to introduce legislation and vet legislation from other ministries for gender sensitivity, she said.

Dr Ellen Kornegay, of the Womens' Development Foundation, who gave evidence before the commission, said what was needed was a dynamic and interactive relationship between national, provincial and local governments, and access to non-governmental organisations on women's issues.

"Participation should not be limited to parliamentarians alone. We need to monitor gender compliance in both the public and private sector. The commission could then report annually to Parliament and society on the advancement of women."

Mompati said the Ministry of Justice had promised that draft legislation on the commission would be completed within the next week and would serve as a working document.

She said that while the commission would have to consult widely on the draft Bill, it should be mindful that the deadline was approaching for the draft legislation to be submitted to the Cabinet so that it can be dealt with in Parliament this year.

Firms warned on hiring techniques

BD 15/6/95 (355A)

Business Day Reporter

EMPLOYERS and recruitment agencies should closely examine their advertising and interviewing techniques so as not to fall foul of planned employment equality legislation, including the redrafted Labour Relations Act, says Anglo American legal adviser Andre van Niekerk.

Writing in the latest Contemporary Labour Law, Van Niekerk warns employers of a clause in schedule 3 of the Labour Relations Bill which prohibits discrimination against job applicants.

"Should this section of the Bill survive the negotiations and political processes unamended, applicants for employment thus far excluded from the ambit of the Act and therefore from the unfair labour practice jurisdiction, will enjoy protection against both direct and indirect discrimination."

He notes that this provision is termed transitional pending the introduction of more comprehensive equal opportunity legislation, but government's stated intention of outlawing all forms of unfair discrimination would, in all likelihood cover job applicants.

Overseas anti-discrimination laws gave pointers on how to avoid pre-employment discriminatory practices which included advertising vacancies, screening and testing applicants as well as selecting the successful candidate.

Van Niekerk says employers should avoid advertising posts in publications whose readership will reduce the possibility of a particular racial group responding to the advertisement.

Terminology should be carefully chosen to avoid discriminatory terms and advertisers should make it clear that all race groups would be considered.

English practice codes went further and advised employers not to confine recruitment to agencies, schools or job centres which catered mainly for a particular race group. Even head-hunting was perceived as potentially discriminatory as only employed people were targetted.

However, it is during the face-to-face interview stage that most discrimination is likely to occur, Van Niekerk says. Interviews' content, the manner in which they were conducted and the nature of questions should be closely scrutinised to ensure their neutrality.

He says overseas anti-discrimination legislation did not revolve around proving an intention to discriminate to establish that a claim was valid. Motive and intention were seen as irrelevant with only the alleged perpetrator's conduct taken into account in deciding a claim.

Van Niekerk warns employers against unnecessary testing of applicants or probing a certain race group more vigorously than another.

"Where tests are not relevant solely to the individual applicant's ability to do the job or to the requirements of the effective performance of the job, it is likely that indirect discrimination is present."

Women and the media

Sowetan 21/6/95

Women are calling for more female executives in media organisations and for a positive portrayal of women, Political Reporter **Pamela Dube** discovers (355A)

THE MEDIA came under fire at a conference this week for the way it portrays women and for the absence of women in decision-making positions in media organisations.

"We live in a society that reinforces male values, and the media is a reflection of that," was the feeling of women at a conference on women and the media in Johannesburg on Monday.

"But this is not a passive response to reality. It is also consciously driven by economic forces and ensures and maintains the unequal power relationships between men and women."

The media (both print and electronic) was attacked from all sides as being biased against women. The general feeling was that despite an increased number of women in positions of power, the media was still stereotyped in its belief that only men "make news".

Coverage of women in the media was described as "disturbing" because the media has a tendency to feature women in a negative light.

There was a recognition that women were proud of their bodies, and most had no qualms about showing off their bodies as they considered their sensuality to be "an integral part of their beings". But the meeting noted its concern about the way their sexuality was used for economic gain and said Sunday papers especially looked on women as sex objects.

Daily newspapers tend to report on women as rape victims only and its women's pages always stress "superficial issues". This strengthens the marginalisation of women.

The meeting also resolved that if pornographic publications continue with their "insulting" measures of portraying women as objects of sexual desire, they would campaign for a boycott of such publications.

Also "worrying" was the fact that the only time professional women were consulted by the media was on issues "thought of as women's issues".

Ms Francis Kendall, the leader of the Women's Rights Party which contested the 1994 general elections, observed that the media, particularly the SABC, tend to ignore women experts in political and economic debate.

"I am a politician. But the only time I am contacted for comment is when the issue is to do with women," Kendall told the conference.

Dr Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri, the chairperson of the SABC board, added: "This is despite the fact that journalists do know women experts in different spheres."

Before the 1994 elections, because of pressure from the Independent Media Commission, the SABC was forced to bring in political commentators of both genders.

"It was not hard for the journalists to get to know which woman was an expect on what subject, because they knew them. But they (journalists) did not seem to do that on their own without being pressured," Cassaburi said. When there is an attempt to give coverage to women, it usually also carries negative undertones. Women are usually divided into race, age and class stereotypes.



Dr Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri



Ms Frances Kendall

Elderly women are always depicted as needy, rural women as mere objects of development programmes and successful women as being middle class and urban.

"Women should be portrayed as complete human beings irrespective of their age, race and the locality from which they come," the meeting agreed. It stressed that the media need a complete restructuring to make young men and women in schools more sensitive and to put more women journalists in strategic positions in media organisations.

Ms Thembeka Nkamba of the SABC informed the meeting that in her research on the media she had discovered that women held the lowest status in the organisational hierarchy.

She said most women in the media were placed at the fourth level of the hierarchy, while men usually occupied the first three levels.

This supported the contention of the meeting that the media establishment was the domain of men who decided what was newsworthy or not.

And, contrary to popular belief, only two of the five glossy women's magazines in South Africa are in fact owned by women.

The meeting also resolved that there should be affirmative action across the board in the media in a attempt to place more women journalists in decision-making positions.

In line with this, media institutions should establish affirmative action scholarships for women journalists to prepare more women for top positions. There should also be a deliberate policy to increase the number of women journalists and to make the media curriculum in tertiary institutions gender-sensitive.

Another resolution of the meeting was to set up a committee to monitor the coverage of women in the media.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS (855A)

To the limit

FM 23/6/95

SA's constitution promises there shall be no discrimination against anyone. It spells out its inclusiveness in what are surely the most politically correct terms in the world:

"No person shall be discriminated against, directly or indirectly (on the grounds of) race, gender, sex, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture or language." There might be some puzzlement about the apparent distinction between "sex" and "gender" but "sexual orientation" refers to whether or not one is gay. This is an astounding freedom, given our national tradition of homophobia.

It could be argued that constitutional protection of such equality goes far enough — and that individual cases of discrimination now have the right of legal redress, up to and including the Constitutional Court. In fact, the interim constitution envisages the creation of a Commission on Gender Equality which would, for example, scrutinise legislation and attempt to eradicate structural discrimination on gender grounds.

The establishment of the Gender Commission is advanced. Draft legislation is in the process of being made available for public scrutiny. However, the ANC — or, at least, its powerful women's lobby — apparently feels that more than the right to equality needs to be entrenched in the constitution. A submission to the Constitutional Assembly recommends that the constitution should make provision for affirmative action for women — which could mean mandatory appointments of women throughout the economy, presumably on a 50-50 basis.

The submission argues: "(It) is insufficient to entrench a right to equality in our new constitution without providing for mechanisms to address wide-scale gender inequality which exists across all levels of our society. The goal of achieving gender equality must, we believe, guide all relevant decision-making, policy and development, within government and without."

The ANC submission states that "we must be wary of creating structures which end up marginalising gender issues. The ANC is of the view that gender concerns should permeate every government ministry; indeed, every aspect of life."

To this end, the ANC wants the enabling clauses in the constitution amended to "promote and protect gender equality and the status of women." Legislation to give effect to this would then flow from the constitutional requirement. The key word is "promote" — which can be interpreted only as affirmative action. The submission makes no suggestions as to what quota of appointments should be female.

The submission, of course, is simply an attempt to elevate women's concerns to an even higher level than they now enjoy. But it is noteworthy that ANC submissions to the Constitutional Assembly have a way of finding their way into the draft text of the final constitution — as has happened on the controversial issue of the independence of the Reserve Bank. Thus the real question about the proposal on affirmative action for women is not whether it should occur but whether it could.

Since women in parliament have tended to see their interests best served by cross-party alliances, the ANC submission probably has support among the women's components of the other parties. The suggestion cannot therefore be regarded as silly and bound to fail. Doubtless, the realities of over-stretched skills will ameliorate any draconian implementation of a stronger gender equality clause but the white male could soon face an extra dimension of threat to his existence. ■

Landmark jobs policy shaped by Asmal's dept

Business Day Reporter

THE water and forestry department yesterday became the first government department to release an employment equity draft policy which, if passed, would eliminate discriminatory practices and set targets for changing its employee profile.

In addition, parties accepting public funds for services rendered to the department would be "obliged to have an employment equity policy" in place before tenders were awarded.

The policy was presented to a National Assembly portfolio committee yesterday after months of drafting by a team of trade union and public sector representatives. Minister Kadar Asmal is expected to sign it by month-end.

Department human resources director Tommy Marshall said the policy went far beyond an affirmative action draft circulated by the public service commission. Many other departments indicated they would accept the strategies it laid down.

The drafting team acknowledged that pursuing the policy's objectives would incur additional costs. Financial provision would be made for this "taking account of the availability of funds and applying the principle of public accountability to render affordable and satisfactory services in a cost-effective manner".

Marshall said it was unlikely the department would meet its target in professional categories such as engineering as there were insufficient qualified personnel. In such cases bursary schemes and training opportunities could rectify the situation.

Training and development were key elements of the policy. Its success would be monitored by a committee which would evaluate programmes and set timetables for achieving objectives.

Marshall said it was unlikely that staff would be retrenched to make way for underrepresented groups as the department was being restructured to incorporate about 22 000 employees from former homelands. This would swell employee ranks from about 8 000 to almost 30 000.

The policy would remain in effect until its purpose was satisfied or legislation overrode its content.

Govt ordered to end gender discrimination

(355A) BD 26/6/95

Erica Jankowitz

GOVERNMENT was given until January 16 1996 to eliminate discrimination in its employment ranks or have the Industrial Court set the ground rules for employees' constitutional rights to be upheld, in terms of a court ruling handed down on Friday.

In the light of additional costs involved — estimated to be about R2,5bn merely to eliminate discrimination in housing loan facilities which precluded married women — the court allowed government six months to get its house in order.

Court president Adolph Landman, who presided over the case in question, said in his judgment that government had allocated R400m in this year's Budget to deal with disparities. This would clearly be insufficient to cover the enormous costs likely to be involved. Instead, an incremental approach might be more appropriate in closing the gap between housing loans for married male and female employees.

Landman found the respondents — the ministers of education and finance and Primrose Hill Primary School's governing body — had committed an unfair labour practice by refusing the school's principal a housing loan in terms of current public service regulations.

However, given that public servants in all sectors and areas had suffered as a result of discriminatory practice and that this "test case" would bind only the respondents to the court's decision, Landman felt a wider solution should be sought. "Any solution must take cognisance of the ability of persons against whom the order is directed to comply with the order within a

Continued on Page 2

Discrimination

(355A) BD 26/6/95

Continued from Page 1

reasonable time and with minimum dislocation and without disrupting the economy or the stability of our civil society."

It would be impossible for SA to afford a decision to make an order to eliminate discriminatory practices retrospective to the date on which they were initiated.

Landman pointed out that housing loans were taxable and government would recoup part of its outlay in higher revenues if it was decided to extend housing loans to married women public servants.

Although education had been portrayed as a major prong of government's reconstruction and development programme, it was not the only priority identified.

Landman said government had indicated that there was a need to keep employment conditions in the educational and other arms of government in line, so any solution found to this case would naturally be extended to cover all public servants.

Working women face worse discrimination

Renee Grawitzky (355A)

THE increasing participation of women in the economy and the labour market has inadvertantly resulted in an increase in discrimination and inequality, says the International Labour Organisation.

The June edition of the organisation's publication, World of Work, said: "The feminisation of employment has not been synonymous with improvement in the quality of employment." Women workers continued to be discriminated against in areas such as pay, with women receiving 70-80% of the rates of pay of men in the industrialised world.

Jobs dominated by women had traditionally been characterised by low status and remuneration.

Despite growing inequality in the workplace, however, there was an increased awareness by some governments of the need for gender equality. A growing number were adopting wage equity and affirmative action measures to accelerate women's entry into leadership and managerial positions, the report said.

The organisation said most women workers worldwide continued to be concentrated in clerical, services, sales and middle-level professional occupations.

In SA the status of women at work does not appear to be a matter of concern to most employers if one analyses employment practices. For example, the main thrust of affirmative action as interpreted by companies has been on racial lines, and disregards gender. This is not in accordance with the reconstruction and development programme, which specifies that affirmative action should apply to both blacks and women.

A snap survey of a number of women in middle to senior management positions in a cross section of organisations revealed that some experienced overt discrimination such as inequality in wages while others experienced a more subtle and intangible form of discrimination. This could take the form of being constantly reminded of women's other roles — as mothers and homemakers as opposed to career women. BD 28/6/95

Some women perceived that women's opinions were not given the same credence as men in the same or similar positions and men from middle-management level and below found it more difficult accepting women's views.

One woman said: "Women bring it upon themselves in certain respects. They have this constant fear of having to prove themselves and they try and overcompensate for being women."

Others said that management was quite happy to let women remain in more junior positions even though they were performing more senior functions. When confronted, management either said women were not ready, even though they had performed the tasks for extended periods, or that they should be happy as they were affirmative action placements.

Comments by all the women interviewed indicated that they felt the "old boys' club" was alive and well.

Fawu considers creating umbrella industry forum

(356) (357) BD 28/6/95

Renee Grawitzky

THE Food and Allied Workers' Union (Fawu) is contemplating establishing a national industry forum in the food sector with 15 sectoral forums falling under the main body.

The national forum would consider broad policy issues such as education, training and industrial restructuring with the aim of becoming competitive worldwide. The sectoral forums would negotiate wages and conditions of employment.

Fawu's Valerie Flanagan said the forums would cover sectors such as sugar, dairy, fishing and baking.

She said initially the union would pursue its objectives in those sectors where it was strongest and able to achieve its goals.

Flanagan said initial discussions had taken place between the union and the Chamber of Baking which represented baking employers.

She said the union wanted to establish an industrial council in the baking sector, but was trying to achieve this with the full understanding and support of both employers and workers. She said part of the delay was that both parties were uncomfortable about how the structure would operate and the subsequent effect on their lives.

The Chamber of Baking's executive director Nic Alberts said the chamber was prepared to discuss the formation of a sector forum.

Alberts said, however, that "we are concerned about the wisdom of such a move at this stage in the development of the industry where we are trying to preserve jobs and keep some marginal bakeries viable".

He said the industry was dominated by six companies with approximately 3 000 small independent bakeries who would have to be accommodated.

Alberts said even within the "big six", "some groups bargain at company level, others at regional level and some are totally decentralised".

Western Cape leads boom in tourism

Theo Rawana (288) BD 28/6/95

SA's tourism industry is well on its way to recovery, figures released by the Central Statistical Service (CSS) show.

The number of foreign tourists to SA in April was more than double the figure for the same month last year, the CSS said.

The most popular province was the Western Cape, which attracted 38% of the visitors. The total number of bed nights sold to foreign tourists in April was 205 602, 117% higher than the figure for April 1994.

Asian tourists accounted for the greatest increase in market share according to continent, rising from 7,3% of the total in April last year to 17,5% this year.

Meanwhile, a study by an international hotel marketing group has found that a family-friendly atmosphere and programmes geared towards children travelling with their parents accounted for a significant chunk of hotel turnover.

The study, conducted by Steinberger Reservation Service, reported that family accommodation accounted for an average 5% of business volume, and was as high as 12,5% at hotels in the US.

The group has two hotels in SA: the Carlton Court and the Malamala.

Gender group delay criticised

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CT 31/5/95

JOHANNESBURG: The Association of Law Societies (ALS) has lashed out at the delay in establishing a commission on gender equality, saying it is time the long legacy of "gross discrimination" against women is overcome.

Women, especially African women, have suffered discrimination at the hands of apartheid and the patriarchal system of customary law, which is why the Interim Constitution made provision for a gender commission, says an editorial in the June edition of the ALS journal De Rebus.

"Sadly, slightly more than a year after the commencement of the constitution, little progress appears to have been made towards the establishment of the gender commission." (355A)

It was hard to understand why

Working women to get a fair deal

(355A) Sowetan 5/7/95

Discriminatory laws that deny women housing loans set to go



TWO FRIDAYS AGO, the Industrial Court ruled that it was an unfair labour practice that married women were not entitled to a homeowner's allowance. This was a sequel to the case brought to the court by the Association of Professional Teachers. The ruling was hailed as groundbreaking by the association because of the pains that it has caused for a large number of married female teachers.

Take the case of Harry and Sally Mdodovu. They are a wonderful loving couple. They have a son who is doing very well at school.

Harry had a good job, which took him all over the country and he and his wife decided to buy a lovely house in a former whites-only suburb.

The wife worked as a teacher in one of the townships.

However, their standard of living could no longer be maintained when Harry lost his job. The bond repayments on the house became a problem and they started falling behind. The job offers for the husband did not materialise and life became unbearable. Eventually, this started to strain the relationship and the once dream-couple were at each other's throats.

The solution which was eventually tried by the two — forced by circumstances, was to divorce so that the wife could get a housing allowance from the Department of Education and Training.

According to the regulations of the DET, married female teachers were not entitled to get a housing allowance but male teachers could get it.

It is this warped logic that has led to people getting a divorce — even if sometimes it is just on paper — so that they can qualify for the allowance. But in other cases, some people have actually ended up divorcing completely because of some minor disagreements with the one partner harping on the fact that anyway they are divorced.

In the ruling, the president of the industrial council said the state must get together with the association and must come to some agreement by January next year.

The long and short of it is that the discriminatory practice must stop. The court declared it as an unfair labour practice and the state is therefore obliged to sort this mess.

The court noted also that this could not be done overnight as it involves a large number of people in the whole civil service — hence the January next year deadline.

Hugo Ackerman of APT says this stupid regulation dates back to the misunderstanding that the man is the breadwinner and that he should provide everything for the family. It has also been criticised for a long time by teachers and other people who were affected by it.

It was easy to challenge the decision with the new Education Labour Relations Act which makes it possible to challenge some of the regulations.

The association also used the provisions of the new constitution in challenging this discriminatory regulation.

The case was brought to the association by a Mrs Di Rademan.

Says Hugo Ackerman: "We are obviously delighted and agree with the decision. It was quite clear that the Industrial Court took this case very seriously in that they sent their important people to listen to the case. The judgment was 98 pages and it shows that this was taken seriously."

MANAGEMENT

Women's club calls for more support

Reports by Amanda Vermeulen (355A) BD 6/7/95

THE Executive Women's Club (EWC) has called for more support in its attempts to encourage women to assume positions of responsibility in the business world.

EWC's Marilyx Stafford-Mayer said that while members had made generous donations to the club's bursary scheme, funds were seriously depleted by early last year. This had highlighted the need for a fund whose capital base was large enough to generate interest to sustain the bursaries.

The bursary fund was established in 1988 to award bursaries to deserving women whose financial circumstances prevented them attending business school.

At the end of last year the fund was approached by 29 women, but resources limited the bursaries to three, bringing to 15 the number of bursaries awarded so far.

One of the other facets of the EWC is its annual recognition of a woman achiever in the business environment. Next month the EWC will announce the winner of its 1995 Businesswoman of the Year award.

The 1994 winner, Veronica Devine — the moving force behind Justine Cosmetics — said the award had provided a motivational boost to the company which reported a 25% increase in turnover during the period.

It had also created international exposure for her and the company, which was looking at expanding beyond SA's borders.

Devine said the award was significant as it recognised the professionalism of women in business, a small percentage of whom occupied senior management positions.

An award aimed at the "businessperson" of the year did not take into account the small representation women had at board level, which made it even more difficult to compete for the honour.

Despite this problem, Devine said she did not believe SA women were any worse off than their counterparts in the US or Europe.

One of the more pleasing developments in the advancement of women in business was the increasing number of women entering the small and medium-sized business sector.

She attributed this to women being frustrated with "the system", and taking matters into their own hands by launching their own businesses.

"Women still have a long way to go to achieve equal treatment and combat discrimination. The EWC award helps in the fight for due recognition."

e pyramid

This did not mean all jobs were seen to be of equal importance. There were various bands and levels of skills, and competencies within bands differed.

"Broadbanding creates opportunities for each position to add value to the organisation, the degree of value added depends on the individual."

The benefits to organisations which implemented broadbanding were numerous. It allowed for rapid initiation of change and response to market vagaries and it encouraged a team-orientated workforce. It also created a new approach to compensation structures, based on pay for performance.

Black business signs on for skills training

(355B) BD 6/7/95

EMERGING black business can contribute to a stable economy provided it is given access to sustained finance and appropriate business skills, Business Skills of SA (BSSA) executive director Hein van der Merwe said this week.

Coopers & Lybrand is running a BSSA course in Johannesburg, and two courses in Soweto, attended by a range of business people.

BSSA is a joint venture of the auditing firm and Nafcoc's National Industrial Chamber (NIC), based on skills transfer programmes developed in Britain.

The BSSA Foundation, Van der Merwe said, had provided business skills training for more than 2 000 people in three years, and had helped create jobs for about 50% of those who attended courses.

Course attendees said it provided relevant examples while also allowing those attending to share experiences.

Subjects included practical marketing, personal selling skills, customer care, debt recovery, pricing policies and management.

Van der Merwe said Coopers & Lybrand had invested more than R1m in BSSA since 1992. It financed basic management and administration, while the NIC assisted in adapting the material.

Work crunch for MPs

WM 7 - 13/7/95

Gaye Davis

IN terms of workload and resources, South Africa's members of Parliament have to be among the most over-stretched and under-funded in the world.

Management consultants hired by National Assembly Speaker Frene Ginwala and Senate President Kobie Coetsee, to recommend ways of reorganising support services for Parliament, will be consulting MPs, management staff and unions before submitting a report on September 25.

They (joint-bidders Deloitte and Touche and K Mgqamqo and Associates) would do well to start by reading the transcript of a little-publicised parliamentary debate last month.

Members from all parties rose, during an extended public committee meeting, to discuss parliament's budget, to voice their concerns about their ability to properly serve the people who put them there — the voters.

Over the 14 months since the new ANC-led government ushered in radical changes in terms of Parliament's make-up and functioning, members' workloads have grown steadily heavier — partly as a result of the demands of the bright new ethos of transparency and greater involvement of legislators in policy matters.

Under the old regime, there were 33 standing committees. Working behind closed doors, they were basically rubber-stamps for legislation.

At the last count, there were 60 committees — 36 in the national assembly, 20 in the senate and four joint committees. Leader of the House, Trevor Manuel (ANC), said that between January and May this year, there were about 320 committee meetings, averaging 20 each Tuesday, and 18 on a Wednesday.

With their powers widened and open to the public, the committees can now examine departments' budgets, and monitor, investigate and make recommendations.

Manuel said this had put an enormous burden on parliamentary staff, MPs and senators — who found themselves "extremely stretched". Members did not have the resources to manage law-making, transforming Parliament, rewriting the constitution and serving their constituencies.

"Even the most cursory examination of trends in parliaments across the world reveals that our members are expected to achieve a near-impossible task."

During the debate it emerged that:

● There are only 12 committee clerks, responsible for serving all 60 committees;

● One secretary serves 37 ANC MPs;

● National Assembly MPs get R280 a month for research assistance and R488 for administration. Senators get more — R428 and R650 respectively. "Why the difference ... and how were such minimal figures arrived at, given the needs?" asked ANC MP Gill Marcus. Another MP pointed out that in Britain, MPs get R241 000 each a year for secretaries and researchers.

● Constituency allowances of R3 000 a month per member (MPs claim their allowances through their parties) were not enough to cover office rental, secretarial services, equipment hire and phone bills.

NP chief whip Hennie Smit said he'd established 13 committees which were in session when the National Assembly was also sitting. "The business of the committees very often results in the impression ... that members are not present in the chamber," he said.

ANC MP Gill Marcus noted that the total allocated for MPs' support was R3,7-million, while R4-million had been allocated for Parliament's democratisation. "This raises the question of whether democratisation is a public relations exercise or real engagement," she said.

Women first choice for ministers' posts

WM 7 - 13/7/95

Gaye Davis

DEPUTY President Thabo Mbeki has pledged that a woman will be first choice to fill any minister's or deputy minister's post that becomes vacant in future.

Mbeki made the commitment when addressing women from NGOs countrywide, who gathered at Midrand last weekend in preparation for a global forum on women, which starts in Beijing at the end of August.

Mbeki also said the government would try to ratify the United National Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Cedaw) by August 9 — Women's Day. And he said the proposed Office on the Status of Women — long-awaited national machinery to promote women's advancement — would be based in the Office of the State President.

His pledges were met with delight by delegates. Nomtuse Mbere, convenor of the non-governmental organisation (NGO) planning committee for Beijing, said while the name of the Office on the Status of Women could change, it would "ensure all ministries work towards the advancement of women" by liaising with ministry-based gender desks and scrutinising budgets. Women wanted it based in the President's office, she said. "If it was a separate ministry, it would not have enough power."

About 1 300 NGOs are accredited for a global NGO forum to run from August 30 to September 8 at Huairou, a Chinese resort town some distance from Beij... it is designed to complement the United Nations-sponsored Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing's Asian Games Village, which runs from September 4 to 11.

"Beijing will be a conference of commitment on the part of governments, which will set the agenda as far as women are concerned for the next 10 years," Mbere said. "The Midrand conference was a chance for women in civil society to identify what they want the government to commit to." Major areas of concern included the burden of poverty borne by women, the need for economic empowerment, employment creation and affirmative action.

Proposals would go to the National Preparatory Committee for Beijing, chaired by deputy minister of welfare Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi.

The 30-strong South African government delegation, to be led by Speaker of the National Assembly, Frene Ginwala, will include a number of reserved places for NGO representatives.

R15m to ease plight of W Cape women

CT 8/7/95 (355 355A)

THE Western Cape has allocated nearly R15 million to improve the welfare of women, regional Minister of Health and Welfare Mr Ebrahim Rasool said yesterday.

He told a news conference, two days ahead of the first national Women's Day, that R14,8m would be spent in focusing on violence against women and improving women's skills.

Almost R500 000 would be spent on skills development, R200 000 on shelters for abused women and R236 000 on care for unmarried mothers.

The largest portion — R14m — would be spent on new creches that would free women to participate more fully in society, Mr Rasool said.



CRECHES: Mr Ebrahim Rasool

Six multi-purpose centres, which would offer women safety and skills and literacy training, would be built this year. — Staff Reporter, Sapa

Women ... ready to fight

(355A) Sowetan 20/7/95

United Nations' figures show that women do two-thirds of the world's work for five percent of the income and own less than one percent of the assets. They want to change this, reports **Pamela Cowen**

WOMEN COUNT, COUNT WOMEN'S WORK. This will be one of the battle cries at the Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing, China, in September.

Raising the cry will be Ms Selma James, founder of the international Wages for Housework Campaign, a network of women from Third World and industrialised countries. They have been fighting since the 1970s to get compensation for women's unpaid work.

James first lobbied for wages for housework in her pamphlet, *Women, the unions and work or what is not to be done*, presented to the National Women's Liberation Conference in Britain in 1972.

"There's no reason why we can't measure women's work in the community, in the field and in the home," James says with conviction.

"It used to be that women were asked what they did all day if they worked in the home. The assumption was that they did nothing, there was no recognition of their efforts."

James describes women as statistically invisible producers. She argues that women's work should be reflected in each country's gross national product, a widely used indicator of a country's wealth.

She says women in Africa grow 80 percent of the food, despite "abominable" working conditions, and care for their families with few resources.

Making waged and unwaged work visible to the entire world will dispel the myth that the Third World is generally "unproductive", she argues.

As evidence of inequity, James points to United Nations' figures which show that women do two-thirds of the world's work for five percent of the income and own less than one percent of the assets.

The women's movement stresses women are low-paid because the work they do in the home and in the community is not officially valued. Evaluating this work is a strategy for equity.

"Counting unremunerated work directly addresses the situation of women, beginning with those who have the least but carry the heaviest burdens," James says.

"Governments have been trying to achieve equity by promoting a few women to the top — on the trickle-down theory. Well, it's pretty dry down here. We must go up together, beginning with the women at the bottom."

James maintains that quantification of women's work will give them power in decision-making when it comes to allocation of aid.

"No one asks women what they need," James says. "If men say they need tractors, they get tractors. But despite lip service to women's equality, women are often denied food, health care, housing or access to land, credit and loans."

Only when women's needs are acknowledged will the balance of power become more equal, says James.



Housework ... although women do most of the world's work, much of it is unpaid.

Another advantage to women would be in the areas of injury, "wrongful death" or compensation for rape or other crimes. Women and their families are at a disadvantage in seeking damages because unpaid work is assumed to have no economic value and legal and other professionals have no accurate official data on which to base claims and proposals.

As a result of intense lobbying, governments at the 1985 World Conference for Women in Nairobi agreed that women's unpaid work in every country should be included in the GNP.

James says progress has been slow because "of those who want to cut services and those who want to exploit us".

But critics question the logistics of WFH's proposal. "It would make perfect economic sense if it could be measured," says Professor Charles Bean of the London School of Economics and Political Science.

"Unfortunately measures aren't always available, especially from developing countries. It's also a question of who should pay them.

"Women do get recompense from their working husbands, although there may be some argument about whether the portion of what they get is fair. But it's not clear to me whether the government should be footing the bill."

James insists that government should be responsible for paying women's domestic wages: "We want the money for our wages to come from military spending. Vast amounts of money is spent on nuclear weapons. We want the money for life, not death."

James argues that figures for unwaged work can be determined by calculating the replacement cost (how much it would cost to get someone to come in and perform all the household jobs) or the market cost (how much it would cost to take all the services performed in the home into the marketplace).

The figures would be entered in a satellite or parallel account, separate from the main GNP, so it would not affect the GNP figures or interfere with aid to developing countries.

Gender clause 'almost certain'

The Argus Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. — The "final" constitution will almost certainly establish a quota for women in Parliament and other structures of government, says Deputy Minister of Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development Mohammed Valli Moosa (355A)

His remarks were made yesterday in Pretoria at the close of a four-day international constitutional conference hosted by his department with the support of the Commonwealth and foreign donor bodies.

Mr Moosa said he believed gender discrimination would not change naturally and that a constitutional provision was therefore necessary.

He suggested that a 50 percent quota for women might be considered. DRG 21/7/95

'Too few women in Parliament'

CT 21/7/95 (355A)

PRETORIA: The final constitution should prescribe that women make up at least half of Parliament, Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development Deputy Minister Mr Valli Moosa said here yesterday.

He told the International Roundtable on Democratic Constitutional Development the gender composition of gatherings such as Parliament would not change naturally.

"Many of us are going to argue very hard that there should be an entrenched proportion for either males or females in the new Parliament.

"Something like at least 50% of the new Parliament should be women."

The "oppression of women" was one the wrongs of the past that should be rectified, Mr Moosa said. —Sapa

Constitutional provision urged

Quota for women in govt mooted

(355A)

Star 21/7/95

THE constitution to be finalised next year should be driven by a desire to produce the best possible for SA conditions, says Meyer

■ BY JO-ANNE COLLINGE

The "final" constitution will almost certainly establish a quota for women in Parliament and other structures of government, says Deputy Minister of Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development Valli Moosa.

His remarks were made yesterday in Pretoria at the close of a four-day international round-table conference on democratic constitutional development, hosted by his department with the support of the Commonwealth and foreign donor organisations.

The deputy minister said he believed that gender discrimination would not change naturally and that a constitutional provision was therefore necessary. He suggested that a 50% quota for women might be considered.

In his closing speech, Minister of Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development Roelf Meyer said it was critical that the "final" constitution dealt thoroughly with the division of powers between levels of government, especially between the metropolitan and local components of urban government.

Observers believe that the vague provision on the respective powers of metropolitan councils and their substructures in the interim phase has fuelled the demarcation disputes which exist in the Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban metropolitan areas.

Meyer commented that the interim constitution was a political settlement translated into constitutional language. In contrast, he said, the constitution due to be finalised next year should be driven by a desire to produce the best possible constitution for South African conditions.

Meyer said it was worrying that the IFP had withdrawn not only from the constitution-making process but from the intergovernmental forum. The situation presented a challenge to the Government of National Unity to address the matter "in such a way that co-operative governance comes through".

Foreign participants in the conference included eminent academics, experienced politicians, senior diplomats and jurists drawn from Commonwealth countries, Europe and the United States.

The debates served to cast South Africa's constitutional arrangements against widely divergent experiences elsewhere.

Baritones still drown out sopranos

(355A) Star 5/8/95



If the National Women's Day on Wednesday is to have meaning for South African women, it should be a day of remembrance and of foresight. Women in South Africa may have much to celebrate, but there is still a long way to full equality, writes CHRISTINA STUCKY



Uplifting women: Rural women are most in need of empowerment, but it is precisely this group of women who are often unaware of their rights or lack the voice to speak out for themselves. Instead they frequently play the dual role of breadwinner and and homemaker.
PHOTOGRAPH: MYKEL NICOLAOU

The catch word is "empowerment". Reams of documents on women's issues are dotted with the word. Journalists sprinkle their copy with it. Activists love it. But the woman in South Africa who truly needs empowerment probably does not even know the meaning of the word. And yet, empowering women at all levels is the cornerstone of true women's liberation and equality.

When women march on Pretoria on Wednesday – National Women's Day – they will be commemorating the 1956 march of women against the notorious Pass Laws. "Unlike 1956, we today actually have an enabling environment to take things forward," says Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, deputy Minister for Welfare and Population Development and chairwoman of the National Preparatory Committee for the Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing from September 4-15.

The "enabling environment" Fraser-Moleketi refers to, is the spirit of reconciliation and nation-building inherent in the Government of National Unity and is also apparent in the RDP's commitment to improving the status of women.

That a disparity exists between the situation of men and women in this country is undisputed.

Fraser-Moleketi admits: "I am not trying to paint a glowing picture."

According to statistics supplied by the Central Statistical Services (CSS) the Human Development Index – which measures "people's ability to live a long and healthy life, to communicate, to participate in the community and to have sufficient means to be able to afford a decent living" – is significantly lower for women when compared to the total population.

This, the CSS says, "indicates gender discrimination".

Fraser-Moloketi points out a few of the steps the Government has taken to bring South Africa's women closer to equality:

- The establishment of Gender Commissions at provincial and national levels to act as monitoring structures for the equality of women.
- The RDP's commitment to eradicating the discrimination against women and girls in terms of training and access to training.
- The availability of free health care for children under five and ante-natal care for women.

In terms of these programmes, the deputy minister says, South Africa comes out ahead of the rest of the developing world.

The real challenge facing the government is empowering rural women, who tend to be marginalised even more than their urban sisters.

And for these women, Fraser-Moleketi says, bringing water and electricity into their homes is "empowering women in a real sense".

According to the CSS, almost 93% of occupants of rural dwellings in the Eastern Cape, and approximately 87% in the Northern Transvaal, do not have electricity for cooking, lighting or heating.

Since women in rural areas are in charge of the household, that means they spend considerable amounts of time and energy hauling water and firewood.

While feminists may argue that the saddling of women with the care of the household is an untenable situation in need of a serious challenge, the reality in rural Africa remains that women carry the burden of home and family.

Making life easier for them, by freeing up their time with the introduction of running water and electricity, improves their quality of life – and may enable them to participate in community development projects.

Addressing the needs of women, both rural and urban, is one of the aims of the Beijing Conference, which has targeted twelve "critical areas of concern" ranging from poverty, to health, to violence against women, to the inequality of men and women in decision-making.

Whether or not the conference aims will ever make it beyond a flood of "legalese" printed on stacks of paper, depends largely on the commitment of the delegations attending the conference.

The South African delegation has already committed itself to focusing on the "post-Beijing impact on women", Fraser-Moleketi says.

"The biggest challenge is how the government will make a difference to women's lives."

The delegation aims to ensure the government makes a commitment.

But – and therein could lie the rub – men hold most of the positions of power, less so than before the country's first democratic elections but still with enough of a majority to override the women in government.

While it would be unfair to imply a malicious intent on the part of male ministers to undermine women, or to deny that there are men in government whose gender-sensitivity is highly honed, the fact remains that women's voices in politics – as in most sectors of society – are drowned out by a choir of baritones.

"Men have always been in a position of power," Fraser-Moleketi confirms, "and precisely because they have been monopolising power they have not had to face women's issues."

However, for men to become involved in the process of female empowerment, they must be made aware of the necessity of their participation.

"It is not just women who should look after women's needs," Fraser-Moleketi says.

Unfortunately, the reality is that most male readers will never even have reached this point in this article and will, like a number of female readers, have turned the page once they realised that this was another report on "women's issues", an overused and misleading phrase that really means issues affecting men, women and children equally.

Unfortunately, "women's issues" evoke little more than a yawn or a shrug of indifference from most men.

In government, but i

As South Africa celebrates its first official National Women's Day tomorrow, August 9, the country can also celebrate the fact that there are more women in government now than ever before. **ANDREA WEISS** spoke to cabinet ministers, MPs, provincial legislators and city councillors to find out how they viewed the state of play.

LONELINESS, guilt about deserting their families for politics, and frustration with male-dominated political structures are a few of the problems women making their way in political life have to contend with.

That the gender profile of government has changed is proved by the fact that about a quarter of the 490 new members of parliament are women, compared to the eight who were MPs in the last "pale, male" government.

Statistics show that only 25 women held parliamentary seats from 1933 until the first democratic national election in 1994. Now more than 100 find themselves in parliament, and hundreds of others in provincial and local government around the country.

Women politicians are adamant that more women must become involved in decision-making, but they also point out that problems within the new order exist.

Key issues that emerged from interviews with a cross-section of women were the difficulties they had juggling motherhood and politics, the fact that government in the past was organised by men for men taking no account of the pressures faced by women, and the ever-present fear of failure.

But many of the women politicians were upbeat about how much women could achieve, how hard they worked and why it was essential for women to have a voice in decision-making.

Here are some of their views.

● Deputy Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology **BRIGITTE MABANDLA**, feels there is still a long way to go before women achieve true equality in government.

Women in the cabinet, particularly, are "very lonely" because there is an assumption that they are "incapable until they prove themselves".

In this respect she cites criticism of the housing minister, who stepped into Joe Slovo's shoes, as a case in point. She says Ms Sankie Mthembi-Nkondo has inherited a policy from her predecessor, but because certain factors were not in place, her competence has unfairly been called into question.

Problems that women, and indeed anybody in politics face, include shifting capitals which creates family difficulties and which is disorientating.

Of this she says: "I'm not even sure that this is a women's issue only."

● **HILDA NDUDE**, ANC member of the provincial legislature, believes that women should take more initiative and should not plead for special treatment.

She acknowledges that society is patriarchal and women are frequently regarded as second-class citizens, but blames women for being "petty" at times.

Mrs Ndude thinks that while President Nelson Mandela has been "progressive" in appointing women cabinet ministers to allow them to prove their worth, the government should be making a more concerted effort to appoint women ambassadors and high commissioners.

● Deputy welfare minister **GERALDINE FRASER-MOLEKETI**, admits that the issue of children versus political life is a sensitive one, but feels the reality is that women invest far more time in managing families than most men.

"In essence this reflects on the whole issue of equality within relationships," she says.

She also feels that women tend to feel more guilty than their male counterparts about whether they are doing the right thing in engaging matters of national interest over and above the needs of their children.

As a mother, she is fearful that while she might have good support structures in place and she makes the effort to communicate openly with her children, there may come a time "when they don't care whether I'm there or not".

While realising all cabinet members are under pressure to deliver the goods, she feels women in high office are under greater pressure than their male counterparts to prove that they are not just tokens.

"It is essential for younger women to be in politics. But I resent the fact that women have to make choices between family life and being in government.

"Men in the same situation don't face the same dilemma. I realise there is a need for sacrifice, but there must be a balance so it's not an 'either/or' situation," she says.

● VER right Nat' gress [illegible] toda "[illegible] off [illegible] but guard their the '

Ms with wh[illegible] of its elect there over [illegible]

"I achie have she a She ment al [illegible] ed with, that they that they

In really still home, ment them should

● [illegible] REI right, Party of the [illegible] a [illegible] the going women [illegible] equal should [illegible] vital



Picture: ANDREW INGRAM, The Argus.

PARLIAMENTARY CRECHE: Children play within sight of the Houses of Parliament where their parents work either as staff members or MPs. The creche is located in the former police headquarters of Tuynhuis.

Kindergarten for parliamentary tots

Staff Reporter

WHERE formerly policemen and their dogs stood guard, you can now hear the sound of children playing as you stroll down Government Avenue.

"And one imagines that since the parliamentary creche opened, perhaps Madiba himself sometimes lays down the papers of state to delight in the sound of children at play within earshot of his offices at Tuynhuys.

Since April this year, 58 children of parliamentarians and parliamentary staff, have been accommodated at the creche which has been set up in the former police buildings in the grounds of Tuynhuys.

The creche is testimony to the will of approximately 120 women who are members of parliament and who set about organising the facility as soon as they arrived to take up office last year.

Initially the task fell to African National Congress MP Jannie Momberg, who handed it over to Buyelwa Sonjica, a former general science and English teacher from the Eastern Cape.

Ms Sonjica explains that the problem arose almost immediately because women who were elected had to take up office in Cape Town, but had nowhere to send their small children after arriving in a strange city.

At first, a handful of children were accommodated on the seventh floor of a nearby office block, but that was not ideal because there were no outdoor facilities. But the children had to make do until the new accommodation at Tuynhuys was converted for them.

While parliament covered the capital cost of changing the building, the people who use the creche pay for its day-to-day running on a sliding scale, starting at R450 a month for the highest earners to R100 a month for the lowest. Anyone who works at parliament can send their child there, and children of staff outnumber children of MPs.

Because of the irregular hours of sittings, the creche also has to stay open until the end of a session which now, due to pressure brought to bear by women, tends to finish at about 8.30 pm.

In Ms Sonjica's view, making parliament more "people friendly" means that MPs are sending a positive message out to the people, that they too should "care for and nurture" their families.

Among the changes being considered are starting sessions at parliament earlier in the day, or running different debates concurrently, so that business can be dealt with within more reasonable hours.

She says of her experience in establishing the creche: "I don't see it as my success as an individual. It is the success of South African women, and in particular the ANC Women's League."

WO[illegible] under[illegible] [illegible] Total [illegible] Total [illegible] Total [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] 1 4 [illegible] Total [illegible] Total [illegible]

t, but it's a battle

(3559) ARG 8/8/95

...t about how could achieve, ...ked and why for women to decision-mak-

...me of their

... of Arts, ... and Technol- MABANDLA, ... a long way to ... achieve true ...ent.

... cabinet, par- "very lonely" an assumption incapable until ...", she cites criti-

... The Argus.

...ents work uynhuis.

...ots

finish at about

... view, making ... "people that MPs are ... message out that they too and nurture"

...nges being starting ses- ... earlier in ... different ...ality, so that ... dealt with ... hours.

experience in ...ecne: "I don't ... as an indi- ... success of ..., and in NC Women's

cism of the housing minister, who stepped into Joe Slovo's shoes, as a case in point. She says Ms Sankie Mthembi-Nkondo has inherited a policy from her predecessor, but because certain factors were not in place, her competence has unfairly been called into question.

Problems that women, and indeed anybody in politics face, include shifting capitals which creates family difficulties and which is disorientating.

Of this she says: "I'm not even sure that this is a women's issue only."

● **HILDA NDUDE**, ANC member of the provincial legislature, believes that women should take more initiative and should not plead for special treatment.

She acknowledges that society is patriarchal and women are frequently regarded as second-class citizens, but blames women for being "petty" at times.

Mrs Ndude thinks that while President Nelson Mandela has been "progressive" in appointing women cabinet ministers to allow them to prove their worth, the government should be making a more concerted effort to appoint women ambassadors and high commissioners.

● Deputy welfare minister **GERALDINE FRASER-MOLEKETI**, admits that the issue of children versus political life is a sensitive one, but feels the reality is that women invest far more time in managing families than most men.

"In essence this reflects on the whole issue of equality within relationships," she says.

She also feels that women tend to feel more guilty than their male counterparts about whether they are doing the right thing in engaging matters of national interest over and above the needs of their children.

As a mother, she is fearful that while she might have good support structures in place and she makes the effort to communicate openly with her children, there may come a time "when they don't care whether I'm there or not".

While realising all cabinet members are under pressure to deliver the goods, she feels women in high office are under greater pressure than their male counterparts to prove that they are not just tokens.

"It is essential for younger women to be in politics. But I resent the fact that women have to make choices between family life and being in government.

"Men in the same situation don't face the same dilemma. I realise there is a need for sacrifice, but there must be a balance so it's not an 'either/or' situation," she says.



● **MELANIE VERWOERD**, right, African National Congress MP, believes women today are "slightly" better off than before, but says they will have to guard their position jealously if their presence is to be felt in the future.

Ms Verwoerd says that even within the ANC, the party which determined that a third of its nominees for the national election should be women, there is still heated debate over what equality really means.

"I believe for women to achieve equality, they may have to be treated differently," she argues.

She feels women in government tend to develop a "survival attitude" which means they frequently do not challenge situations for fear of being shouted down. Where they take issue with, for instance, the time that meetings are scheduled, they are still likely to be told that if they cannot make it they should get out.

In her view, however, the reality is that most women are still the primary caretakers at home, and therefore if government is serious about having them in office, their needs should be taken into account.



● **ANNETTE REINECKE**, right, National Party member of the provincial legislature and a member of the delegation going to the women's conference in Beijing, believes that if women demand equal opportunities, then they should not expect any special treatment.

However, she thinks it is vital for women to be involved in politics, saying that history has shown that when women have access to public office, greater attention is paid to social upliftment.

"I believe women in public office can open doors which make it possible to help the community."

While she thinks individuals must deal with their own personal circumstances and pay for extra services where they need them, she supports the provision of facilities which enable women to participate in politics.

"I'm not saying it's wrong to have a creche at the houses of parliament, but it wouldn't be fair to expect parliament to pay for that creche."

She also believes that women are extremely hard workers who are able to impress their male counterparts with their commitment to the job.

"I don't believe in quotas, but I certainly hope that party members insist on women candidates in the local elections."



● **JENNY SCHREINER**, right, SA Communist Party MP, feels that the success in drawing more women into the legislatures has not been reflected in executive committees or in the civil service. She cites the example of there being only one woman director-general, and that, predictably, in health.

She also feels that the issue of working hours has not been properly addressed, and that it lies at the root of the oppression of women.

She argues that working hours are structured around the assumption that there is a woman at home doing the work.

"Unless we change that it becomes tokenism," she says.



● Housing minister **SANKIE MTHEMBI-NKONDO**, right, suggests that women should organise themselves in formal structures to prepare themselves for political life so that when they come to political power, they're not simply "people in dresses".

She feels that South Africa is relatively well-equipped with "good women", but suggests there should be an audit of women so that when senior appointments are made in politics or the civil service, there is a data base to draw from.



● **MARTHA OLCKERS**, right, Western Cape MEC for education and culture and the only woman in the provincial cabinet, believes women's entry into politics should come through "empowerment and education", but feels that women should take the initiative, particularly with the forthcoming local elections.

"I think there is still a perception among some women that they must be asked to make themselves available, and we must get out of that frame of mind."

Mrs Olckers believes that third-tier government is a perfect training ground for full-time politics as it exposes participants to a wide range of subjects.

However, she is firmly opposed to quota systems because "I think it degrades our struggle for merit and acknowlegement".



● **THERESA SOLOMON**, right, deputy mayor of the city of Cape Town, believes that it is vital for women to be involved in decision-making, precisely because there are a host of issues which affect them directly. She cites the lenient attitude of the courts towards maintenance and the battery of women.

But women are frequently "caught up" in running homes and holding down jobs, making it difficult for them to find the time to give their energies elsewhere, such as in local government.

"We need to find how we can streamline our lives. If we don't, we are never going to be put in places where our needs can be addressed," she says.

Mrs Solomon also thinks that in the Western Cape, there has been far too much affirmative action emphasis on employing African people, without looking at women.

Where are the women?

WOMEN make up half the population, yet they are still under-represented in decision-making bodies, as the following table shows.

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Total number of cabinet ministers: 28
Women cabinet ministers: 3
Total number of deputy cabinet ministers: 14
Women deputy cabinet ministers: 3
Total number of MPs: 490
Women in the Senate: 16 out of 90 members
Women in the National Assembly: 103 out of 400 members
Women chairing committees: 9 out of 29 committees in the National Assembly, 2 out of 12 in the Senate
1 out of 6 joint committees
4 out of 5 ad-hoc committees

WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT:

Total number of MECs: 10
Number of women MECs: 1
Total number of provincial legislators: 42
Number of women in legislature: 10
Women chairing standing committees: 1

Civil servants honour women

CT 9/8/95 (355A)

A DECLARATION of intent to promote the status of women was signed by all the heads of the Department of Provincial Administration yesterday.

The declaration — initiated by the Department of Social Services — was signed by all 11 male heads of departments — there are no women department heads.

South Africa's women were also honoured at a special sitting of the National Assembly, to mark National Women's Day.

A unanimous resolution said the government should ensure the Public Service was representative, provide for women's involvement in the RDP and ensure it improved the status and conditions of women, especially in rural areas. — Sapa

● See Page 5

WEDNESDAY
AUGUST 9, 1995 ★

SA HAS NOT RATIFIED UN CONVENTION

Gender equality delay condemned

CT 9/8/95 (355A)

JOHANNESBURG: SA women should lobby the government urgently to ratify the UN convention on gender equality, the Deputy Minister of Welfare said yesterday.

THE failure of Parliament to ratify a United Nations convention on gender equality was an indictment against South African women, Deputy Minister of Welfare Ms Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi said yesterday.

The convention was to have been ratified today, Women's Day, but "major delays in government" meant the date for ratification had been set back until December.

Women should lobby the government urgently to ratify the convention before the SA delegation left for the fourth UN Women's Conference in Beijing in September, Ms Fraser-Moleketi said.

ANC deputy secretary-general Ms Cheryl Carolus called for an "urgent re-evaluation" by police and the courts of their ability to combat rape, abuse and violence against women, saying over 40% of disabilities in SA women were the result of interpersonal violence.

Questioned on accusations that the ANC was using Women's Day to further its political agenda, Ms Carolus said: "We are not going to apologise for our role in history."

She added: "It is through the commitment of the ANC that parliament and the provincial governments have a level of women's representation never witnessed before in this country and the world."

SA was a leader in gender issues and had one of the most progressive constitutions, she said, calling for a gender-equality commission to be enshrined in the constitution.

'Gender friendly'

Ms Nomvula Mokonyane, chair of the Gauteng standing committee on local government, said the policies and budgets of government ministries should be "gender-friendly".

She stressed the role of women in local government, adding that 50% of the ANC's candidates for the coming elections were women.

— Sapa

The daily grind

☐ Many hours spent gathering firewood and fetching and carrying water

(35SA)
ARG 9/8/95

SOUTH Africa generates over 60 percent of Africa's electricity, but over two-thirds of the country's population do not have access to it for their household needs.

Eskom is making considerable strides in providing electricity as a basic service and since January 1994, hundreds of thousands of households have been switched on. In spite of the significant progress, nearly three million households (mostly rural) comprising about 16 million people, still collect firewood with which to cook the daily meal.

A study by Posel, Todes and Friedman in 1993, calculated that women in rural areas spend up to four and a half hours daily gathering firewood. In addition, more time is spent fetching and carrying water.

Women are expected to undertake these onerous chores, and perform them daily. The fact that today is National Women's Day means little, if anything, to the millions of women who will have no choice but to treat it as any other day.

Half their waking hours today will be spent in performing these two essential tasks and it is likely that several more hours will be spent in preparing the family meal, cleaning the home and caring for the needs of their children.

The lack of basic services presents additional problems, particularly those relating to health. The water drudgingly collected is often teeming with dangerous bacteria. Wood and fossil fuels clog the atmosphere with poisonous fumes as they burn. The lack of water-borne sewerage means that waste accumulates, overflows and provides breeding grounds for sickness and disease.

The unprecedented influx of people into urban areas compounds the problem. Rural communities have more space to spread out.

Once they move to towns and cities, there's a lot less space in which to move. What little water is available is shared by many more people and the density of these settlements means that there are no mechanisms to transport and dispose of waste.

There is no firewood, so coal is the obvious alternative. Thousands of small fires chug out tonnes of polluting gases, which hang thick and heavy over the community.

Right in the middle, sit South Africa's women.

In four months time, South Africa is to hold a national exhibition and forum entitled Women's World. For the first time in the country's history, a focused and high profile event will address these serious issues through exhibits, seminars and discussion forums.

Women's World, to be held at the Kyalami Exhibition Centre in Midrand from November 2-5, is set to be South Africa's premier forum for women and will play a key role in promoting social change and a better understanding of the plight of women in this country.

The exhibition will address hundreds of issues, among them: health, business, law, fashion and entertainment.

For further details, call ☎(011) 483-3179.



Picture: BRENTON GEACH, The Argus.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS: Members of Mediawatch stage a placard protest outside Newspaper House to highlight the "unrealistic" portrayal of women in the media, and the absence of women on Independent Newspapers' 12-member international advisory board.

No quotas, please

ARLS 9/8/95 (355A)

CLIVE SAWYER
Political Correspondent

BETTY Boothroyd, Speaker of the British House of Commons, votes a firm no to the idea of quotas for women in public office.

Miss Boothroyd, visiting South Africa at the invitation of her South African counterpart Frene Ginwala, is the first woman speaker in Britain's parliamentary history.

More women in parliament and in decision-making roles generally, yes, but not through a quota system, she said.

Elected as a Labour MP in 1974, Miss Boothroyd was elected speaker in 1992 by a substantial majority from both sides of the house.

Once a "chorus girl" who performed for the troops in World War 2, Miss Boothroyd has described herself as "school-marmish".

But, it is a strict — and strictly impartial — woman who prevents unruliness in what has been described as the finest club in Britain.

'Chorus girl' who is now Speaker firmly against ratios for women

In her own way, Miss Boothroyd is a champion of a minority: The backbenchers.

The Westminster system gives absolute discretion to the Speaker to choose who may address the house, unlike here where a speaker's list is arranged by whips.

"Whips who try to approach the speaker to suggest who should speak in a debate would be sent away with a flea in their ear."

In Britain, with a parliament dominated by two parties which are essentially coalitions, allowing a voice for backbenchers is a means to ensure all opinions are heard "rather than only the official party line".

It is particularly relevant on issues where there is divergence of opinion within the parties, such as on the European Union.

A stop on her visit to Cape Town was a look-in on Monday to a constitutional sub-committee, the multi-party body attempting to break deadlocks in writing the 1999 Constitution.

Rather than the proverbial smoke-filled room where deals are cut, the sub-committee operates in the full glare of scrutiny by public and Press.

British parliamentary committees are allowed to decide whether to hold their proceedings open or closed.

Evidence to select committees is usually heard in the open, but deliberations are behind closed doors.

A similarly transparent system to that in South Africa could evolve, she said.

Barred by convention from commenting on controversies in British and foreign politics, she emphasised it was up to South Africa whether it chose to emulate any aspects of Britain's system of government.

"I always say ... look at what we've got, which has its blemishes and warts — and may not suit you — and adapt anything which fits your needs."

A disappointment for Miss Boothroyd has been that her tour will not include seeing the national assembly, senate or any of the provincial legislatures in action. "This is my lifeblood, after all."

She missed yesterday's special debate in the National Assembly to celebrate Women's Day, because of prior commitments to visit British-aided projects on the Cape Flats.

The projects were important, splendid to see, and it would have been wrong to omit them from her schedule, she said.

In Britain, speakers are retired to the House of Lords, which provides them with an opportunity to speak out on issues — which Miss Boothroyd clearly will welcome.

● See focus on National Women's Day — page 19

Parliament pledge on 'truly non-sexist society'

Political Staff

PARLIAMENT committed itself to a "truly non-sexist society" in a special debate to mark South Africa's first Women's Day.

Speaker Frene Ginwala called the debate amid some controversy because the national assembly is not sitting this week.

The debate went ahead yesterday in spite of objections from some parties.

The motion called for the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as soon as possible, for the public service to be made representative of the population and for women to be involved fully in the Reconstruction and Development Programme.

Introducing the debate, Dr Ginwala said the occasion was not just a day for women, "but a day chosen by our nation for men and women to focus on the challenges that lie ahead".

The public holiday was not just in memory of women who marched on the Union Buildings in August 1956 in protest against passes.

The commemoration included women in the Black Sash, the suffragettes and the women in the English concentration camps during the Boer War.

Sheila Camerer of the National Party said the government should establish the commission on gender equality without delay, improve delivery of social services and act on crime and violence.

Pieter Mulder of the Freedom Front said more women should be in parliament and the public service, but on merit.

Strong SA presence in Beijing

(355A) Sowetan 9/8/95

A top level SA delegation will be at Beijing to set objectives for achieving women's equality

By Betsy Spratt

THE Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women will be a conference of commitments, says Mrs Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, deputy minister of population development and social welfare.

Moleketi will lead a delegation made up of representatives from the national government, the provinces and non-governmental organisations to the conference scheduled for September 4 to 15 in Beijing.

Like the 80 other delegations participating in the conference, the South Africans will look at ways of improving the lives of women and will bring commitments back to their government for implementation.

"We want the government to make concrete shifts in policies that contribute to the status of women," Moleketi said.

Shifts in these policies will give women greater access to resources and decision-making positions, Moleketi said.

The Beijing Platform for Action, the policy document to be adopted at the conference, details ways of achieving these shifts.

Areas of concern

The document outlines 12 critical areas of concern facing the world's women and lists strategies for addressing these issues.

For instance, education has been determined as a critical area since it is a major contributor to the marginalisation of women, especially in the rural areas. "If you look at the rural areas, more than one-third of the households are headed by women, most of whom are illiterate," Moleketi said. "But they still have to manage households."

Consequently, improving women's access to quality education is crucial to achieving gender equality.

However, education is not the only area that impedes women's advancement. All of the areas operate collectively and individually to disempower women, Moleketi said.

Therefore, strategic actions have been developed to tackle each of the critical areas.

"Giving women a central role in development and greater access to resources will improve the overall wellbeing of the nation," Moleketi said.

Women must also begin building national and international solidarity that will last beyond Beijing, Moleketi said.

The Beijing delegation will begin the process by hosting report back sessions on the decisions made during the conference. The sessions are a way of empowering women by including them in the discussion and implementation process.

"Empowerment of women is crucial," Moleketi said. "You can't exclude 51 percent of the population and ensure the socio-economic wellbeing of any nation."

The 12 critical areas of concern listed in the *Platform for Action*: are:

Poverty	To enable women to overcome poverty
Education	To ensure women's access to quality education and training for self-reliance at all levels and in all fields and sectors
Health	To increase women's full access to appropriate and quality health care and related services
Violence	To eliminate violence against women
Effects of Armed Conflict	To increase the participation of women in conflict resolution and to protect women in armed and other kinds of conflict under foreign occupation
Economic structures and policies	To promote women's economic self-reliance, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources - land, capital & technology
Inequality of men and women in decision-making	Strengthen factors that promote the full and equal participation of women in power structures and decision-making
Gender Equality	Integrate gender-equality dimensions into policy and programme planning and implementation at all levels and in all areas.
Women's Human Rights	Apply and enforce international norms and standards to promote and safeguard the full and equal enjoyment by women of all human rights
Media	Enhance the role of traditional and modern communications media to promote awareness of equality between women and men
Environment	Involve women in programmes for sustainable development



GCR 060 FF

National Women's Day schedule of events

08:30 to 10H00	Meet at Art Museum between Park and Schoeman Streets in Pretoria
10:00	March to the Union Buildings
11:00	Opening and minute of silence
11:15	Flag Raising Ceremony
12:00	Dr Frene Ginwala: Speaker of Parliament Challenges Facing South African Women
12:25	Music: Thandi Klaasen
12:35	Keynote Address: Dr Libertina Amathila Minister of Local Government & Housing, Namibia
13:15	Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Director Regional Bureau for Africa, UNDP: Women and Governance
13:30	Cyril Ramaphosa: Constitutional Assembly: Women's Rights as Human Rights within the new Constitution
13:55	Music by Sisters of the Calabash
14:10	Honouring of the Veterans: Young Women's Network and Thandi Sigodi, Convenor of Women's National Coalition
14:40	Amina Cachalia; Veteran of the Women's Struggle
15:00	Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, Deputy Minister of Welfare and Population Development: Report on the position of South African Women headed for Beijing

Call to make SA a non-sexist society

(355A) Star 9/8/95

■ **BY PATRICK BULGER**
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Cape Town — Parliament, on the occasion of a special debate to mark South Africa's first Women's Day, yesterday committed itself to a "truly non-sexist society".

National Assembly Speaker Dr Frene Ginwala called the debate amid some controversy because the Assembly is not sitting this week. The debate, however, went ahead in spite of objections from some parties.

The motion called for the ratification of the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women as soon as possible, for the public service to be made representative of the SA population and for women to be fully involved in the RDP.

Introducing the debate, Ginwala said the occasion was not just a day for women, "but a day chosen by our nation for men and women to focus on the challenges that lie ahead".

The public holiday was not just in memory of those women who marched on the Union Buildings in August 1956 in protest against having to carry passes. This included women in the Black Sash, the suffragettes and the women in the English concentration camps during the Boer War.

A notable absentee from the debate was ANC Women's League president Winnie Mandela, who returned to Parliament shortly before the winter recess after a long illness. Mandela was not in the House for the debate and enquiries to ANC Chief Whip Arnold Stofile's office about her absence were not answered.

Instead, ANC MP Lulu Xingwana called on the Government to "enact the necessary legislation that will translate policy into meaningful programmes to bring about change to the lives of ordinary women in South Africa". She listed the "visible increase in the number of women parliamentarians", the reduction in tax for married women, free medical care for pregnant women and school feeding as gains for women.

The NP's Sheila Camerer said the Government should establish the commission on gender equality without further delay, improve delivery of social services and do something about crime and violence.

Empowerment

The FF's Pieter Mulder said more women should be included in Parliament and in the public service, but he added that this should be on merit.

■ **Jovial Rantao** reports that women leaders in the ANC yesterday urged all South African women to celebrate National Women's Day by lobbying for women's empowerment and the eradication of gender discrimination and violence against women.

At a press conference in Johannesburg, ANC deputy secretary-general Cheryl Carolus called on women to observe today's holiday by calling for the establishment of a Cabinet committee to further the emancipation of women through monitoring the policy and budgets of ministries and departments.

'Women MPs abused'

Battered women use make-up to hide their bruises — says Thandi

Modise 3559 AR 9/12/8/95

GLYNNIS UNDERHILL
Staff Reporter

SOME women in parliament were physically abused at home and tried to cover up bruises with make-up when they went to work, according to MP Thandi Modise.

As deputy president of the ANC Women's League, Ms Modise feels a responsibility to speak out about the abuse of women.

One of the first women to serve in the ANC's military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, Ms Modise's own experience of emotional abuse was revealed when she was invited to appear on an SABC chat show on the abuse of women.

She was incensed when the programme was withdrawn last week as a result of threatened legal action because it contained allegations against a well-known political figure.

■ The deputy president of the ANC Women's League, Thandi Modise, has spoken out about the emotional abuse she has experienced.

However, the television programme on abused women has been re-edited and will be broadcast tomorrow on NNTV at 6pm and on CCV at 10.50pm, the SABC said yesterday.

Her resolve to speak out comes from the knowledge that she is not alone in her experience and said other women MPs were also being abused.

"There are a number of women in parliament who are physically abused and they try to use make-up to cover it up when they come to work," she said.

The ANC Women's League has designated August as the Month of the Woman to highlight the issue of domestic violence.

The television programme focuses on domestic abuse and violence, and Ms Modise was furious when told it was being withdrawn.

The SABC confirmed that it had been threatened with legal action by an ANC activist.

"I appeared on behalf of victims of abuse, primarily because people don't believe politicians can be victims. But they can come from all walks of life," she said.

"I think people don't want to admit to being abused. Women are very closed about what is happening to them and believe they are not supposed to talk about it," she said.

Ms Modise was pleased the television programme intended to look at the law and inefficient support system it offered for women in abuse situations.

The large audience for the chat show programme was made up of women, she said.

"I can't even recall what I said. I have not been physically abused but emotionally abused," she said.

Ms Modise said it was time women stood up to talk about their experiences and television programmes like this gave them opportunity.

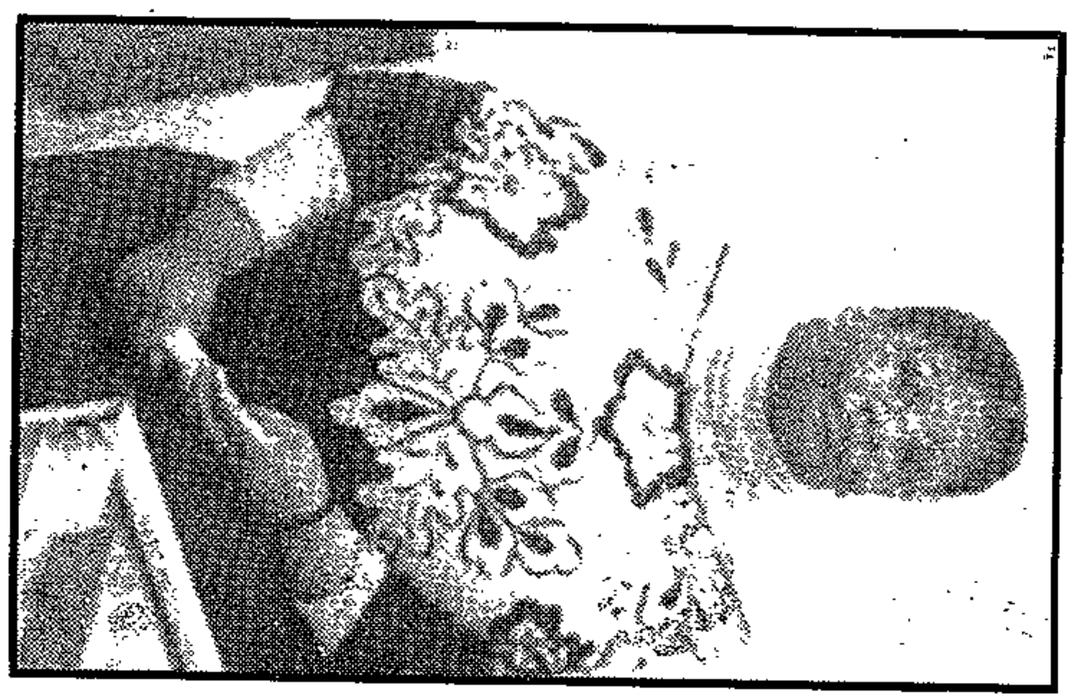
Before the SABC decided to broadcast the edited version, the spokeswoman for the Women's League, Lulu Xingwana, said she was dismayed when the organisation was informed the programme would be withdrawn.

"They told us they wouldn't be screening the programme because they didn't want to become involved in family squabbles. But it happens to women of all walks of life and all races," she said.

Women had bravely come from shelters to participate in the programme, said Ms Xingwana.

■ The person against whom the allegations were made had denied they were true, the SABC said.

Jill Chisholm, television news production editor-in-chief, said: "On the advice of our legal officers I withdrew the programme until I could be satisfied it did not expose the SABC to legal action and that the highest professional standards were maintained."



□ SPEAKING OUT: Thandi Modise has voiced her concerns about the abuse of women.

Rex Trueform earnings soar 65%

By AUDREY D'ANGELO
Business Editor

WIDER margins as a result of selling more from its own Queenspark retail outlets — and a healthy export trade — enabled the Rex Trueform Clothing Co (Rex True) to lift earnings by an impressive 65,5% in the six months to December.

This was achieved on a rise of only 1% in turnover — a drop in real terms.

Earnings at share level rose to 56,6c (34,2c). Attributable income was R2,3m (R1,4m).

Net operating income rose to R2,8m (R1,9m). Pre-tax income was R2,2m (R1,4m). The interest bill rose to R552 000 (R509 000). The tax bill was R16 000 (R18 000).

The directors say that a tax review resulted in an additional assessment for R300 395 in respect of the 1989 tax year.

Executive chairman Stewart Shub said the rise in profit would be "a morale booster for the company, the shareholders and the industry.

"There has been a cloud over the whole industry, following the retrenchments here and elsewhere."

Shub said the domestic market was still weak. The improved results were "due almost entirely to the extra profits coming through from our own Queenspark retail outlets — we now have 16 — to good asset management and continuing tight control of costs."

Cost control

Emphasising that cost control and efficiency will be increasingly necessary in future, Shub pointed out that SA companies would have to be internationally competitive to survive even in the domestic market.

"We cannot expect other countries to accept our exports unless we give them access to our own market. We are joining the real world now and that means having to compete in our own markets."

Shub said the US market was opening up now to SA clothing manufacturers. "We received our first orders from the US about 10 days ago. It is potentially a huge market for us."

Britain was still Rex True's biggest export market and there were signs that an upturn was starting there.

Germany, an important market for the company, was now sliding into recession. "But we have set aside a proportion of our capacity for the German market and that is booked solidly until September."

Discussing the removal of tariff protection for SA manufacturers, Shub said that, although tariffs would have to come down, it would be disastrous if there were no control of imports at all.

He thought only "a reasonable quantity" should be allowed in, as was the case in most other countries, to prevent the SA market from being swamped completely by an unreasonable surge in imports.

This was something the government would have to consider in good time.

Cape Times 13/03/93.

THE DAY WOMEN CAME TOGETHER TO CHART THE WAY FORWARD

Pretoria's conquerors



THEY FOUGHT FOR DIGNITY ... Many veterans of the 1956 women's march were at the Union Buildings again this week to celebrate.
■Pic: ANDRIES MCINEKA

By NOMVHULA KHALO

AS SHE watched thousands of South African women marching to the Union Buildings on Wednesday to celebrate Women's Day and protest against discrimination against women and domestic violence, Amina Cachalia's eyes filled with tears.

The veteran of the women's struggle was reliving memories of Wednesday, August 9, 1956.

On that day 39 years ago Cachalia – then a 16-year-old – had joined a multitude of women on a march to the Union Buildings to confront the then premier, JG Strijdom, and demand the scrapping of the pass laws.

That march – in which 20 000 women from all parts of South Africa took part – was not as colourful and exuberant as this week's, Cachalia told City Press.

The women walked quietly, with sober determination – knowing full well that at the merest excuse they could be thrown into police vans and carted off to jail.

Strijdom had already signalled his antagonism to the march by shutting down all public transport in the city that morning.

But the women, who had been preparing for months for the stand they were to make that day, were not fazed.

"He (Strijdom) could not stop the trains – so women used trains and other means like lorries and private cars to get to the Union Buildings," said Cachalia, an executive member of the Federation of South African Women, who organised the march.

The women had simply had enough of the pass laws – and nothing would stop them from saying so.

The pass laws broke up homes and disrupted family life in many ways, said Cachalia.

"I took part in the march for my black sisters because they were the ones who were suffering. Their husbands were forced to carry passbooks and if they did not they got arrested," she said, weeping at the memory.

She said a Wednesday had been chosen for the march in 1956 because many women were domestic workers – and that was the day they usually got off.

When the women reached the Union Buildings they were tired – but in high spirits. The men saluted them for their courage, said Cachalia.

The then government's reaction to this tremendous show of solidarity was even harsher oppression – black women were forced to carry passes too.

But the struggle for liberation was boosted and intensified.

On Wednesday this week, Cachalia said she was overjoyed at being able to celebrate Women's Day for the first time in a democratic South Africa.

■ At the gathering Cyril Ramaphosa, chairman of the Constitutional Assembly and secretary general of the ANC, challenged other political parties to follow the ANC's example by ensuring that 50 percent of their candidates for the local government elections were women.

He said women should play a greater role in government – and half of the Cabinet should consist of women, because they formed more than 50 percent of the population.

It was thanks to the women that the struggle against apartheid had been won, he said.

"Women have always been in the forefront. They sacrificed their lives, children and husbands," said Ramaphosa.

He said August 9 was a holiday because women had fought for it and the day belonged to them.

Ramaphosa urged all men to respect women and called for an end to domestic violence.

Women were not yet free, he said – but the new constitution would make sure that they got equality in every sphere of life.

He would like to see a woman become president of South Africa, said Ramaphosa, as women were courageous, committed and wise.

■ The Speaker of Parliament, Dr Frene Ginwala, said women should organise themselves and confront their premiers and members of parliament to find out what they had done so far.

■ "Women hold a knife at the sharpest edge," said deputy welfare and population development minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, adding that without them South Africa would achieve nothing.



FIGHTER ... Amina Cachalia
■Pic: ANDRIES MCINEKA

Women with winning ways

THEY FOUGHT FOR DIGNITY ... Many veterans of the 1956 women's march were at the Union Buildings again this week to celebrate.
■Pic: ANDRIES MCINEKA

Women with winning ways

By DAN DHLAMINI

A "TUGGING" match for supporters – between ANC and NP members in Potchefstroom – ended amicably on National Women's Day after the different groups kept loyal to their respective parties.

First the NP members tried to woo ANC members from their Ikageng venue – to attend a Women's Day meeting which was being addressed by Marike de Klerk – wife of Deputy President FW de Klerk.

In turn ANC die-hards also arrived at the NP venue to coax NP members to join them on their trip to a women's event in Orkney.

However political tolerance prevailed, thanks to the diplomacy shown by officials of both political parties – who ensured that the day was not spoilt by 'warring" factions.

Only a handful of white women attended the NP meeting, the rest were black.

Better future

In her speech Marike De Klerk said she was speaking on behalf of all the women of South Africa when appealing to politicians and "to all those still stuck in the past to let go so that there could be movement towards a better future for all".

She said all women faced the same issues of child birth and child care, "issues which knew no cultural difference".

Amid murmurs of approval from her supporters De Klerk said no amount of "just talking about women's rights and fair quotas at the workplace for women would solve their problem".

"What we need are schemes on the ground to improve the quality of life of all women – in such a way that they are able to help themselves," said De Klerk.

Some women interviewed told City Press that although they were not NP supporters as such, they attended the meeting in the same spirit that prevailed among thousands of women from various political disciplines – who had marched to the Union Buildings in 1956 to protest against the pass laws.

For elderly Maria Moleko, 71, it was a real pleasure, she said, to see the women of today, both black and white, holding hands to pay tribute to those brave women.

Moleko said holding hands and "praying together across the colour line, for unity, love and prosperity in the new South Africa" showed that women, irrespective of their political persuasion, "were at last finding each other".

"I am old now and might not see a completely free South Africa ... when gender equality would finally prevail," she said.



SUPPORT ... Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale joined the crowd of women celebrating their victory, and Speaker Frene Ginwala (inset) urged women to demand progress reports from politicians.
■Pic: ANDRIES MCINEKA

Crafts to weave the fabric of society

By ZB MOLEFE

WITH spot-on timing a foreign business and crafts delegation arrived in South Africa this week – two day's before the landmark first National Women's Day.

The representatives of German and Dutch federations of skilled crafts and chambers of small industries and European Union members made it clear they were fixing their sights firmly on South African women.

The delegation held three intensive workshops which examined women entrepreneurs, arts, crafts, design and product development.

A meeting was held with the minister of trade and industry, Trevor Manuel; the minister of education, Sibusiso Bhengu; the minister without portfolio, Jay Naidoo and the chief director of Small Business, Alistair Ruiters.

The delegation also met some of the country's influential business groups – including the Foundation for African business and Consumer Services, South African Chamber of Business, National African Federated Chamber of Commerce, National Economic Development and Labour Council, the Sunnyside Group and the National Industrial Chamber.

German Confederation of Skilled Crafts president Heribert Spath said that with high unemployment and related problems, "the productivity and capacity of skilled crafts will become even more important in the future" worldwide.

Government should act as an "invisible hand". The stress should be on individual initiative. Only those tasks which cannot be performed by individuals should be made public responsibility.

He said in the labour-intensive sectors of the economy – small and medium-sized enterprises and skilled crafts, for instance – workers could not be replaced by machines.

Incidentally, said Spath, this view had also been emphasised last month by Manuel at a South African forum in Munich, Germany.

"Small and medium-sized enterprises strengthen regional economic structures – and they shape social as well as cultural life," said Spath. "It is therefore necessary that we devote special attention to them."

Spath said government should act as an "invisible" hand". This implied that the individual's own initiative was crucial.

On the other hand this meant that only those tasks which could not be performed by individuals should be made public responsibility, he said.

"With respect to an effective implementation of the reconstruction programmes for South Africa, it is necessary to strengthen those institutions which are non-governmental – that is, non-profit making, public-law corporation," Spath emphasised.

Discussion groups were held on how women could contribute to the economy.

Well-known business personality Angie Makwetla, speaking on women entrepreneurs, touched on issues that are beginning to become an uncomfortable reality of corporate South Africa – affirmative action, gender issues and tokenism.

She said the culture of poverty in South Africa had to be eradicated and women had to play an even stronger role.

She was supported by Dutch Association of Builders in the Construction Industry director Sybilla Dekker, who said the challenges facing women in post-apartheid South Africa mostly rested on the shoulders of black women.

"Arts and crafts play a major role in the diversity of South African society. We have to realise the potential of arts and crafts which can be developed into the formal sector," said Ingeborg Algierie, Press and Public section department head within the German Confederation of Skilled Crafts.

But it was not Europeans telling South Africans all the way what to do in order to forge ahead.

The inspiring story was told of a local luxury German car company which had entered into a successful dealership partnership with a group of black women.

'Be serial avengers'

By JEFFERSON LENGANE

PERHAPS the crudest call to South African women to rise up against oppression this week came from the Azanian Youth Organisation's gender co-ordinator, Nthuteng Malapala.

At the pre-launch of the Azapo Women's Organisation (Azawo) on Wednesday, Malapala called on women to become "serial killers if possible".

"Recently, 12 women have been sexually brutalised before being killed, and the suspect is given the fancy name of 'serial killer'. If possible, you women should also become serial killers – and kill men because they kill you.

"In that way, maybe any sort of violence against women will come to an end."

She said violence against women had become an enormous problem in SA.

"Violence against women ranges from sexual harassment, sexist jokes, pornography, incest, rape and battery to murder. This violence affects every aspect of a woman's life and it takes a high toll on physical and mental health."

She also claimed that such violence seemed to be condoned by the legal system and society.

To redress these attitudes it was "high time that we as women now demand female prosecutors, magistrates and judges to deal with cases where women and children (girls) are raped or beaten up, because male prosecutors, magistrates and judges are biased.

"They support men by asking ridiculous questions and don't care less about the feelings of women."

She said two incidents showed that the violence and abuse women were enduring: In Dennilton a man brutally beat and raped his grandmother – for the sake of money for beer and in Soweto a lover shot his girlfriend dead and wounded her baby – because she refused to have sex with him without a condom.

Dineo Monna-Moroa, national co-ordinator on the women's desk of the Metal & Electrical Workers Union of SA said: "On the question of female participation in the National Council of Trade Unions and its affiliates, the lack of participation of women has been noted with great concern.

"Even in affiliates where women are in the majority, they continue to be under-represented in decision-making and leadership positions."

Statistics compiled by the Nactu Women's Unit in 1993 to assess the representation of women within the council and its affiliates revealed that about 25 percent of women were represented on the shopsteward committee; 15 percent were represented on branch executive committees and 10 percent were represented on the national executive committes. Only 1 percent of women were represented on Nactu's central committee.

The solution to the problem, said Monna-Moroa, was for women to begin to have trust in themselves. "Women never elect women. We've got to look into that matter – not when but now."

On the need for the formation of Azawo, the group's interim chairperson, Makoma Lekalakala, said: "We feel that our issues as black women are being clouded by foreign and new concepts that do not relate or address our problems."

She paid tribute to all those women who exemplified the need for the restoration of human rights by burning their passes in 1960 and "bringing us closer to freedom".

Azawo will be officially launched next month at a venue which has still to be announced.

Search and seizure powers for gender commission

ARG 14/8/95

CLIVE SAWYER
Political Correspondent

THE Commission on Gender Equality will have wide powers of search and seizure if a draft bill is approved.

The commission will monitor policies and practices of the state, public bodies and private businesses.

The powers of search and seizure are outlined in a bill based on recommendations by the parliamentary ad hoc committee on the establishment of the commission.

The National Party had asked that its objection to the search and seizure provisions be formally recorded, committee chairwoman Ruth Mompati (ANC) said.

The bill provides for a commission of between eight and 12 members who each must have "a record of commitment to the promotion of gender equality".

The commission will have to promote gender equality and develop and run information and education programmes.

It will evaluate and make recommendations on any act of parliament or a provincial legislature.

The commission will investigate gender-related matters on its initiative or when prompted by a complaint.

These matters will be resolved by mediation, conciliation or negotiation.

Disputes which cannot be resolved will be referred to the human rights commission or the public protector.

The commission will recommend to parliament and provincial legislatures new laws to promote gender equality and the status of women.

It will monitor compliance with international conventions related to gender equality.

"All organs of state, including any statutory body or functionary, shall afford the commission assistance as may be reasonably required," the bill says.

The commission will be empowered to summon people to appear before it, and witnesses will be compelled to answer questions and produce evidence.

Any member of the commission or a police officer authorised by it will be able to enter any premises connected, or suspected to be connected, to an investigation.

Entry and search of premises will have to be done with regard to decency, order and regard to a person's right to protection of dignity, security, freedom and privacy.

Meetings of the commission will be open to the public, the bill says.

The commission will report annually to the president, who will have to table the report "promptly" in the national assembly and the senate.

Anyone who fails to answer a question by the commission, gives false evidence, interrupts proceedings, defames the commission, is in contempt of the commission, anticipates its findings or tries to influence it improperly, will be liable to a fine or jail of up to six months, according to the bill.

CALL FOR SEARCH AND SEIZURE POWERS

Gender board proposed

355A CT 15/8/95

THE SELECT COMMITTEE on the Establishment of a Commission on Gender Equality has released a report calling for a commission with wide-ranging powers.

A GOVERNMENT commission to monitor gender equality should have powers to break doors and windows to enter premises, according to a report tabled in Parliament yesterday.

The search and seizure provisions raised eyebrows among MPs yesterday.

DP spokesman Ms Dene Smuts said she did not think the provisions were "apposite" but that it was difficult to refuse the commission powers granted to others like the Truth Commission.

And NP spokeswoman Ms Sheila Camerer said a "question mark hung over the powers of search and seizure". Both parties supported the establishment of the commission, however.

The report of the ad hoc Select Committee on the Establishment of a Commission on Gender Equality provides for a commission of between seven and 11 people to monitor state and private institutions' record on promoting gender equality. It is likely to further stir up the gender controversy created by the release of a report last week calling for abortion on demand. Concerns have also been raised about "commission inflation", a reference to the large number of human rights-type bodies being established in terms of the interim constitution.

Reservations

The select committee noted that the NP had expressed reservations "regarding the wide investigatory and search and seizure powers" of the commission. The committee tabled its report in the form of a Commission on Gender Equality Bill and said the bill, read with the NP's comments, should serve as the basis for legislation.

The commission would have wide-ranging powers to conduct investigations into gender equality and would be able to recommend new legislation, monitor compliance with international conventions and undertake research.

Any person could be summoned to appear before the commission, to take an oath or affirmation and to supply information required. Failure to do so could result in an unspecified fine or imprisonment for six months.

A magistrate or judge may issue a warrant empowering a person to "use such force as may be reasonably necessary to overcome any resistance against entry and search of the premises". — Political Staff

Broad powers mooted for sex equality team

BD 15/8/95 (355A)

Tim Cohen

CAPE TOWN — Draft legislation tabled yesterday proposes a gender equality investigation team, complete with the power to use "necessary force" to enter premises.

The draft Bill, drawn up by a parliamentary committee, outlines the powers and functions of the proposed commission on gender equality.

The commission will consist of between seven and 11 members with the power to monitor and review the policies and practices of public and private bodies.

It will have the power to conduct information programmes, evaluate laws of Parliament, monitor compliance with international conventions and investigate "any gender-related issue".

Four of the 14 pages of the proposed legislation regulate investigations by the commission. These make it possible for any person to be questioned by the commission and compelled to answer all questions "notwithstanding that the answer may incriminate him or her".

The commission has wide powers to enter and search premises and remove articles, although searches must be conducted with regard to a person's right to freedom and personal security.

Under the regulations, an authorised investigator may use such force as may be reasonably necessary to overcome any resistance to such entry "including the breaking of any door or window".

A maximum six-month sentence may be imposed for, among other things, anticipating the findings of the commission, improperly influencing the commission or

Continued on Page 2

Powers (355A) BD 15/8/95

Continued from Page 1

misbehaving during an investigation.

Commission chairman Ruth Mompati denied that the commission intended creating a "gender police".

The proposed regulations governing commission probes were based on Human Rights Commission legislation, Mompati said. If these seemed excessive, it was because years had been spent fighting for gender equality and "we don't seem to have come very far. It has become necessary to be quite aggressive, our action must be strong."

She stressed that the commission would also be responsible for a range of activities intended to build gender equality.

cards

(355A)(66)

'Gender police' on stamp out discrimination

Tough search and seizure steps mooted to s

Star 15/8/95

PENALTIES proposed for people who refuse to take the oath or affirmation or who give false evidence

■ BY PATRICK BULGER
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Cape Town — A commission to safeguard gender equality should have powers for forcible entry into premises and to seize documents, according to a proposal tabled in Parliament yesterday.

The tough search and seizure provisions for what would be "gender police" raised eyebrows among women MPs.

Democratic Party spokesman Dene Smuts said she did not think the provisions were "apposite". But she added that it would be difficult to refuse the gender commission powers granted to others, like the Truth Commission.

And National Party spokesman Sheila Camerer said a "question mark hung over the search and seizure powers".

Both parties support establishment of the commission and say discrimination against women can take violent forms. The commission is provided for in the Interim Constitution, which outlaws discrimination against women.

The proposals, by an ad hoc select committee on gender equality, are for between seven and 11 commissioners to monitor the records of State and private institutions on their policy in promoting equality.

Concerns have also been raised about "commission inflation", a reference to the large number of human rights-type bodies that are being established in terms of the Interim Constitution.

The select committee, chaired by ANC MP Ruth Mompati, notes that the NP expressed reservations "regarding the wide investigatory and search and seizure powers" of the commission.

The committee, which tabled its report in the form of a Commission on Gender Equality Bill, said its Bill, read together with the NP's comments, should serve as the basis for legislation.

Wide powers

The commission would have wide-ranging powers to conduct investigations into gender equality in State, statutory, public or private institutions. It can also recommend new legislation, monitor compliance with international conventions and undertake research.

Any person could be summoned to appear before the commission, to take an oath or affirmation and to supply information required.

Failure to take the oath and to answer questions could result in an unspecified fine or imprisonment for six months.

In the course of investigations, a magistrate or judge may issue an entry warrant empowering a person to "use such force as may be reasonably necessary to overcome any resistance against such entry and search of the premises, including the breaking of any door or window of such premises".

The person empowered by the commission to break in shall first "audibly demand admission" but this does not apply "where the person concerned is, on reasonable grounds, of the opinion that any article or document which is the subject of the search may be destroyed, disposed of or tampered with".

Penalties are proposed for people who refuse to take the oath or affirmation, who give false evidence, who interrupt commission proceedings, defame the commission, commit contempt of court, anticipate the findings of or interfere with the commission.

The report is based on the oral evidence of 13 people and 24 written representations.

Unleaded petrol could be introduced locally before June next year. In a special investigation for Spectrum, ***Denis Droppa*** *looks at the facts and issues surrounding unleaded petrol in South Africa*

The fuel of the future

(183) Star 3/8/95 (56)

Fitting of converters likely to be optional

Depending on how well a vehicle is tuned, only between 1% and 3% of exhaust fumes – carbon monoxide, itrous oxide and hydrocarbons – are ..id to be harmful.

A catalytic converter (Cat for short) gnificantly reduces these harmful emisons by making use of the unique propries of platinum group metals. The met-'s act as catalysts in a chemical process hich changes the emissions to harmless arbon dioxide, nitrogen and water apour.

However, a Cat is only effective when sed with unleaded petrol, as leaded etrol soon clogs it and makes it inoperble.

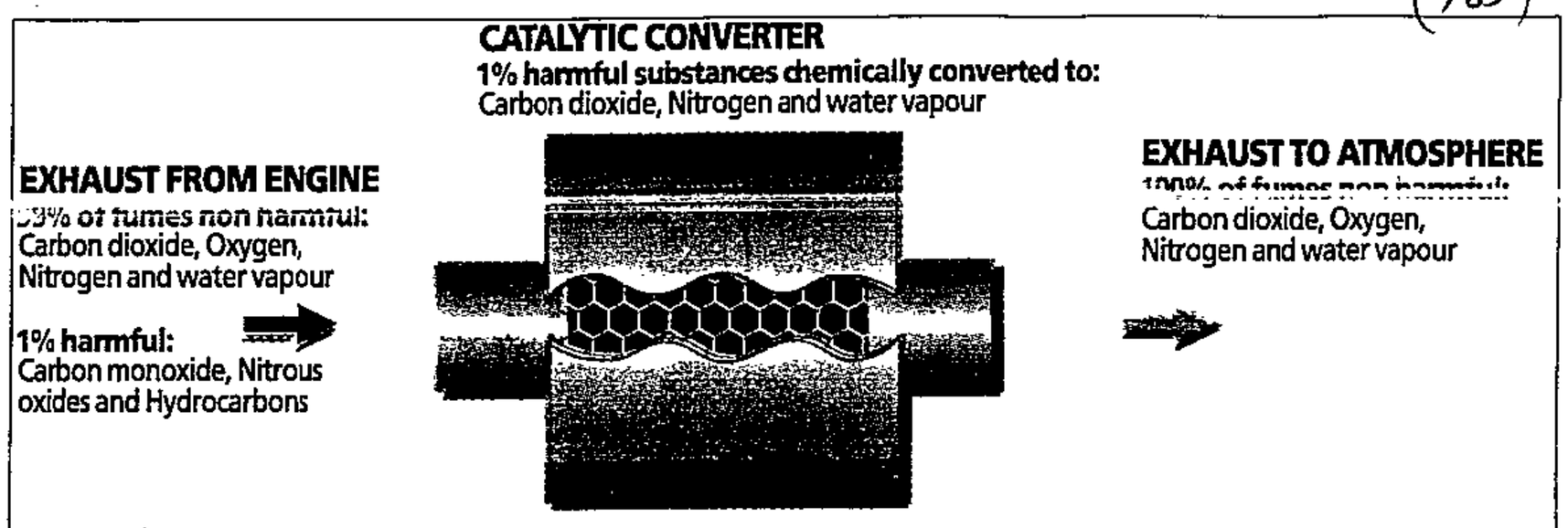
ollution

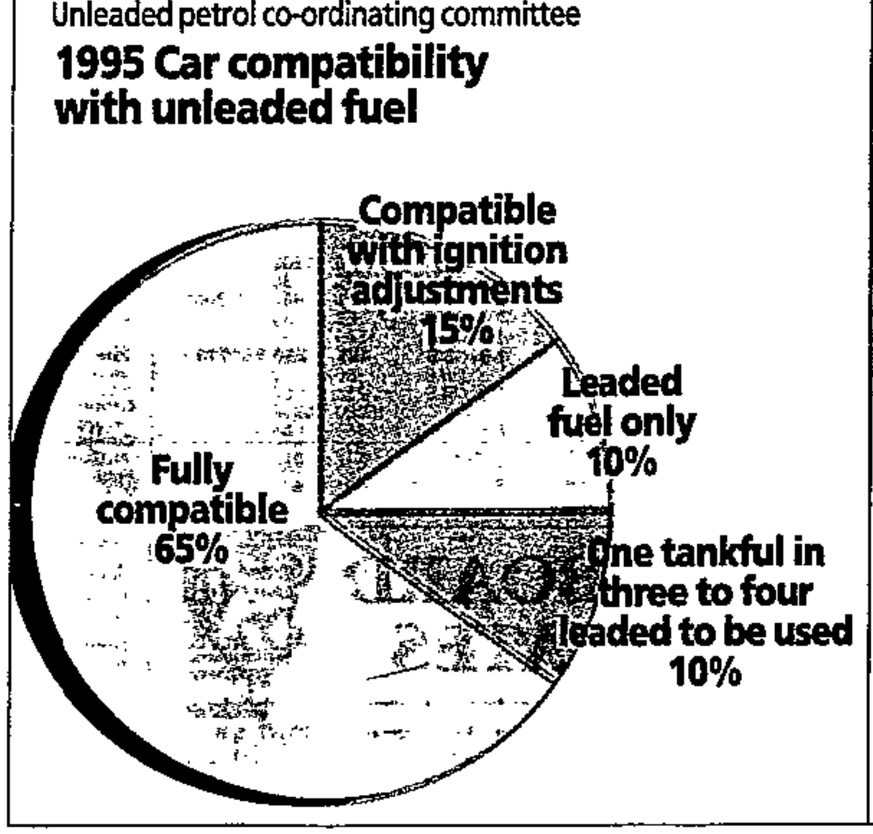
The law will not initially require the mpulsory fitment of Cats to vehicles, as outh Africa is going the unleaded petrol oute for technological rather than ealth reasons.

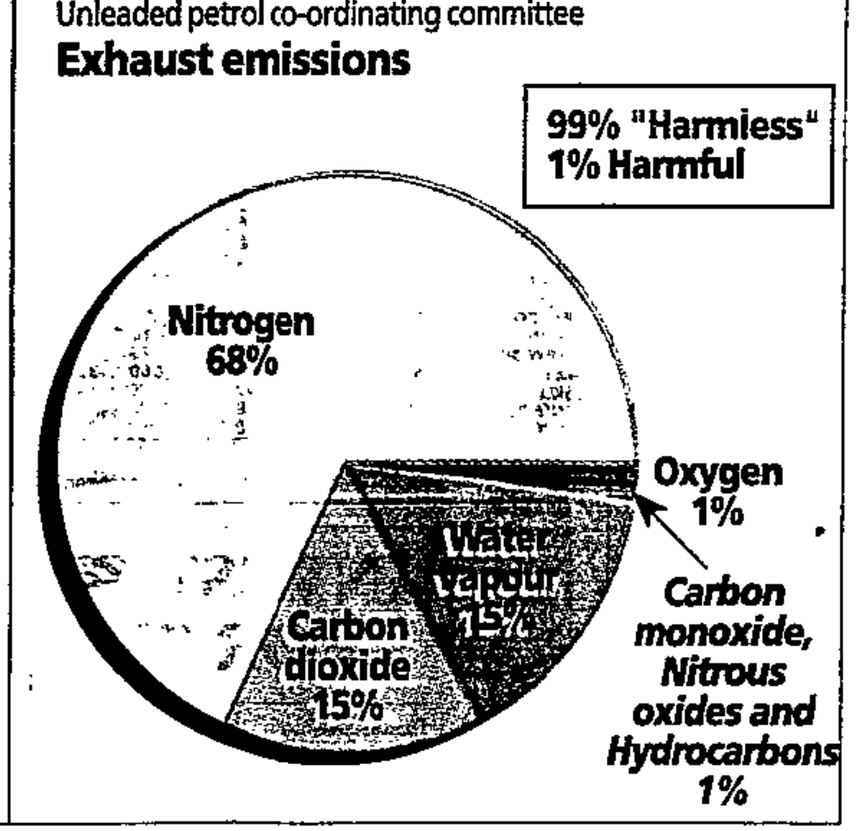
There is no proof that vehicle emisons are a major contributing factor to llution in South Africa. It is believed at electrifying townships and rural eas would do far more to curb air polion than cleaning up the emissions of outh Africa's relatively small car popuion.

However, an emissions working group t up by the Unleaded Petrol Co-ordiating Committee is currently developing national policy on vehicle emissions, id government policy could change pending on their findings.

The five-phase project is due for comtion within three to four years. Cats st between R2 000 and R3 000.







Unleaded petrol is usually introduced for environmental reasons. But in South Africa it is being introduced for economic reasons.

Exports will play a vital role in the future survival of South Africa's seven vehicle manufacturers now that duties are decreasing and imports are becoming more competitive.

Internationally, new engine technology is almost entirely based on unleaded petrol and SA needs to fall in line if its exports are to find markets. The alternative, converting engines that have been designed to use unleaded petrol so as to enable them to use leaded, will make cars more expensive in South Africa.

It has been estimated that export markets which could open up to SA motor manufacturers could earn the country up to R250 -million a year in the first 10 years.

Wholly compatible

The benefit for South African motorists in the long term is the improved fuel efficiency of engines designed to run on unleaded petrol. However, engines not wholly compatible with unleaded petrol are expected to be less efficient in the meantime.

Engines built according to unleaded technology are claimed to have a longer life than leaded petrol engines and to require lower maintenance. Spark plugs and exhausts are also said to last longer too.

To achieve a market penetration of about 20% in the first year, it was proposed to make unleaded (which is more expensive to produce) cheaper to buy than leaded petrol.

But because unleaded is more expensive to produce than leaded, it has been proposed to push up the price of leaded so as to subsidise unleaded.

It was disagreement over this that led the Government to postpone the introduction of unleaded petrol (see accompanying story).

Lead has traditionally been added to fuel because it lubricates valves, reduces engine knock, and is a low-cost octane enhancer. Octane improves performance.

Unleaded petrol did not come about because its emissions are healthier to breathe than those from leaded petrol, as seems to be the general perception. In fact, lead was removed from petrol because it attacked the catalytic converters that were increasingly being fitted to cars in the US in the 1970s, rendering them useless in a short period of time.

It is the catalytic converter, not the unleaded petrol, which reduces the health risk of petrol emissions by converting harmful carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides into harmless compounds such as water vapour, carbon dioxide and nitrogen.

Unleaded petrol, as opposed to lead-free petrol, still contains some lead, albeit in very small quantities. International standards allow up to 13mg of lead a litre to qualify as unleaded, compared to the current 400mg in leaded petrol.

Unleaded became available in the US in 1975, followed by Japan in the same year. Many other countries followed suit, but the Cameroon is the only African country to have introduced it so far.

The Unleaded Petrol Co-ordinating Committee (UPCC), a body formed in 1991 to develop a programme for the introduction of unleaded in SA, claims only 1% of vehicle exhaust emissions are harmful.

The bulk of emissions are made up of harmless nitrogen (68%), carbon dioxide (15%), water (15%) and oxygen (1%). Harmful emissions are said to comprise carbon monoxide (0.1% – 0.4%), nitrogen oxides (0.3%) and unburned hydrocarbons (0.3%).

State of tune

The levels of these emissions also vary depending on the state of tune of an engine.

Octane boosting lead alternatives such as aromatics and olefins will probably increase the proportion of unburnt hydrocarbons, but the UPCC admits that no local research has been carried out as to their possible harmful effects.

The relatively low octane level of South African unleaded (in comparison with the UK, for instance) should keep emissions down, it says.

It will initially not be compulsory to fit expensive catalytic converters to cars running on unleaded when it is introduced in SA.

Women lose $11-trillion in 'pay' a year — survey

BD 18/8/95

365A

Kathryn Strachan

A STAGGERING $11-trillion is missing from the global economy each year because of unpaid "invisible" labour performed by women, says a UN development programme report released yesterday.

The Human Development Report, which is issued annually, breaks new ground by attempting to calculate unpaid work, such as housework and agricultural labour, in 31 countries around the world.

"There is an unwitting conspiracy on a global scale to undervalue women's work and contributions to society," says Mahbub ul Haq, a former Pakistani finance minister and principle author of the report.

"In virtually every country of the world, women work longer hours than men yet share less in the economic rewards. If women's work was accurately reflected in national statistics, it would shatter the myth that men are the main breadwinners of the world."

Globally, women work an average of 13% more hours than men. The difference ranges from as little as eight minutes a day in South Korea to three hours a day in rural Kenya.

Factors such as environmental degradation have also placed a heavier burden. In Sudan, for example, deforestation has meant that the time women spend gathering wood has increased fourfold in a decade.

When comparing the proportion of time that men and women in industrialised countries spent on paid and unpaid activities, Denmark shows the least inequality, and Italy the most, the report says.

The report does not suggest a price tag should be attached to every activity within a family or a community, but it does advocate that women's contributions are not undermined in important economic transitions such as property ownership or offering collateral for bank loans.

The report shows that while the gender gap in education has more than halved in developing countries between 1970 and 1990, women still represent 70% of the 1,3-billion people living in poverty today. A frustrating global pattern in women's lives showed them making rapid strides in education and health while lagging a long way behind men in economic and political status.

Worldwide, women hold an average of only 10% of parliamentary seats and 6% of cabinet positions in national governments.

"Over the past 20 years, doors to education and health opportunities have opened rapidly for women, but the doors to economic and political power are barely ajar," says Ul Haq.

In examining the links between economic growth and human development (which is measured in terms of investments in health, education and skills development), the report found equitable distribution of income the key.

Wherever the distribution is severely skewed, as in Brazil, Nigeria and Pakistan, high GNP growth rates have failed to translate into positive changes in people's lives.

However, some countries have significantly improved overall human development levels despite poor growth and uneven income distribution. Cuba, Jamaica, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe and many countries in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have achieved high levels of human development through well-structured state social expenditures.

The report said the sure way of linking growth and human development was to empower people — especially women.

Powers for gender body 'problematic' says the DP

Star 18/8/95 (35SA)

■ BY PATRICK BULGER
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Cape Town — Controversial "smash and search" powers intended for the Government's Commission on Gender Equality were "problematic", according to Democratic Party justice spokesman Dene Smuts.

Smuts was reacting to charges by the South African Institute of Race Relations that the Government was creating a "Big Sister" to enforce gender equality.

A report by an ad hoc parliamentary committee tabled this week specifically recommended that commission members and police be given powers "including the breaking of any door or window" to search and seize documents.

The commission is provided for by the Interim Constitution.

Standard

Smuts said the commission's powers were a "little sister mirror image of the Human Rights Commission Bill".

"Powers of investigation are standard, and although neither the HRC nor the Gender Commission will in our view use them frequently, they should not be denied if the final version of the Bill does indeed encompass a role beyond the advisory function that is indicated in the constitution.

"Powers of search and seizure are more problematic," Smuts said.

"The real problem lies in the general lack of legislative attention to discrimination.

"This lacuna applies to the HRC as much as the Gender Commission," she added.

Key role, but abused

Women comprise over 50 percent of the population in Africa. And although they are the majority of worshippers in churches, women still occupy a subordinate position in structures of religion. **Joe Mdhlela** reports

Sowetan 18/8/95 (355A)

AS THE Christian Church forms part of the wider society that oppresses women, it has a role to play in ridding society of this malady.

This challenge came up at a national conference on *Christianity, African Culture and Development in Southern Africa* in Olifantsfontein last week.

The conference was organised by the South African Council of Churches under the leadership of general secretary Ms Brigalia Bam.

A senior lecturer at the University of Nairobi, Professor Collette Suda, said women were continually marginalised and abused even though they played a key role in society.

She argued that in most African societies the survival of family structures depended on women – yet society continued to debase and discriminate against them.

"Providing love and care for family members, teaching people to lead morally upright lives, helping transform oppressive structures and working towards peace and reconciliation are some of the ways in which many African women have contributed and continue to contribute to the moral health of society," Suda said.

She added: "African women have been in the business of moral teaching since time immemorial. Under the traditional family system, African women played a key role in teaching children social, ethical and moral values.

Gender power imbalance

"But, under the patriarchal system of gender power imbalance, African women are under more pressure than men."

Turning to the oppression of women by the church, Suda said: "Women comprise over 50 percent of the population in Africa.

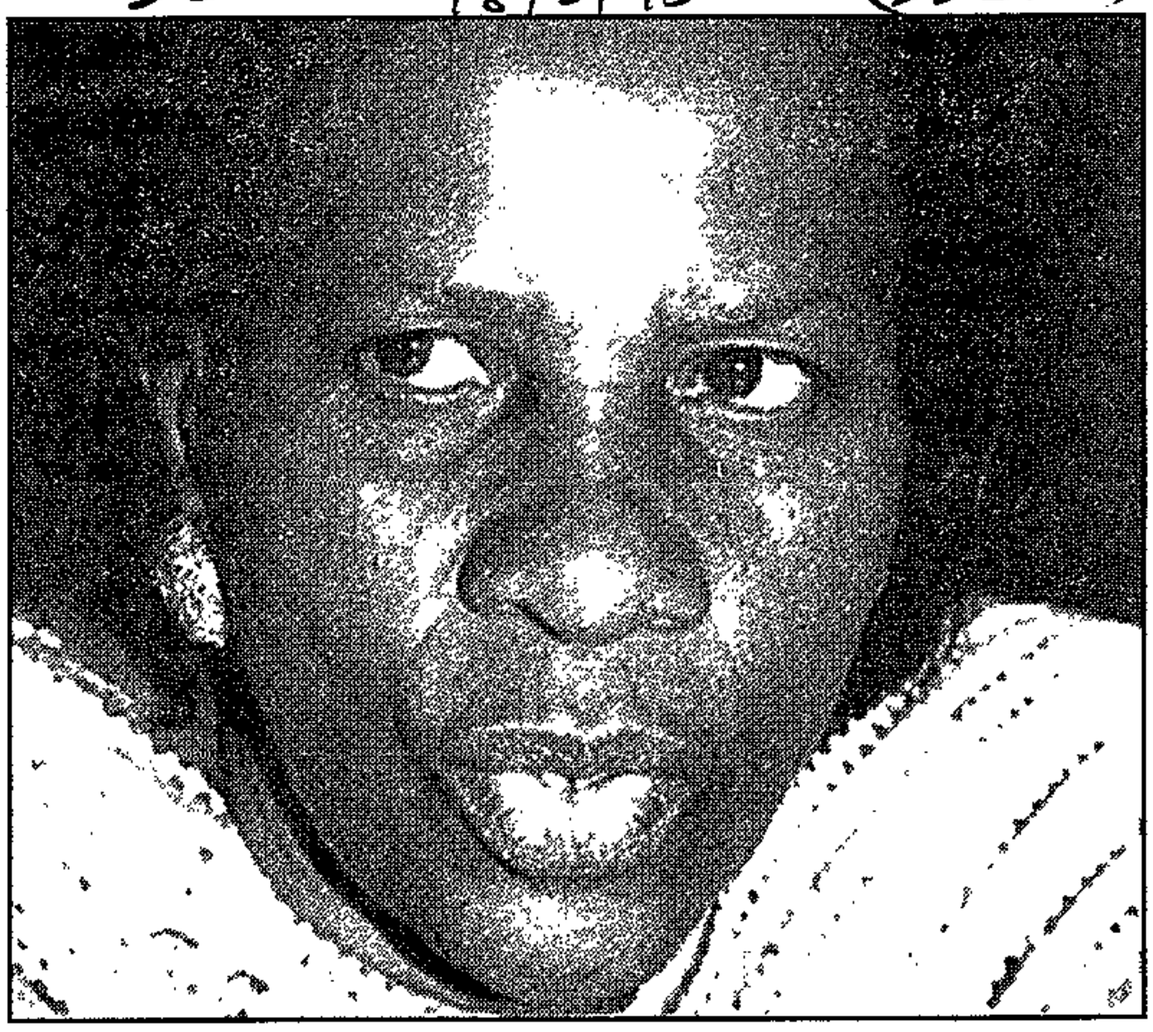
"They are the majority of worshippers in churches, where they contribute to community life through the transmission of religious values and beliefs.

"But culturally and structurally, women still occupy a subordinate position in male-dominated structures of religion and society."

Suda said the healing ministry of women in South Africa was significant in "bringing love to the world, yet society and the church fails to recognise these attributes.

"The church in Africa is widely seen as a replica of the larger social order. Despite their spiritual strength and acknowledged contribution to the church's finances and upkeep, African Christian women remain at the margin rather than centre of both church and society."

The conference also delved into what the church can do to help African communities, especially those in rural areas, develop resources.



SACC general secretary Brigalia Bam ... addressing the relationship between Christianity and African culture.

Professor Gilbert Ogutu, a senior lecturer at the University of Nairobi, claimed that a dependency syndrome encouraged underdevelopment.

"The late anti-colonialist Walter Rodney once talked of how Europe underdeveloped Africa," he said. Relating this to underdevelopment in Africa, Ogutu said: "Our problem seems to be how the urban areas have helped to contribute to the underdevelopment of rural areas."

Using an analogy to explain his attitude towards development and self-reliance, Ogutu said: "A Tswana friend once told me he could not smoke a pipe which had been filled with tobacco as if he did not know how to fill a pipe with tobacco himself."

Ogutu also recalled how a Sotho friend told him: "Man, how dare you ask me to buy the meat of antelope as if I have no spear?"

These analogies suggest that rural people can develop themselves, and that trekking to urban areas will not necessarily provide a solution to their poverty. Colonial masters taught rural people to look at the urban centre "as a place where life or civilisation is".

This teaching, he suggested, was mainly responsible for rural dwellers moving to cities whether there was work or not.

Ogutu said the solution was to transform the rural areas and make resources available that would sustain rural communities. In Kenya rural communities have begun to mobilise around the concept of *Harambee*, which called on rural dwellers to become responsible for their own development.

"Nobody needed to teach the Kenyans what *Harambee* meant because it had permeated every aspect of their cultures," he said. "It was their thing. It formed the base for patriotism and development."

Ogutu said the church, and specifically the clergy, could play an important role in actively encouraging programmes aimed at elevating rural communities.

"After all, local or parish priests should not only be seen as spiritual leaders, but as being central to the self-esteem of the people lead."

Ogutu said as long as Africans continued to smoke pipes already filled with tobacco, development in rural areas would be retarded – and migration to the cities would never end.

BIDay 20/8/93

NEWS FOCUS

New slant needed on workplace equality

(365A)

ANDRÉ VAN NIEKERK

"Men may cook or weave or dress dolls or hunt hummingbirds, but if such activities are appropriate occupations of men, then the whole society, men and women alike, votes them as important. When the same occupations are performed by women, they are regarded as less important." — Anthropologist Margaret Mead, 1949.

EQUAL pay is an area of labour law surprisingly underdeveloped in SA. But this is likely to change as a Bill of Rights and possible legislation prohibiting gender discrimination leads to equal pay claims against employers.

Internationally, the policy underlying laws on equal pay is not that all employees doing the same or similar work should receive the same remuneration. Rather, it is that employees should not be discriminated against as far as remuneration is concerned. In other words, where there is differentiation, it should be on account of a factor which does not have as its basis generalised assumptions about the characteristics of particular groups of people. Differences in pay which have as their basis productivity, length of service or skill will be justified. Those which have as their basis, for example, race, sex, religion or ethnic origin will not.

Most SA employers have no doubt arranged their affairs, and their pay structures in particular, so that there is no differentiation, at least not in an overt sense, which offends these principles. The fact that a black and white employee, or a man and a woman, similarly qualified and experienced and engaged in the same work or job category are paid the same wage is no doubt comforting to most personnel managers, particularly those whose mission statements and other credos of corporate culture espouse nonracialism, nonsexism and equal opportunity.



'Women's work' — will it be revalued when equal pay legislation takes hold?

This perspective of equality is not confined to employers. The handful of cases on discrimination in the workplace and equal pay heard in the Industrial Court in the past decade demonstrate a similar understanding of equality in employment by most trade unions.

Equality in employment generally, and in respect of pay and pay structures in particular, is a far more subtle concept. Practices which are apparently neutral may mask effects which disadvantage particular groups of employees. The US Supreme Court referred once to the "in-built headwind" for those who are not members of the group in society with the power of decision-making.

While word-processing may have replaced weaving, and executives now hunt heads rather than hummingbirds, Mead's conclusion remains a valid one. The work done by particular groups of employees may have been undervalued by society. Occupational structures which determine job ranking and consequent pay levels reflect assumptions on the value attached to particular skills, particularly where they are regarded, for example, as skills which are traditionally possessed by women.

Equal pay legislation attempts to remedy this situation and, in doing so, presents a challenge to commonly held assumptions about the kinds of jobs predominantly done by women or other groups.

Most industrialised countries have laws which specifically prohibit discrimination on the basis of either sex or race. Equal pay laws often form part of broad statutory prohibitions of discrimination. Claims are often possible either in terms of a particular statute or in terms of broader legislation. For example, in the US, equality claims are possible in terms of the Equal Pay Act or the Civil Rights Act. In SA, the only existing mechanism is the unfair labour practice remedy in terms of the Labour Relations Act.

That will soon change as a range of remedies in terms of legislation on gender discrimination and constitutional provisions regulating equality comes into being. Depending on the ambit of these provisions, equal pay claims may extend beyond allegations of differentiation on the grounds of race or sex. The latest draft interim Bill of Rights provides that it will be unlawful to discriminate on grounds which include nationality, ethnic origin and sexual orientation.

The draft Bill on the Promotion of Equal Opportunities represents the first attempt by government to address gender discrimination. While its passage through Parliament remains uncertain, the draft Bill, for all its faults, incorporates a number of universally acknowledged principles relevant to discrimination and equal pay claims.

Equal pay claims are likely to become a feature of future industrial relations life. They will affect job and pay structures. It is time now to begin considering whether existing job evaluation schemes will withstand the rigour of judicial scrutiny.

Equal pay claims will have an impact on the labour market. It remains to be seen to what extent SA labour courts will permit market forces to dominate in what is ultimately a balancing exercise between those forces and the pressures for equity.

☐ **Van Niekerk is Anglo American labour law consultant. Saccola is holding workshops on equal pay in Johannesburg on Monday and in Durban on Tuesday.**

10% of MPs are women — UN

CT 21/8/95 (355A)

JOHANNESBURG: Women worldwide hold about 10% of parliamentary seats and six percent of cabinet positions in national governments, a UN report says.

The Human Development Report 1995 said that although women had made rapid strides in education and health, they accounted for 70% of the 1,3 billion people living in poverty.

SA has 'reservations' over women's charter

ARG 22/8/95 (355A)

CLIVE SAWYER
Political Correspondent

SOUTH AFRICA may not ratify all clauses of the United Nations convention outlawing discrimination against women.

In doing so, it will follow the example of all other countries which have ratified the convention, none having done so without reservations.

Top of the list for possible exception from clauses acceptable to South Africa is that governing access to abortion.

As the Beijing UN conference on women draws near, there is considerable pressure for South Africa to ratify the convention. At one stage, it was hoped the convention would have been ratified by parliament on National Women's Day, August 9.

But, when a series of contradictions between the convention and South African law became apparent, this became impossible.

Ratification of international conventions binds signatories to bringing domestic law into conformity within a certain period.

Parliament is setting up an ad hoc committee on ratifying the convention.

A Department of Foreign Affairs official said "serious and urgent" attention was being given to the convention.

The convention on women is only one of a range of international agreements South Africa is due to sign.

A convention barring the use of chemical weapons, already scrutinised by committees from both houses, is due to be tabled in the senate today. It is to be put to the national assembly tomorrow.

The convention on the prohibition and reduction of conventional weapons, which deals mainly with limitations on the use of landmines, was tabled in parliament on May 7.

It is listed as pending further business of the houses, with no date having been set for ratification.

The Organisation of African Unity's charter of human and people's rights, adopted by OAU heads of state in 1981 and in force since 1983, has yet to be signed by South Africa, an OAU member since last year.

The Department of Foreign Affairs expects ratification of this treaty in the next few weeks.

Parliament is yet to ratify the Southern African Development Community treaty, a step which is likely to be no more than a formality.

A treaty on co-operation between South Africa and the European Union, tabled on June 6, has been referred to the foreign affairs committees of both houses.

Also awaiting ratification are a series of UN conventions on human rights, including the 1951 International Convention on the Status of Refugees, and the UN Convention on Civil and Political Rights.

Pending as well is the Covenant on Economic, Social and Political Rights.

Poverty tops agenda at conference on women

ARG 23/8/95 (~~241~~) (355A)

ESANN de KOCK
Staff Reporter

POVERTY and its effects on women has been placed at the top of the list of issues to be addressed by the fourth United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing next month.

Western Cape government delegate to the conference Annette Reinecke says UN figures show women make up the overwhelming majority of the more than one-billion people living in abject poverty in the world today.

The UN believed absolute poverty, continued violence against women and widespread exclusion of half of humanity from institutions of power and government underscored the need to continue the search for development, peace and security, she said.

It is a view shared by Ms Reinecke who says the practical focus after the Beijing conference will be crucial to the ultimate success of the conference.

The conference will focus on women and poverty, education, health, empowerment and the environment.

Ms Reinecke believes it is one thing to identify problems and to talk about strategies and solutions. It is quite another to turn the theory into practice.

As part of the South African delegation of 25 people she shares the concern about the effects of poverty on women, but notes that empowerment of women in general will play a major role in addressing this problem.

Other critical areas of concern which will be discussed in Beijing include how men and women can achieve equality in the political, social, economic, cultural and environmental arenas.

The UN, explains Ms Reinecke, believes barriers to women's empowerment remain — in spite of efforts of governments and non-government organisations.

The organisation estimates a quarter of all households worldwide are headed by women and many other households are dependent on female income even where men are present.

Female-maintained households, it says, are very often among the poorest because of wage discrimination, work segregation and other gender-based barriers.

Ms Reinecke says the UN believes full participation by women in decision-making, conflict prevention and resolution and other peace initiatives is essential to realising lasting peace.

Therefore, practical implementation of solutions are paramount after the conference, she believes.

After the women's conference, delegates should go back to their governments, business and private sectors and seek commitments to act on equality, development and peace.

The UN, says Ms Reinecke, recognises that the formulation and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes and actions in areas of concern are the responsibility of each country and should be done with full respect for the various religious and ethical values, cultural background and philosophical convictions of all its people.

She hopes the South African delegation, after having identified and discussed crucial issues of concern, will return with practical proposals to address local problems.



WOMEN'S WORLD ... A delegate is checked with a metal detector at the entrance to the non-governmental organisations women's forum in Hualrou in China. The safety inspection sites for the NGO's are manned by women police. The NGO forum starts tomorrow. PIC: AFP

Women will want change in Beijing

(355A) Sowetan 29/8/95

Women often earn 40 percent less than men for doing the same job

By Edith M Lederer

HANOI, Vietnam – Ms Nguyen Thi Kim Thu is learning the fine points of cooking hamburgers. Ms Phi Thi Phuong Anh is tackling word processing. Ms Nguyen Thi Van Nam is struggling with English grammar.

They are hunting for a place in Vietnam's growing private economy. Studying at Hanoi Women's Union No 2 boosts their chances – 70 percent of its graduates find work.

The United Nations women's conference in Beijing will hold up women like them as an example to women around the world. But jobs and a decent life remain only a dream for millions of the world's poorest.

Promise of equality

Nearly 20 years after the UN optimistically declared a "Decade of Women", many countries have not kept their promises of equality and opportunities.

The Beijing conference will try again to make these promises come true.

"What we're hoping for in Beijing is action," said Gertrude Mongella, the conference secretary-general. "We are not going to be the same as men. But we want equal opportunities and equal standing before the law."

Since the first UN women's conference in Mexico in 1975, women have made some important gains on paper.

Women's rights

A UN treaty on eliminating sex discrimination has been signed by 133 countries. The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights declared that women's rights are human rights – and must be protected.

The 1994 UN population conference in Cairo, Egypt, said women should have access to modern birth control and the right to choose whether to become pregnant. Woman are also living longer and are better educated.

Women account for 70 percent of the world's 1,3 billion poor. Eighty percent of the world's refugees are women and children. Women are typically paid 30 percent to 40 percent less than men for doing the same job.

One-third of wives in developing countries are physically abused, according to the charity Oxfam. The number of women in parliaments has dropped from 15 percent in 1988 to 11 percent in 1994.

"We are going into the 21st century with concentrations of wealth side by side with the feminisation of poverty," said Ms Nolene Heyser, executive director of the UN Development Fund for Women, created at the first women's conference.

In Hanoi, about 35 percent of young children are malnourished because their impoverished mothers have to return to work and cannot breastfeed them, said Dr Khong Ngoc Am, director of Hanoi's Maternal and Child Health Centre.

Since International Women's Year in 1975, women have been trying to figure out how to close the enormous gender gap.

Governments break promises

In 1985, at the last conference in Kenya, governments promised that by the year 2 000 they would enforce equal rights for women, outlaw slavery and prostitution, enforce a minimum age for marriage, punish the killing of baby girls and give all women access to education, maternal health care and family planning.

Yet many countries have not carried out the proposals of the three previous world conferences.

Some governments have achieved these goals and gone even further – including women in policy debates and combating sexual harassment.

Participants in the Beijing conference hope to pressure governments to keep their promises and get them to commit to doing even more to help women.

Some believe one of the best ways to improve women's economic condition is to give them access to credit. In Vietnam, the 11 million-member Women's Union has an extensive credit system, run by 12 000 village groups that make loans. Now, it wants to start a women's bank but is having difficulty raising money, said Ms Nguyen Kim Cuc, head of the union's foreign relations department.

Tourist agency

Nam, an English student, works for Vietnam's tourist agency and wants a better job. Unemployed Anh (22) wants to work for the Vietnam Motor Company and thinks computers are the way to do it.

Thu, the 35-year-old cookery student, says her husband and three children will benefit from her training, but she wants a job in a hotel or restaurant – or even abroad.

What will get into the plan approved at the Beijing meeting is still a matter of intense debate. Various governments have objected to about a third of the items in a draft proposal on poverty, the workplace, education, health, violence and the effects of war. Many women are afraid delegates in Beijing will be refighting old battles on contentious issues such as abortion and human rights.

Pope John Paul II, in an open letter to women in July, pushed for equal rights but opposed abortion, even for rape victims. The Vatican opposes all mention of contraception and sex education.

The whole woman

Mongella said she wants the conference to focus on the whole woman, not on abortion.

"After Cairo, people are looking at the womb all the time and not the brain," she said. "They never talk about men's reproductive organs 24 hours a day."

While the Beijing platform is not a binding treaty, it is intended to help guide the policies of governments and international agencies into the 21st century. *–Sapa-AP.*

GENDER COMMISSION

Sexism under fire

The fact that the proposed Commission on Gender Equality is to be facilitated by a Bill that, at this stage, proposes strong powers of search and seizure has been widely subject to ridicule and apprehension. Is it really necessary to create a mini-FBI to investigate people or institutions that may discriminate against women?

It is precisely the lot of women that is in question. This is plain in the section of the interim constitution that mandates the creation of the commission, which "shall be to promote gender equality and to advise and make recommendations to parliament or any other legislature with regard to any laws or proposed legislation which affects gender equality and the status of women."

The commission was agreed to within the same broad ambit of mooted law to set up a Public Protector, a Human Rights Commission (HRC) and a mechanism for the restitution of land rights. It is part and parcel of the democratic impulse to redress past social inequities.

The most troubling element, of course, relates to the independent policing powers conferred on these bodies. As with the Truth Commission, the fear arises of witchhunts and one-sided persecution.

Derision of the commission is — on the most trivial level — misplaced. "Sex police" are not about to descend on men who call women "babes" or otherwise harass them in traditional macho fashion.

However, where consistent discrimination or abuse is brought to the commission's attention, it could be empowered — assuming that the Bill passes as it stands — to investigate, summon, search under warrant, inspect relevant documents and even refer cases to similar bodies, such as the HRC.

These powers certainly exceed those originally considered by the parliamentary committee under the ANC's Ruth Mompati that caused the Bill to be drawn up.

In June the *FM* wrote that the committee was being driven by the ANC's concern that women's rights should enjoy legislative protection reinforcing that conferred by the constitution itself, which lays down that "no person shall be discriminated against (on the grounds of) race, gender, sex, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture or language."

An ANC submission to the Constitutional Assembly was a major factor in the committee's deliberations. In reporting to parliament, the committee was able to reflect consensus among all parties — only the National Party registering dissent to the search and seizure powers.

However, Sheila Camerer of the NP — a member of the committee — this week said that the intention was emphatically that the gender commission should "have muscle and teeth."

And the committee also wants the legislation to be passed this session, so that the process of installing the 11-person commission can begin.

Camerer's fear is that the policing powers represent an unnecessary duplication of expenditure and resources, and that the NP's position is that cases of gross violations of gender rights could more appropriately be referred to the HRC.

Nonetheless, the NP's dissent to the policing provisions does not represent a fundamental disagreement with the principle that suspects under investigation must comply with search warrants — normal procedure for bodies that protect human rights. Camerer feels, though, that the various SA commissions in this field should link up.

The fact is that SA now faces yet another politically correct tribunal.

The functions of the Commission on Gender Equality include:

- ❑ To monitor and review the policies and practices of State bodies at all levels, statutory bodies and their functionaries, public authorities and private concerns;
- ❑ To develop education and information programmes;
- ❑ To review discriminatory legislation and make recommendations on amendments to parliament; and
- ❑ To investigate gender matters on the basis of complaints, or on its own initiative, with the full powers sketched out above. The commission shall, however, seek to resolve disputes without recourse to sanction — that is, mediation before referral of abuses to the HRC or the Public Protector.

This would appear to indicate that it will be consistently discriminatory policies and practices that will come under scrutiny, with criminal behaviour presumably left in the province of the police.

At this stage, it remains possible that the Bill will be referred once again to the parliamentary justice committee — which drew up the Bill as it stands — for consideration of the NP's point about unnecessary duplication and costs.

Whatever the outcome, discrimination against women has never before been taken as seriously in SA. Whether rectifying gender inequities is as important as what some would consider more burning social issues is another question. ■

Women's conference talks are flawed — but still worthwhile

BD 5/9/95 (355A)

Bronwen Maddox

HOW much should we expect from the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, which kicked off formally yesterday? Not a lot, say the critics of UN gatherings, including many of the 20 000-odd delegates now assembling in Beijing's rain.

To UN groupies, the world's capitals are resonant with ideals of past mega-conferences: Copenhagen (social development, March this year); Cairo (population, last year); Vienna (human rights, 1993); and Rio (environment, 1992). Not to mention Nairobi 10 years ago, the UN's previous session on women's issues.

They have become sprawling events, swollen by parallel workshops for campaigners. Critics argue that they waste time and money, and promise a social revolution they cannot deliver.

Many attacks are justified. Recent agreements bestow "rights" so freely that they strip the term of meaning. The Cairo conference granted everyone the right to a "satisfying and safe sex life".

Such follies are the result of a tortuous debating process that is rightly mocked. The initial text is drafted in a bureaucratic language beyond parody. One of the comedies of Cairo was watching Chinese and Arabic translators grapple with "empowerment" and "reproductive rights". Delegates can then delay agreement on a final text for days with ingenious interpretations. Even the phrase 'safe motherhood' in the Cairo text proved controversial, on the grounds that it might be read as an endorsement of abortion.

The agendas do, undeniably, sidestep the most sensitive issues. Much has been made of the failure of the Beijing conference to challenge China on its poor record on women's rights. Rio's coyness in addressing China's dependence on coal for energy was even more serious, given that it may undermine efforts by other countries to tackle global warming.

The discussions also regularly fail to acknowledge the expensiveness of resolutions, or duck them with spurious arguments.

One favourite claim is that development will boost economic growth so much that everyone will be better off. Rio gave much space to the assertion that "greener means richer", which is often untrue. Many in Beijing and Cairo suggest similarly that educating women makes economies grow faster. Maybe, but not always.

Most important, critics point out that the UN has no power to enforce the final agreements, such as the Rio conventions on climate change and biodiversity. Frequently, no change occurs. Not all the blame falls on national governments for that failure; public enthusiasm for "green" issues in the US, UK and Germany was a driving force behind Rio, but public opposition scuppered subsequent attempts to introduce energy taxes.

But these shortcomings, serious though they are, do not make the conferences entirely worthless. A year ago, I went to report the Cairo conference in the frontline of sceptics; I came back converted to their value.

At the very least, the global surveys which accompany the conferences give a valuable snapshot each decade of complex social phenomena that cross national boundaries. True, the figures given the greatest prominence by the UN are aggregated to the point where they are meaningless; Beijing delegates have been told that women "do two-thirds of the world's work" but "earn one-tenth of the world's income". However, the small print can still embarrass governments: the UK has been reminded that it ranks 56th in the world in terms of women in parliament, below Bangladesh and Mozambique. The Beijing text ventures further than previous ones in discussing the prevalence of violence against women.

The meetings of non-governmental organisations, held alongside the main conferences, are chaotic but unmissable. They supply unforgettable stories of injustice: a reminder of why the issues deserve UN attention, and a welcome antidote to the political correctness of the main debate, where western delegates fall over themselves trying not to suggest that one culture's treatment of people is better than another's.

It is easy to criticise the final resolutions for innocuousness — the text tabled for Beijing aims to "lighten the burden of poverty on women". Such banal phrases conceal very controversial policies. If implemented, they would be highly redistributive of money and power. Most important, the conferences also provide a way for countries to search for the highest common denominator of their principles on human rights.

The price of such debates is hypocrisy: governments may pledge themselves to policies they have no intention of implementing, and their voters may champion causes for which they have no desire to pay.

But at least the statistics and resolutions that emerge from these conferences provide a standard against which future actions can be judged. — Financial Times.

Work or quit, Mandela tells striking nurses as protest action spreads

BS 8/9/95

Kathryn Strachan

NURSES at Johannesburg General Hospital yesterday joined a nurses strike crippling Gauteng hospitals, while President Nelson Mandela issued a tough ultimatum.

Kevin O'Grady reports from Gaborone, Botswana, that Mandela said: "Go back to work or leave the nursing profession . . . we are not in a position to increase salaries." If nurses left the profession, "we will decide what emergency measures to take".

Gauteng health MEC Amos Masondo said striking nurses who ignored an ultimatum to return to work yesterday had until 3pm today to explain why they were not at their posts. If they did not respond to this ultimatum legal action, which could include dismissal, would be taken.

Protest action has left Baragwanath, GaRankuwa and Hillbrow hospitals at a standstill. It spread to Johannesburg General Hospital yesterday, where nurses took turns to rotate between picketing and going back to their posts. Only emergency cases were being admitted. There were reports of striking nurses at GaRankuwa chasing away the few nurses trying to keep the intensive-care unit running.

Gauteng health deputy director-general Eric Buch said provincial and national health authorities in principle backed the nurses' basic demands that their conditions and salaries be improved, and they had set in place a range of mechanisms to achieve this. One was the establishment of a national health consultative forum, announced by the national health department yesterday, which would discuss salaries and conditions of service for health workers. The forum was planned for later in the year but had been brought forward to deal with the crisis.

The forum would also investigate mechanisms for integrating local authority and provincial authority nurses, including the question of parity in conditions of service — an issue which has largelly fuelled the strike. "Now nurses need to actively participate and drive the process forward," said Buch. "If they go back to work now they will get long-term gains."

Masondo also took the unprecedented step of asking the Public Service Commission to reopen negotiations for this year, and officials at national level promised to

Continued on Page 2

facilitate that the nurses' demands be heard by the commission.

But the commission said all funds which had been made available for the improvement of conditions for the next financial year had been used, so it was therefore not possible to reopen salary negotiations in the public service bargaining council at central level for 1995/96.

A doctor in the Baragwanath paediatric intensive-care unit said premature babies were being sent home before it was safe to

Hospital strike

BD 8/9/95

Continued from Page 1

do so because there were no nurses to care for them. The hospital intended to bring the babies back in once the strike was over. Without nurses to back them up, doctors could do no more than give basic care.

A spokesman for Park Lane Clinic, where a lot of cases were transferred earlier in the week, said it was clear from the appalling conditions of these patients that they had been neglected for a long time — from before the strike started — which was an indication of how the tension at Baragwanath had been growing.

Two critically ill babies who had been transferred had not been bathed "for weeks", and an 11-year-old who was transferred for a throat operation arrived at the clinic covered in faeces and bed sores. "She had clearly not been moved for a long time." The clinic was still trying to trace the parents of one five-month old baby.

Nomavenda Mathiane reports that members of the Gauteng legislature asked Masondo not to issue ultimatums, but to rather open negotiating forums.

Ben van der Walt (FF) said dismissing the nurses was not a solution. Instead, Masondo should persuade the nurses to affiliate to existing forums so the issues could be addressed there. Meanwhile, Health Minister Nkosazana Zuma said Mandela had asked her to stay in Beijing despite the strike. She is leading SA's delegation to the UN women's conference.

Women in revolution

(355A) Sowetan 6/9/95

Women say they have fought side by side with men against all forms of political evil. Now they too want support, reports **Charlene L Fu** of *Sapa-AP*

BEIJING – DELEGATES TO the United Nations women's conference yesterday got down to the business of debating how to bring about the social revolution that participants called for a day earlier when the gathering opened.

Some of the world's top women political leaders said again and again that all the talk at this conference will come to nothing without strong follow-up from governments and private citizens alike – and that men must be part of the solution.

"There can be no spectators, no sideliners, no abstainers, for this is a crucial social agenda which affects all humanity," said conference secretary-general Ms Gertrude Mongella.

The gathering of more than 4 750 delegates from 181 countries, the first of its kind in a decade, passed its first day smoothly, in contrast with the controversy over Chinese policing that has dogged a parallel gathering of voluntary organisations.

On Monday, there were signs that tensions had eased in Huairou, the town 30 miles north of Beijing where 23 000 activists from private groups have met for the past five days.

Women in Black

Police stood by quietly as about 1 000 members of the international anti-war group Women in Black protested silently for an hour, carrying or wearing signs demanding a peaceful resolution of conflicts around the world.

But Chinese security's new hands-off attitude was tested yesterday when the lesbian contingent at the private gathering – which has run into trouble with Chinese security – staged the group's largest demonstration yet.

Lesbian activists staged a noisy march, their biggest and most visible demonstration to date at the parallel forum of about 23 000 private activists that began last Wednesday.

The lesbian contingent has complained of harassment by Chinese authorities, including confiscation of literature and photographing of participants with telephoto lenses. There were no major run-ins with Chinese security at yesterday's demonstration, however.

Yesterday also brought the arrival of a high-profile participant – Hillary Rodham Clinton, who was addressing the conference later in the day and then travelling to Huairou today to speak to the women's advocacy groups there.

Activists planned to capitalise on her highly publicised visit by demonstrating for their causes.

But on Monday the spotlight was on issues confronting women and the "platform of action" to be adopted by the conference to guide the women's agenda in the 21st century.

"Cementing the partnership of women and men" is critical, Mongella said.

"Women have all along struggled with their menfolk for the abolition of slavery, the liberation of countries from colonialism, the dismantling of apartheid and the struggle for peace. It is now the turn of men to join women in their struggle for equality," she said.



A crowd of delegates try to make their way through a security check-point to enter the UN conference on women at the Beijing Conference Centre on Monday.

Women's poverty

The platform includes specific proposals for governments, the UN and volunteer groups to alleviate women's poverty and improve health care, education and job opportunities for women.

It also proposes measures to combat violence against women and to make women's voices heard in government and in peace talks.

Yesterday, delegates broke up into committees to begin work on the platform draft, some elements of which are likely to spark controversy.

That was underscored on Monday when the conference drew criticism from two leading Muslim nations.

Saudi Arabia's highest religious authority said the meeting's platform "seeks the destruction of the family, and allows the unrestrained practice of adultery and other immoral acts".

Iran's Deputy Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Mr Mohammad Ali Taskhiri, was quoted by the *Iran News* as saying the stance of "pro-American and Zionist" elements at the conference aimed to promote immoral acts.

UN women applaud SA move to non-sexism

(25A) ARLT 6/9/95

BEIJING. — South Africa's progress towards a non-sexist society has received resounding applause at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women.

Speaking on the global stage, Health Minister Nkosozana Zuma, who is leading the government delegation, listed the country's considerable and speedy achievements since last year's elections to the envy of women in a number of countries.

"Under apartheid South Africa, there were only two women cabinet ministers," she said. "We now have three cabinet ministers and three deputy ministers."

Other advantages she listed were advances in education, health for babies and pregnant women, and the number of women parliamentarians and judges.

"We have a very gender-sensitive constitution, and have also established the gender commission and the human rights commission," she said.

These had created a helpful environment and the government was mindful of the fact that it could not create a non-sexist society on its own but ordinary people had to take part in the struggle to create a greater awareness of the needs of women.

She said much more progress was needed in fields like commerce and religion and there needed to be recognition for women's unpaid labour. The government needed to ensure that the very poorest women had access to credit.

"We have no illusions about the scale of the challenges that lie ahead until a non-sexist South Africa to which we aspire becomes a reality." — Independent Foreign Service.

Applause for Zuma at Beijing conference

CT 7/9/95 (395A)

BEIJING: South Africa's progress towards a non-sexist society today received resounding applause at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women.

Speaking on the global stage, Health Minister Dr Nkosazana Zuma, who is leading the government delegation, listed the country's considerable and speedy achievements since last year's election.

"Under apartheid South Africa, there were only two women cabinet ministers," she said, "We now have three cabinet ministers and three deputy ministers.

Other advantages she listed were advances in education, health care for babies and pregnant women, and the appointment of women judges.

"We have a very gender-sensitive constitution and have also established a Gender Commission and a Human Rights Commission," she said.

These had created a helpful environment and the government was mindful of the fact that it could not create a non-sexist society on its own but that ordinary people had to take part in the struggle to create a greater awareness of the needs of women.

She said much more progress was needed in fields like commerce and religion and there needed to be recognition for women's unpaid labour.

The government needed to ensure that the very poorest women had access to credit.

"We have no illusions about the scale of the challenges that lie ahead until a non-sexist South Africa to which we aspire, becomes a reality," she said. — Sapa-AFP

No turning back

There is no turning back for the women who went to Beijing and if their collective voices are heard and heeded the world will indeed be a different place for women the world over. JILL GOWANS reports from the Chinese capital for The Argus Foreign Service.

IN the oldest Chinese scripts of the Shang Dynasty, centuries before the birth of Christ, the word "woman" was depicted as a kneeling female image.

It is an image the current Chinese government must have had in mind when they bid in 1990 for the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, hoping to restore their world prestige in the wake of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre of students demonstrating for democracy.

They began by placing stringent requirements on registration and then dragged their heels on issuing hotel registration forms and visas to the thousands of women who wanted to attend the parallel Non-Governmental Organisations Forum. This only served to strengthen the resolve of those who finally arrived at Hauirou — until now an obscure town on the way to the Great Wall of China. As many as 19 000 women from 185 countries made the long and expensive journey.

Once here, the immense logistical difficulties have also epitomised the plight of the world's women. The China Organising Committee made a last-minute decision to move the controversial NGO Forum away from central Beijing to hinder contact with ordinary Chinese women and with the government delegations attending the prestigious UN World Conference. The spread-out 42-hectare site is an exhausting one to get around and virtually impossible for the disabled.

The COC also optimistically restricted demonstrations to the parade ring of the school which forms part of the site. But the women ig-

□ A better deal for women: After Beijing the world may never



dresses other critical areas of concern — health, education, economics, the environment, the media and the girl child. Large portions of it remain bracketed which means that there has been no global consensus up until now, despite much preparatory lobbying.

Unbracketing the brackets, so to speak, is the task of the UN World Conference which ends on September 15. By then, it is hoped the final draft can be adopted and that delegates can go back to their home countries with a definite commitment to advance the status of women. And not with just words, but with concrete proposals on how to do this.

South Africa's Deputy Welfare Minister, Geraldine Fraser Moleketi, who is a key member of the country's 25-strong core delegation, said they felt strongly about all the critical areas of concern and would be working hard to achieve global agreement. She was optimistic this could be done.

So many conferences, so much talking. Can this conference, which many think will be the last on women, really deliver?

The Chinese took an oversimplified view of the women's movement and so have many others. My feeling is that if the governments of the world can't reach agreement by September 15, the NGOs who represent the women of the world will never forgive them.

Here is one example of NGO proaction. Korean women here have demanded reparations from the Japanese government for so-called

deal for women: After Beijing the world may never be the same again

(355A) ARG 7/9/96



men Square massacre of students demonstrating for democracy.

They began by placing stringent requirements on registration and then dragged their heels on issuing hotel registration forms and visas to the thousands of women who wanted to attend the parallel Non-Governmental Organisations Forum. This only served to strengthen the resolve of those who finally arrived at Hauirou — until now an obscure town on the way to the Great Wall of China. As many as 19 000 women from 185 countries made the long and expensive journey.

Once here, the immense logistical difficulties have also epitomised the plight of the world's women. The China Organising Committee made a last-minute decision to move the controversial NGO Forum away from central Beijing to hinder contact with ordinary Chinese women and with the government delegations attending the prestigious UN World Conference. The spread-out 42-hectare site is an exhausting one to get around and virtually impossible for the disabled.

The COC also optimistically restricted demonstrations to the parade ring of the school which forms part of the site. But the women ignored them, and the vociferous reactions of groups like the Tibetan exiles and lesbians attracted Chinese harassment which turned the world spotlight on them.

Daily there have been a number of peaceful, good-natured protests, marches and torch-lit processions to highlight women's concerns. And as many as 400 events daily have focused on every subject under the sun.

It is impossible to take it all in and delegates have had to be very selective in pursuing particular interests and concerns.

On the positive side footsore women can get free acupuncture and massage, and buy everything from Tibetan silver to Indian cottons, Chinese silks, pyramid-shaped Vietnamese straw hats and T-shirts, badges, caps and posters from every country.

But what has run like a thread through the days, and nights of cultural activities, is the deep longing of the world's women for peace — in every sense of the word. Women in Black held a candle-lit, silent march on Monday calling for world peace.

As has been all too evident, no country is free from violence against women: whether it is female genital mutilation in Somalia, domestic abuse in the United States and Australia, bride-burning in India, trafficking in young girls in the East, imprisonment of dissidents in Tibet, female infanticide in China, and the ongoing armed conflict in Palestine, Bosnia, former Yugoslavia and Cyprus.

The desire for peace is the message that has been strongly conveyed to government leaders as the world conference began work on the draft Platform for Action on Monday. This document is a call for the empowerment of women, for their integration into the mainstream of all areas of society, and for an equal partnership between men and women for the good of society.

At the preparatory conference there was great support for the use of strong language to condemn women abuse. African delegations in particular led the effort to call on governments to address harmful cultural practices that lead to violence against women, and to review civil and customary law so as to reduce legal discriminations against women in such areas as inheritance and property rights.

The 150-page draft document awaits, is the task of the UN World Conference which ends on September 15. By then, it is hoped the final draft can be adopted and that delegates can go back to their home countries with a definite commitment to advance the status of women. And not with just words, but with concrete proposals on how to do this.

South Africa's Deputy Welfare Minister, Geraldine Fraser Moleketi, who is a key member of the country's 25-strong core delegation, said they felt strongly about all the critical areas of concern and would be working hard to achieve global agreement. She was optimistic this could be done.

So many conferences, so much talking. Can this conference, which many think will be the last on women, really deliver?

The Chinese took an oversimplified view of the women's movement and so have many others. My feeling is that if the governments of the world can't reach agreement by September 15, the NGOs who represent the women of the world will never forgive them.

Here is one example of NGO proaction. Korean women here have demanded reparations from the Japanese government for so-called "comfort women" used for sexual slavery by the Japanese army during World War 2.

A group of Japanese women, The International Women's Year Liaison Group, responded. They said: "We apologise for the invasive wars and colonial rule of Japan in the past. We request the Japanese government to restore the honour of women, specifically those who were abused as 'comfort women' by the Japanese military, and to pay them compensation."

There are still conservative elements in world which can hinder the progress of women. These are likely to surface during the deliberations on the draft Platform for Action and include the Vatican, Catholic and Islamic countries and those currently at war or occupying other countries. And those who profit from the growth of the arms industries.

But as Gertrude Mongella, secretary-general of the conference, said: "There is no turning back. All the indications point to a social revolution in the making."

Rural girls 'sold into city slavery'

355A

CT 8/9/95

MELANIE GOSLING
STAFF REPORTER

"SLAVE" syndicates are operating in the Western Cape, recruiting young girls from rural areas with the promise of lucrative employment and then "selling" them to employers who force them to work as servants without pay — sometimes for years.

This was revealed by Mr Mike Sedgwick, regional organiser of the Domestic Workers' Union, who said the practice was particularly rife in Rylands, Athlone and Grassy Park.

"It's slavery. People pay these recruiters between R100 and R200 and the girls are taken off into homes. Some of them live in appalling conditions — in garages or on the floor — and many are locked up when the people go to work. It is very difficult for us to crack this practice because the girls go willingly, and once sold they just disappear.

One slave syndicate victim is 16-year-old Anna Samson of Oudtshoorn, who worked for a family in Crawford for two years without pay. Penniless and with nowhere to go, she finally found the courage to walk out this week.

Could 'take no more'

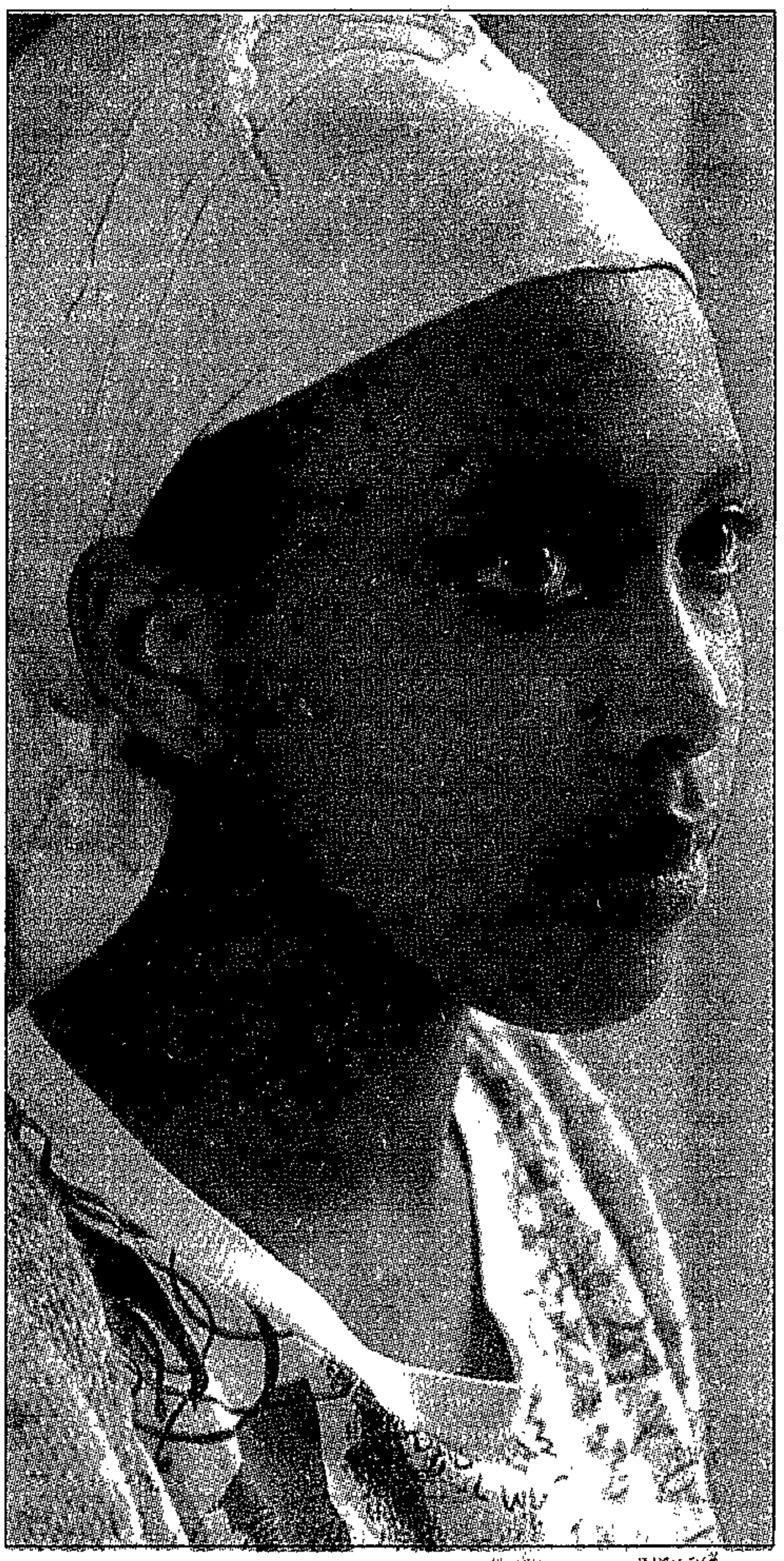
"I left a letter on the kitchen table on Monday. I said I couldn't take it anymore. I didn't know where to go so I walked the streets in Athlone asking for work. One lady said I could sleep at her house," Anna said. The woman took her to Athlone police station where staff informed the Domestic Workers' Union.

Another victim, Anne, was only 14 when a "young white woman", came to the squatter area near Oudtshoorn and offered her a domestic job in Cape Town, at R120 a month. Her grandparents were also to be sent money.

"Me and a friend said yes and were brought here in a taxi. We had to stay in a house in Grassy Park with about 20 other girls. I was the youngest. Others were 16 or 17. After a while they took me to a house in Crawford and the lady there told me I would get R120 a month.

"She bought me some new clothes and that was the first and last thing I ever got from her. I never got any money. The second day she did not like my work and hit me with a broom stick. Sometimes she hit me with her shoe. About every second day she hit me," Anne said.

Anne was forced to clean from 7am to 5.30pm and then bath and feed the children. She stuck it out for two years because she did not know who to turn to.



SLAVE: Anna Samson, 16, of Oudtshoorn, worked for a city family for two years without pay. Anna was recruited from the platteland with about 20 other young girls. ***PICTURE: NIC BOTHMA***

When the law is not enough

PETER FABRICIUS of The Argus Foreign Service in Washington reports on a disquieting new American report on the status of women in South Africa and the gap between good intentions and day-to-day reality.

(355A) ARG 8/9/95

"STAGGERING" numbers of women still suffer daily domestic violence in South Africa despite the commitment of the new government to full equality for women, the New York-based group Human Rights Watch said in its Global Report on women's human rights.

The report, published to coincide with the women's rights conference in Beijing, said that Human Rights Watch (HRW) had sent a fact-finding mission to South Africa in January this year which discovered an "enormous" gap between official policy protecting women and actual practice.

It said South African womens' organisations estimated that as many as one in six South African women is being abused by her partner and took the government and officialdom to task for not fully implementing laws aimed at protecting women.

While recognising the enormous challenges faced by the new government HRW nonetheless remarked that "lasting political and social transformation towards a democratic South Africa can be genuinely achieved only if the ANC-led government shows the same commitment towards eradicating gender-based violence as it does towards racial oppression."

HRW said the 1993 Prevention of Family Violence Act had improved women's access to protection from domestic violence by simplifying and speeding the procedure for getting restraining interdicts against abusive partners.

Under the law an abused woman may get an interdict from a magistrate restraining her abusive partner.

If she then calls the police to complain of further abuse and produces the interdict, they are obliged to arrest the partner.

Women's organisations reported that many magistrates were using the law effectively, although it had inadequacies such as not applying to certain types of intimate relationship including lesbian liaisons or teenage girls living with their parents and not specifying exactly what constituted abuse.

But the main problem was not the law but its implementation by a judicial and police system that was still unsympathetic or even hostile to women who sought redress.

After many interviews with officials and others, the HRW concluded that police officers and court clerks were often unaware of the new law and turned away victims of violence.

Other policemen were aware of the law but chose not to respond promptly and decisively.

Police officers commonly either failed to respond to calls for help or merely warned abusers and prosecutors frequently discouraged women from bringing charges.

"Such mistreatment appears in large part to be due to entrenched attitudes among police and court officials who view domestic violence directed against women as a 'private matter' which need not be taken seriously by the state."

Judicial and police officials received virtually no training in the dynamics of family violence.

By not acting decisely to prevent and punish domestic violence, they were failing to enforce the law equitably and thus violating international human rights law which required equality before the law.

HRW blamed the police for most ot the problems in implementing the new law and said a survey had shown barely 60 percent of station commanders were even aware of it and others did not understand it.

Police often failed to act "because they hold discriminatory views about women," the report said, citing one Sergeant Gwamanda of the Hammarsdale police station near Durban who said the law "would make women to be rude to their husbands and cases of divorce will be more if women know about" it.

In a "particularly notorious case" in June 1994, police had actually brought an abusive husband to a battered women's shelter in Durban, and threatened to break in on his behalf because he claimed his wife had been abducted there by the Advice Desk on Abused Women.

Another problem was that black women especially were reluctant to report abuse to the police whom they still did not trust because of their experiences of them in the apartheid era.

Beijing '95: Strike the women ...

(355A) WM 8-14/9/95

The statistics placed before the UN Women's Conference in Beijing are almost unbelievable. **Robin Wright** reports on the worldwide problems — and the reasons behind them — that are being tackled by the delegates

THE women from all corners of the globe who have convened in Beijing to discuss how to achieve empowerment and equality face a daunting task.

A United Nations survey concludes that, at the current rate of progress, women will not gain economic equality until the year 2490.

Yet the biggest problem for women begins at home, and it often boils down to simple survival.

Worldwide, at the end of the 20th century, staggering numbers of women are still slaves, spoils of war, sexually mutilated and, most of all, victims of abuse in its many brutal forms.

The UN calls the trend "a global epidemic." Indeed, if it weren't for the credibility of the institutions that compiled the data, the numbers would almost be unbelievable.

In Peru, 70 percent of all reported crime involves women beaten by their husbands, says a UN study prepared for the Beijing conference. That figure probably doesn't reflect the true dimensions, since most physical, sexual and especially psychological abuse goes unreported.

Peru is not the exception. In Chile, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka and Tanzania, at least 60 percent of women report being beaten or abused by a male family member or intimate. At least one of three women is beaten or abused in Malaysia, Mexico, South Korea and Zambia, according to *Violence against Women*, a World Bank report.

Victims are not just family members. Female employees in the home are also frequent targets. In the city-state of Kuwait, hundreds of Asian domestics have fled to their embassies after being beaten by their bosses.

"Domestic violence is a leading cause of female injury in almost every country in the world and is typically ignored by the state, or only erratically punished," concludes *The Global Report on Women's Human Rights*, released by Human Rights Watch.

Getting officialdom to pay attention to the problem often seems as difficult as getting the abusers to stop.

Abuse takes other forms besides beating or sexual attack. In India, it includes an increasing number of "dowry deaths", the punishment meted out by in-laws when a bride brings an inadequate dowry in money and goods to her husband's family. And worldwide, roughly 114-million women have had their genitalia mutilated, according to the Population Council.

Growing numbers of girls and women are also being lured, abducted or sold into forced prostitution and involuntary marriages, often at family initiative or with its compliance.

Perhaps the most shocking numbers are the females who don't exist at all. Based on discrepancies in the standard male-female ratio, more than 100-million women are "missing" around the world, some 49-million in China alone, reports the 1995 UN Development Programme survey issued two weeks ago.

Why, in an era of global empowerment and two decades after the first UN Conference on Women in Mexico City mandated change, are most of these problems getting worse, sometimes much worse, and not better?

Perhaps the most shocking numbers are the females who don't exist at all. More than 100-million women are 'missing'

"Most gender-based violence against women is inextricably linked to male power, privilege and control," concludes the UN study prepared for Beijing.

But the culprits are not just sexual deviants or testosterone bullies. In Canada, a judge in British Columbia suspended the sentence of a 33-year-old man convicted of sexually assaulting a three-year-old girl with the comment: "The child was sexually aggressive."

In fact, the problem is not strictly male attitudes and actions. Women, too, are often full or partial accomplices, whether by aborting a female foetus, allowing or urging a daughter's circumcision, not acting when a sister, mother, cousin or aunt is abused, or even by not helping herself.

"Violence against women derives essentially from the lower status accorded to women in the family," says the UN report.

In many countries, children are still taught — implicitly and explicitly, by women as well as men — that males are dominant or superior and violence is acceptable in asserting power and resolving conflict.

"Each society has mechanisms that legitimise, obscure, deny — and therefore perpetuate — violence. Even where a particular act of violence might be deplored, powerful social institutions — the state, families, normative systems that regulate gender relations — collude in maintaining the status quo," concludes *Violence Against Women*. — *Los Angeles Times*



Hillary Clinton: 'Women's rights are human rights' PHOTOGRAPH: DOUG MILLS

... and strike the rockface

COMMENT

"If there is one message that echoes forth from this conference, let it be that human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights."

With that, Hillary Rodham Clinton crystallised the issues that have brought tens of thousands of women to Beijing for the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women.

Her speech this week helped to refocus attention on conference matters: education, health care, reproductive rights, violence against women and girls and denial of human rights.

Clinton also gave a voice to the frustration of delegates of non-governmental organisations, whose meetings have been confined to an area 50km north of Beijing and stifled by heavy and intrusive Chinese security.

She complained that it is indefensible that many NGO delegates who wished to participate in the UN conference have not been able to attend — or have been prohibited from fully taking part.

"Let me be clear," she said. "Freedom means the right of people to assemble, organise and debate openly. It means respecting the views of those who may disagree with the views of their governments."

The UN conference provides a once-in-a-decade opportunity for women from around the world to gather and devise a plan to articulate and direct policies that address their needs. Until Clinton's speech, the issues were obscured by Beijing's heavy-handed tactics, which included barring South African representative Winnie Mandela from opening ceremonies because she was late.

In highlighting abuse and violence against women, Clinton cited many instances, including the thousands of women who are subject to rape as a tactic of terror or prize of war, as in Bosnia. This is one of the many reasons why women's rights are human rights. — *Los Angeles Times*

Saturday Star
September 9 1995

SA women discover they're on the right road

Star 9/9/95 (335A)

Drawn together by a common cause, thousands of women are returning home sadder and wiser after the congress in Huairou. **JILL GOWANS** of the Independent Foreign Service wraps up the proceedings

Huairou – Thousands of women dressed in black came from all walks of life and all over the world to stand in candle-lit silence for an hour this week to mourn violence against women.

In a week in which the French exploded a nuclear bomb and Nato forces bombed Bosnian Serb positions, violence against women, in all its forms, was the issue that united the world's women who came to this remote town, some 45km from central Beijing.

Like so many places – from Sharpeville to Mururoa atoll – Huairou was unknown to the outside world until the China Organising Committee decided at the 11th hour to move the NGO Forum here – and segregate it from the UN world conference being held in the capital city.

"Welcome to tourism holiday spot of Huairou and expect everything to turn out as you wish," said a huge welcoming banner across the entrance.

It wasn't quite so for the locals who were told to limit their use of electricity and piped water – which everyone was advised not to drink – to cope with the thousands of visitors.

Much has been reported about the chaos, and in a stormy conference yesterday, a Chinese woman blasted the foreign media for focusing on the negative issues of the forum.

But, conversely, the local press has only reported the positive – and been at great pains to emphasise the long march of Chinese women towards equality.

Hillary Rodham Clinton's stirring speech which, among other things, criticised Chinese obstructionism, got but a one-line mention in the Communist Party-controlled China Daily.

On the last day of the NGO Forum, the rain came down unremittingly as it has all week – while thousands of women prepared to return home, "OD'd (overdosed) on workshops and information", as one said.

So what has it meant to them? "It's meant looking at the world through women's eyes," said a Norwegian.

"I came here not knowing much about the concerns of the women of the world. I'll never see things quite the same way again. I'll never be able to look at the bombing of Sarajevo without thinking of the women who were here, and who live there.

"We knew about violence against women in our own country," said an Australian delegate. "But we discovered that violence was much more prevalent in the family and in the nations than we'd imagined."

"What has been important for me," said a delegate from Zimbabwe, "is that we have realised we are part of the world. Coming here has created this enormous network we can call on in time of trouble. Through modern technology and e-mail, we can continue to share our concerns and lobby at the highest level."

"It wasn't that chaotic as much as exhausting and overwhelming," said Johannesburg delegate Anu Pillay of People Opposing Women Abuse. "There was so much to see, do and be a part of that I had to remain focused on the issue I came here for. I felt some of our people (a 150-strong delegation) might not have been able to deal with that challenge.

"Some of them hadn't been to Dakar (the Africa regional conference last November) and weren't prepared for the multiple choices and the logistics of getting around.

"I found out we're on the right track and in step with global thinking when it comes to strategies in eradicating violence against women."

Said Sharda Pillay, also of Johannesburg, representing the Council for Economic Empowerment of Women in Africa: "I'm hoping very strong statements about women in poverty will come out of the NGO. And the recognition that economic empowerment is the base for all other forms of liberation. That came through very strongly at different workshops.

"I did a presentation at a workshop on women's reponses to economic policies in Africa where I was asked to speak about poverty alleviation, but changed this to poverty eradication, because unless you have a national policy, you're just applying a Band Aid.

"I could speak about the RDP as a national strategy, which was wonderful. You realise just how rich and comprehensive it is compared with many other countries. In truth, there were lots of reasons why we, as South Africans, could hold our heads up high."

WOMEN ON THE MOVE

ST 10/9/95

Despite the rain, despite the Chinese police and despite the Western media, the women's conference in Beijing was a great success, writes GRAHAM HUTCHINGS

(335A)

DAMP in everything but their spirits, thousands of women from around the world braved a final day of rain on Friday to end their forum in Huairou with a burst of rap singing, a dragon dance and a display of martial arts.

It was a sodden end to the United Nations World Conference on Women which, for many of those taking part, seems to have been an inspiring 10 days devoted to thrashing out strategies of "female empowerment" in a school complex 40km north of Beijing.

"When people ask you what happened in Huairou, tell them about the outstanding women who came here," said Supra Masdit, a leading organiser of the forum, to a wet but cheerful crowd at the closing ceremony.

"When you go home, press your governments to fight for equality."

The activists, said to number 31 000, mustered another of the cheers that have sustained them through hours of torrential rain, poor transport arrangements and, for some, surveillance, filming and following on the part of China's security police.

Complaints about these problems sparked talk of a possible boycott last weekend, but it quickly melted away when the organisers won new assurances from their Chinese hosts.

A senior official was unrepentant about police harassment this week, telling reporters it was necessary to "protect national sovereignty and dignity".

Xu Zhijian, a leading member of China's organising committee, said: We guaranteed freedom of speech ... But we strictly opposed the minority who, driven by ulterior motives, tried to create incidents and distort facts."

This was a reference to a group of Tibetan women exiles and various human rights groups who used their presence in China to draw attention to the host government's failings.

They were harassed at almost every turn — a clear sign that China's tolerance of free speech is both temporary and strictly limited to causes outside of its own frontiers.

There was further proof of this on Thursday when police bundled three television journalists from Hong Kong into a van as they were filming a human rights group delivering a petition to Jose Ayala-Lasso, the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights.

They were released after a cameraman "received education" and apologised for hitting a member of the conference staff, the official New China News Agency said.

The petition called on the UN to implement the 1993 Vienna Declaration on Human Rights.

The difficulties encountered by groups pursuing sensitive causes affected only a minority of the thousands of women of all ages, creeds and religions who turned the otherwise sleepy township of Huairou into their temporary home.

"We had a great time, despite the rain — and despite the mud, despite whatever CNN reported," said Amil Masda of the Philippines.

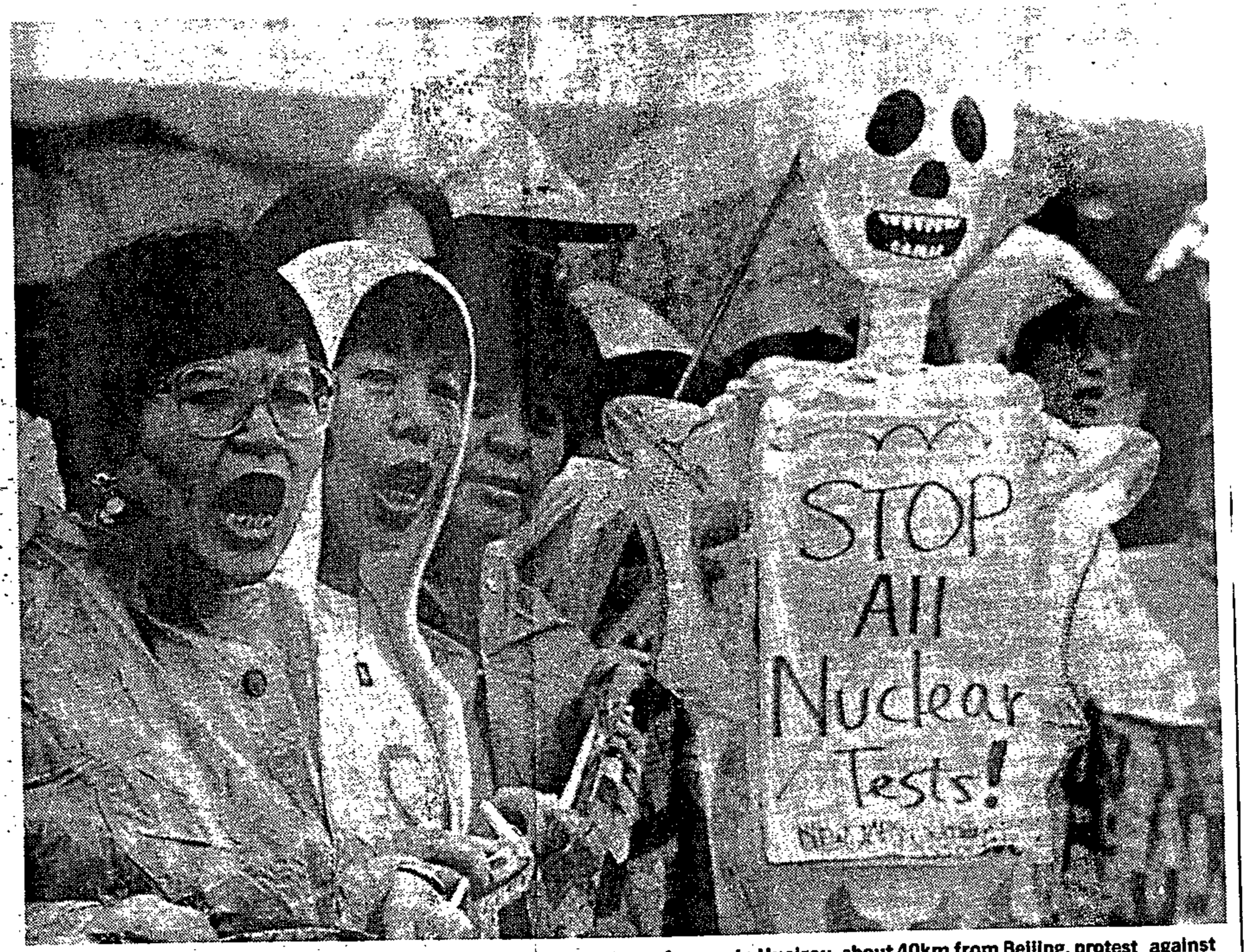
Her remarks were part of a growing chorus of criticism about the allegedly negative coverage by the Western media. The Chinese government was happy to join in, seeing in it a chance to reverse some of the damage done to its international image.

Whatever the justice of the complaints, there is no doubt that many women found the hundreds of workshops, discussion groups and protests they staged a thoroughly worthwhile exercise.

Netta Leah, a British teacher from Staffordshire, said: "It was a brilliant time. The Chinese have been friendly and great hosts.

"The one thing I am angry about is that there are only about 200 women from the UK here. The Americans sent 13 000 and there were 5 000 from Africa."

Sandra Boston, an American, told a group of fellow activists that before setting out she had asked herself: "Why go to Beijing?" Her reply, now that the forum was over, was simply that she wanted "to be among that number" — a cue for those sitting round her to start singing *When the Saints go Marching In.* — © *The Telegraph, London*



DON'T KILL THE WORLD ... Japanese delegates to the women's conference in Huairou, about 40km from Beijing, protest against French nuclear tests in the Pacific. The 31 000 delegates to the conference have spent days discussing gender issues Picture: AP

US women still victims

(355A)

By Judith H Dobrzynski

NEW YORK TIMES

New York — When it comes to the world of 'work, the mood of America's women appears to have taken a pessimistic turn. They believe overwhelmingly that while women are better off than they used to be, they continue to face restrictions and discrimination, according to a new poll made public yesterday.

Of the 3 000 women polled, 84 percent agreed that "regardless of changes that may have occurred, women still face more restrictions in life than men do". A total of 77 percent said sexual discrimination, although more subtle and less open than it used to be, "remains a serious problem".

Harassment CT(BR)13/9/95

And 76 percent said there was a lot or some sexual harassment in the workplace.

Even though those results suggest that women believe there is room for improvement, the poll also shows that women do not have as much hope as they once had. Only 56 percent see the role of women as continuing to change, down from 73 percent in 1990.

Sheila Wellington, the president of Catalyst, a nonprofit women's research and advocacy group, said she was not surprised by the results.

"Women believe that there is much that remains to be done," she said.

Women compromise over funds

ST 14/9/95 (355A)

BEIJING: Delegates at the World Women's Conference reached a compromise agreement yesterday on the key issue of how to finance commitments, with "new and additional" resources being pledged by governmental and private sources.

The G-77 group of poorer countries, supported by the Vatican, has insisted on more aid to fund their social development programmes, saying that the conference's Platform for Action should only be implemented if aid is provided.

Developed nations rejected the link.

The crucial funding issue was one of the last remaining areas of dispute in the cornerstone text of the 10-yearly gathering.

The text, agreed in informal meetings, also calls for "effective development-oriented solutions" to relieve Third World nations' external debt problems.

But it makes clear that measures to reduce and cancel such burdens would not go beyond the scope agreed by the Paris Club in December.

An earlier draft urged multilateral financial institutions to "cancel or substantially reduce" debt burdens, without reference to the Paris Club agreement.

The new text has yet to be approved by the conference's main committee and the plenary session, during which member states are still technically able to raise objections.

The United States, which is seeking to cut its massive budget deficit, had been most strongly opposed to wording suggesting that Western governments should increase aid payments.

US ambassador to the UN's Geneva-based Economic and Social Council, Mr Victor Marrero, said yesterday the delegation was satisfied with the agreed text. — Sapa-AFP



SPEAKER: Ms Palesa Beverly Ortale, from South Africa, talks to reporters after speaking at a UN Women's Conference plenary session in Beijing yesterday. **PICTURE: AP**

2 breakthroughs at women's conference

Beijing – The United Nations women's conference achieved two breakthroughs yesterday as it tried to remove some of the final issues bogging down agreement on a 10-year blueprint on women's rights.

Islamic conservatives agreed to a compromise which ended a deadlock on inheritance rights for girls while industrialised nations fended off footing the bill for the blueprint Platform for Action.

The breakthroughs came in emergency sessions aimed at overcoming issues holding up progress at the UN Fourth World Women's Conference in Beijing which closes tomorrow.

But two last controversies over sexual preferences and the phrase "cultural particularities" threatened further delays.

Wrangling between conservative Islamic nations, spearheaded by Iran and Sudan, and Western governments had bogged down late last night. The stalemate ended when negotiators decided to define inheritance rights in terms that oppose discrimination rather than ensure equal rights, officials said.

Iranian delegate Turan Jamshidian said: "Equity is okay, equality is not okay," she said. "We will go on our way," she said, hinting that Iran may append reservations to the final document if it is not happy with this new phrasing. Iran says the Koran dictates unequal inheritance rights and proposed adopting the word "equity" instead of "equality". – Reuter.

► Document – page 8

Star 4/9/95 (355A)

2 breakthroughs at women's conference

Beijing – The United Nations women's conference achieved two breakthroughs yesterday as it tried to remove some of the final issues bogging down agreement on a 10-year blueprint on women's rights.

Islamic conservatives agreed to a compromise which ended a deadlock on inheritance rights for girls while industrialised nations fended off footing the bill for the blueprint Platform for Action.

The breakthroughs came in emergency sessions aimed at overcoming issues holding up progress at the UN Fourth World Women's Conference in Beijing which closes tomorrow.

But two last controversies over sexual preferences and the phrase "cultural particularities" threatened further delays.

Wrangling between conservative Islamic nations, spearheaded by Iran and Sudan, and Western governments had bogged down late last night. The stalemate ended when negotiators decided to define inheritance rights in terms that oppose discrimination rather than ensure equal rights, officials said.

Iranian delegate Turan Jamshidian said: "Equity is okay, equality is not okay," she said. "We will go on our way," she said, hinting that Iran may append reservations to the final document if it is not happy with this new phrasing. Iran says the Koran dictates unequal inheritance rights and proposed adopting the word "equity" instead of "equality". – Reuter.

► Document – page 8

Star 14/9/95 (355A)



First for lesbians ... Palesa Beverley Ditsie, a 23-year-old lesbian from South Africa, gestures dramatically during her speech in which she appealed for gay rights at the United Nations World Conference on Women in China yesterday. It was the first time a lesbian had addressed a UN conference.

CT 15/9/95

Compromise on sexual freedom ends impasse

(355A)

BEIJING: An 11th-hour compromise on sexual freedom early on Friday broke a deadlock that had bogged down a 10-year blueprint on women's rights at the world women's conference.

The breakthrough enabled proponents and opponents of new sexual rights to claim victory on the Platform for Action and its shorter preamble, the Beijing Declaration.

Compromise was won when conservative Islamic nations agreed to drop a phrase on cultural differences that opponents said could undermine or weaken the universal nature of human rights in the document.

For its part, a European Union bloc gave up a demand to enshrine sexual freedoms in the declaration, which is regarded by delegates as a vital rallying cry for sexual equality and women's rights.

Signatories agree to "ensure the full enjoyment by women and girls of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and take effective action against violations of those rights and freedoms", the compromise preamble says.

A UN official said the bargain resolved almost all outstanding disputes over the language of the two documents. — Reuter

Beijing conference delegates say 'Women are waking up'

Star 15/9/95 (33SA)

Beijing – Declaring that "women are waking up", women today were ending the world's biggest women's gathering with pledges to push for change in mud-hut villages and corporate boardrooms alike.

"There isn't a single country in the world — not one — where men and women enjoy equal opportunities," Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland told delegates to the Fourth World Conference on Women in a closing speech.

Before adjourning, the 5 000 delegates from 189 countries were to vote on the conference platform, which was hotly debated into the pre-dawn hours.

Lesbian rights, which were championed by the United States and some European countries, but denounced by the Vatican and many Islamic countries, were eventually dropped from the final draft.

The 150-page platform contains especially hard-hitting sections advocating sexual freedom and denouncing violence against women.

Negotiators said they hoped that those provisions could be used to fight wide-ranging abuses like trafficking in women, genital mutilation of girls, even pressure to have sex.

The platform is not binding like a treaty, but it is meant to serve as a guide for governments.

Amid the closing-day pomp, some organisers spoke of fears of a conservative backlash over the conference's outcome.

"Many of these issues — reproductive health, sexuality — were so heated and so controversial, there is a sign of conservative reaction — worrying about liberating women too much," said Patricia Licuanan of the Philippines, the head of the conference's main committee and of the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

"I think the women's movement is doing quite well and making some headway ... and some people are saying that we should not rush things," she said. "Some people are getting scared about too much change too fast."

The platform describes the family as the basic unit of society and urges that it be strengthened, protected and supported. But conservatives were angered by a notation that "various forms of the family exist".

They say that is an implied blessing of homosexual unions, single parents, people living together and out-of-wedlock children.

"The document ... seeks to destroy the family, totally ignores marriage, minimises the importance of motherhood," said Christine Vollmer of the World Organisation for the Family, based in Washington DC.

Despite the divisions, Licuanan hailed the conference as a show of determination and unity oL the overriding goal of improving the lives of women everywhere.

"It shows women are waking up and are concerned about issues they used to take for granted," she said.

In a closing speech, World Bank president James Wolfensohn pledged about $900-million (about R3 240-million) – a year for girls' education, saying that will ultimately strengthen women's role in world leadership. Sapa-AP.

1-m sign petition

Beijing – The UN Development Fund for Women (Unifem) formally launched a campaign yesterday to end violence against women, a worldwide scourge as old as mankind.

A petition of one million signatures calling for the elimination of violence against women had been presented to UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Jose Ayala-Lasso, Unifem spokesman Roxanna Carrillo said.

Violence against women was a human rights violation affecting women of all races in both public and private. It ranged from female genital mutilation in African and Islamic countries to abortion of female foetuses, slavery, trafficking, mail-order brides, rape, infanticide, sexual harassment, and violence in the home. – Reuter.

Up-to-date SA women in campaign for poor

Star 15/9/95 (355A)

South Africa's women are able to use surprising advantages when it comes to the heated issues of Beijing, writes Jill Gowans

As the newest member of the United Nations, South Africa came to the party with two gifts: the Bill of Rights and the Interim Constitution.

And the 25-member core government delegation to the UN World Conference on Women has been struck by how advanced these are, even compared with some so-called liberal Western countries.

Issues that have caused protracted, heated debate – and delayed the final Platform for Action for one day – are already non-negotiable in South Africa.

But allied with Africa and the G7 countries, delegates have found themselves lobbying on behalf of those nations that still have far to go in terms of women's equality.

For instance, the controversial sections of the document – which have been vigorously opposed by Catholic and Muslim countries – include sexual orientation or gay rights.

South Africa already has protection for this group.

Another bone of contention, customary law, is overridden by the Bill of Rights and a new abortion law, currently in the pipeline, will make safe and legal abortions more accessible than does the current Act.

On the economic side, South Africa already has the Reconstruction and Development Programme in place.

Though not specifically aimed at women, it should, in reality, uplift large numbers of them as they are the majority of the poor.

Sub-Saharan Africa is up to its ears in foreign debt largely because of the so-called Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

These, as has been widely publicised here, are the major causes of the "feminisation" of poverty as the programmes demand harsh economic measures in the recipient countries, and include cutbacks in state social spending, currency devaluation, and the switch from subsistence agriculture to cash crops for export.

All of which have further impoverished women who, for instance, grow most of the food in developing countries.

South Africa does not have huge foreign debts and from the African example is cautious about foreign loans.

But the Non-Governmental Organisations' delegates who are accredited to the world conference will today show solidarity with less-fortunate countries.

They will wear a white garment – the Chinese colour for mourning – and take part in the presentation to the World Bank president of a petition calling for changes in World Bank and IMF policies.

But there is no room for complacency.

"Laws, conferences and conventions are there as enabling instruments," said Dr Nkosozana Zuma, Health Minister and leader of the Government delegation.

"Our struggles on the ground are what is going to make a difference. We have a gender-sensitive constitution but we have to make sure gender is mainstreamed into all our policies.

"And it's not just government. Women in industry and civil society, especially the NGOs, have to make sure they use the Platform for Action for women's empowerment and advancement."

As a Catholic she has not found the right to legal abortion – as contained in the Platform for Action – a bind.

"My attitude is based on reality, not morality. I see us offering a service to protect the lives of women.

"More than 30 000 women in South Africa have backstreet abortions and the thrust of the new law will be to make legal abortion more accessible to poor women who struggle to get access to one doctor, let alone the two whose signatures are needed under current law.

"We have been promised an Office on the Status of Women and hopefully the president (Mandela) will be able to lend his weight to implementation.

"I think it all depends on how women, and all of us, go about it. I'm very optimistic. Ten years ago I was in exile and we were grappling with all sorts of issues. We didn't know then that women would be cabinet ministers and deputy ministers and that 25% of members of parliament would be women."

Said Ribbon Mosholi of Pretoria, another government delegate:

"We will go home with a document that will show that the gains we have made as South African women will continue.

"I've learned from other developing countries that we had better develop slowly and be sure we can sustain it, rather than opt for a quick-fix.

"But even if the Government is gender-sensitive – to some degree – it doesn't mean all men and women understand what we're trying to achieve.

"I see the rise of Christian and Muslim fundamentalism at this conference as another kind of Cold War. It has polarised people.

"But people in South Africa have to understand why we opposed them, especially as our society is very religious. "The bottom line is that we couldn't go back on what we've already achieved through hard work." – The Star Foreign Service.

Lesbians lose out

☐ Gay lobby fails but women's conference approves right to contraception and abortion

(355A) ARG 15/9/95

JILL GOWANS of
The Argus Foreign Service
reports from Beijing.

LESBIAN rights were finally removed from the Platform for Action which will be adopted today by the UN World Conference on Women.

It was defeat for the vociferous lobby which has brought the issue onto the world stage by demanding these rights be included in the document.

Said a Canadian activist: "We do not see why we should wait another decade (until the next world conference) to have the rights of lesbians explicitly recognised."

But they were not the only disappointed group. The Vatican, plus Catholic and Muslim countries were unsuccessful in removing women's right to contraception and abortion. But an inclusion in the text affirming a country's individual cultural and religious practices weighs this in the balance.

Just before sunrise today the main committee headed by Patricia Licuanan of the Philippines cleared the remaining contentious language from the Platform for Action and the Beijing Declaration.

Agreement was reached on such difficult issues as financial resources for the Platform's implementation, macroeconomic measures to eradicate poverty, nuclear testing as a cause of environmental degradation, and unsustainable patterns of consumption.

The thorny issue of the right of countries to their own religious, ethical and cultural values was, at the eleventh hour, included in the text. Many observers believe this negates important parts of the document which say that women's rights should be paramount.

An important breakthrough was the inclusion of text reaffirming that all couples and individuals have the right to decide on the number, spacing and timing of their children. This means, among other things, access to contraception and abortion, a right that has been vigorously condemned by the Vatican and Catholic countries.

On the issue of "sexual orientation" or gay rights, South Africa spoke out for them, going against many African countries, including Sudan, Nigeria, Senegal and Ghana who do not want to give rights to lesbians. South Africa already protects the rights of gay people.

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, who have come in for much criticism because of their loan programmes, are called upon to structure their packages with women and children in mind.

In the section setting out the global framework for the conference, the committee approved a paragraph asserting that excessive military expenditure and investments had reduced resources available for development.

The document also emphasises the "great potential of the media to promote the advancement of women".



UNITED WE STAND: Lesbian caucus members chant slogans in Beijing — but their lobbying was in vain.

SA leads the world

With the Bill of Rights and the interim constitution South African women have shown the world how minority rights can be protected. The tip of Africa is way ahead of even some Western liberal countries, reports JILL GOWANS of The Argus Foreign Service from Beijing.

AS the newest member of the United Nations, South Africa came to the party with two gifts: the Bill of Rights and the interim constitution.

And the 25-member core government delegation to the UN world conference on women has been publicised here, are the major causes of the "feminisation" of poverty as the programmes demand harsh economic measures in the recipient countries.

These include cutbacks in State social spending, currency devaluation, and the sw[illegible]

will go home with a document that will show that the gains we have made as South African women will continue. I've learned from other developing countries that we had better develop slowly and be sure we can sustain it, rather than opt for a

24 HOURS

'No country is free from gender apartheid'

The Argus Foreign Service

NO country in the world was free from gender apartheid and oppression of women, Norwegian Prime Minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland told the United Nations World Conference on Women today.

She was among four main speakers on the final day of the conference before the adoption of the Platform for Action.

"We must go back with this document to the shanty towns of the Third World, to the boardrooms and suburbia of North America and Europe, to all communities, to governments and to the United Nations headquarters to make sure that not only do women become free and equal to make choices in their lives, but that they make use of that right," she said.

"We need women at all levels of national and local government. When I became prime minister 15 years ago it was a cultural shock for many Norwegians. Now I hear that four-year-olds ask their mothers: "But can a man become prime minister?"

Addressing what she said were some of the most compelling elements of the document, she said: "We agree women's education is essential. School for girls is one of the unlocking keys for development.

"The West has been accused here of attempting to impose its cultural patterns as the international model. But there are limits to what countries can expect the international community to accept or condone — practices which these countries claim are their cultural and religious rights.

"Violence a[illegible]nst women —

tices weighs this in the balance.

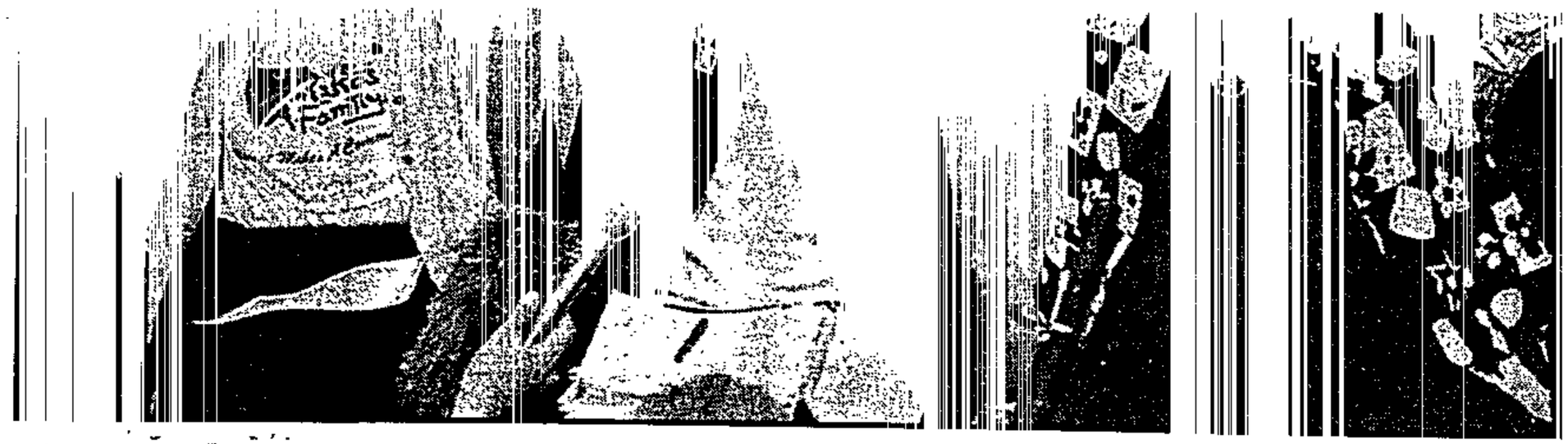
Just before sunrise today the main committee headed by Patricia Licuanan of the Philippines cleared the remaining contentious language from the Platform for Action and the Beijing Declaration.

Agreement was reached on such difficult issues as financial resources for the Platform's implementation, macroeconomic measures to eradicate poverty, nuclear testing as a cause of environmental degradation, and unsustainable patterns of consumption.

The thorny issue of the right of countries to their own religious, ethical and cultural values was, at the eleventh hour, included in the text. Many observers believe this negates important parts of the document which say that women's rights should be paramount.

An important breakthrough was the inclusion of text reaffirming that all couples and individuals have the right to decide on the number, spacing and timing of their children. This means, among other things, access to contraception and abortion, a right that has been vigorously condemned by the Vatican and Catholic countries.

On the issue of "sexual orientation" or gay rights, South Africa spoke out for them, going against many African countries, including Sudan, Nigeria, Senegal and Ghana who do not want to give rights to lesbians. South Africa already protects the rights of gay people.



UNITED WE STAND: Lesbian caucus members chant slogans in Beijing — but their lobbying was in vain.

(3SSN ARG 15/9/95

SA leads the world

With the Bill of Rights and the interim constitution South African women have shown the world how minority rights can be protected. The tip of Africa is way ahead of even some Western liberal countries, reports JILL GOWANS of The Argus Foreign Service from Beijing.

AS the newest member of the United Nations, South Africa came to the party with two gifts: the Bill of Rights and the interim constitution.

And the 25-member core government delegation to the UN world conference on women has been struck by how advanced these are, even compared with some so-called liberal Western countries.

Issues which have caused protracted, heated debate — and delayed the final Platform for Action for one day — are already non-negotiable in South Africa. But, allied with Africa and the G7 countries, delegates have found themselves lobbying on behalf of those nations which still have far to go in terms of women's equality.

For instance, the controversial sections of the document — which have been vigorously opposed by Catholic and Muslim countries — include sexual orientation or gay rights. South Africa already has protection for this group.

Another bone of contention, customary law, is over-ridden by the Bill of Rights, and a new abortion law, currently in the pipeline, will make safe and legal abortions more accessible than does the current Act.

On the economic side, South Africa already has the Reconstruction and Development Programme in place. Though not specifically aimed at women, it should, in reality, uplift large numbers of women as they are the majority of the poor.

Sub-Saharan Africa is up to its ears in foreign debt largely because of the so-called Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. These, as has been widely publicised here, are the major causes of the "feminisation" of poverty as the programmes demand harsh economic measures in the recipient countries.

These include cutbacks in State social spending, currency devaluation, and the switch from subsistence agriculture to cash crops for export. All of which have further impoverished women, who, for instance, grow most of the food in developing countries.

South Africa does not have huge foreign debts, and, from the African example, is cautious about foreign loans.

Nevertheless, the Non-Governmental Organisations' delegates who are accredited to the world conference will today show its solidarity with less-fortunate countries. They will wear a white garment — the Chinese colour for mourning — and take part in the presentation to the World Bank president of a petition calling for changes in World Bank and IMF policies.

But there is no room for complacency. "Laws, conferences and conventions are there as enabling instruments, said Dr Nkosozana Zuma, Health Minister and leader of the government delegation. "Our struggles on the ground are what is going to make a difference.

"We have a gender-sensitive Constitution but we have to make sure gender is mainstreamed into all our policies. And it's not just government. Women in industry and civil society, especially the NGOs, have to make sure they use the Platform for Action for women's empowerment and advancement."

Said Ribbon Mosholi of Pretoria, another government delegate: "We will go home with a document that will show that the gains we have made as South African women will continue. I've learned from other developing countries that we had better develop slowly and be sure we can sustain it, rather than opt for a quick-fix.

"But even if the Government is gender-sensitive — to some degree - it doesn't mean that all men and women understand what we're trying to achieve. I personally see the rise of Christian and Muslim fundamentalism at this conference as another kind of Cold War. It has polarised people.

"But people in South Africa have to understand why we opposed them, especially as our society is very religious.

"The bottom line is that we couldn't go back on what we've already achieved through hard work for women in our existing laws and Bill of Rights."

"We've got the framework. We've got the history. We've got the vision," said Judy Fortuin of the National Progressive Primary Health Care Network, an NGO which was accredited to the world conference. "We now have to transcend what we have in text to a living reality."

"I think it was strategically the wrong thing to do to only have women in our government delegation. They should have brought Cyril (Ramaphosa).

"Unless we create a new structure, unless we feminise the world, nothing will change.

"We want the feminine side to dominate. Only then will there be peace and the eradication of poverty and violence against women."

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, who have come in for much criticism because of their loan programmes, are called upon to structure their packages with women and children in mind.

In the section setting out the global framework for the conference, the committee approved a paragraph asserting that excessive military expenditure and investments had reduced resources available for development.

The document also emphasises the "great potential of the media to promote the advancement of women".

day.

She was among four main speakers on the final day of the conference before the adoption of the Platform for Action.

"We must go back with this document to the shanty towns of the Third World, to the boardrooms and suburbia of North America and Europe, to all communities, to governments and to the United Nations headquarters to make sure that not only do women become free and equal to make choices in their lives, but that they make use of that right," she said.

"We need women at all levels of national and local government. When I became prime minister 15 years ago it was a cultural shock for many Norwegians. Now I hear that four-year-olds ask their mothers: "But can a man become prime minister?"

Addressing what she said were some of the most compelling elements of the document, she said: "We agree women's education is essential. School for girls is one of the unlocking keys for development.

"The West has been accused here of attempting to impose its cultural patterns as the international model. But there are limits to what countries can expect the international community to accept or condone — practices which these countries claim are their cultural and religious rights.

"Violence against women — in a domestic situation — can be said to be part of a cultural pattern, even in my own country. But the State becomes an accomplice if this kind of violence, for instance, becomes accepted as a cultural pattern of behaviour as opposed to women's human rights.

"Genital mutilation of girls is just that — mutilation. It does not become acceptable because it is said to be part of a cultural pattern."

Without mentioning China by name, she commented on the "tragic testimonies" of pre-natal sex selection and fatal neglect of infant girls and asked the question: "Why are there astonishingly more boys than girls in certain countries?

"The allegation that this conference is against motherhood and the family is plainly absurd. Greater equality in the family, I believe, means better lives for men, women and children.

"Today we recognise that poverty has a gender bias and increasingly discriminates between men and women. It is high time that we genderise economic policy and government budgets."

Referring to the Catholic and Muslim lobby against the issue of "reproductive rights" as contained in the Platform for Action, she said: "We managed to erect a dyke against the stormy waves."

Women employees focus of forum

ARG 15/9/95 (356A)

Municipal Staff

A WOMEN'S Forum, to be chaired by deputy mayor Theresa Solomon, will look at problems women council employees experience and ways of enabling councillors to become public representatives.

Executive committee chairman, Llewellyn van Wyk, said that while the council had always been committed to being an equal-opportunity authority, it was time to show how this was being put into practice.

The human resources department was asked to draft a report recording all the progress made by the council during the last five years on all matters affecting women in local government.

Mr Van Wyk said that while the council's affirmative action policy covered aspects of gender equality, issues such as sexual harassment, home ownership, medical aid and adult education should also be looked at.

"We will have to see if funds from existing budgets could be set aside for the establishment of a Women's Forum under the chairpersonship of Mrs Solomon."

● The City Council will soon be saving thousands of rands on the price of its airfares as negotiations are underway to enter into a commercial agreement with South African Airways.

The council's executive committee will be looking at different proposals for cost reductions put forward by SAA, and will decide on a particular package at their next meeting.

Leon Markovitz said it was time the council used its strong corporate muscle to get reductions.

A possible agreement would be based on the principle of the Voyager arrangements the airline had in place for individual frequent flyers, but in the council's case, the credits gained by officials and councillors would be transfered to the council.

● Old City Council computers, which are usually sold by auction, will now be donated to schools in deprived areas through the Adopt-a-School Project, run by the Computer Society of South Africa.

Most of the personal computers have been replaced either because they are faulty or are no longer able to run the correct software.

The council's executive committee decided that, as part of its affirmative action policy and the reconstruction and development programme, they would be better used at the schools.

Exco chairman Llewellyn van Wyk said the object of the project was to create an awareness of computers within under-privileged schools and to create the infrastructure with which existing education could be supplemented.

Absolute sexual rights

(355A) Sowetan 15/9/95

Despite disagreement on some issues the women's Beijing conference highlights the main issue of women's needs, reports **Marcus Eliason** of *Sapa-AP*

BEIJING – Even as delegates at the United Nations women's conference in China bargained furiously yesterday over the content of their closing document, a chorus of critics weighed in: Too liberal. Too conservative. Not enough money. Too much sex.

The two-week conference, the world's biggest women's gathering, was to end today with calls for delegates from 189 countries to work to make its goals, large and small, a reality in their homelands.

Let little girls go to village schools as often as boys, delegates urged. Punish those who rape women as a means of waging war. Lend poor women seed money to start small businesses that can enrich whole communities.

Discrimination against lesbians

Heading into the final hours of work on the platform, several issues still remained unresolved, conference organisers said, including one of the most contentious: a call to end discrimination against lesbians.

If approved, it would be the first such statement ever enshrined in a UN document.

Lesbian activists said they felt they had made progress simply by raising the issue of discrimination against them, but acknowledged yesterday they were growing impatient.

A straightforward plea

"Our plea is a very straightforward one – not for new rights, not for special rights, but to have the human rights that countries around the world have said all people should enjoy," Shelagh Day, a Canadian lesbian rights activist, told reporters.

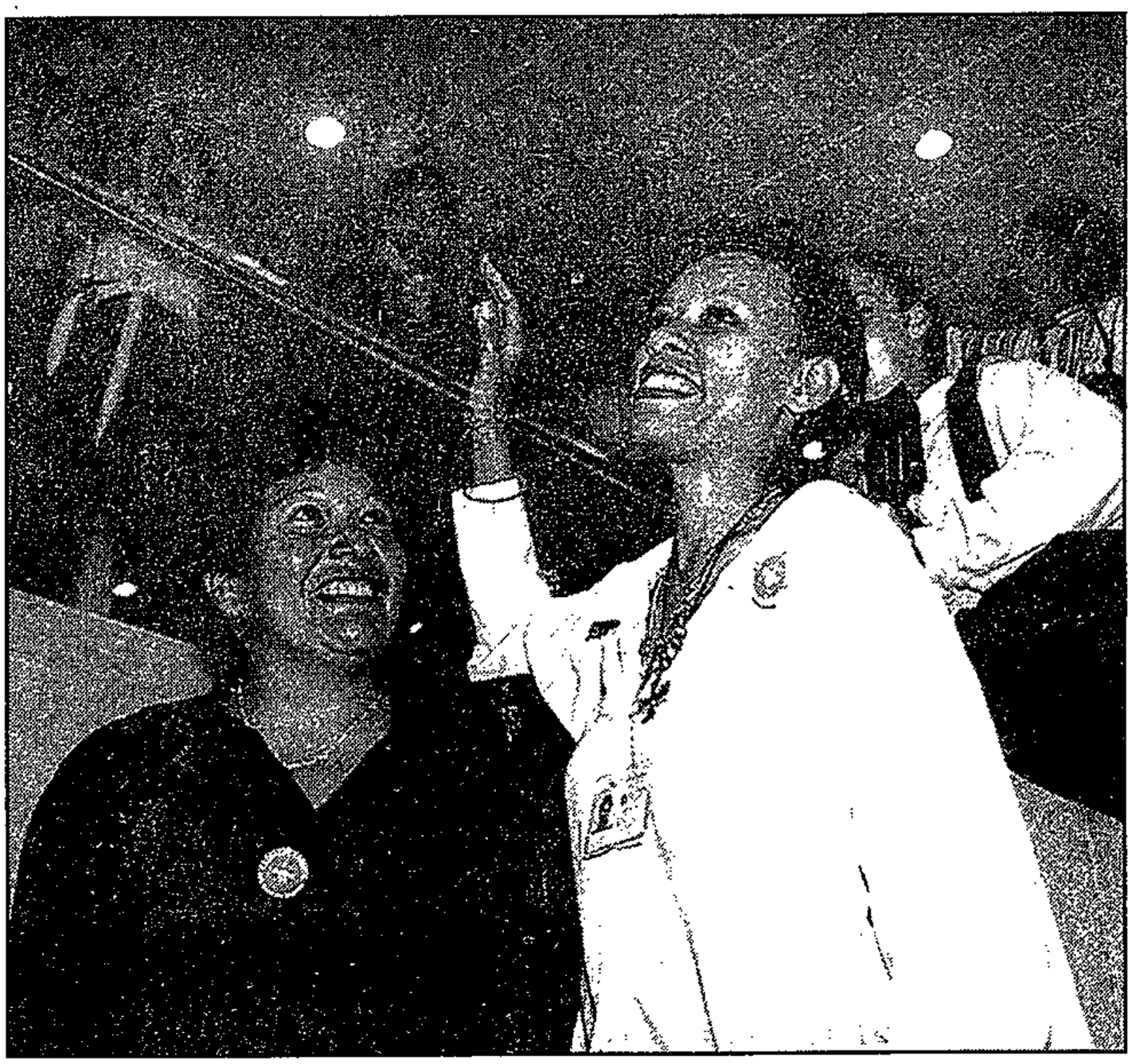
The women's conference is held only once a decade and Day said: "We do not see why we should wait another decade to have the rights of lesbians explicitly recognised in the platform."

Others, though, say the platform goes too far in promoting sexual freedoms. The Vatican – which has kept a low profile but lobbied hard behind the scenes – said yesterday that many delegations object in particular to the platform's section on health.

Main concern for women

"It is only focusing on sexual things," spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls complained. "You ignore what is the main concern for women in Nigeria, in Zimbabwe and in India and so on – that is tropical diseases and elementary and basic health services."

Navarro also criticised rich nations like the United States, Japan, Canada and European Union countries for not committing more money to help developing countries.



Ms Palesa Ditsie (right), a 23-year-old lesbian from South Africa, waves to supporters after a ground-breaking speech at the plenary session of the UN Women's Conference in Beijing. Next to her is a lesbian friend, Ms Rebecca Sevilla of Peru. PIC: SOWETAN

Throughout the conference, predominantly Catholic countries have often aligned themselves with mostly Muslim nations to fight provisions they believe would encourage immorality.

That theme was carrying through to the conference's end. The Sudanese state minister for social planning Ms Mariam Osman told reporters she was distressed at what she termed "absolute sexual rights" being part of the platform. That was apparently in reference to a controversial statement calling for women to be able to make sexual choices free of "violence, coercion or discrimination".

Negotiators said the provision could be used as the basis for many different laws in different countries, against everything from wife-beating to trafficking in women.

Twenty-three countries said on Wednesday night they would lodge objections in some form to that provision in the final version of the platform, which is non-binding but intended to serve as a guide for governments.

The document's defenders said debate over a few high-profile issues has tended to draw attention away from wide areas of agreement on the need to improve women's lives everywhere.

Conference spokeswoman Ms Therese Gastaut calling the document a "solid, strong text".

Even if two dozen countries out of nearly 200 object to a few provisions scattered throughout a 150-page document, there is still agreement on the vast majority of the platform, she told reporters yesterday.

gets some fresh air from SA women

(35SA) WM 15-21/9/95

Some activists criticised the South African delegation for failing to take a strong stand on issues on which it differed with its negotiating partners. But Zuma dismissed such complaints.

"South Africa has experienced the worst form of discrimination that any country can ever experience," she said. "We will make sure that no one is ever discriminated against on the basis of individual preference in our country, regardless of how any other country sees this issue."

In the controversy with Muslim countries over whether boys and girls should have equal inheritance rights, South Africa vowed to stand firm.

Muslim countries said they couldn't agree to equal inheritance rights in the Platform for Action being negotiated at the conference because, under their legal systems, males have greater financial responsibilities after a bereavement.

South Africa threw its weight behind a Southern African Development Community (SADC) initiative to ensure that this reference was not watered down.

"South African women fought for equal inheritance rights in our new Constitution," said Deputy Minister of Social Welfare Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi. The issue was "non-negotiable", she added.

Another potentially tricky issue was the call by G77 countries for new and additional resources to support the Platform of Action, along with calls for debt reduction by rich countries.

After decades of international isolation, South Africa is one of the few African countries that does not have a major external debt problem and it is wary of foreign aid. The European Union lobbied the South African delegation to tone down the G77 demands for more money.

Overall, the South African delegates had their strongest impact in smaller working groups.

Klugman, who works for the Johannesburg-based Women's Health Project, played a key role in the contact group formed to hammer out agreement on the concept of sexual rights.

The Cairo Population Conference last year broke new ground in defining reproductive health, reproductive rights and sexual health, but could not reach agreement on sexual rights.

Although the use of this term could still not be agreed in Beijing, the contact group got agreement that "human rights of women include their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality".

While sexual health refers to services, sexual rights "are about the integrity of the body".

Monjake Gumbi, legal adviser to Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, raised serious objections to an attempt to discard references to dangerous weapons on the grounds that this is not a "women's issue". As a result of Gumbi's complaints, a smaller group was formed to negotiate this text.

Where does all this take South Africa? Wasn't the country far ahead of the common-denominator positions that were finally agreed at the end of the conference on Friday?

"What was most significant about this conference was the diversity of the group that came here: from government, from the provinces, from the NGOs," said Fraser-Moleketi. "It was a marvellous empowering experience."

Added Zuma: "What these international conferences do is create an enabling environment. It would be presumptuous for us to leave Beijing feeling that we have reached the goals. What about the thousands of girl children who are not in school? What about the lack of women in decision-making positions? What about the lack of women in the Cabinet?"

For Nomtuse Mbere, leader of the NGO team, the Beijing gathering was one of many in a bag of lobbying tools.

Soon to follow are national conferences on an empowerment policy document drafted by the Reconstruction and Development Programme, and a national conference on violence against women in Cape Town in November. At those occasions, Beijing will be brought back home.



Mixing codes: A Kuwaiti delegate studies a photo of Hillary Clinton at the Women's Conference PHOTO: ANAT GIVON

A world first for Glow member

Colleen Lowe Morna

SOUTH AFRICA'S Palesa Beverly Ditsie became the first self-confessed lesbian ever to address the United Nations when she sent out a riveting plea this week for the Fourth World Conference on Women to recognise the discrimination faced by women who choose to love other women.

"Women who love women are fired from their jobs, forced into marriages, beaten and murdered in their homes and on the streets, and have their children taken away by hostile courts," she said. "Some commit suicide due to the isolation and stigma that they experience."

If the Platform for Action did not acknowledge these problems, "it will stand as one more symbol of the discrimination that lesbians face and of the lack of recognition of our existence," she warned.

Ditsie, who mounted the podium in sandals and an African-print wrap-around skirt, sent an electrifying wave around the room as she spoke on behalf of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission and more than 50 other gay and lesbian groups.

"I am from Soweto, South Africa, where I have lived all my life and experienced tremendous joy and pain within my community," she said. "I come from a country that has recently had an opportunity to start afresh, an opportunity to strive for a democracy, where people govern and emphasis is placed on human rights."

Ditsie noted that President Nelson Mandela had received resounding applause in his opening speech in Parliament last year, when he declared that no one would ever again be discriminated against in South Africa on the basis of sexual orientation.

A member of the Gay and Lesbian Organisation of the Witwatersrand (Glow), she has been in daily contact with the South African delegation, which has stood firmly behind South Africa's constitutional position on gay rights.

In an impromptu press briefing after her speech, Ditsie said she had been the victim of threats and four rape attempts. During the press conference, another African NGO representative suggested that one of Ditsie's parents must be white or from a Western country.

"There is nothing more painful than to be told by another African that I am not an African," the 23-year-old writer and journalist said. "I knew that I was different when I was seven, before I could speak English," she said. "I did not need to read about homosexuality to know that I am a lesbian. This is who I am, how I am. This is me — a South African woman, in Africa, who loves other women. This is me."

Hosts with the most to lose

Ian Johnson in Beijing

ONE reason for holding two global women's conferences in China was the belief that it would spread new ideas to the one-fifth of the world's female population living here.

But as the two gatherings came to a close this week, not many Chinese women will have got the message, much less been allowed to act on it.

Documents and interviews with dozens of Chinese delegates and staff members disclose that China's propaganda and security apparatus fixed a chokehold over the Chinese participants, indoctrinating them thoroughly before and after meetings, as well as directing their movements during the two-week period that drew more than 30 000 foreigners.

One small propaganda textbook written especially for the conferences told delegates to be constantly mindful that the Communist Party is in control of the country and must keep a tight grip on society.

"Every women's organisation must resolutely study Comrade Deng Xiaoping's basic line of building socialism with Chinese characteristics by adhering to the principle of one centre and two points," instructed one booklet, using Communist Party jargon for developing the economy while maintaining the party's grip on power.

The Public Security Bureau, which acts as both secret police and counter-intelligence agency, focused most of its attention on the NGO Forum on Women, a gathering of 25 000 women from around the world that was held an hour's drive north of Beijing in the farming town of Huairou.

According to Chinese participants, security agents sat in on morning and evening "strategy sessions" during which NGO representatives reported whom they had met and what was discussed.

They were told which workshops they would visit and which to avoid. Unless previously approved, delegates were also ordered not to attend meetings dealing with sensitive topics, such as human rights issues.

At the main gathering of government organisations, the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, which ends on Friday, security has also been strict, with staff and delegates likewise indoctrinated with propaganda and slogans.

A woman who works in the Jinglun Hotel in downtown Beijing said police had conducted periodic sweeps, even of Chinese businesses with offices in the hotel, to make sure no conference material on women's issues was being disseminated.

Ordinary citizens were unsure what to make of the spectacle. Some were curious about the meeting, thinking that something good must surely be coming out of an event the government was trying so hard to isolate.

Many others, however, seemed to be more cynical, spurred on, perhaps, by a government that used the opportunity for a world gathering of women to raise hotel prices and air fares by 30 percent. — *The Baltimore Sun*

GENDER EQUALITY (355A)

Constitutional clash

FM 15/9/95

Parliament's decision to ratify an international convention on eliminating discrimination against women has highlighted inconsistencies in SA law on gender equality.

In terms of the 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, SA has committed itself to eliminating laws, behaviour, customs and practices that prejudice women.

But problems have arisen over Article 15(3) of the convention, which states that all existing contracts and private legal instruments directed at restricting the legal capacity of women shall be deemed null and void.

While supporting ratification of the convention, the Democratic Party says the article conflicts with the interim constitution. It could even lead to countries declaring disputes with SA and the State appearing before the International Court of Justice.

Section 14(3) of the interim constitution expressly allows legislation which recognises the personal and family law adhered to by particular religions and the validity of marriages under religious law, even if they enshrine gender inequality.

Yet the constitution contains an equality clause which states that no person shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, gender, sex, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture or language.

DP MP Dene Smuts says a way will have to be found to amend the constitution to bring Section 14(3) into line with the right to equality which overrides it.

She failed to convince the ad hoc committee investigating the ratification of the convention that SA should register its reservations over Article 15(3).

Parliament subsequently adopted the committee's recommendation to ratify the convention without reservations and create a parliamentary committee to oversee its implementation.

The convention requires governments to submit a detailed report every four years on their progress in eliminating gender discrimination on all fronts.

Smuts says this in particular makes the convention an excellent guide and watchdog device for any government.

It has been DP policy since 1990 that it should be ratified by SA and Smuts believes this is long overdue.

The parliamentary women's caucus is concerned that women's rights should enjoy legislative protection which reinforces that already conferred by the constitution "to ensure women's issues don't drop off the agenda." But how can more legislation and the creation of yet another government forum on gender equality be justified?

Clearly, the convention covers much the same ground as the Commission on Gender Equality, which is expected to review discriminatory legislation as well as the policies and practices of State bodies, statutory bodies and their functionaries, public authorities and private concerns. The commission is being empowered by a Bill which proposes that it be granted strong powers of search and seizure to deal effectively with complaints of discrimination against women.

It has been argued that the commission is a duplication of the Human Rights Commission and creates a costly precedent for the creation of separate commissions on each category of discrimination.

Knowing that SA has outlawed gender discrimination again will mean little to the unemployed mother whose family's urgent requirements are housing, employment, clean water, sanitation, better schooling and access to primary health-care facilities.

The RDP has already ensured that men's and women's fundamental socio-economic needs are at the top of the agenda. What is needed from government is action and delivery, not another politically correct statement of intent. SA cannot afford to use its limited resources on costly duplication exercises while the RDP languishes in the starting stalls. ■

Labour Bill will sort out sex pests

(355A) (EEB) Star 16/9/95

By TROYE LUND

Gaps used by employers to escape prosecution for sexual harassment have been narrowed by the Labour Relations Bill passed by Parliament earlier this week.

According to the Sexual Harassment Education Programme (Shep), 76% of SA's working women are sexually harassed at work.

They are now guaranteed a fair hearing before an informed, trained commission.

"Some rulings of the past have been clearly bigoted, sexist and in favour of the male perpetrator," said attorney Shirley Welsh, who made submissions to Parliament on behalf of Shep.

"The previous system tended to make sexual harassment do to labour law what rape is to criminal law – the victim is humiliated and turned into the accused," she said.

Victims of sexual harassment will no longer have to apply to the Department of Manpower and then to the Industrial Court should they want the department's ruling overturned. Cases will be heard by a commission for conciliation, arbitration and mediation.

No appeal can be made against the commission's decision, but people who sit on the commission will be better equipped to give an informed judgment. Commissioners are to receive specialised training on the subject.

Welsh is adamant that each case be heard for its individual merits by people who are sensitive to aspects that are not part of other labour disputes.

According to Shep, the changes will make it easier for women to report harassment.

Fighting for freedom

After an outspoken conference at which women made many demands, some of them extremely controversial, conference leaders now fear a conservative male backlash, reports **Edith Lederer** (355A Sowetan 18/9/95

BEIJING – DECLARING THAT "women are waking up", delegates to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in China ended the world's biggest women's gathering last Friday with pledges to push for change in mud-hut villages and corporate boardrooms alike.

"There isn't a single country in the world – not one – where men and women enjoy equal opportunities," Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland told delegates in a rousing closing speech. "We now need a tidal change."

Before moving to adjourn, the 5 000 delegates from 189 countries adopted by consensus their conference platform, which was hotly debated into the predawn hours.

Some countries lodged formal objections to various parts of the platform, which is non-binding but meant to serve as a guide to governments.

The 150-page document contains hard-hitting sections advocating sexual freedom and denouncing violence against women.

Negotiators said they hoped those measures could be used to fight abuses like trafficking in women, genital mutilation of girls and even pressure to have sex.

Debated for first time

Lesbian rights – championed by the United States and some European countries, denounced by the Vatican and many Islamic nations – were dropped from the final draft. But lesbian activists said they were happy the question had been debated for the first time at UN level.

"We feel at this point actually quite exhilarated," said Ms Nicola McIntyre of San Francisco. "We feel the lesbian movement has got a shot in the arm."

Amid the closing-day pomp, some organisers spoke of fears of a conservative backlash over the conference's outcome.

"Many of these issues – reproductive health, sexuality – were so heated and so controversial, there is a sign of conservative reaction worrying about liberating women too much," said Ms Patricia Licuanan of the Philippines, the head of the conference's main committee and of the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

"Some people are getting scared about too much change too fast," she said.

The platform describes the family as the basic unit of socicty and urges that it be strengthened, protected and supported.

But conservatives criticised the inclusion of the phrase "various forms of the family exist", calling it an implied blessing of homosexual unions, single parents, people living together and out-of-wedlock children.

The document "seeks to destroy the family, totally ignores marriage and minimises the importance of motherhood," said Ms Christine Vollmer of the World Organisation for the Family.



The Secretary General at the fourth World Conference on Women, Gertrude Mongella (left) and conference President Chen Muhua (right) shake shands during the closing ceremony of the 12-day conference on Friday. PIC: SOWETAN

Despite the divisions, Licuanan hailed the conference as a show of determination and unity on the overriding goal of improving the lives of women everywhere.

"It shows women are waking up and are concerned about issues they used to take for granted," she said.

Now, delegates were told, concrete steps are needed to make the conference goals a reality.

In a closing speech, World Bank President Mr James Wolfensohn pledged about R3 150 million a year for girls' education, saying that will ultimately strengthen the role of women in world leadership.

And Peruvian President Mr Alberto Fujimori said he hoped others would follow his predominantly Roman Catholic country's example of launching a family-planning programme in defiance of the church hierarchy.

"May women be the masters of their destiny!" he said.

Official Chinese media carried reports praising their government's efficient handling of the two-week UN conference and an earlier private forum in Huairou, outside Beijing.

Unreported in the Chinese Press – except indirectly – were the tensions between the gathering's participants and the Chinese hosts.

During the conference, China reacted angrily when it was criticised by participants, most notably US first lady Hillary Clinton, who delivered a tough human rights speech.

The Chinese government was also touchy about mentions of logistical problems at the muddy, half-finished Huairou meeting site, and of criticisms of its restrictive family-planning policies, which critics say lead to forced abortions and killing of girl babies.

In her closing speech, Brundtland said runins with Chinese security should not be discounted – but they should not detract from the conference's achievements.

"What will be remembered? Zealous security? Visas not granted?" she said.

"Yes, but such practices cannot and will not long endure."

Look to the big picture, she urged delegates. "We cannot maintain the illusion that someone else is going to do the job and establish equality with men," she said.

"Women, and men working with us – we must all fight for freedom." – *Sapa-AP.*

Wednesday September 20 1995 THE NATION

'More funds needed for women'

Beijing delegation urges government to act on discrimination

(355A) ARG 20/9/95

The Argus Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. — The government will be urged to mobilise additional financial resources to meet the needs of women in South Africa.

This was the message from the South African delegation which returned from the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, Gauteng MPL Loretta Jacobus said yesterday.

The delegation would also stress the need to adopt and implement laws and policies to avoid discrimination against women.

Ms Jacobus said the delegation was preparing a report on the conference, which would be available in a week or two when the full impact of events in Beijing would become more apparent to South African women.

"The women who attended came back feeling empowered and positive and we would like to carry forward that feeling."

She said the South African delegation was one of the more liberal at the conference and this was mainly due to the interim constitution, which entrenched human rights for all.

The delegation had "a strong voice" in controversial debates on issues such as abortion, prostitution and sexual orientation.

"This was the first time South Africa was active at a conference like this as we have always only been observers," she said.

"What it meant for our women is that we have come a long way in attempting to address sexual inequality in this country."

She said the success or failure of the platform of action — the resolution document which emerged from the conference — would be measured by the quality of life for women in South Africa over the next few years.

This was not the lone responsibility of those who attended the conference, but rested heavily on the government of national unity.

Women ring the changes in Beijing

(355A) WM 22-28/9/95

Progress and frustration characterised the final days of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, writes **Colleen Lowe Morna**

ACROSS the hallway from where Islamic delegations were registering reservations to the Beijing Platform for Action, a group of veiled Yemeni women were explaining that Islam in its truest sense is gender neutral.

Upstairs, meanwhile, the lesbian caucus was expressing its dismay at the failure of the Platform for Action adopted by the conference to acknowledge the discrimination they face because of their sexual orientation. At the same time, the women claimed a major victory in "swinging open the closet doors" at the largest-ever UN conference.

The scenes from the just ended Fourth World Conference on Women that brought together 50 000 women from around the globe, spoke of the mixed sense of progress and frustration that characterised the gathering in its final days.

Amid the torrent of reservations expressed by the Vatican and conservative Catholic and Muslim countries, Particia Licuanan, chairperson of the main negotiating committee, offered this insight:

"The reservations have to be seen in the context of the period in which the conference is taking place. The women's movement has made incredible advances. At the same time, there has been a conservative backlash. The reason why we have these battles is that there are many men who feel very threatened."

While some hoped for gains that had not occurred, the Philippines activist said: "There are certain issues you have to keep putting on the table; this is eventually how change comes about."

The cards were heavily stacked against the gathering. The Vatican and allies such as Ecuador, Argentina, Guatemala, Honduras and Malta signalled their intention to reopen debates on reproductive rights and sexual health — contentious issues at the United Nations Population Conference in Cairo last year — at a preparatory conference in March. The Vatican sees these terms as code words for abortion.

In references to women's rights as human rights, the Vatican sought to insert the word "universal". Women activists fought against this reference, which would imply modifying rights applicable to women to only those that are universally accepted.

Several Islamic countries, such as Iran and Sudan, had sought to replace the word "equality" in the Platform of Action with "equity" — a far weaker legal term — during the preparatory conferences.

In an unprecedented debate at the preparatory conference, both the Vatican and Islamic countries objected to the term "gender", which they argued encompassed homosexuality.

And the Tanzanian secretary general of the conference, Gertrude Mongella, who is also a Catholic, put her foot in it when she decided to pay a private visit to the Vatican ahead of the conference, claiming after the meeting that the Pope is one of women's greatest allies.

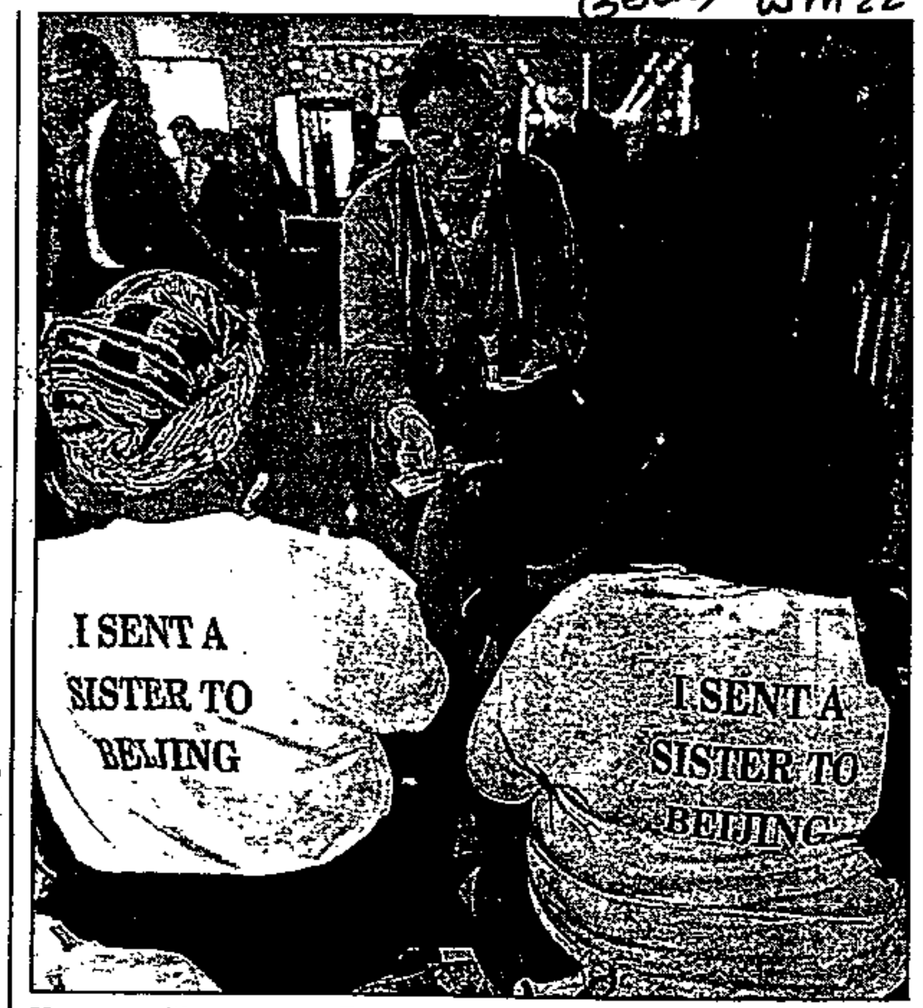
As if these controversies were not enough, the choice of China as venue for the conference threatened to overshadow all substantive concerns. Trouble began with the failure of hundreds of women to obtain visas on time. Many of these were associated with exiled Tibetan and Taiwanese organisations, or causes like gay rights.

The decision by Chinese authorities to shift the non-government organisation (NGO) forum to a tourist resort called Huairou, 50km away, sparked an outcry from these groups, who lobby governments heavily at such conferences.

The NGO forum began before the official conference and overlapped with it by four days. It was dogged by reports of human rights activists from countries as diverse as Iran, Iraq, Sudan and Tibet being harassed, followed and their literature seized.

But, as Joan Dunlop, president of the International Women's Health Coalition, pointed out: "Most women never considered boycotting Beijing, because what is at stake is more than a referendum on China and its policies and police. This conference could well determine the course of women's progress into the 21st century."

As in Cairo, the Vatican refused to join the consensus on the entire health section. Unlike Cairo, the Vatican failed to dominate the conference, in part because the Pope had taken a strategic retreat, appointing a female envoy for the first time, in the form of the soft-spoken, outwardly reasonable Harvard law professor, Mary Ann Glendon.



Message with a purpose: Two US delegates to the Beijing conference sell T-shirts to pay for their air fares home PHOTOGRAPH: ANAT GIVON

Islamic countries wanted it known that any agreements they reached had to be strictly interpreted according to Sharia law.

But an encouraging feature of the conference, says Licuanan, was "the number of Catholics and Muslims who have taken on the task of interpreting religious dogma", and distancing themselves from negative aspects of religion.

Anita Nayar, of the Women's Environment and Development Organisation, which played a key role in co-ordinating NGO inputs into the conference, said it had succeeded in meeting the bottom line set by activists: consolidating the gains made in Cairo and at the UN human rights conference in Vienna.

"There are some gems in there that we can pull out ... organisational hooks as we leave Beijing," Nayar noted. Key among these are the affirmation of:

- Women's rights are human rights. The word "equity" is replaced with "equality" and "universal" deleted as a qualifier;
- Sexuality as an important human right. Objections by the Vatican and Muslim countries to the term "gender" were overturned;
- The emphasis on poverty and the importance of the economic empowerment of women, as well as the recognition, for the first time ever in the UN document, of the need to measure unwaged work;
- The importance of establishing effective national mechanisms for advancing gender equality, and of mainstreaming gender concerns in government planning;
- The plight of the girl child, which has never before received such attention at an international conference;
- The recognition of the negative effects of violence against women and of rape in situations of conflict as a war crime.

Although agreement could not be reached on including sexual orientation in a list of factors which contribute to discrimination against women, the negotiating committee had an unprecedented, hour-long debate on the issue.

Several countries from the south joined western countries in condemning the homophobia propagated largely by the Vatican and Islamic countries. South Africa, whose constitution explicitly outlaws discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, was especially vocal in distancing itself from the more conservative countries of the G77.

Another feature of the conference was the new emphasis on gender equality being more than just a women's concern. Scandinavian men broke new ground by launching a book at the conference, called *Men on Men*.

In the foreword to the anthology, Swedish Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson declares that "merely breaking down the barriers faced by women on the labour market and in public life is not enough. The next breakthrough is a change in men".

Although governments were collectively reticent about committing themselves to "new and additional" resources for implementing the Platform for Action, NGOs mounted a campaign to get them to make commitments in their speeches.

Mounting a commitment scoreboard just outside the press lounge, where over 3 000 journalists passed each day, NGOs allocated points for commitments and analysed what each of these meant.

The 27 000 NGO representatives — diverse, colourful, restive and not always agreed among themselves — nonetheless offered the greatest hope that someone will be keeping an eye on the promises made in Beijing.

On the closing day, a lively group of NGO representatives engaged the World Bank's new President, James Wolfensohn, in an unprecedented debate. At the close of the session, Hazel Medina, who introduced herself as a "structurally adjusted youth from Trinidad and Tobago" made a date with the Australian-born bank executive: to meet on his final day in office to compare notes on how "the situation of women and poor people has changed". — *Women's Feature Service*

Beijing delegation falls behind on preparations

South Africa's performance at the Beijing Conference could suffer because of poor preparation, reports **Marion Edmunds**

THE leaders of the South African delegation that will be going to the Beijing Conference next month put on brave faces this week, and said they were confident that South Africa would contribute meaningfully to the conference.

But, at the first and possibly last pre-Beijing news conference in Parliament this week, the delegate leaders could only speak in broad terms about the conference, putting a positive spin on to preparations that are lagging behind deadlines and being held up by red tape.

Despite a great deal of work done, under difficult circumstances by a team of dedicated women, South Africa's performance at the conference could be undermined by poor preparations.

The report to be presented to the conference, signifying how much South African women have advanced since the elections, is not yet finalised. Delegation leader Health Minister Nkosazana Zuma could not this week say when it would be ready.

Furthermore, a draft report indicating government commitments to women's empowerment still has to go before Cabinet before the government delegation can present it at the conference, which starts in less than three weeks. Only half of the government departments have responded to appeals for commitments to plans of action empowering women despite the fact that they were meant to do this by the end of June.

Those who made commitments have often done so in vague terms. For example, the Department of Sport has on its list, the commitment to "promote the recognition by women of the intrinsic value of sports, which includes the enhancement of feelings of self-worth, self-esteem and confidence about their own capabilities."

The department with the firmest plans is the Department of Justice, which has two women-related pieces of legislation under review, has drafted the Gender Equality Bill and is examining the harmonisation of South African law and customary law with regard to the rights of women.

Many departments are leaning on a commitment to eradicate internal gender discrimination as a sign of their commitment to gender equality. To date, this appears to satisfy the government delegation which is headed by Zuma, and the Deputy Minister of Welfare Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi.

While Zuma has joined the Beijing team only quite recently, Fraser-Moleketi has been battling for more than a year to define South Africa's agenda for the conference and keep the country in line with international developments in women's issues.

She has done the leg-work, flying to conferences all over the world, most recently in Addis Ababa and New York, to caucus over the Draft Platform of Action — a thick, unfaxable document which lays out what is needed to empower women.

The draft Platform of Action divides women's woes and problems into 12 critical areas, which are dealt with separately in almost incomprehensible jargon. The critical areas include the problems of women and poverty, women and health issues and the plight of the girl-child.

Each "critical area" or topic outlines an aspect of women's suffering and oppression. The statistics are chilling and indicate that there is a long way to go before women are equal to men — unfortunately the document is indigestible. There is a serious need for it to be interpreted and explained to the public.

To date, it has been extremely difficult to get clear and simple explanations from the government about Beijing. The NGO-sector has been active in providing information and workshops for those involved in women's groups, but the average women in the street — let alone her husband, lover, father or brother — has remained ignorant about the Beijing Conference, what it entails and how it is meant to affect lives.

Beijing's bad reputation

(355A) WM 25-31/8/95

Marion Edmunds

LEADER of the South African Government Delegation to the Beijing Conference, Health Minister Nkosazana Zuma refused to comment this week on China's human-rights record, saying that South Africans were going to Beijing to talk about women's issues, not to scrutinise the Chinese government.

Meanwhile, Human Rights Watch has distributed a pamphlet called *Your Rights in Beijing: a Brief Guide* to arm delegates against possible human rights abuses by the Chinese authorities, while at the conference.

The pamphlet urges delegates to be prepared for a society where freedom of expression is not allowed and "anti-Chinese" activity could lead to dire consequences.

The pamphlet gives an example. Earlier this year the Chinese police strip-searched two French women who were carrying letters from Tibetans. The police confined them to their hotel, confiscated their letters, interrogated them about their contacts, made them sign confessions that they had broken the law and then deported them.

Human Rights Watch also warns that plainclothes officers — the most common security-force officers — can use force to make foreigners heed their commands. It's likely, according to the pamphlet, that delegates will be tailed. The pamphlet suggests travelling with a friend or two.

The pamphlet also provides some useful tips and telephone numbers should delegates land in trouble.

Beijing showed SA 'is frontrunner'

BD 26/9/95 (365A)

Kathryn Strachan

DELEGATES to the UN Beijing Women's Conference told a report-back meeting last week that women in SA could be proud of the gains they had made.

In comparison with the rest of the world, the conference had shown that SA had gone a long way ahead of many other countries in entrenching women's rights in the constitution and in legislation. The stipulations of women making up 33% of Parliament, of a National Women's Day and new legislation on violence against women were all important milestones, said delegate Anusanthee Pillay.

"Women in SA can hold their heads high for what we have achieved," she said.

But it was up to women to ensure that government implemented the policies it had committed itself to at the conference. It was important to press government on how much it would spend on implementing these policies and on what time frames would be set.

Cosatu delegate Rosemary Makqwane said other delegates were surprised by Cosatu's success in getting companies to give three to six months of maternity leave. Some affiliates had even negotiated 12 months of maternity leave. She said in many African countries, women were given only 10 days.

Another delegate, Nomtuse Mbere, said the conference focussed on how women were carrying the burden of poverty. The World Bank's structural adjustment policies for Africa had contributed to poverty, and lower spending on health and education. Women made up 70% of the impoverished people in the world.

The question of unpaid labour was another focus and women demanded that the value of this "invisible" work be recognised.

The SA government committed itself to addressing the question of unpaid work for women.

A staggering $11-trillion was missing from the global economy each year because of this unpaid "invisible" labour, the UN Development Programme stated.

It said there was an unwitting global conspiracy to undervalue women's contributions to society.

Community group aims to promote women in society

Staff Reporter (355A)

CAPE Flats community-based group Build A Better Society (BABS) has launched a programme to train women to play a more active role in the latest push for women's liberation in South Africa.

The guest speaker at the launch, Professor Nana Araba Apt of the social administration unit at the University of Ghana, spoke of her experiences of women's development in Africa, and urged the launch of training programmes to help women play a more active role in all spheres.

She said her research had revealed women were subservient in several sub-Saharan African countries. She was keen to examine the situation in South Africa.

Training co-ordinator Nevina Smith said BABS had already helped between 30 and 40 communities run community development projects in South Africa. ARG 5/10/95

"BABS assists the training and development of individuals and grassroots organisations in order to enhance their participation in social change," she said.

"Until now, women have played a vital, yet unacknowledged role in our various communities, particularly in rural areas where the role of women has been largely ignored and their status is at its lowest.

"While the need for development appears to be the greatest in these areas, there is also a need for a development programme for women to take their rightful place in government and non-government organisations.

"Rural women have been chosen as a particular focus because of their remote location, lack of formal qualifications, lack of finances and lack of resources."

The aim of the development programme for rural women was to equip women at grassroots level with practical skills so they could become visible and effective leaders in the field of women's development.

The purpose of the development programme for women in government and non-government organisations was to develop women for leadership positions in their organisations and communities.

A training programme will also be established for trainers, the aim being to contribute to the empowerment of women by training them as facilitators in development.

Choi
S
Prices
PR
EF

World Bank finance for businesswomen

(356) BD 5/10/95 (355A)

Simon Barber

WASHINGTON — The International Finance Corporation, the World Bank's private sector investment arm, is putting up more than $600 000 to help 30 000 "previously disadvantaged" women take control of a BMW dealership in Johannesburg.

The women are shareholders of Women Investment Portfolio (Pty) Ltd, which was offered the franchise by BMW (SA) after the previous owner, JSN Motors, decided to relocate to a suburban site in Sandgate. The Anderson Street showroom and service centre will now be called WIP Motors, and will be operated, initially at least, as a joint venture with Imperial Holdings Ltd which has dealerships nationwide.

"Imperial Holdings will play a major role as a technical partner in the operations of the dealership until such time that the WIP members have acquired the relevant skills and experience," the finance corporation's project summary states. The transaction cost is $2,8m, to be shared between WIP and Imperial Holdings. The corporation is providing WIP with $528 000 in convertible loans and is putting up another $83 000 in equity.

WIP Motors expects to sell between 30 and 50 new and used cars a month.

WIP's shareholders include the Young Professional Women investment group, the Greenhouse Childcare Trust, Entabeni Ltd and an organisation called Herdgurlzz, finance corporation spokesman Amy Conran says.

The corporation is making the investment through its African Enterprise Fund, which provides finance to small businesses in Africa.

The corporation's SA exposure stands at just over $35m. This includes stakes of $11,7m in Aflife, $20m in the SA Capital Growth Fund and $3,6m in the SA Franchise Capital Fund. The corporation is also helping SA firms participate in other projects in Africa.

Teacher wins battle for subsidy

ET 17/10/95 (355A)

EDUCATION REPORTER

A CAPE Town teacher made history yesterday when the Industrial Court ruled that the Western Cape education department's policy barring married women from receiving housing subsidies was an unfair labour practice.

Mrs Karen George of Brackenfell fought the education department staff code on the grounds that it discriminated against her in gender and marital status.

Handing down judgment, advocate Mr M P Freemantle said the education department's refusal to give Mrs George a housing allowance was an unfair labour practice in view of the equality clause in the new constitution.

He ruled that the department would have to pay Mrs George from the time of her application for the subsidy in January this year and pay her legal costs.

Her lawyer, Mrs Estelle Morkel, said the case was "a victory for women in the face of discriminatory laws".

4 in 10 women 'harassed'

(355A) CT 27/10/95

STAFF REPORTER

FOUR out of 10 women were aware of incidents of sexual harassment in the workplace, a nationwide survey of 350 companies has shown, but women were not the only victims of sexual harassment.

According to a survey by the Quest Personnel Group, there were cases where female superiors had harassed their male subordinates and also where same-sex harassment had taken place.

Though most companies had formal policies to deal with sexual harassment, it was felt the problem was significantly greater than the report indicated owing to cases that were not reported because employees were worried about loosing their jobs.

It emerged that while black men and black women were benefiting from affirmative action, white women were not.

Executives

The survey showed that just over 35% of salaried staff are female, but only 10% are managers and 0,28% executives.

Female managers form 22,6% of management and female executives form 3,14% of all executives in the workplace.

The survey found that while the position of women in business had improved considerably in recent years, there were still many aspects that need urgent attention.

While salaries were considered equal at management level, some women estimated that they were paid about 25% less than their male counterparts.

Most of the companies surveyed had maternity and paternity policies, the poll found.

Altogether 85% of women who took maternity leave returned to the same company and 12,85% stopped working. This could be reduced if child care facilities were made available or if companies would contribute to crèche fees.

Public service to target gender ratios

365A

Ingrid Salgado.

MORE women had been employed in public service management echelons since the general election, but they were still inadequately represented, Public Service Commission personnel chief director Zonke Majodina told a restructuring government conference yesterday.

The number of women managers in the public service had increased from 3,5% of the total on March 31 last year to 10,7% of the total in September this year, Majodina said.

The number of women directors-general had increased from 0% to 2,7%; deputy directors-general from 0,8% to 9,4%; chief directors from 2,5% to 8,7% and directors from 4,3% to 11,9%. Majodina called for a targeted recruitment of women and a career advancement programme for female public servants.

Blacks and coloureds should be the primary focus of affirmative action in the public service because both were underrepresented at management level, Majodina said.

Whites still occupied 60,5% of such positions, blacks 32,7%, Asians 3,9% and coloureds 2,9%. The same pattern of underrepresentation emerged among blacks and coloureds in the highly skilled category.

The picture changed at the level of highly skilled production worker, with representation approaching population demographics.

This improved further at the lowest level of production worker, but Asians were underrepresented at this level.

BD 22/11/95

Responsible

Majodina said that it was not possible for a detailed affirmative action programme to be formulated for each department in the public service, given the different characteristics and composition of the different departments.

Departments and administrations were instead responsible for the development of programmes unique to their organisations. The commission would co-ordinate these programmes, monitor, audit and report to Parliament and the Cabinet, he said.

The White Paper on transforming the public service stipulated that each department should have at least 50% of blacks at management level within four years. In the same period, at least 305 recruits to middle and senior management echelons should be women, and within 10 years, disabled people should comprise 2% of public service personnel.

Majodina said that the representation of women should be analysed to determine at which levels a career advancement programme should be directed.

The ratio of women to men through the "normal" career advancement of women working in the service should be established.

The groups in which targeted recruitment of women needed to take place should also be determined.

Textile sector firm on trade

John Dludlu

BD 22/11/95

THE Textile Federation has vowed to stand its ground on the conditions attached to the proposed reinstatement of trade preferences for Zimbabwean clothing and textiles.

The department of trade and industry wrote to the clothing and textile industries last week proposing that the local content requirement in the trade deal be lowered after recent talks with the Zimbabweans ended in deadlock.

The SA offer — based on requests from Texfed, the Clothing Federation and the Southern African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union — required Zimbabwean products to have 75% local input (in labour costs and materials) to qualify for better market access. The Zimbabweans said the requirement would make the trade deal virtually unworkable.

But Texfed executive director Brian Brink said yesterday that the requirement was "non-negotiable", and said he was surprised the Zimbabweans had rejected the offer.

"I am becoming very suspicious about this (Zimbabwean rejection), unless they want to supply SA with Chinese products, I can't see how they can reject the offer," Brink said.

In its letter to the SA industries, the department called for a lower initial local content requirement with a higher percentage phased in "from a less onerous level".

"Our research suggests that at 75% local content... Zimbabwe could find it difficult to access the preferences," the department said.

The Zimbabweans had agreed to pursue the issue of labour standards — one of SA's proposals.

But the letter also shows government knew the local content proposal, accompanied by import quotas, would not fly. "We tabled a proposal based on your request, which we knew would be difficult to negotiate," the letter added.

A government source said the department, which is leading the talks, might now have to toughen its stance toward vested interests which were "holding the country hostage".

UN statistics highlight global sex discrimination

(355A)

BY ROSS HERBERT CT (BR) 22/11/95

Johannesburg — The world economy generates the equivalent of $23 trillion in goods and services, but the equivalent of another $16 trillion is transacted without cash — mostly through the unpaid labour of women.

That is one of the intriguing but caution-inducing statistics produced by the United Nations Development Programme in its Human Development Report released recently at a conference in Johannesburg.

This year the organisation has focused on the role of women in the world, painting a stark statistical picture of economic and political discrimination.

Women constitute 70 percent of those in poverty and 70 percent of the world's illiterates. They hold only 14 percent of managerial and administrative jobs, 10 percent of parliamentary seats and 6 percent of cabinet posts. In 55 countries, there are either no women in parliament, or fewer than 5 percent.

Such numbers are "a major indictment of the continuing discrimination against women in most societies", wrote James Gustav Speth, the administrator of the programme, in the introduction to the report.

Interpreting global statistics is difficult, given the widely varying estimates in some developing countries and, unfortunately, some major gaps in data concerning South Africa. But the numbers deserve a look.

South Africa ranked 95th out of 174 countries on what the organisation calls its human development index. This index takes into account national progress in income as well as such non-economic measures as life expectancy and education.

Overall, developing countries are making rapid progress, described as three times the development rate of industrial nations a century ago.

Neighbours

Central America, the Caribbean and east Asia are rapidly approaching the level of development of industrial countries, but Africa continues to come in last.

The proportion of the world living in countries with high human development has doubled since 1960 and average life expectancy has increased by 17 years.

In life expectancy, South Africa's 62,9 years ranks behind the industrial country average of 74,4 years but ahead of its neighbours. Life expectancy at birth, according to 1992 figures, was 46,4 years in Mozambique, 53,7 years in Zimbabwe and 57,5 years in Swaziland.

One measure linked to ongoing poverty is the proportion of women having children in their teens. Only 18 countries in the world have a higher fertility rate than South Africa among 15 to 19 year olds and 14 of those are in Africa.

Only 84 women out of 100 000 die in child birth in South Africa compared with 606 for all of sub-Saharan Africa. White South Africa would rank among the most developed countries in the world, while black South Africa, if considered as a separate country, would rank 128th, below Cameroon.

In South Africa, female literacy is nearly identical to that of men, while in the developing world the number of women who can read represents only 66 percent of the number of men who can read.

The number of South African women in administrative and managerial jobs represents only 21 percent of the number of men in such jobs. As far as the number of seats held by women in parliament is concerned, South Africa's 24 percent compares favourably with the world average of 10 percent and the European Union average of 14 percent. In developing countries, women in urban areas do 51 percent of the work. In rural areas they do 55 percent of the work.

Labour calls for sectoral minimum wage levels

BD 23/11/95 (345) (355A)

Renee Grawitzky

LABOUR believed sectoral minimum wages rather than a national minimum wage was the path to take, Cosatu general secretary Sam Shilowa said yesterday.

Shilowa, presenting submissions during day two of the public hearings held by the Labour Market Commission on minimum wages, said labour rejected the notion that low wages or deregulation resulted in job retention.

Wage regulation should be instituted in sectors where no collective bargaining took place, which were unorganised or where workers were exploited. These included the security, domestic and farming sectors.

Domestic Workers' Union general secretary Florence de Villiers called for a national minimum wage of R600 a month. She said in some areas workers earned less than R120 a month.

The SA Chamber of Business (Sacob) said a precondition for the absorption of surplus labour was wage restraint. Sacob spokesman Raymond Parsons said his organisation rejected the view that a national minimum wage would protect the vulnerable from exploitation or improve the lives of the "least well-off".

However, if this was adopted, it should be implemented on a sectoral basis. For SA to be competitive internationally and for job creation, it could not be locked into a specific wage.

Commission member Jeremy Baskin asked if Sacob believed R250 a month could be regarded as exploitation. The figure was based on various surveys which found 10% of workers earned less than R250 a month.

Parsons said this was a judgment call, but if a minimum wage was introduced and workers lost their jobs and income, one could ask to whom injustice was being done.

Shilowa rejected the argument es-

Continued on Page 2

Wages (345) (355A)

Continued from Page 1

BD 23/11/95

poused by right-wing economists that it was better to earn a wage even if it was R2 a day, than not to have a job at all. A Cosatu affiliate, in an attempt to save the jobs of its members at a particular company, had agreed to a wage way below the minimum in the industry, he said. However, the company had announced recently it intended closing, and 2 000 jobs would be lost.

Shilowa said debate had begun within Cosatu around the movement towards a national income policy, "but at this point we do not believe we can bring wage restraint to the table". The driving force of an income policy had to attempt to eliminate inequalities and at the same time create jobs.

National Council of Trade Unions general secretary Cunningham Ngcukana also proposed sectoral as opposed to a national minimum wage and rejected the notion that a deregulated market affected employment levels.

Louise Cook reports that Cosatu's SA Agricultural, Plantation and Allied Workers' Union called for a special body to probe cases where farmers claimed they could not afford minimum wages.

The union repeated calls for a minimum wage on farms, but shifted to R850 a month from R750 a month. An exemption board, able to grant individual farmers leave to pay other amounts, should decide on the merit of each case.

The union did not know the average wage paid on farms but was aware of farmers in the Karoo who "paid" with a sheep and expected it to be slaughtered immediately to cut the cost of grazing. "With no refrigeration, that is a meaningless payment."

The SA Agriculture Union (SAAU) dismissed allegations that farm workers in the Northern Province were being paid between R70 and R90 a month (including payment in kind such as housing and food). SAAU chief director Kobus Kleynhans said the union was updating statistics but, based on a 1992 survey, the average wage paid in the farming sector was R650 a month, including payment in kind.

"However, we are not happy with averages — we are concerned about the bottom end of the scale which could drop to R200 a month."

The National Maize Producers' Organisation said its 6 861 members paid an average of R600 a month, including benefits.

The National African Farmers' Union, representing small-scale black farmers, said wages were generally R20 to R25 a day.

Unions call for minimum wage

(355A) (~~SEPS~~) CT 23/11/95

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHANNESBURG: Cosatu and Nactu, representing nearly two million workers, called yesterday for the introduction of a national minimum wage to combat widespread exploitation in industries where negotiating forums were weak or absent.

They did not put a figure on what the minimum wage should be, as some of their affiliates had done in their submissions to the Labour Market Commission over the past two days.

But the South African Chamber of Business (Sacob) expressed doubt that a minimum wage would protect the most poor, while domestic workers said the wage should be pegged at R600.

Cosatu secretary-general Mr Sam Shilowa said a minimum wage would have to be compatible with a the minimum living level, which had been pegged at R850 a month, if the wage's aim was to alleviate poverty.

He said poverty did not exist only among the unemployed — the World Bank had found that 10% of SA workers earned less than R250 a month.

In a submission described as "depressing" by commission chairman Mr Dave Lewis, SA Domestic Workers' Union (Sadwu) official Ms Florence de Villiers said most domestic workers still put in 12 to 15 hours' work every day and received no time off despite the passing of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act in 1994.

The union called for the introduction of a R600 minimum wage for ordinary work in the industry.

Protection

The Farmworkers Research and Resource Project said average cash wages in the agricultural sector were R110 per month for women and R150 per month for men.

Sacob said, however, it was not convinced a national minimum wage would achieve the desired objectives either of improving the lot of the least well-off or of protecting vulnerable groups.

Regulation of working hours, overtime rates and leave were perhaps more effective ways to protect workers from exploitation.

Unions demand national minimum

Star 23/11/95 (355A)

Sacob doubts it will protect poorest; domestic workers call for bottom line R600

By Justice Malala
Labour Reporter

Two of South Africa's biggest trade union federations, which represent nearly 2-million workers, called yesterday for a national minimum wage to combat widespread exploitation in industries where negotiating forums were weak or absent.

The Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the National Council of Trade Unions (Nactu) did not put a figure on what the minimum wage should be, as some of their affiliates had done in their submissions to the Labour Market Commission over the past two days.

But the South African Chamber of Business expressed doubt that a minimum wage would protect the poorest among the poor, while domestic workers said the wage should be pegged at R600.

The commission is investigating the potential role of institutions in income determination; the impact of existing determination mechanisms; and the elements of possible national incomes agreements. Its findings will be released next year.

Cosatu secretary-general Sam Shilowa argued a minimum wage would have to be compatible with the minimum living level which had been pegged at R850 a month if the wage's aim was to alleviate poverty.

He said this might have to be phased in.

He said there was a tendency to think that poverty only existed among the unemployed, and argued that poverty also existed among the employed, adding that the World Bank had found that 10% of workers earned less than R250 a month.

In a submission described as "depressing" by commission chairman Dave Lewis, SA Domestic Workers' Union official Florence de Villiers said most domestic workers still put in 12 to 15 hours every day for very low pay; were subject to sexual harassment; and received no time off despite the passing of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act last year.

The union called for the introduction of a R600 minimum wage for ordinary work in the industry, which would increase gradually for those who cook and do other jobs in the household.

However, the SA Chamber of Business said it was not convinced that a national minimum wage would achieve desired objectives.

"As a general point of departure, Sacob would favour the most flexible system of wage determination possible, which does not undermine collective bargaining, which caters for the diversity of sectors and regions, and which accommodates the special needs of small business," the organisation said.

It said regulation of working hours, overtime rates and leave was perhaps a more effective way of protection against exploitation.

Frame warns unions not to push wages too high

(355A) (355) (355)

BY SHIRLEY JONES

Durban — Trade unions and employees must realise that unless South Africa contains the rising cost of wages and salaries, competitiveness in world markets will diminish and, with it, badly needed jobs.

This warning was delivered by Frame's managing director, Walter Simeoni, at a presentation to Steve Swanborough, sales manager at one of its largest export customers, Allders Stores.

Allders, a major departmental retail store in Britain, which has a turnover of more than £700 million from 25 stores, has booked a third in-store promotion with an expected order value of more than R4,5 million.

Products will be shipped in March.

CT (BR) 24/11/95

JOBS

Roses make cents for women's empowerment

ST(BR) 17/12/95 (355A)

A World Bank-supported development programme aimed at increasing South African women's economic power, has taken to the acquisition trail in an upbeat mood, writes **THABO KOBOKOANE.**

THE Women's Investment Portfolio is spreading its wings. After acquiring a BMW dealership a few months ago, it has bought a nine hectare rose farm on the Vaal River to grow flowers for export to Europe and North America.

Three other deals, including one with a JSE-listed company, are likely to be concluded before the end of the year, says Louisa Mojela, the WIP's executive director.

The rose flower deal, to be financed partly by the International Finance Corporation, the World Bank's private sector arm, will see the WIP own 70% and the former owners 30%. The IFC also owns part of the WIP.

"This will be a pilot project as we intend acquiring other flower farms for export projects," says Ms Mojela. "We believe this will not only create employment for our rural members, but will also curb migration to big cities."

The WIP, formed in 1994 and with 30 000 members, is driven by "a strategy based on leveraging the consumer power base of women", she says.

"Our investments are focused on consumer products and we hope to galvanise our members to support the products in which the WIP has vested interests."

The rose business represents the fifth in the WIP's growing investment portfolio, which started off with the acquisition of a large stake in Kuyasa Trust, owners of a stake in New Age Beverages, bottlers and distributors of Pepsi.

This was followed by the acquisition in Johannesburg of a BMW dealership, now called WIP Motors, in a joint venture with Imperial Holdings worth R10-million. Both companies took a 50% equity stake.

Further interests are in Africa Sun International, a joint venture with a business consortium including Sun International and the WIP, whose president and founder member, Wendy Luhabe-Shilowa, is the venture's chairman.

The WIP is also engaged in an as yet unnamed national lotteries consortium.

As an economic empowerement vehicle with five major women business partners who intend to "marshal 5-million black women countrywide", the WIP is poised to bring women into the mainstream of the economy, not only as consumers or workers but as owners, says Ms Mojela.

The IFC's involvement in the WIP is one of the corporation's many projects under the Africa Project Development Facility, which helps black enterprises with a total investment size of between R500 000 and R25-million.

Since setting up office in South Africa in July, the APDF has offered assistance to 10 operations which they have judged "serious enough" to put into their programme. Five of them have contracts to provide the APDF with services and the remaining five are undergoing project profiles to establish their feasibility.

The APDF was set up in 1986, by the UN Development Programme, the IFC and the African Development Bank.

John James, spokesman for the APDF, says it aims to accelerate development of private enterprise sponsored and owned by African entrepreneurs as a means of stimulating economic growth and productive employment in sub-Saharan Africa.

Its strategies include:

- ☐ Formulating and screening business ideas;
- ☐ Assisting in shaping the business idea into a business plan;
- ☐ Selecting skilled consultants to prepare feasibility and market studies;
- ☐ Identifying foreign investors and financial institutions interested in investing opportunities in sub-Saharan Africa and negotiating agreements for joint ventures and buyouts; and
- ☐ Negotiating with local and investment authorities, equipment suppliers, contractors, financial institutions and potential technical partners.

Mr James says the APDF provides services in the start-up of a new business and in expanding, modernising or rehabilitating an existing one. Ideally, a business should be a private limited company, says Mr James, although the APDF will not turn down a close corporation.

"We are talking about fairly sizeable operations with borrowings from international organisations and institutions — and the operations have to become fairly transparent and close corporations are not geared towards that," says Mr James.

But their services do not come cheaply. Although the APDF meets its own and consultancy costs, the business must pay:

- ☐ Front-end segment payment of 75% of project cost;
- ☐ Business plan payment of 1% of project cost; and
- ☐ A success fee of 0,5% of project costs.

"The costs are just a fraction of what the APDF pays," says Mr James.

"But, more importantly, a serious business person will realise the short-term costs are outstripped by long-term benefits."

Since its inception the APDF has helped 202 businesses with total capital costs of $315-million and net foreign exchange input of $118-million and has created over 16 000 jobs, says Mr James.

At least 52% of projects assisted have been in the agri-industry sector, with manufacturing accounting for 36% and services 12%.

WOMEN WORKERS

1996 - 1997

Empowering women

The year 1996 will usher in of a new era in the lives of women as their rights are implemented by the Government, reports **Betsy Spratt** (355A Sowetan 2/1/96

THE UNITED NATION's Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), ratified by Parliament on December 15, will usher in a new era in the struggle for women's empowerment.

"We want to kick off 1996 as a year of implementation in a real sense," said Deputy Welfare Minister Mrs Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, one of the leaders of the government delegation to the UN in Beijing, China last year.

This year will bring to a close the myriad of conferences and workshops held throughout 1995, which were aimed at identifying critical areas of concern impeding women's advancement.

These were spelled out in the Platform for Action, the strategy document developed at the Beijing conference.

The ratification of CEDAW by Parliament should propel the creation of legislation to address these areas of concern, Moleketi said.

"We do have a Constitution that demands much of what is outlined in CEDAW," she said, "but CEDAW will help us speed things up".

Adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979, CEDAW is an international agreement that must be followed by all nations which ratify it. Parliament ratified CEDAW without reservations.

The convention will take effect in South Africa on January 14, 30 days after it was ratified. The ratification of CEDAW caps off a year of historic firsts in the struggle for women's emancipation in this country.

When South Africa attended the World Conference on Women in Beijing last year, it was the nation's first appearance at such a conference as full participants.

The nation celebrated its first National Women's Day last August 9, the date on which women's rights advocates had hoped that CEDAW would be ratified.

"But there was a procedure to be followed," said Ms Louise Euthimiou, Assistant Director-General of Foreign Affairs, adding that because of the process of passing a convention it was not a realistic date.

However, as of December 15, South Africa now joins the ranks of 130 other nations which ratified CEDAW and will be tasked with strengthening international ties by creating legislation to increase development, peace, security and cooperation.

In creating the legislation, the country must recognise women's contribution to the welfare of the family and the development of society.

It must also establish national courts and special bodies – like the special Commission on Gender Equality – to hear charges of discrimination and punish offenders.



Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi ... government and civil society must work together in the struggle for women's empowerment.

The articles that comprise CEDAW looks at the effects of discrimination in different spheres of life.

Article One defines the term "discrimination" and points out that the new Constitution recognises equality between men and women, and forbids discrimination.

Article Two calls for measures to be taken to enforce the legislation created to end discrimination.

Article Three guarantees basic human rights and fundamental freedoms of women, calling upon the nation to ensure their political, social, economic and cultural advancement.

Article Four states that affirmative action in employment, education, and housing must be used to correct the effects of past discrimination.

Article Five calls for the correction of sex-role attitudes that have deemed women as being less important than men. Article Six discourages prostitution, pornography and other forms of sexual exploitation.

Article Seven calls for the equal treatment of the sexes in the political arena, while Article Eight encourages the Government to appoint more women to represent the nation internationally as ambassadors.

Article Nine states that the sexes must have equal rights to citizenship, and that the rights of a married woman must not depend on her husband's citizenship.

Article Ten calls for the elimination of discrimination in education, while Article Eleven calls for the elimination of discrimination in employment.

Article Twelve calls for equal access to health care, and Article Thirteen states that social and economic equality must be ensured.

Article Fourteen calls attention to the plight of rural women, and outlines measures to be taken to ensure that rural women benefit from rural development.

Article Fifteen calls for equality under the law, and Article Sixteen calls for the end of discrimination against women in marriage and family life.

Fraser-Moleketi added that, even before Parliament ratified CEDAW, the Government had already begun working on many of the goals outlined in CEDAW.

The Ministry responsible for the Reconstruction and Development Programme, for instance, is finalising a document on rural renewal. It will explore ways of helping women to secure social security and participate in capacity-building projects.

Parliament also recently adopted a policy document on education that examines ways of countering the high levels of female functional illiteracy which beset the nation.

With CEDAW in place, said Fraser-Moleketi, the Government and society must work in even greater unison to fulfil the goals of CEDAW and the Platform for Action.

"By the first half of 1996," she said, "we hope to have most of the national machinery up and running."

A new SA – but women still second class citizens

Although the interim constitution guarantees gender equality and prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, and in spite of the RDP's "key focus" on ensuring an equal role for women in society, an international human rights agency says South African women remain second class citizens. A report by ROGER FRIEDMAN.

(365A) ARG 8/1/96

IF the South African government is serious about its Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) pledge to "ensure a full and equal role for women in every aspect of the economy and society", it must take urgent steps to address violence against women.

Although a number of "encouraging initiatives" have been launched, the state's response to the extraordinarily high levels of gender-based violence have lacked commitment, says Human Rights Watch in its just-released report Violence Against Women in South Africa.

Violence against women has not achieved "the sort of high-level political attention that the more general political violence, for example, has been given", and there is no co-ordinated national strategy to address problems in the criminal justice, law-enforcement and health and welfare systems.

"The South African government's commitment to the elimination of violence against women will entail legal reform, police and prosecutorial training, enhanced inter-agency co-operation, improved data collection and support for and collaboration with non-governmental organisations," says the report.

"It may also require considerable resources at a time when there are many urgent calls on the government's funds.

"However, no progress can be made towards establishing the type of society that the liberation movements have pledged to create without addressing the violence suffered by women – a majority of the population – on a daily basis."

The report makes a number of recommendations to the government in the fields of legal reform, improved police services, the medico-legal system, inter-departmental co-ordination and the documentation of violence against women.

The recommendations include:

● Expanding the Prevention of Family Violence Act to include protection for individuals who are abused by a partner with whom they have never lived, and gay and lesbian couples.

● The Department of Justice should issue guidelines to magistrates to clarify the types of abuse qualifying for an interdict under the Prevention of Family Violence Act.

● Guidelines should be adopted by the police and prosecutors on arrest and prosecution policy so that domestic violence cases are accorded the full attention of the criminal justice system.

● The definition of rape should be expanded to include anal and oral penetration, and penetration by foreign objects.

● Legislation should be introduced to abolish the cautionary rule giving courts "an excessive level of discretion" in deciding whether or not to credit the testimony of women who allege they have been raped.

● Guidelines on sentencing should be adopted by the Department of Justice and circulated to all judges.

● Standard training on domestic violence, rape and sexual assault should be completed by all policemen and women.

● Provincial authorities should review government health services responsible for the examination and treatment of rape survivors to ensure the most responsive, effective and accessible delivery of service.

● Rape reporting centres should be established as widely as possible, particularly in township areas.

● A national multi-disciplinary task force on violence against women should be created to improve inter-departmental co-ordination. It should include representatives of the departments of health and welfare, justice, and safety and security.

● Studies as to the nature and extent of violence against women should be funded by the government and urgently undertaken in conjunction with non-governmental organisations.

Human Rights Watch bemoans the fact that it is presently impossible to quantify accurately the extent of the problem of violence against women in South Africa.

"The reported figures are already extraordinarily high, but they are certainly only a small percentage of the total."

Rape Crisis estimated in 1992 that one in every three women was assaulted by her male partner, the Women's Bureau estimates one in four women are abused by their partners, and the Advice Desk for Abused Women estimates one in six women are regularly assaulted.

The organisations People Opposing Women Abuse and Co-ordinated Action for Battered Women also estimate one in six women are abused by their partners.

Research conducted in Soweto in 1994 suggested one in three women had been battered at some or other time by her husband or boyfriend, while the Human Sciences Research Council found that 43 percent of 159 married women surveyed in Cape Town had been subjected to marital rape or assault.

A total of 9 365 rapes were reported nationally in 1980. This figure rose to 27 056 reports in 1993, and 32 107 cases a year later – or 88 cases a day. Figures for last year are not yet available.

Government to scrap sexual discrimination

CT 17/1/96 (355A)

FROM HOUSING LOANS to pensions, women will no longer be at a disadvantage in the government service after the cabinet-endorsed convention for the elimination of discrimination against women came into effect yesterday. **BARRY STREEK** reports.

SWEEPING plans announced by the government yesterday to eliminate discrimination against women include equal pensions and 100% housing loans for women civil servants.

Deputy President Thabo Mbeki said the cabinet had endorsed a far-reaching memorandum to advance gender equality following the Fourth World Conference on Women which took place in Beijing last year.

The memorandum includes the introduction of "extensive employment equity legislation" by the Ministry of Labour this year to eliminate sexual discrimination in the workplace over the next five years and improve access to jobs traditionally dominated by men.

"The legislation will provide for special training, skills and knowledge development aimed at improving access to jobs traditionally dominated by men," Mr Mbeki said in a statement.

Deputy Welfare Minister Ms Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi said the measures included plans by the Ministry of Education to enable pregnant adolescents to go to school.

The re-allocation of military expenditure for women's economic advancement would be considered by the Finance Ministry.

Mr Mbeki, Ms Fraser-Moleketi and Deputy Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology Ms Brigitte Mabandla addressed a press conference in Pretoria on the United Nations Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

The convention, ratified by Parliament on December 14, came into effect in South Africa yesterday.

Mr Mbeki said the convention, which dealt with all forms of discrimination against women, would have a significant impact on the government's actions. "Its coming into force means we will have to initiate a process to ensure that all legislation in the country is consistent with the convention."

Ms Fraser-Moleketi said the Finance Ministry would apply a single income tax rate to all individuals from the 1995/96 financial year, and newly-proposed pension legislation for civil servants omitted any reference to gender.



ENDING DISCRIMINATION: Deputy President Thabo Mbeki

The Department of Finance had also set up an office for affirmative action.

The Education Ministry had pledged to reduce illiteracy among women to half its 1990 level by the year 2000. It also undertook to close the gender gap in primary and secondary education by the same year.

Girls would get counselling encouraging them to pursue non-traditional careers and measures enabling pregnant adolescents to go to school by providing child care services for them would also be examined.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry had promised to review and amend policies and programmes discriminating against small enterprises operated by women in rural areas.

"The ministry will also enhance women's knowledge by disseminating market, trade and resource-related information, and provide appropriate training in these fields," Ms Fraser-Moleketi said.

The Ministry of Home Affairs would evaluate and amend citizenship laws and administrative measures that discriminate against women in acquiring permanent residency status and citizenship.

The Ministry of Water Affairs and Forestry had introduced an Employment Equity Policy. It said that by the end of 1995/96, two million households formerly without water would have a dependable water supply.

Women would also constitute at least 30% of local water committees.

The Public Works Ministry had amended its guarantee scheme for 100% housing loans to civil servants to include married women, she said.

Govt plans gender equality office

(355A)

Stephané Bothma

BD 17/1/96

PRETORIA — A programme to advance gender equality in SA, which could include reallocation of defence spending to programmes dedicated to economic empowerment of women, was announced by government yesterday.

Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, at a news conference in Pretoria marking the implementation in SA of a UN convention to eliminate discrimination against women, said a women's status office would be established in the president's office later this year.

Details of the structure and budget for the office were being discussed and would be dealt with in the 1995-96 Budget. The office could be established by the end of March, he said. Similar offices would be set up for the empowerment of the youth and the disabled.

Implementation would initiate a process to ensure that all legislation was consistent with the convention, Mbeki said. Government would also push for early adoption of legislation to set up a gender commission — a statutory body reporting to Parliament on the promotion of gender equality.

Deputy Arts and Culture Minister Brigitte Mabandla said all ministries

Continued on Page 2

Women

(355A)

BD 17/1/96

Continued from Page 1

would be required to establish gender focus desks in terms of government's plan to eradicate sex discrimination.

Deputy Welfare Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi said the Cabinet had endorsed measures to advance gender equality following the Beijing world conference on women last year. They included extensive employment equality legislation, to be initiated by the labour ministry, and providing for special training to improve access to jobs traditionally dominated by men.

"The ministry of finance says it will consider reallocating military expenditure to support women's economic advancement," Fraser-Moleketi said.

Other measures included:

□ Closing the gender gap in education — particularly on subject choices and career orientation — by the year 2000, cutting the female illiteracy rate to half its 1990 level by 2000 and looking into the schooling of pregnant adolescents and young mothers;

□ Public servants' pension legislation omitting reference to gender and the establishment of an office for affirmative action in the finance department;

□ Amending policies and programmes discriminating against small-scale, rural enterprises operated by women;

□ Evaluating mechanisms to improve the effectiveness of the Prevention of Family Violence Act;

□ Evaluating and amending citizenship laws; and

□ Amending the public works ministry's guarantee scheme for 100% housing loans to government sector employees to include married women.

Picture: Page 5

Discrimination on basis of sex on the way out

ARG 19/11/96

(355A)

CLIVE SAWYER
Political Correspondent

BOLD steps towards gender equality, including a review of all laws to eliminate discrimination because of gender, are in the offing.

Several ministries have announced measures to further the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

These include:

● The Labour Ministry is to initiate far-reaching employment equity legislation this year, providing for special training, skills and knowledge development aimed at improving access to jobs traditionally dominated by men.

● The Finance Ministry is considering reallocating military spending to support the economic advancement of women.

● The Public Works Ministry has amended its guarantee scheme for 100 percent housing loans to officials and government employees to include married women.

● The Education Ministry has pledged to close the gender gap in primary and secondary education by the year 2000, and to reduce female illiteracy to half its 1990 level in the same year.

The ministry said it would provide counselling to girls to pursue non-traditional careers.

It will investigate schooling for pregnant adolescents and young mothers, and the provision of child care.

● The Ministry of Justice is evaluating ways to improve the effectiveness of the Prevention of Family Violence Act.

● The Ministry of Health is to provide sexual and reproductive health as well as family planning services with a focus on the health needs of the young.

● The Ministry of Home Affairs is to amend citizenship laws and administrative measures that discriminate against women in getting permanent residency status and citizenship.

Other measures have been agreed to by the ministries of Trade and Industry, Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development, Water Affairs, and Welfare and Population Development.

The government is to set up an Office on the Status of Women, possibly as early as the end of March.

Deputy President Thabo Mbeki said women's rights in South Africa would in future be underpinned by legislation aimed at ending discrimination, but the struggle for gender equality would continue beyond bureaucracy.

Mr Mbeki said CEDAW would have a significant impact on the government's actions.

All legislation would have to be consistent with the convention, he said.

Govt office for women soon

(355A) Star 17/1/96

By Karin Schimke
Political Reporter

The Interim Constitution provides for the establishment of a Commission for Gender Equality, but a team of South African experts on gender has urged the Government to create an Office on the Status of Women (OSW) as soon as possible.

Whereas the Commission for Gender Equality will promote gender equality, and advise and make recommendations to Parliament on legislation which affects women, the OSW would ensure that a "gender perspective is integrated into all publicly funded policies and programmes".

Welfare and Population Development Deputy Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, who led the National Planning Committee at the 1995 UN World Conference on Women in Beijing, said the results of a study visit to Uganda and Australia had led the group to recommend that the OSW be located in the President's Office to give it political clout.

At a press conference yesterday, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki said the Government had considered the report and different ministries were now looking at how the office could be incorporated.

"We don't believe a ministry for women should be created because then it would be equal to other ministries and would not be able to intervene in their affairs," he said.

Mbeki indicated the office might be in operation by the end of March, but added budget constraints had to be considered.

Govt drafting policy on workplace equity

BD 24/1/96 (355A)

Renee Grawitzky

GOVERNMENT is in the process of drafting an affirmative action policy aimed at addressing past imbalances, and an accompanying enabling legislation on employment equity dealing with preventing discrimination in the workplace.

Labour department equal opportunities director Mpho Makwana said yesterday that an affirmative action policy document would be tabled in the National Economic, Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) in March with the intention of it forming part of an agreement between the social partners. A green paper on employment equity legislation would be tabled in Nedlac in April with the intention of it being tabled during the second session of Parliament, he said.

Makwana said the process of drafting these documents commenced last year when the Affirmative Action Policy Development Forum was formed at the request of the stakeholders who had an interest in affirmative action and employment equity in the workplace. The forum was formally opened by Labour Minister Tito Mboweni.

The forum was intended to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to debate such issues before formalised negotiation commenced within Nedlac.

Makwana said a number of affirmative action policy framework discussion papers had been drafted last year, but government would finalise its position only after further workshops with other government departments.

Makwana said the affirmative action policy did not propose targets or stipulate time frames. Intense debate was still taking place with the department as to whether targets should be negotiated between parties to create flexibility which would take into account the specific circumstances of different industries or whether they should be prescribed by government.

Makwana said policy considerations would culminate in a policy document which would target gender discrimination, and should "negate the validity of race as a concept of employment or employability".

It would also address those who were disabled and had "traditionally" been marginalised "from participating effectively in the workplace" and those suffering from "social disability" including those infected with HIV.

A proposed employment equity Act intended to "achieve equality in the workplace" proposes that such legislation should be "protective and punitive in character". Makwana said a number of enforcement mechanisms would be considered ranging from "sanctions" against those violating legislation to various monitoring mechanisms.

Ending gender bias

(385A)

Perceived differences between men and women cause women to be relegated to a secondary role in society and makes it difficult for them to reach their full potential, a Commonwealth study has found.

Sowetan 31/1/96



The study says boys and girls should be discouraged from playing stereotypical games.

GENDER bias continues to limit women's participation in all aspects of education. It creates and sustains a view of the world in which male activity and males are of primary importance and of the greatest value, while female activity and females are marginalised and made invisible or downgraded.

It is even present in primary school text books where it takes many forms and is difficult to detect, according to a new book published by the Commonwealth Secretariat. It says gender bias should be tackled at an early age so that boys and girls grow without being stereotyped.

"Gender bias in school text books" gives practical guidelines on how to tackle the problem. It is aimed at Commonwealth teachers, teacher trainers, textbook writers and publishers.

The London-based secretariat is an international organisation at the service of all the Commonwealth's 53 members.

It says gender bias is unfair and can cause long-term damage to both sexes. Exposing girls and boys to sexist stereotypes damages girls' self-esteem, limits their view of their own potential and reproduces earlier patterns of gender segregation in education and employment. It generates sexist expectations amongst boys of their own roles and encourages them to view girls as having inferior roles to their own.

Gender stereotyping

The secretariat believes elimination of gender stereotyping and equal access to education are vital if women are to enjoy full rights and play an equal role in the economic, social and political development of their countries.

The book is written by Bronwyn Davies of Australia and is based on surveys in three Commonwealth regions – Africa, Asia and the Caribbean – plus a country survey of Australia.

The African study showed that girls and women were often trivialised and portrayed as inadequate or troublesome; men were shown as performing difficult tasks such as climbing mountains, carrying heavy loads and herding livestock in the fields.

Most professional jobs were held by men.

The Asian survey found that boys and men were repeatedly portrayed as belonging in the public sphere, while girls and women were depicted as belonging in the domestic sphere "to an extreme quite at odds with reality".

An analysis of illustrations in the Caribbean text books revealed that although representation in terms of number of appearances by males and females was fair, the content was biased.

More females were portrayed in domestic situations and more males in recreational situations. Boys were more often shown to be adventurous and fun-loving and getting into trouble; females were shown as fretting and scolding. Texts often showed females in passive or subordinate roles with interests centred on family and home.

The book acknowledges that it may not be possible to replace all existing biased text books. But it says that efforts should be made to rid of them of the bias whenever they are revised and reprinted.

Meanwhile, to rectify the situation, supplementary materials should be prepared for existing biased texts

Women textbook writers

It suggests that women authors should be encouraged to write future text books. Writers need to present a more balanced picture of the world and to show students and teachers how to detect bias.

The book was produced by the secretariat's Women and Youth Affairs Division, headed by Ms Eleni Stamiris of Canada.

The division is responsible for managing and coordinating the secretariat's programme to achieve gender equality.

It works closely with member governments and other secretariat divisions to integrate a gender focus on all planning and implementation processes and to increase the participation of women in all their activities.

The division does so in response to a mandate from Commonwealth leaders committed to building a world in which women enjoy full rights and are equal partners in shaping the future of their countries.

Gender should not hamper students

Its book on gender bias in education recommends that teachers and teacher educators help students develop their full potential and ensure that they are not held back by gender.

It suggests, for example, that in group work teachers should not ask girls to perform secretarial duties and boys to organise and give orders. Similarly, boys should not always be asked to perform heavier tasks such as lifting a box and the girls to do the lighter work – watering the plants, for instance.

Such practices are commonly found in classrooms, points out the book.

The guidelines for text book writers and producers recommend that they should try to maintain an equal balance between the sexes numerically and in terms of the significance of any activities illustrated.

Photographs should show both women and men in the same wide variety of professions and trades and girls and boys exercising the same skills in work or play.

Women sprint their way up the corporate ladder

(355A) (B) BD 1/2/96

Mungo Soggot and Patrick Wadula

WHITE women have clawed their way into SA's new elite with a vengeance this year, increasing their slice of the directorship pie by 229%, according to the 1996 breakdown of SA's directorships.

The survey, which will be part of Robin McGregor's forthcoming new Directory of Directors, reveals yet another proliferation of multiple directorships: there are 66 directors who sit on more than 10 boards.

Business SA's Dave Brink stands out from the pack — he has increased his workload fivefold by taking on 20 new directorships in 1996.

Although 81 new directorships went to black men — a 29% increase on last year — only 5% of SA's directors are black.

Black men have made impressive gains in the multiple directorship stakes. Enos Mabuza comes top, having doubled his directorships to 12. He sits on the boards of Anglovaal, SABC, SA Breweries and Edgars.

Wiseman Nkuhlu of Worldwide Africa Investments now sits on seven boards, compared with only two last year.

Ntatho Motlana added only one new title to his name, bringing his total to nine.

But apart from Mabuza and Nkuhlu, none of those on the list of black men with more than five directorships has increased his load by more than three new posts. But white men have made up for this restraint.



BRINK



MABUZA

Apart from Brink's impressive contribution, multiple directorship stalwart Leslie Boyd from Anglo American added six new posts to his existing 23 directorships. Mike King of Anglo American held on to his title of SA's busiest white director, taking one new post to bring his total to 30.

Old Mutual's Buddy Hawton now sits on 27 boards, compared with just 12 last year. And John Maree, chairman of Eskom and Denel, has shot to No 6 position, increasing his posts to 21 from six last year.

Anglo American's Graham Boustred is one of the few on the list to have cut his workload. He has ditched two posts to leave himself with 18 directorships.

The list of white women with more than one directorship is topped by Elizabeth Bradley, who now sits on seven boards. These include Metair, CG Smith and Tongaat Hulett and Stannic. Vivienne Mennel — on the Impala Platinum board — has taken on three new directorships which puts her one place behind Louise Tager — Transnet's new chairman — who held on to her No 2 spot with four directorships.

There has been a 129% increase in the number of black women directors, but there are only five black women who hold more than one directorship. The busiest black female director remains Wendy Luhabe. She sits on five boards, including African Life, Thebe Investments and Telkom. She is followed by Pat Gorvalla, who sits on the Transnet and SAA boards, and Nana Magomola, who also sits on Transnet and SAA, with three each.

In all, of the total 8 401 directorships in SA, 7 920 are held by white men (7 276 last year), 357 (276) by black men, 32 (14) by black women and 92 (28) by white women.

The survey's author, McGregor, puts SA's peculiar boardroom landscape in its southern African context.

He says 1 005 of the 1 390 sub-saharan companies covered in his book are SA.

SA and Zambia remain the most chauvinistic from a female director point of view with 1% and 0% respectively, while the least chauvinistic is Swaziland with 9% of its directorships occupied by women.

Out of a total 11 098 directorships in sub-Saharan Africa there are only 197 women, and only one of them —Elizabeth Bradley — holds more than five.

McGregor says SA wins hands down when it comes to multiple directorships. A massive 23% of SA directors hold more than five directorships. Next comes Zimbabwe with an 8% concentration of multiple directorships.

CALL FOR GENDER BUDGETING

FM 2/2/96 (355A)

Government is taking the lead in the battle for equality between the sexes. Sexual discrimination is being torn from the statute books and gender offices are being established in the presidency and each ministry to ensure that women's empowerment is high on the agenda.

The Cabinet recently endorsed a far-reaching memorandum in which a wide range of government departments outlined programmes designed not only to remove discriminatory legislation but also to empower women.

The move is aimed at meeting SA's obligations under the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which parliament ratified on December 14.

Accordingly, the Finance Department is to consider diverting defence expenditure to support women's economic advancement.

The justice ministry is looking at ways to improve the effectiveness of the Prevention of Family Violence Act.

The labour ministry will initiate employment equity legislation to remove all forms of workplace discrimination and to improve women's access to male-dominated careers.

Some ministries have let idealism get the better of them: cash-strapped education will look into providing child care for adolescent mothers and schooling for pregnant teenagers.

Other measures include the provision of 100% housing loans for married women civil servants and new nondiscriminatory State pension legislation.

Late last year, a delegation led by Welfare & Population Development Deputy Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi visited Australia and Uganda to examine how they had improved the status of women. In a report-back to Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, ANC MP Pregs Govender urged that an office on the status of women be established to implement a "women's budget."

Govender says the key task of the office, to be established in the presidency this year, will be to ensure that all departments evaluate the impact of their programmes on women so that budgetary allocations can be equitably distributed between the sexes. It will be backed by gender desks in each ministry.

The report says "all departments should be trained to analyse their policies and programmes from a gender perspective and disaggregate their data and expenditure accordingly." Departments are under no obligation to evaluate or report on their performance in relation to the country's new priorities.

"Most departments, including finance, are still staffed by the old bureaucrats with their old mindsets and view of economics. There has been insufficient training or reorientation of these bureaucrats on the new priorities set by the constitution or the RDP," it says.

There is no mention of the probable cost and time spent evaluating gender bias in each piece of legislation.

Even if it is feasible, can it be warranted? Joint Standing Committee on Finance chairman Gill Marcus says the cost will be "enormous" if SA does not introduce budget performance indicators. SA needs to know whether the Budget is achieving its goals and meeting real needs, be it the delivery of textbooks or improving the lot of women.

"We don't have any of these indicators. All we are saying is that one of them must be gender because if the Budget has an effect on women, a lot of other things, like poverty and job creation, will also be addressed."

Marcus believes the entire Budget should be gender-sensitive and her committee is running a project to assess the impact which certain government programmes have on women.

Whether the notion of gender budgeting is as keenly received by the rest of government remains to be seen. ■

Tackling sexism in the workplace

(355A)

Gauteng officials are taking new routes to ensure that gender inequalities are addressed at a practical level. Glenda Daniels reports

Star 16/2/96

Changing a patriarchal cultural heritage which goes back hundreds of years is a difficult task. Now women in the Gauteng provincial government have begun to tackle the issue head-on.

The Women in Government Forum was formed six months ago to discuss effective ways of challenging sexism and patriarchal practices and to make the work environment more women-friendly.

The forum is the brainchild of Lucy Abrahams, commissioner for Gauteng Provincial Services Commission (GPSC).

Next month the group will hold a conference to coincide with Human Rights Day. The conference will tackle the problem of changing the sexist mindset in both the public and private sectors and in broader society.

"From this conference, we want quick wins and 'implementables', but there are also broader problems to deal with," says Aspasia Karras, organisational development adviser in the office of the GPSC and founding forum member.

"We have to challenge certain assumptions from the past, for instance, that women do not have the mental capabilities to take on managerial roles. And, when they do take on these roles we've got to ensure that there are support mechanisms. In the past these positions were always for males," says Karras.

She says that sexist assumptions underly how much a woman earns, what career path to follow and the occupational class group she falls under.

Some of the task groups already set up are focusing on such issues as women abuse, HIV awareness and Educare (an educational creche facility for the children of working women).

Karras says that in the past any change would come from the top. Now women at all levels are taking the initiative to create change, which has to happen at a practical level. In the past people have understood sexism from a theoretical or sloganeering point of view, she says.

A unique dimension to the forum is that all sectors are given a voice.

Secretaries, for example, in the past felt they were on the bottom rung of the ladder of success. The forum has given them the space to form a subcommittee to discuss issues which affect them.

"While we support a strong affirmative action in government, we need to go beyond quotas. We need to set up gender-sensitive parameters which will work for women," Karras says.

She says that of the 110 000 people employed by the provincial government, half are women. Before the advent of democracy only 1% of these women were in managerial positions, but now it is 25%.

"Nevertheless, this is not a benchmark we are proud of, we need to go even further than this. We also need to ensure that there are mechanisms which will ensure the system which has always worked for men will now be as comfortable for women. In the past, men have had wives at home to look after children if they got back late from work. This

Women in government still far behind

(355A)

BARRY STREEK
POLITICAL WRITER

CT 19/2/96

LESS than a quarter of South Africa's national and provincial legislators are women — and they constitute only 11% of the national cabinet.

In the Western Cape 11 of the 42 provincial MPLs are women and there is only one, Mrs Martha Olckers, in the 10-person executive council.

This was disclosed in the latest issue of Agishanang (Building together), published by the Community-Based Development Programme (CBDP).

Of the 894 members of the national and nine provincial legislatures, 213 (23,8%) are women.

In the national Parliament, 122 of the 490 members (24,9%) are women, and three of the 27-member cabinet and three of the 12 deputy ministers are women.

Although the representation of women in government structures has improved markedly since the adoption of the interim constitution, these figures show that women still lag far behind men.

CT 19/2/96

IFP urges focus on ending sex discrimination

(355A)

JOHANNESBURG: Women needed to ensure that their own ideals were attainable without being impeded by legislation or society, IFP West Rand chairman Mr Humphrey Ndlovu said yesterday.

Ndlovu, addressing an IFP Women's Brigade general meeting, said women needed not only to address their own roles, but to continue their important contributions to society, economics and politics.

"In the past the issue of women's rights and equality was not given separate attention from that of liberation in general," he said.

"This does not mean that the role of women has been ignored, but rather ... placed within the context of the transformation of South Africa from apartheid to democracy."

Ndlovu said it was now necessary that issues concerning all forms of discrimination were separately addressed to ensure that full democratic rights were endorsed for all South Africans. — Sapa

Working women may get relief

(355A) (KEB) CT(BR) 19/2/96

By Françoise Botha

Cape Town — Women will receive a boost to their labour rights if far-reaching proposals presented in the government's Green Paper on new employment standards are adopted.

In terms of current legislation, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act prevents pregnant employees from working for four weeks before and eight weeks after the birth of a child. This has given rise to a large number of applications for exemption.

The proposal recommends reducing the period after the birth to six weeks if the woman is medically fit to return. The entitlement to four months' maternity leave has been retained.

Provision is made for alternative work to be given to night workers and those doing work that may be harmful to the worker or the child. The employee should not suffer any loss of benefits during the pregnancy or for a year following the birth.

In terms of the new Labour Relations Act, job security has been provided for pregnant and nursing women.

Employees with more than one year's service may be entitled to three days' paid child-care or paternity leave during the year following the birth of the child.

Other proposals include reduced working hours for women to assist increased parental responsibility.

Part-time workers, the majority of whom are women, may also receive a boost. The proposal states they should be entitled to the same statutory protection as full-time employees. Another option is to provide this protection on a proportional basis.

The Green Paper suggests giving part-time workers who have been employed for two years or longer preferential consideration for a vacancy. This would be subject to the standard criteria of qualification and experience. However, these employees only represent 2 percent of the workforce.

The Basic Conditions of Employment Act classified part-time workers as "casual employees" working for three or fewer days a week. In terms of the legislation they were denied the right to paid leave, paid sick leave and notice of termination.

Domestic workers employed for three or fewer days a week are considered regular day workers.

Women poorly represented in local govt, claims expert

(355A)

Mduduzi ka Harvey 08 6/3/96

ALTHOUGH SA was one of the leading countries in terms of representation of women in local government, women were still poorly represented as elected councillors, Institute for Democracy in SA (Idasa) director Paul Graham said.

Graham said yesterday that research conducted by Idasa attested to the numerical marginalisation of women, because even though they constituted 51% of the population, women accounted for 18,75% of elected councillors in both rural and urban authorities in SA.

Only 14,6% of key positions at executive level were held by women and among this "elite" even fewer held key decision-making positions such as chairman.

Reasons cited in the research for lack of representation include party bias towards male candidates. Of the major political parties only the ANC held a formal policy on gender, largely focused on getting women candidates on proportional representation lists.

Nationally, 27,6% of the proportional representation seats were won by women while they also won 10,84% of the ward seats. Women made up 13,6% of the executive seats in local authorities.

The breakdown of election results indicates out of an overall total of 6 305 seats women won 1 182 seats. For proportional representation positions women won 815 seats out of 2 920 seats, while out of a total of 3 385 ward seats they won 367 seats.

Research found administrative shortcomings where the Local Government Transition Act, although stating the purpose to establish the bodies, powers and administrative procedures to create and implement local authorities, had failed to take gender into account.

In addition, the hierarchy of traditional authorities was overwhelmingly male and had serious immediate and long-term implications for women. In some rural communities, women were not identified as an interest group.

In terms of the Act interest groups were guaranteed a limited number of seats in the councils at the discretion of each of the provincial local government and housing MECs.

There was also a shortage of experienced women in political, public and private sectors which caused a shortage of qualified candidates.

Graham said the limited showing of women had serious implications to rebuilding the country as local government was closest to the people and women were typically the principle care givers in households and were the best candidates to effectively shape local government.

Search, seizure powers urged for Gender Commission

THE Gender Equality Commission would have no teeth if it did not have the search and seizure powers proposed in legislation now before parliament, said Lindiwe Ngwane, ANC member of the National Assembly's Justice committee.

Speaking at a multiparty Press conference to mark International Women's Day, she said President Nelson Mandela had instructed committee chairman Johnny de Lange that priority be given to the bill, which sets out the ground rules for the commission.

Search powers had caused an uproar among some people, but they were necessary for the committee to do its work properly.

Deputy Agriculture Minister Thoko Didiza said Women's Day was a time to celebrate, assess achievements and chart a programme for the future.

One of the functions of women in parliament this year should be to look at how the government was meeting its commitment to setting up the Gender Commission and a women's office at the office of the president.

ANC MP Baleka Kgotsitsile said woman parliamentarians planned to set up a multiparty committee to monitor progress towards the goals of the Beijing platform of action and the Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

NP MP Sheila Camerer said women had made a difference by being in parliament in large numbers.

They had had an impact on legislation, had forced the repeal of discriminatory legislation and had even influenced the blueprint for the reconstruction and development programme. — Sapa.

(355A) ARG 9/3/96

Women show unity

South Africans have a proud record of fighting for equality, yet our women are regularly abused by men. **Palsley Dodds** reports on the fight against sexism

(365A) Sowetan 11/3/

ABOUT 1 000 PEOPLE stood in blazing sunshine on Friday at Johannesburg's Library Gardens to show support for International Women's Day and to demand an end to sexism in South Africa.

Their demands included shelters for abused women, compassionate rape counsellors, high bail for child abusers and stricter sentences for men who beat their wives.

Joking that he had to be taught how not to abuse his wife, Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale added that it was important for more women to be involved at all Government levels.

"We need to make sure that they (women's rights) are not only enshrined in the Constitution but are also enshrined in the homes and various workplaces," Sexwale told the crowd.

Among the crowd stood Nonia Ramphomane (67), who started one of the country's first women's groups in 1948, the local chapter of the Young Women's Christian Association. The group spearheaded women's literacy, unemployment prevention and abuse prevention.

She said that during her lifetime she had struggled against sexist and racist customary laws that denied her house ownership, and had battled against family members who tried to silence her fight for equality.

Now, she said, attention needed to shift from fighting against apartheid to battling sexism.

"Racism has always been perceived as more important than sexism, but it was the poor black women living in the rural areas who struggled the most during apartheid," she told *Sapa*.

Both men and women stood in front of the library holding placards condemning domestic abuse which strikes one in four South African women, according to People Opposing Women Abuse.

Sexual abuse

Other placards condemned sexual harassment, rape, sexual abuse and illiteracy in rural black communities.

The crowd toyi-toyied and sang popular songs sung during the anti-apartheid rallies.

Booths dotted the lawn with vendors selling T-shirts, bumper stickers, posters and hats.

"The time has come when we must value women's work," said Gauteng safety and security MEC Jessie Duarte. "Domestic workers' work is no different from the work of a woman sitting behind a big shiny desk."

Duarte said the Government was trying to implement programmes that would boost shelters for abused women and children but it was up to communities to stop abuse.

"By the time police get to the child or to the woman, it is too late," Duarte said to shouts of agreement.

Lisa Vetton of the Sexual Harassment Education Project said international holidays that highlighted the fight for women's rights and equality were important because they constantly reminded people that the battle remained to be fought.

"Considering recent events such as police officers who are in the newspapers for killing their wives, I think this event is timely," Vetton said.



International solidarity ... many women gathered in Johannesburg las Friday to show their support for International Women's Day and to demand an end to sexism in South Africa. PIC: PAT SEBOK

Some of the men agreed. "It is embarrassing the way women are treated in South Africa. We must fight against abuse," said Themba Sibeko (19). Minutes later, he said women should avoid wearing short skirts.

● Lindiwe Ngwane, an African National Congress member of the National Assembly's Justice committee, said on Friday the Gender Equality Commission would have no teeth if it did not have the search and seizure powers proposed in legislation now before Parliament.

Speaking at a multiparty Press conference at Parliament to mark International Women's Day, she said President Nelson Mandela had instructed committee chairman Johnny de Lange that priority be given to the Bill, which sets out the ground rules for the commission.

The search powers had caused an uproar among some people, but they were necessary for the committee to do its work properly.

Deputy Agriculture Minister Thoko Didiza said International Women's Day was a time to celebrate, assess achievements and chart a programme for the future.

One of the functions of women in Parliament this year should be to look at how the Government was meeting its commitment to setting up the Gender Commission and women's office in the Office of the President

ANC MP Baleka Kgotsitsile said wom parliamentarians planned to set up a multipa committee to monitor progress towards t goals of the Beijing platform of action and t Convention on Elimination of Discriminati Against Women.

Impact on legislation

NP MP Sheila Camerer said women had ma a difference by being in Parliament in lar numbers. They had had an impact on legis tion, had forced the repeal of discriminato legislation and had even influenced the blu print for the Reconstruction and Developme Programme.

"Our track record speaks for itself and will go on to greater achievements in t coming year," she said.

She also suggested that the new Constituti might specify that a commission on the g child be established.

Constitutional Assembly chairman Cy Ramaphosa told the women that a meeting the CA's special negotiating committee h briefly adjourned so he could come to p tribute to the women of South Africa. – *Sap*

Priority urged for gender equality bill

(355A)

TYRONE SEALE
Political Staff

PRESIDENT Mandela has urged parliament to give priority to processing the Gender Commission Bill which provides for the monitoring of the advancement and implementation of equality, and the resulting entitlements for women in state and private sector institutions.

The bill, now under consideration by the parliamentary justice committees, is expected to become law later this year, according to African National Congress MP Edna Sethema-Molewa, who is part of the parliamentary multi-party women's caucus.

She was speaking recently at a media conference hosted by this caucus to mark International Women's Day.

Ms Molewa said Mr Mandela had urged all the legislative channels to process the bill as quickly as possible.

The bill gives the commission the power to refer matters of concern to the public protector or human rights commission.

ARG 11/3/96

Another caucus member, Baleka Kgositsile, said this forum needed to strengthen itself to ensure that when it came to producing new legislation, women from different parties could speak with one voice.

Another challenge was for women MPs to maintain links with the women who had elected them to parliament.

National Party MP Sheila Camerer said that as women MPs accounted for only 25 percent of the national legislature, they still found themselves "in an unequal power relationship", and said it was quite difficult for them to assert themselves in what still retained certain elements of the "old men's clubs".

Even so, women had made a difference by being in parliament in relatively large numbers, she said.

Union leads the way in securing benefits for parents

ARG 26/3/96

(355A)

ESTELLE RANDALL
Labour Reporter

IN South Africa about 60 percent of female employees are entitled to maternity benefits from employers, according to an International Labour Organisation (ILO) country review in 1996.

This is as a result of trade union negotiations with employers.

A leader in the field of these negotiated agreements is the South African Commercial and Catering Workers' Union (Saccawu).

Saccawu's agreements cover about 60 000 workers, about 60 percent of whom are women.

The main companies are Pick'n Pay, Edgars, Foschini, Beares, OK Bazaars, Woolworths, Checkers, Clicks, Game, Metro Cash'n Carry, Dions, Diskom, Joshua Doore, Ellerines and Aegis Insurance.

"Our landmark agreement was with Pick'n Pay in 1982," recalled Patricia Apollis, Saccawu's national gender coordinator.

This agreement gave pregnant women workers who had worked for 12 months at the company the right to return to work after nine paid months maternity leave.

Workers also had the option of taking another two months' unpaid leave.

Pick'n Pay agreed to pay 75 percent of the worker's salary for three of the 11 months and 30 percent of the salary for another six months.

Parents who worked at Pick'n Pay could also share the 11 months.

Saccawu's subsequent negotiations have resulted in maternity benefits ranging from four months paid leave at 30 percent of the worker's salary to 11 months paid leave. Most agreements provide for six months paid leave.

With paternity leave, they range from three to eight days' paid leave. In most cases employees had to have been with the company for a year before they qualified for these benefits, Ms Apollis said.

Besides maternity and paternity leave, parents could also take parental leave which they could share if they both worked at the same company. Workers who adopted or fostered children had the same benefits, except those related specifically to pregnancy and birth.

Post-natal leave ranges from five days to eight days paid time off until the child is two years old. "In our agreement with Game, fathers specifically can get four days off at full pay to take their children to clinics," Ms Apollis said.

In most cases, companies also paid either the medical aid or retirement fund contributions of workers on parental leave and not getting their full salaries.

Ms Apollis said Saccawu was now attempting to negotiate around a new model parental rights agreement. Some of its main provisions were for 12 months paid maternity leave at full salary, with another 12 months unpaid leave, three months paid paternity leave at full salary with another 12 months unpaid leave, and 20 days paid child care leave for parents with children of preschool age.

In the clothing and textile sector, which also has a large number of women workers, the South African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (Sactwu) has also made strides.

Ronald Bernickow, Sactwu's national health care officer, said the union had negotiated parental rights agreements which covered almost 200 000 workers in the clothing, textile and leather industries. Most of these agreements were for between three to six months maternity leave paid at 33 percent of normal salary, with job security.

The union and employers were currently investigating ways in which to "get around" the 30 percent limitation which the Unemployment Insurance Fund placed on employer contributions, Mr Bernickow said.

Paid paternity leave was generally for three to five days. Sactwu and clothing employers had also established community-based clinics in areas where workers lived, and most clothing agreements gave workers two hours paid time off to visit these clinics.

Maternity/paternity ... the shape of things to come

ARG 26/3/96

(355A)

ESTELLE RANDALL
Labour Reporter

NEW laws are being discussed which may make it easier for workers, especially women, to combine a career with family life.

The Basic Conditions of Employment Act prevents pregnant women from working for 12 weeks - four weeks before the birth and eight weeks after - but there is no legal guarantee that a woman will get back her job after maternity leave.

And the only legal financial support for pregnant women is the limited maternity benefit offered by the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF).

About 60 000 women claim maternity benefits from UIF every year. But these are only women who have contributed to UIF. And only women who have contributed to UIF for a continuous period of three years can draw the benefit for six months. Excluded are domestic workers and those earning above R5 785 a month.

The maternity benefit which women can claim from UIF is also limited to 45 percent of their normal salaries, paid monthly for a maximum of six months.

The total maternity benefit a woman is entitled to from UIF cannot be paid out for a shorter period.

Employers may not contribute more than 30 percent of the woman's salary, if she also claims from UIF. This means that women do not get their full salary while on maternity leave. There is no legal right to paternity or child care leave.

Changes to laws affecting labour aim to address these shortcomings. The Labour Relations Act, which comes into effect in May this year, prohibits employers from not employing women simply because they are pregnant.

And the proposed new Employment Standards entitle all female employees to four months maternity leave during which their security of employment is guaranteed.

It proposes that women be able to take maternity leave at any time in the period starting four weeks before the expect- six weeks after the birth of her child, unless a doctor certifies that she is fit to return to work earlier.

A pregnant woman doing night work or work which may be harmful is entitled to suitable alternative work without loss of benefits during pregnancy and for a year after the birth of her child.

All employees with one year's service are entitled to three days' paid paternity or child care leave during the year of the birth of the child.

There is also a proposal to allow women to reduce their working hours so that they may combine parental responsibilities and work.

On paper these proposals provide important steps towards improved conditions for women workers. However, a key problem will be enforcing these new proposed rights.

"Sometimes workers don't know their rights and even when they do, the balance of power between them and employers may be too great to allow workers to insist on enforcement," said Roseline Nyman, gender researcher for the National Labour and Economic Development Institute (Naledi).

Ms Nyman is sceptical of these proposed rights being enforced through trade union bargaining because many women are employed in sectors with a low level of unionisation, such as agriculture and domestic work.

She welcomed the three days paid paternity leave during the child's first year as a landmark provision, and the proposed flexibility about when maternity leave is taken.

"This flexibility takes into account the real situation for most working women - that they receive low wages and the 45 percent cover from UIF for maternity leave is often insufficient to allow them to take the full four months maternity leave. "But the flexibility can also be used to undermine minimum standards and to pressure women into getting medical certificates to return to work earlier than they should," she said.

UIF had to be restructured to allow for extra maternity benefits so that women would be able to take the maternity leave available to them, she increase to 60 percent. The whole issue of UIF, including the benefits it offers, is being reviewed.

Since women already earned low salaries and they alone were responsible for UIF contributions, it was economically unrealistic to expect them to pay any extra, Ms Nyman said.

She suggested that the state pay the balance of maternity benefits, in line with international trends where maternity and parental leave benefits are paid from state-funded social security.

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) has argued that parental leave can be a good way of attracting and retaining skilled workers of both sexes. The problem is that if parental leave is only taken by women, it could become a way of excluding them from the labour market. A key failing of parental leave is that it often does not carry with it compensatory payment. This severely restricts parents who can't afford a loss in income.

The availability of child care facilities is an important factor which determines whether women return to work at the end of parental leave. Linked to this is the length of parental leave.

The shorter the parental leave period, the fewer women return to work because they are unable to find child care facilities for their children.

In Europe, the Scandinavian countries were the first to introduce paid parental leave. At first parental leave had to be taken in one go immediately after maternity leave but this has become more flexible. Sweden allows full-time or part-time leave which can be spread over time until the child is eight years old.

Almost all parents in Sweden, Norway and Finland take parental leave when they are entitled to it. In other countries, such as France and the Netherlands, where very few parents take parental leave, the main reason for not doing so is concern about a loss of money and, among women in particular, a fear that this will harm their career.

Although parental leave can be expensive because of



Actress **DEMI MOORE** ... she's one working mother who doesn't have to worry too much about her finances during pregnancy.

Maternity/pat

ARG 26/3/96

(355A) (355)

ESTELLE RANDALL
Labour Reporter

NEW laws are being discussed which may make it easier for workers, especially women, to combine a career with family life.

The Basic Conditions of Employment Act prevents pregnant women from working for 12 weeks - four weeks before the birth and eight weeks after - but there is no legal guarantee that a woman will get back her job after maternity leave.

And the only legal financial support for pregnant women is the limited maternity benefit offered by the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF).

About 60 000 women claim maternity benefits from UIF every year. But these are only women who have contributed to UIF. And only women who have contributed to UIF for a continuous period of three years can draw the benefit for six months. Excluded are domestic workers and those earning above R5 785 a month.

The maternity benefit which women can claim from UIF is also limited to 45 percent of their normal salaries, paid monthly for a maximum of six months.

The total maternity benefit a woman is entitled to from UIF cannot be paid out for a shorter period.

Employers may not contribute more than 30 percent of the woman's salary, if she also claims from UIF. This means that women do not get their full salary while on maternity leave. There is no legal right to paternity or child care leave.

Changes to laws affecting labour aim to address these shortcomings. The Labour Relations Act, which comes into effect in May this year, prohibits employers from not employing women simply because they are pregnant.

And the proposed new Employment Standards entitle all female employees to four months maternity leave during which their security of employment is guaranteed.

It proposes that women be able to take maternity leave at any time in the period starting four weeks before the expected birth, or earlier if this is necessary for health and safety reasons.

It further suggests that an employee may not work for six weeks after the birth of her child, unless a doctor certifies that she is fit to return to work earlier.

A pregnant woman doing night work or work which may be harmful is entitled to suitable alternative work without loss of benefits during pregnancy and for a year after the birth of her child.

All employees with one year's service are entitled to three days' paid paternity or child care leave during the year of the birth of the child.

There is also a proposal to allow women to reduce their working hours so that they may combine parental responsibilities and work.

On paper these proposals provide important steps towards improved conditions for women workers. However, a key problem will be enforcing these new proposed rights.

"Sometimes workers don't know their rights and even when they do, the balance of power between them and employers may be too great to allow workers to insist on enforcement," said Roseline Nyman, gender researcher for the National Labour and Economic Development Institute (Naledi).

Ms Nyman is sceptical of these proposed rights being enforced through trade union bargaining because many women are employed in sectors with a low level of unionisation, such as agriculture and domestic work.

She welcomed the three days paid paternity leave during the child's first year as a landmark provision, and the proposed flexibility about when maternity leave is taken.

"This flexibility takes into account the real situation for most working women - that they receive low wages and the 45 percent cover from UIF for maternity leave is often insufficient to allow them to take the full four months maternity leave. "But the flexibility can also be used to undermine minimum standards and to pressure women into getting medical certificates to return to work earlier than they should," she said.

UIF had to be restructured to allow for extra maternity benefits so that women would be able to take the maternity leave available to them, she said.

As early as 1981 the Wiehahn Commission on Labour recommended that UIF maternity benefits increase to 60 percent. The whole issue of UIF, including the benefits it offers, is being reviewed.

Since women already earned low salaries and they alone were responsible for UIF contributions, it was economically unrealistic to expect them to pay any extra, Ms Nyman said.

She suggested that the state pay the balance of maternity benefits, in line with international trends where maternity and parental leave benefits are paid from state-funded social security.

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) has argued that parental leave can be a good way of attracting and retaining skilled workers of both sexes. The problem is that if parental leave is only taken by women, it could become a way of excluding them from the labour market. A key failing of parental leave is that it often does not carry with it compensatory payment. This severely restricts parents who can't afford a loss in income.

The availability of child care facilities is an important factor which determines whether women return to work at the end of parental leave. Linked to this is the length of parental leave.

The shorter the parental leave period, the fewer women return to work because they are unable to find child care facilities for their children.

In Europe, the Scandinavian countries were the first to introduce paid parental leave. At first parental leave had to be taken in one go immediately after maternity leave but this has become more flexible. Sweden allows full-time or part-time leave which can be spread over time until the child is eight years old.

Almost all parents in Sweden, Norway and Finland take parental leave when they are entitled to it. In other countries, such as France and the Netherlands, where very few parents take parental leave, the main reason for not doing so is concern about a loss of money and, among women in particular, a fear that this will harm their career.

Although parental leave can be expensive because of its duration, it usually leads to savings in public child care services and unemployment payouts when the parents are unemployed, the ICFTU said.

the councils on July 1.

Women still a minority in govt structures

B55A

Bonile Ngqiyaza

BD 28/3/96

ONLY 18,5% of all local councillors in rural and urban areas were women, ANC MP Lydia Kompe said in Johannesburg yesterday.

She told a rural local government conference that although women made up 51% of SA's population, the recent local elections had not reflected that situation.

Only 14,6% of women representatives worked at the executive level of local government structures, she said.

Kompe attributed the limited representation of women to a political bias towards male candidates by the major parties. She said the entrenchment of the male-dominated traditional authorities in local government structures would have "serious immediate and long-term implications" for the participation of women, especially in rural communities.

Kompe criticised the Local Government Transitional Act of 1993 for failing to legislate the status of women as an interest group. "The result has been that some provinces have chosen not to classify rural women as such."

At the conference, Constitutional Development Deputy Minister Valli Moosa said the establishment of a national rural local government ministry was not such a good idea. He suggested that government become involved in local government issues only when it was "absolutely critical ... because of the detail involved".

The conference reiterated the position taken by the national land committee yesterday for democratic government to take precedence over all other forms, but said it appreciated the need for local government to be as representative as possible.

CROSS COLOURS 960175/A

Green paper to be tabled on employment equity

Renee Grawitzky

A GREEN paper on employment equity, expected to be tabled in Parliament on April 25, could act as a mechanism to achieve organisational transformation to create a climate for employment equity.

This is opposed to legislation merely outlining quotas for affirmative action placements. A team appointed by the labour department to draft a green paper had presented its recommendations to the department and it was understood that its main thrust differed vastly from a fifth draft discussion paper leaked to the media earlier in the year.

Although the green paper, as with the fifth draft, would include various enforcement mechanism options such as fines, tax or other incentives to ensure compliance, it would attempt to act as an enabling document to guide organisations in human resource development strategies. This could impact on remuneration systems, grading and career path planning.

Meanwhile, negotiations on the employment standards green paper are scheduled to begin in the National Economic Development and Labour Council's labour market chamber tomorrow, although it is doubtful whether these would take place as not all the parties had submitted their positions to Nedlac.

The employment equity green paper, instead of focusing on affirmative action positions, would focus on processes that organisations engaged in, therefore, focus would be given to affirmative action organisations rather than positions.

Labour department equal opportunities director Mpho Makwana said in the latest edition of People Dynamics that "it is not the candidate who is need of affirmation, it's the organisation which is the candidate for affirmation". He said "affirmative action is a means to an end, whereas employment equity is about dealing with current discrimination and preventing future discrimination in the broader sense."

The green paper, after being tabled in Parliament, would be presented to the social partners within Nedlac for negotiations.

BD 10/4/96

OLD BOY NETWORK STRONG AS EVER

Glass ceiling 'still keeps women down'

CT 12/4/96 (355A)

AN INVISIBLE but effective "glass ceiling" that ensures women seldom reach top management still prevails in South Africa, a study finds. **MELANIE GOSLING** reports.

THE Old Boy Network in South Africa is alive and well — and keeping corporate women firmly out of top management.

This was one of the findings of a University of Natal dissertation that looked at the problems South African women experience in the workplace.

The dissertation, by Ms Nicky Wood, involved in-depth interviews with Durban women managers and found that while more women were reaching the middle management ranks, there was an invisible but effective "glass ceiling" that ensured they seldom reached top management.

She found the way the "white male monoculture" prevented women reaching the higher echelons was subtle and covert. It centred less in open discrimination like unequal pay than in less obvious aspects like the "old boy network".

Wood also found lip service was paid to equal opportunity schemes but little action or insight into women's real needs.

Many of the women interviewed for the study had left their jobs in frustration and had started their own businesses.

Wood said in an interview: "By a glass ceiling I refer to the subtle but very real blocks that stop a woman getting higher up on the corporate ladder — things like not having access to the informal corporate grapevine because women are not allowed in their company's rugby boxes.

"Or they can't become members of the men-only golf clubs to which their male colleagues belong. It is very important to have access to these things because a lot of corporate politicking goes on there.

"The informal grapevine is important in business. Women said there is a subtle but conscious effort by their male colleagues not to pass on information from these male-only gatherings, and in this way they miss out. They can't force men to include them."

She said the "old boy network" operated in most organisations.

"It operates subtly. Men in the upper echelons who were at the same school or were university buddies, or who belong to the same clubs, help each other. Women are seen as intruders and they close ranks against them."

Other ways of keeping women from being promoted were more open.

Some women said that when they were being considered for promotion they were asked when they intended having children. This had a bearing on whether they were promoted.

Equality in the workplace 'still evades women'

(ET 24/4/96(BR)(355A)

BY FRANÇOISE BOTHA

Cape Town — Women, who represent 50 percent of the world's population, received only one-tenth of the world's income, said Brenda Greyling, the managing director of Brenda Greyling and Associates.

Speaking at an Executive Women's Club lunch yesterday, Greyling released figures published by Naomi Wolf in her book, The Beauty Myth, that showed there were only two professions in which women consistently earned more than men.

"Sadly, they are modelling and prostitution," she said.

This was despite the fact that women worked nearly two-thirds of all the world's working hours. In addition, women were found to own less than 1 percent of the world's property.

"When one looks at world statistics, the achievements of women are remarkable," Greyling said, commenting on the figures.

But, she cautioned, there was still a long road ahead.

"You do not win by struggling to the top of a system. You win by refusing to be trapped within one at all," she said.

The keynote speaker was Wendy Lucas-Bull, the executive director of Rand Merchant Bank Holdings and last year's businesswoman of the year. Speaking on management challenges facing South Africa, she said local companies faced the same challenges as their international counterparts.

"In the past, South African companies could choose between being superb service providers or low-cost producers. The challenge is now how to do both," she said.

THE CAPE

W Cape women vastly under-represented

ARG 25/4/96 (355A)

ANDREA WEISS
Metro Reporter

WOMEN in the Western Cape are vastly under-represented in positions of power and influence, two studies on the topic have found.

The studies, one by the Development Action Group focusing on Working Women of the Western Cape, and the other by Idasa, entitled Women at the Periphery of Power, conclude that despite making up half the population, women are marginalised when it comes to positions of influence.

The DAG study found that the position was "dismal" when looking at boards of major companies and senior management in the Western Cape.

Of six large companies with head offices in Cape Town, two had no women board members, and the other four had only one each. Most had only one woman in senior management. The best was eight percent women and 92 percent men in senior management positions.

In the provincial legislature, only 26 percent of seats were occupied by women and only one of the 10 members of the executive council (cabinet) was a woman - Martha Olckers, MEC for education and culture.

At national level, only 14 percent of cabinet posts were held by women.

The DAG study also found that women were more heavily represented than men in the lower-income groups, regardless of colour, but the biggest "in-race" gender income gap was between white women and white men. The smallest gender income gap was between African men and women, while African men and women were almost equally represented in the highest income categories.

Idasa's Local Government Information Centre found that across the country, women secured 19,4 percent of seats on local councils, but at executive level, only 14,4 percent of seats.

In the Western Cape's partial elections last year (in the towns), only 15,26 percent of seats had been won by women, and only two women had been elected to the position of executive committee chair.

The bulk of women high up in councils were in the position of the more traditionally ceremonial appointments of mayor or deputy mayor, with women in the Western Cape clocking up four mayoralties and 12 deputy mayoralties.

Only 19 women throughout the country held the position of chairing executive committees.

The Idasa study concluded that while South Africa was one of the leading countries in terms of representation of women in local government - three percent higher than the average for the 25-member states of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - the fact that women held less than 20 percent of all elected positions in local government and just more than 14 percent of key executive ones showed that the country's "laurels quickly wither".

Debate over gender body

(355A)

Tim Cohen
BD 30/4/96

CAPE TOWN — ANC senators sparred yesterday over whether the proposed gender commission ought to be consensus-seeking or an investigative body.

The debate took place during hearings on the Commission on Gender Equality Bill by the Senate justice committee.

ANC Senator Stefanus Grove argued that clauses in the legislation empowering the body to investigate instances of gender inequality were unnecessary because the body did not have powers to adjudicate matters.

Grove said if investigation was necessary, it should be conducted by the Human Rights Commission, which was empowered to adjudicate on matters. Mohseen Moosa, committee chairman, said the inclusion of investigative powers was desirable because it would assist in the adjudication process when cases were referred to the Human Rights Commission or other bodies.

Companies go for Gold to win gender-equality race

Star 6/6/96 (#35A)

South African women are being promoted in business now more than ever before. Glenda Daniels reports

Women's participation in working life in South Africa has changed enormously since the days when it was considered proper to stay at home, cook and tend to the children.

Fifteen years ago, women believed they were seriously discriminated against in the workplace, and did little as a group to challenge that. But today, this has changed. They are now a force to be taken seriously, says insurance consultant Sharon Lain.

Lain heads the Gold Award – a non-profit project run by the SA Federation of Business and Professional Women – to encourage companies to give women an equal deal in the workplace.

South African companies are becoming more proactive and enthusiastic in their support for gender equality, as more and more enter for the award, says Lain, who launched the competition 15 years ago.

This year, the Gold Awards will take place in October, for companies that employ more then 100 people. And the SME (small to Medium Enterprise Award) will cater to companies who have 25 to 100 employees.

The Business and Professional Women's Federation was established in 1948 and is affiliated to the International Federation of Business and Professional Women. The federation started the Gold Awards competition in 1982.

> **"Women talk of careers, not jobs"**

Shirley Selzer, organiser of the forthcoming event in October, says that companies are judged on what they have achieved in the past year for the betterment of women in the workplace. Employment opportunities, empowerment and the creation of employment equality are some of the major challenges facing businesses today, she says.

One of the goals, says Selzer, is to honour the employers in various categories who do the most to uplift, support, educate and train women.

The participating companies will also be judged on the most positive growth climate for developing the work abilities of women and attaining promotion for all job levels in the organisation.

In 1982, 18 companies entered the competition. By 1994, the number had risen to more than 60. The number of entries for this year's competition is not yet available as companies have only just received invitations to participate.

The increasing number of companies entering the Gold Awards appears to indicate that the promotion of women in business is becoming an attractive trend, says Lain.

Over a decade ago, she says, women had to battle to get anywhere in business. But Lain could see that the world was changing, and she was confident that South Africa would copy this.

"Being the optimist that I am, I decided to create something that will give recognition to the companies which try and incorporate equality into their ethos. This in turn, has the effect of other companies becoming competitive, and following suit," says Lain.

She says that some might call this affirmative action, and in a sense it is, but it is not at the expense of merit.

"We still believe in the best person for the job, but we strongly believe in giving women opportunities that were previously lacking," says Lain, who has a male secretary, because he is the best person for the job.

She explains how she sees the change.

Women's attitude to work is quite different from what it used to be. Work is not seen as just a gap before marriage the way it used to be. Women now talk in terms of careers, not jobs, she says.

There is the need today for two income earners in a household. Men are not seen purely as the breadwinners any more.

And thank goodness for this, according to Lain, because with economic freedom can come equality between men and women in their relationships.

Women's attitudes to equality have changed. There is less whingeing and complaining and more getting on with the job, these days. Women are using new opportunities to train and educate themselves, says Lain.



Strides ahead ... times have changed for the better for women in the South African workforce.

It is going to take time to reach complete equality. South Africa is not alone, even in the United States there is still discrimination against women.

It is only in Scandinavian countries that there is semblance of some form of equality, says Lain.

She gives some tips to women who are keen to achieve their potential in a work environment:

★ Women have to focus their priorities and sharpen their skills.

★ With the right planning, today's woman can juggle a career and family, without having to be a superwoman.

★ Financial empowerment for women is the most important aspect of equality and women should look at ways to reach financial independence, especially as divorce statistics continue to rise.

★ Women have to smash the myth that men should take care of their financial affairs.

★ With increased independence comes raised self-esteem and confidence – ingredients necessary for a woman's success. "Companies serious about promoting women would attract the seriously skilled and career-minded and so they would also therefore benefit from such women," says Lain.

■ For more information: Tel 408-6113 and Fax 339-7732.

'Gender police' Bill ushered through, flaws and all

(355A) BD 24/5/96

COLIN DOUGLAS

PARLIAMENT is poised to pass the Commission on Gender Equality Bill, which will give the state-appointed commission the power to "monitor and evaluate policies and practices ... of private businesses, enterprises and institutions, in order to promote gender equality" and then to "make any recommendations it deems necessary".

The Bill, which was passed in the Senate on May 10 with the support of every party except the DP, also authorises the commission to "investigate any gender-related issues of its own accord or on receipt of a complaint". During the course of such investigations it may subpoena any person to appear before it and "search any person or enter and search any premises on which anything connected with an investigation is or is suspected to be".

The power to search persons was included in the Bill as a result of an amendment by the Senate's justice committee. These provisions will authorise the commission to interfere in the affairs of (and if it wishes to, harass) private companies that have broken no law, on no more compelling ground than that a "gender-related issue" is at stake.

SA Institute of Race Relations CE John Kane-Berman commented when the Bill was first introduced in Parliament: "Since the human race is divided into two sexes and since most offices, factories, farms and homes have both men and women in them, it is very difficult to think of any issue which cannot be twisted into being 'gender-related'.

"To arm anybody with investigative powers so broadly defined is repugnant to the rule of law. In free societies private citizens and private institutions are free to do as they please provided they do not break the law, but we seem to be moving into a society which is governed not by law but by the latest trends in political correctness."



OMAR

The institute's criticisms of the Bill helped to persuade the DP to oppose it in the Senate. (Dene Smuts, a DP parliamentarian, had previously supported the commission's proposed powers of investigation, saying, in apparent justification of them, that they would not be used frequently.) But, while the ANC, the NP and the IFP said they had reservations about the Bill, they all — strangely — voted for it.

Strangest of all, perhaps, was the IFP's response. Senator Musa Zondi approvingly quoted parts of Kane-Berman's statement above, and warned that the Bill was "putting the cart before the horse" by giving the commission wide powers of investigation in the absence of legislation targeting sex discrimination.

Zondi cautioned against what he described as a growing trend of "government by commission". He nonetheless supported the Bill.

The NP's response was almost as strange and — as the Senate debate took place only a few hours after the NP announced its withdrawal from the government of national unity — was perhaps an early indication of how effective the party will be on the opposition benches.

Senator Mark Wiley approached the Bill with hostility, saying: "Much of this Bill has been driven by vociferous minorities."

His colleague, Senator Stanley Fisher, described the powers conferred on the commission as "draconian". The NP's senators nonetheless supported the Bill, although "with reservations".

Justice Minister Dullah Omar of the ANC, the Bill's official sponsor, gave it a lukewarm introduction in the Senate. He acknowledged that the commission's powers of investigation, search and seizure were "far-reaching".

"I have no doubt that members will want to subject these provisions to rigorous scrutiny in this house. One is concerned about the tendency to create commissions on every conceivable issue," he said.

In closing the debate, Omar called on senators to keep a watchful eye over the functioning of the commission and the manner in which it exercised its powers.



SMUTS

Other ANC members were more dismissive of the criticism of the Bill, saying that, as the ANC-led government had not previously abused power, there was no reason to suggest that the commission would do so. A number of ANC senators argued that there was no reason to fear that the commission would use its powers to curtail civil liberties, as the new constitution protected human rights.

Sources said that although several ANC senators had had doubts about the Bill, they had come under "tremendous pressure" from the ANC Women's League to pass it without any major amendments.

The DP's Senator James Selfe, who opposed the Bill, had moved several amendments to it in the Senate's ad hoc committee on justice. His most notable amendment, which was defeated, proposed removing the commission's powers of investigation and providing instead that the commission, were it to come across evidence of criminal activity, should report this to the police.

The committee did, however, agree to one improvement: warrants authorising the commission to search persons and premises may now be granted only where the article or document sought "cannot reasonably be obtained in any other manner". This amendment is apparently the result of criticism of the commission's powers by the DP, the IFP, the SA Institute of Race Relations and others.

The Bill is to return to the National Assembly on May 30, where it had previously been adopted without dissent. Deputy Justice Minister Sheila Camerer, an NP member, said her party would not oppose the Bill in the Assembly, although it would attempt to remove the commission's power to search persons, which was "entirely inappropriate".

Some IFP members, aware of the institute's criticism of the Bill, are attempting to reverse their party's support for it.

Once the Bill is enacted, the commission's members, who will number between seven and 11, will be appointed by Parliament.

In terms of the Bill, they will be nominated by a joint committee of Parliament and approved by a simple majority at a joint sitting of the two houses.

□ Douglas is parliamentary affairs manager of the DP.

LETTERS

Watchdog for labour policies

By Khangale Makhado

LABOUR Minister Tito Mboweni has appointed a drafting team to be charged with putting in place the Employment Equity Bill.

The move follows the approval this week by the Cabinet of the appointment of the 11-man team charged with the task of eradicating all forms of discrimination in the labour market.

The team is made up of lawyers, labour law experts, senior government officials in the labour department and other academics.

The Ministry said yesterday that once passed, the Bill would aid in the process of achieving social justice in the country and would form part of the laws initiated by the Government.

According to the Ministry, once in place the Bill would be the first intervention "to do away with all forms of discrimination in occupation and employment".

The 11 members of the drafting team are Ms Urmila Bhoola, Dr Caroline White, Ms Thuli Madonsela, Dr Guy Mhone, Mr Mpho Makwana, Ms Lucia Rayner, Ms Valerie Amos, Mr Sipho Madlopha, Dr Neva Makgetla, Professor Paul Benjamin and the State Law Adviser.

Sowetan 24/5/96

Laws unfair to women must be overhauled, govt is told

BD 29/5/96 (355A)

Mduduzi ka Harvey

GOVERNMENT needed to ensure that laws discriminating against women, particularly women in rural areas, were immediately overhauled to ensure equality, Gauteng Human Rights Commission member Pansy Tlakula said yesterday.

Speaking at an equality day workshop in Johannesburg — this marked the launch of human rights awareness week — she said there was a need not only to address inequalities against women, but to deal also with the empowerment of the disabled, AIDS sufferers who were subjected to pre-employment tests and intolerance towards homosexuals.

Tlakula told delegates from a cross-section of the Gauteng community that although government had shown a commitment to equality and human rights by setting up commissions and by implementing different initiatives, it now needed to address the socio-economic imbalances in the society and ensure black empowerment and not black enrichment was instituted.

She said there was a need also to transfer skills to blacks who were previously denied them, to move from tokenism to real ownership, put an end to lip service to affirmative action and to overhaul the criminal justice system, particularly in the case of violence against women.

In addressing these challenges the commission would play a crucial role as it was empowered to initiate its own investigations to ensure there were no transgressions of the new constitution, Tlakula said.

Soweto mayor Sophie Masite said a new era of human rights demanded that local government review and overhaul the way it interacted with its employees and with the community.

This, Masite said, applied at political as well as administrative levels.

She said practical steps had to be taken to translate human rights into reality and to contribute meaningfully to transforming communities so they embraced a culture of human rights.

The driving forces which should inspire transformation should be the constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Moosa moots gender quotas

Mduduzi ka Harvey

THE absence of women in local government, particularly at management level, had raised the question of whether an enforced quota system to ensure equitable representation should be debated, Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development Minister Valli Moosa said yesterday.

He was speaking at a joint women's conference on local government organised by his ministry and Idasa in Johannesburg. Moosa said the quota system debate would have to be reopened for discussion with all stakeholders.

Government and political parties would have to address gender imbalances before the next local government elections. Disadvantaged councillors, he said, should be provided with greater backup and programmes should be implemented which would enable women to take part in local government at managerial level.

It was important for women to take part in the drafting of the local government white paper. The white paper will scrap the transitional structures in place at local authority level and restructure local government. Legislation for this would be tabled in Parliament next year.

Bridging legislation to restructure local government, which will be tabled in Parliament in August, was almost complete and would aim at overcoming inadequacies in the Local Government Transition Act.

Moosa reiterated that while there were strong provisions for empowering women at a local government level, this meant nothing without action. Women should be involved in the running of councils as town clerks and treasurers and there must be a move away from "men's club" type councils.

He called for a move away from male domination not only at a local authority level, but nationally as well.

At the conference delegates called for steps to be taken immediately by national and provincial governments to legislate the recommendations. They called also for commitment from provincial and local governments to be gender-sensitive and for more consultation between women on their common problems.

In addition, they called for greater capacity building training programmes on democracy at council and political party level and implementation of legislation aimed at encouraging women to take part, particularly in rural local government.

They called also for the extension of resources to implement gender sensitivity at local government level.

Wages, job creation not always linked

Renee Grawitzky

BD 20/6/96

THE labour market commission acknowledges that although a trade-off exists to some extent between wage and employment levels, it does not follow that unemployment is simply caused by high wages.

This is among the positions adopted by the commission in its deliberations on the elasticity of wages and employment.

Research conducted by the World Bank and Prof Sam Bowles has concluded that wage increases have a negative effect on employment to the extent that in the long term, a 10% increase in real wages has been associated with a 7% decline in employment levels.

The commission points out that these studies measured the average relationships and do not necessarily hold for wages at the lowest level.

The commission says that it is simplistic to conclude that if wages can be lowered, job growth can automatically follow.

Call for legislation on 'employment equity'

BD 20/6/96

Renee Grawitzky

THE Labour Market Commission has recommended that legislation on "employment equity" or affirmative action be placed before Parliament soon.

The commission's report says the law should rely on targets, not quotas.

The commission recommended that legislation should require employers to formulate comprehensive affirmative action plans and that these should be monitored by a new directorate of equal opportunities within the labour department.

There would be no direct penalties for non-compliance. However, companies' action plans would be assessed when companies put in tenders for government work. The commission said: "Major sanctions and incentives should centre on the extent to which access to government resources is facilitated by the filing of a serious employment equity plan".

Commission co-chairman David Lewis said that proposed legislation would be enabling, not prescriptive.

The commission said that affirmative action policies should be directed at redressing the "labour market manifestations of racial and gender discrimination and discrimination against the disabled".

It questioned whether legislation along the lines mentioned by Lewis would be effective and said "it will be important for the directorate of equal opportunities to develop a partnership and a sense of common purpose with companies and with institutions".

The commission was of the view that newly established institutions, namely, the directorate of equal opportunities, workplace forums and the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration were potentially powerful enough to play key roles.

The commission said employment equity programmes that "embody a strong internal labour market focus must place considerable emphasis on deracialising the higher ranks of the shop floor", meaning supervisors and skilled technical workers.

Commissioner Niccoli Nattrass, an economist at the University of Cape Town, in a dissenting opinion, agreed that affirmative action could be an important way of addressing labour market discrimination and disadvantage in SA.

However, she objected to the "commission's failure to problematise (sic) race, or to appreciate that the overlap between race and the labour market disadvantage is not exact".

Affirmative action, she argued should ultimately be guided by socio-economic considerations.

A disturbing new law is rushed through parliament

(355A) ARE 24/6/96

In their haste to pass the Gender Equality Bill, political parties went along with provisions which are contrary to the rule of law writes **COLIN DOUGLAS** parliamentary affairs manager of the South African Institute of Race Relations

PARLIAMENT has just passed a bill which will give a state-appointed commission the power to investigate, search and interrogate citizens who are not accused or suspected of breaking any law.

The bill, innocuously named the Commission on Gender Equality Bill, was supported by every party except the Democratic Party and the African Christian Democratic Party, even though members of the larger parties were opposed to some of its key provisions.

The bill, which now requires only President Mandela's signature before it becomes law, will give the commission the power to investigate law-abiding citizens and organisations whenever it believes there is a "gender-related issue" at stake.

During the course of its investigations, the commission may search persons, enter and search premises, seize property and summon persons to appear before it.

The commission may also "monitor and evaluate policies and practices ... of private businesses, enterprises and institutions, in order to promote gender equality" and then "make any recommendations that the commission deems necessary."

The South African Institute of Race Relations has argued since the bill's inception that to arm anyone with investigative powers so broadly defined is repugnant to the rule of law.

When the senate added the search of persons to the commission's list of powers, the Institute said this was further cause for concern.

Mr John Kane-Berman, chief executive of the institute, commented when the bill was first introduced in Parliament: "Since the human race is divided into two sexes and since most offices, factories, farms and homes have both men and women in them, it is very difficult to think of any issue which cannot be twisted into being 'gender-related.' "

Mr Kane-Berman added: "In free societies private citizens and private institutions are free to do as they please provided they do not break the law, but we seem to be moving into a society which is governed not by law but by the latest trends in political correctness."

Many parliamentarians agreed with the institute's objections, or at least some of them.

Mr Johnny de Lange, chairman of the portfolio committee on justice and an African National Congress MP, said he would seek to have the searching of persons provision removed.

So did Mrs Sheila Camerer, the National Party's justice spokesman, who said the provision was "entirely inappropriate."

Between them, the ANC and the NP could easily have amended the bill to remove its worst elements, but they did not.

Instead, the bill was rushed through the national assembly on June 21, the last day before parliament's winter recess, apparently because the ANC was under pressure from its Women's League to avoid delaying the appointment of the commission.

It was odd that some parliamentarians voted for provisions which they knew were inappropriate, and which they knew they could probably have removed if they had held the bill over, for a mere six weeks, until parliament reconvenes on 12 August.

The least that voters should be able to expect from their representatives is that they will vote for what they approve of and against what they oppose.

What makes the commission's search and entry powers so much more problematic than those bestowed on the police, is that a policeman will obtain a warrant to enter and search premises only if there is some likelihood that a crime has been committed.

The Commission on Gender Equality, in order to obtain such a warrant, will have to show merely that a "gender-related issue" exists.

And, to my knowledge, the power to search persons is a new innovation that will be unique to the commission.

Some of the bill's supporters have responded to criticism by saying that the commission's powers of investigation, search and seizure would rarely be used.

Their basis for predicting the future is not clear, but if these provisions are of so little significance, then why include them in the bill at all?

Discrimination on the grounds of sex is as irrational and unfair as is racial discrimination.

If parliament wishes to promote gender quality, then it can pass legislation that, within the terms of the constitution, outlaws particular kinds of sex discrimination.

People who continued to practice these kinds of discrimination could then be prosecuted. But rather than drawing up such legislation, parliamentarians have left it to the commission to decide what constitutes a "gender-related issue" and to investigate whomever it chooses, whether or not they have broken any law.

The bill creates the possibility that the commission will abuse its power, and the certainty that citizens will be unable to predict in advance which acts will fall foul of the commission and which will not.

The NP, the Inkatha Freedom Party and several ANC members were uncomfortable with the bill's investigation provisions, and Justice Minister Dullah Omar acknowledged in the senate debate on the bill that "the fear of abuse of power (by the commission) is a genuine one".

Yet none of these people opposed the bill for fear of being seen to be against gender equality.

Are South Africa's political leaders incapable of saying that they wholeheartedly support worthwhile goals such as gender equality, but firmly oppose unjust means to attain them?

If so, supporters of human rights will have to be vigilant in the years ahead.



Sheila Camerer, former deputy minister of justice and National Party spokesman on justice. She described the search powers in the bill as "entirely inappropriate", yet like critics of the bill in the African National Congress and other parties, she voted for them.

African women break with the past

(350) (355A) ARG 26/6/96

Businesswomen form association for joint ventures

The Argus Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. – For centuries African women have had to contend with stringent customary laws and traditional stereotypes that prohibited them from fully and meaningfully contributing to the success of business in Africa.

However, the paradigm is shifting and there is now a new picture of African women: they are self-assertive and raring to get into businesses previously considered the sole domain of men.

They are no longer just working in the kitchen, hawking goods in the streets or selling cooked food or fruits. Now they are, for example, setting up enterprises in the manufacturing industry.

Last week prominent businesswomen from 11 African nations met in Johannesburg and held talks that led to the formation of the All-African Businesswomen's Association (AABA).

The businesswomen were part of a four-day All-African Businesswomen's Conference – sponsored by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) – which brought together women publishers, manufacturers, industrialists, mine owners, agriculturalists exporters and importers.

The newly-established body is intended to encourage joint ventures and evaluate business objectives, needs and opportunities for women across Africa and also to enable them to network with businesswomen on other continents.

Most of the women started on a small scale and never visualised themselves amassing capital that would see them venturing into large-scale businesses and creating employment for unemployed people in their countries.

Prosperous and prominent Zambian businesswoman Catherine Mwanamwambwa, 52, runs the multi-million rand Bimzi company which employs about 600 people. Her company's annual turnover exceeds US $ 20 million (R86 million) Bimzi deals in agriculture, leather goods, venture capital and owns the largest rose export farm in the country.

But her journey to success has not been rosy.

"It is through seizing the opportunity and mainly sheer determination that I have reached the level where I am," she said.

Ms Mwanamwambwa says her business is successful because it is investment-friendly. She ventured into business in 1974, manufacturing clothes from home and accumulating capital to expand.

After seven years she bought a building that she had earlier rented and started a clothing-manufacturing factory.

Now she has established a joint-venture financing scheme in Zambia and is assisting about 1 200 women who own small and medium-sized businesses.

Khadija Simba, from Tanzania has been involved in manufacturing women's hygiene products since 1975.

"It is very difficult for an African woman to engage in business, especially big business. The society expects us to engage in small businesses, like selling porridge in the streets. I experienced a lot of problems and it was sheer persistence and determination that got me where I am," Ms Simba said.

Today she is a proud African businesswoman running Kays Hygiene Products. Her business ambition materialised only after she had received a loan from the East Africa Development Bank.

In 1987 Ms Simba started producing cotton wool for hospitals and domestic use. Two years later she diversified and started distributing her company's products.

In 1991 she started a publishing company and three years later she got into partnership with Population Services International to package and distribute condoms in Dar es Salaam.

She said she was now making loans to budding businesswomen through the Kawe Economic Development Group. Although she has no formal academic training, Ms Simba heads the Federation and Association of Entrepreneurs in Tanzania.

Kenyan businesswoman Cecilia Cege is a farmer and manufacturer. Armed with a Social Sciences degree from the University of Dar es Salaam, Ms Cege, 53, went into part-time business in 1973 "by accident".

"I had to stay home and look after my child who is physically deformed. Meanwhile I needed to do something to keep myself busy and earn money and therefore I ventured into business."

After 1976, Ms Cege started farming full time on a small scale, producing milk and selling it. Initially she could not expand her business because of the government monopoly of the farming industry.

After the liberalisation of the industry, Ms Cege managed to expand and she now owns medium-sized Echuka Investment Limited company, which produces milk and processes it into dairy products.

Ms Cege has netted numerous awards since she went into business.

In 1992 she won the Food and Agriculture Organisation award, Presidential Awards for the best farm and several meritorious awards in horticulture.

Sunday ARGUS 22/23-6-96

Labour set for challenge over growth plans

SAM SOLE and BRENDAN SEERY
Political Staff

■ The Government is headed for a showdown with labour over the ANC's new economic growth strategy.

LABOUR leaders are gearing for a head-on challenge with the government's new macro-economic strategy, unveiled last week, because it represents a fundamental departure from the strategy of inward growth through development spending which underpinned the reconstruction and development programme.

Instead, it proposes a policy of reducing the country's debt, promoting exports and attracting foreign investment. It places its faith firmly in the market for achieving growth and job-creation.

The document, read with the Labour Market Commission (LMC) report and the announcements on privatisation, together represent a profound challenge to union orthodoxy.

But the government's own assumptions on the ability of export and private investment-led growth have been strongly challenged by labour economists.

The detailed LMC report, while more friendly to labour, proposes a presidential summit on job creation, but the proposal is bracketed by calls for wage moderation on the part of unions and more flexible employment and pay conditions.

In a tough preliminary response, Cosatu slammed the calls for wage restraint and said it would boycott any summit where it would be told to end "the fight to close the wage gap or inequalities based on race and sex".

The labour federation also gave notice it was not prepared to accept that the government's framework was fixed: "Cosatu is particularly worried about a statement by the Minister of Finance saying that the parameters of the macro-economic strategy document are non-negotiable. Our executive committee will discuss this interesting concept," Cosatu said.

It said South African workers had an "extremely negative view" of the concept of a "social accord" - a compromise between government, business and labour in the interests of growth - as it had been presented.

"The packaging of this idea has been problematic since it was announced by Trevor Manuel ... It appears that the hidden intention of this includes asking workers for a wage restraint. If it does the authors would have discredited the whole idea of getting agreements between labour, business and government on specific social and economic issues."

On proposed greater labour market flexibility Cosatu said it suspected the aim was labour deregulation and the introduction of a "two-tier" labour market system, where many employees would fall outside the net of industrial wage agreements - a development labour rejects.

The government proposals would also involve significant amendments to the new Labour Relations Act - negotiated with some pain at Nedlac. "Cosatu rejects and will resist any attempts to undermine the provisions of the Labour Relations Act on the question of the extension of agreements to non parties. The suggestion by the commission and by the Minister of Finance to give more discretionary powers to the labour minister to extend agreements is a repudiation of the LRA deal."

Labour relations consultant Steuart Pennington said he thought government would try to "manage" the potential for conflict with the unions: "But I also think government is going to start governing. If it comes to the crunch, they will take on Cosatu and Cosatu will come second. Cosatu needs to understand that."

Cosatu officials were tight-lipped ahead of an exco meeting in July, but the chief labour negotiator at Nedlac, Ebrahim Patel, said labour's response would depend on how flexible government was about the framework.

"One issue we would explore is what are the areas all sides can reach consensus?

"The minute the framework is fixed there isn't anything to negotiate. There's little prospect of getting an agreement if they say 'This is the framework-all you can do is fill in the details'.

"The situation is very fluid. The next few weeks are crucial when we have our first engagement with the government and see what room there is for manoeuvre."

Economic analyst Tony Twine said the lack of strident union comment on any of the latest developments could be "the calm before the storm".

"The situation has changed markedly from what the unions could have expected even a year ago and undoubtedly some of them are angry."

He said he felt the unions were also trying to craft a response which would "not leave them looking like enemies of the six percent growth plan".

Mr Patel said the labour market report, with one by the ILO, contained some very different economic assumptions to those expressed in the macro-economic strategy. he said Cosatu would like to explore those contradictions with government.

Policewomen still face discrimination, says expert

ST 26/6/96 (2D) (335A)



WOMEN in the SAPS still have to put up with outdated ideas on what is fit for a woman and are still expected to make the tea. **JACKIE CAMERON** reports.

"I'M terribly sorry, please stop shooting. I've got to get my handbag," the flustered and desperate woman in blue pleaded with the angry gunman.

Ms Dianna Yach, a British expert on policing, is describing a scenario which until recently was a very real possibility for policewomen in Britain and South Africa.

It was considered "inappropriate" to wear a holster on one's skirted hip, so policewomen had to keep them in their handbags.

Women have also been relegated primarily to office jobs and more junior police functions, because some beats are considered too dangerous or physically challenging for them.

There are also the unwritten rules: Policewomen are still expected to make the tea, play along with overfamiliar sexual jokes and work on a first-name basis with their underlings, while many senior policemen only respond when they are addressed by rank.

Yach has been an ardent campaigner for women's rights in the British police service and is equally determined to help their counterparts in this country — not just because it is politically correct that gender imbalances should be addressed.

More importantly, she believes women "add value" to an organisation and offer skills that are sometimes sorely lacking in men.

"I am not saying women are more nurturing. I'm not. I have no intention of having children, although I like other people's children," she said.

"Women are extremely efficient at dealing with tense situations. They're good at talking down trouble. They can diffuse situations through dialogue. Their manner appears less aggressive.

"Police work is about communication. You listen to people's stories, find out what is going on. Police work is not just about leaping over buildings."

Yach says that two women marshals among a group she helped train before the 1994 elections, in a British-funded programme, rated among the best of the group.

"I remember some sexist comments being made that women could not deal with dangerous situations."

Yach dismissed arguments that women cannot lift heavy scramblers and handle hefty guns, and says the technology should fit the people and not vice-versa.

She is also concerned about the lack of Xhosa-speaking police members in this province despite the vast Xhosa-speaking population, and says: "The job requirements need to be looked at and maybe language should become an essential feature."

Perhaps it is because she grew up in South Africa that Yach is vigorously opposed to injustice of any kind. But it is a British sense of humour that peeps through her determined exterior.

"The police service is very much a boy's club. You can feel it when you go out on patrol. It's like a Boy's Own adventure ... that search for excitement, fast cars and flashing lights.

"Men are fascinated by toys, like shiny fire engines. It's the human side that women go in for."

It takes a "very pioneering sort of woman" to work with an all-male team of detectives for example — but there have been a sprinkling of women who have reached responsible, senior ranks in their police careers.

"But some say: 'Well I got there, I put up with this behaviour, you should do the same'. Some women seem to give as good as they get.

"In a male-dominated world it can be jolly difficult to stand firm and be yourself."

Yach says South African policewomen should form a support group to actively fight for their rights.

"All police services are very resistant to change. They have a very hierarchical, macho culture."

She also says police should have a rigorous disciplinary code to put an end to discrimination — and that offenders should be fired, which has been happening in Britain.

"This is all linked to developments in community policing. You cannot be seen to be fair if you discriminate within your own ranks. It has an impact on public confidence. If you are serious about community policing you should also be fair about treatment within the service."

In Britain women have increasingly reported rape and domestic violence to police, not necessarily because there has been a rise in this type of crime.

Yach has recently co-authored a practitioner's guide to community policing. So strong is her belief in the value of community policing and women's rights that the proceeds of the book are being channelled into a trust to assist students wishing to pursue policing as a career in South Africa.

Women will initially be supported by the trust because they are seriously under-represented at all levels in the SAPS.

"I would say I'm a feminist. I believe in women's rights. I believe women have to be visible at all levels. I utterly believe in that, and make no apology," Yach says.



CAMPAIGNER: Ms Dianna Yach, a British expert on policing and ardent campaigner for women's rights in the service.

355A

GENDER COMMISSION

NO STRIP TEASE

FM 28/6/96

The Commission on Gender Equality Bill has been rushed into law — despite qualms within all parties and outside lobbyists that it introduces extraordinary provisions of search and seizure which could be subject to future abuse (*Current Affairs* June 21). The commission — mandated by the interim constitution of 1993 — can "investigate any gender-related issues" in both the public sector and private businesses.

The searching of individuals in pursuit of a "case" is a unique authority given to the Gender Commission. Only the DP and the ACDP voted against the Bill last week, prior to the parliamentary winter recess. It had been hoped by opponents of its draconian quasi-police powers that the Bill would stand over and allow the parties to reassess its formulation.

Within the parliamentary portfolio committee on Justice, Willie Hofmeyr (ANC) expressed reservations about the personal search clause. The NP's Sheila Camerer found the search provision "entirely inappropriate." Nonetheless, once the Bill is gazetted, the process of setting up the commission will begin; and its character will be dependent on the people who are appointed to it.

It would appear that the firm intention of the ANC Women's League that the Bill be passed in its present form before the end of the last session prevailed.

Chief executive of the Institute of Race Relations John Kane-Berman commented on its introduction: "In free societies private citizens and private institutions are free to do as they please provided they do not break the law, but we seem to be moving into a society which is governed not by law but by the latest trends in political correctness."

The Constitution explicitly commits SA to "nonracialism and nonsexism." The Gender Commission, as originally conceived, was to have been largely a legislative watchdog, vetting old and new legislation where it discriminated on gender grounds.

But its scope has been enormously expanded. It will inevitably spawn a huge bureaucracy on the perpetual lookout for gender inequalities and incorrectness, and doubtless receive innumerable complaints, not least from women who feel aggrieved in the corporate world.

Colin Douglas, Race Relations' parliamentary affairs manager, comments: "People concerned about human rights will have to be vigilant in future if political leaders are prepared, in the pursuit of worthy goals like gender equality, to resort to the kind of unjust measures contained in this Bill. It is unthinkable that, in a free society, anyone should be authorised to investigate, search and interrogate citizens who are not suspected of breaking the law.

"Many MPs acknowledged the Bill's dangers and could have removed some of them if they had waited until after parliament's recess to pass the Bill. Yet they did not, which is disturbing."

The latitude for intervention permitted by the Bill could presage similar powers being awarded to the other statutory commissions. What are the police and courts for if this tendency takes root? ■

LITTLE PROGRESS IN PROMOTING WOMEN

Distinct shifts taking place in the workplace

CT 29/7/96 (355A)

A FOUR-YEAR study by the Breakwater Monitor project of the implementation of affirmative action in South Africa has found some progress in the top firms, but women still make up only 25% of the workforce, reports Political Writer **HENRY LUDSKI.**

A GROUP of South African companies — several of them in the Western Cape — have emerged as affirmative action trendsetters, according to a major survey of market trends.

The four-year study, focusing on the implementation of affirmative action, graphically shows the huge gap between the "Top 15" and most large corporations, which are still struggling to get into top gear.

The study also points to a glaring inconsistency in the implementation of affirmation action across the board — almost all companies have made little progress in recruiting and promoting women. Figures in both areas for the "Top 15" and the national average showed declines since September 1994. Women still make up only 25% of the total workforce on average and there has been no real increase since 1994.

The survey points to yet another disturbing labour market trend that has a direct bearing on the private sector's ability to absorb more people into the economy: Restructuring in the past two years has resulted in job losses of 1,14% (9 600 people in a sample of 843 011).

The research project, undertaken by the UCT's Graduate School of Business Breakwater Monitor, is the largest research initiative of its kind in South Africa, with the voluntary participation of 150 of the country's most progressive employers who together employ more than a million people.

In almost every job category, it has found distinct shifts taking place in the workplace as employment patterns begin to reflect new realities.

On a management level alone, black people on average now make up 16% of managers in the leading affirmative action companies — six percent up on 18 months ago — compared with a national average of 10%. Between 1994 and 1996, the number of women at management level has increased by an average of only about one percent.

"At the current rate of change, black managers will make up 30-35% of managers in these companies by the year 2000," said Breakwater Monitor project manager Mr Angus Bowmaker-Falconer. There is no ideal company out there. People are doing different things right."

In the "Top 15", black managers now make up 70,74% of all new management recruits, compared with 20,32% in 1994. The national recruitment average is now about 42%.

The study shows that aggressive recruiting has also coincided with increased levels of promotion. At the top end, 42% of all management promotions are now black, compared with the national average of only 18%.

Black workers now account for 28 585 of skilled labour posts, compared with 23% in 1994. This is much higher for the top 15 organisations, where the proportion increased from 19,37% in 1994 to 30,59% in 1996.

"We have collected and analysed internal labour market and affirmative action data biannually for the past four years and it is only now that clear patterns of change are emerging," Bowmaker-Falconer said.

This week we will run a special series of articles probing the story behind the implementation of affirmative action. Topics that Political Writer HENRY LUDSKI will turn the spotlight on include: Affirmative action as a booming trade; the international experience; successes and failures in the field and the gender factor.

Another feature of the restructuring of organisations has been that top companies lost 14,44% of their new black management recruits compared with the national average of 11,99%.

The report, to be published next month, covers 19 sectors, including financial services, banking, fast moving consumer goods, industrial, media, large industrial, parastatals/utilities and retail.

Both the recently published Labour Market Commission report and employment equity green paper make provision for the possibility of engaging external agencies to assist with information management and monitoring the implementation of more equitable employment practices.

The Breakwater Monitor project is seen as a model for monitoring South Africa's affirmative action policy.

Bowmaker-Falconer said the findings showed that even within this top-end sample there were organisations that had taken up the challenge of transformation much more seriously and aggressively, while others had not made any significant progress.

"The changed organisational structures tend to point to an upskilling, with more people at management and skilled work levels and a decrease of unskilled workers."

It appears that although organisations are making progress at management and skilled levels, there is little progress in the training, development and promotion of unskilled workers.

Bowmaker-Falconer argues that the companies who are having success with affirmative action are improving their organisational and workplace practices with the view to becoming more efficient and productive.

Saying that "there's no ideal company out there" and that people were succeeding in different ways, Bowmaker-Falconer added that affirmative action depended to a great extent on involving the entire staff in the process and not only on bringing in people from the outside.

"Many big organisations are bringing in black managers as a total solution, which is not the correct approach. Black managers are important for changing power relations and for ensuring that they are role models and people who can influence thinking at management level.

"Successful affirmative action companies are bringing in people from the outside as well as focusing internally to develop people who were denied opportunities.

"A successful affirmative action model also looks at both race and gender and deals with the entire staff process, including promotion, performance and evaluation practices.

"You also need a reliable system of information management, especially for executive reporting and setting targets. You also have to commit resources to the process. The experience of the study is that even large and sophisticated employers battle to provide basic labour market information, with the situation likely to be much worse in the public sector and in small- to medium-sized organisations."

Bowmaker-Falconer argues that an effective mechanism at the national level and implementing a reliable monitoring system will require a partnership between business and government. "Businesses are unlikely to respond favourably to a punitive approach and will find ways under such a system to circumvent accurate data collection."

Bowmaker-Falconer believes the development of electronic data reporting mechanisms allowing for standardised reporting and internal tracking of the process by organisations should be a core component of any effective monitoring system of affirmative action by the government.

"If the government sets up an affirmative action monitoring infrastructure, it has to ensure it develops the sophistication of the data it collects over time and standardises and sets up automated systems for data collection, verification and analysis."

Options like Internet and providing employers with the tools to collect and report data should be considered.

"We are dealing with the top companies and if large numbers of them can't provide us with basic and reliable data, I can't imagine how smaller companies will be able to provide information if a method of standardisation is developing.

"If you look at rate of change, it's the South African companies that are taking the lead."

Breakwater Monitor is a national research project established as a partnership between progressive South African employers and the University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Business.

WORLD

Women work longer for less pay — study

BD 30/7/96 (355A)

GENEVA — Women around the world are working longer hours but are paid less than their male counterparts, says a new study by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) released today.

But women had made significant gains in entering formerly male-dominated jobs in the global labour force, it said.

"The bottom line is that while more and more women are working, the great majority are simply swelling the ranks of the working poor," says report author Lin Lim.

"Women's economic activities remain highly concentrated in low-wage, low-productivity and precarious forms of employment," she said. Women faced wages that were three-fourths that of their male counterparts outside the agricultural sector in developed and developing countries.

Unemployment rates were from 50% to 100% higher for women than men in many industrialised countries.

They had limited access, also, to senior management jobs. Women held less than 6% of executive positions worldwide.

Women were having better success in joining the labour force. In the 28 countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the number of working women grew by twice the rate for men between 1980 and 1990. Other gains were noted in developed countries, Latin America and the Caribbean where more women had managerial, administrative, professional and technical jobs.

Occupational segregation based on gender remained high. In non-agricultural jobs in the US, Britain and France, 45% of the labour force worked in gender-orientated jobs in which women or men made up 80% of the work force.

In Japan, women made up 95% of the work force in jobs such as day-care, hospital attendants and nurses, kindergarten teachers, housekeepers, maids and entertainers.

In all regions of the world, females worked longer hours for less pay than men, earning "only between 50% to 80% of men's wages worldwide", it said.

In developed countries, women work at least two hours more a week than men, although five to 10 hours more a week was not unusual. In Australia, Canada and Germany, women and men worked about the same number of hours a week. In Italy, women worked 28% more than men, in Austria 12%, and in France 11%.

The report called for action to be taken to "improve the terms and conditions of employment" for women. — Sapa-DPA.

Companies too quick to skirt the question of gender equity

CT 31/7/96 (355A)

HENRY LUDSKI
POLITICAL WRITER

GENDER equity has emerged as one of the most contentious issues in affirmative action.

The problem has been highlighted by several recent surveys that have found that, in the public and public sector, it is still very much a man's world.

Affirmative action has aroused intense debate in the workplace, but nowhere is it more fierce than in the gender movement where the focus is on moving the debate to the political centre-stage.

"At the moment the debate is not even in the room, let alone on the table," says organisational development consultant Ms Phuti Tsukudu, who is involved mainly in training in the non-government organisation and public sectors.

Tsukudu argues that organisational structures are modelled on "patriarchal" societal values.

"When one mentions gender one senses an element of discomfort among men because it touches on the power dynamics between the sexes.

"It's an issue with which even many progressive black men are struggling."

The relationship between men and women is often characterised by suspicion and fear that women in the gender movement have a "hidden agenda", Tsukudu says. "We would begin to succeed only if most men embraced gender equity and began to challenge and educate their male colleagues."



The third in our series of articles on affirmative action focuses on the challenge of achieving gender equality.

Gender equity and the rights of the disabled have received special government attention. This is reflected in the emphasis given to these in employment and human rights legislation and in the Constitution.

A member of the Law Society's executive, Mrs Christine Qunta, said she had been "startled" by a recent survey that found women were not rising up the corporate ladder at the same rate as men.

The survey, by UCT's Graduate School of Business Breakwater Monitor, found a slight decline in the percentage recruitment of women by top companies that were making progress with affirmative action.

Qunta called for "fairly drastic steps to be taken to rectify the situation".

At the heart of the problem, she believed, was the question addressed by her book, Who's Afraid of Affirmative Action? "White men, it appears," says Qunta.

"From my experience in the corporate world, it appears that most white males find it difficult and unusual to deal with black women."

As the only black practitioner dealing with commercial corporate law, Qunta has found that many white men are reluctant to deal with women and to view them as being skilled.

Qunta believes that women bring to the corporate world special qualities that are "badly needed".

By promoting representivity at the highest level of power, the government has "pointed the way", Qunta says.

"It has created a tremendous climate and platform for women which has resulted in a lot of issues receiving attention and being highlighted.

"The government has laid the foundation for gender issues to be addressed and it is now up to other people to keep it alive."

Western Cape human rights commissioner Ms Rhoda Kadalie said she expected affirmative action and discrimination would be one of the focuses of the Human Rights Commission.

A number of complaints had been received from women who said they were being discriminated against in the workplace.

"I have told them that if they believe they have been overlooked, then they must take this up first with the company. In this way, employers will have to develop grievance procedures that address this issue.

"Companies are going to be confronted increasingly with cases of discrimination. It is important that they start dealing with such matters themselves because it is extremely costly to go to court."

Kadalie, who as gender co-ordinator at the University of the Western Cape played a significant role in placing gender on the table on campuses, said the HRC would tackle aggressively the question of discrimination.

Companies should "accept that women are breadwinners, just as men are" and that they should be treated similarly.

There were still many factors, such as the lack of child-care facilities in the workplace, that mitigated against the performance of women and which needed to be addressed, Kadalie said.

"Education in the workplace around issues of employment and gender equity should form an integral part of the implementation of affirmative action."

● *Tomorrow we focus on the lessons to be learnt from the Canadian experience in developing and implementing a policy of equity in employment.*



Working more for less

(355A) Sowetan 1/8/96

More and more women are working – swelling the ranks of the working poor

GENEVA – Women around the world are working longer hours and are paid less than their male counterparts, says a new study by the International Labour Organisation released this week.

Women have made significant gains in entering formerly male-dominated jobs in the global labour force, it says.

"The bottom line is that while more and more women are working, the great majority of them are simply swelling the ranks of the working poor," says Lin Lim, the author of the report.

"Women's economic activities remain highly concentrated in low-wage, low-productivity and precarious forms of employment," she said.

Women face wages that are three-quarters that of their male counterparts outside the agricultural sector in both developed and developing countries.

Unemployment rates are 50 to 100 percent higher for women than men in many industrialised countries.

They also have limited access to senior management jobs.

Women hold less than six percent of executive positions worldwide.

Women have better success in joining the labour force. In the 28 countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the number of working women grew by twice the rate for men between 1980 and 1990.

Other gains are in developed countries, Latin America and the Caribbean, where more women have managerial, administrative, professional and technical jobs.

Occupational segregation based on gender remains high.

In non-agricultural jobs in the United States, Britain and France, 45 percent of the labour force works in gender-oriented jobs in which either women or men make up 80 percent of the workforce.

In Japan women make up 95 percent of the workforce in jobs such as day-care, hospital attendants and nurses, kindergarten teachers, housekeepers, maids and entertainers.

Less pay

In all regions of the world, females work longer hours for less pay than men, earning "only between 50 to 80 percent of men's wages worldwide", the report says.

In developed countries, women work at least two hours more weekly than men, although five to 10 hours more a week is not unusual.

In Australia, Canada and Germany, women and men work about the same number of hours a week.

In Italy, women work 28 percent more than men. In Austria, the number is 12 percent and in France it is 11 percent.

In Japan, the time women spend on unpaid work was nine times greater than men.

In Kenya, women devote up to 10 times more time on domestic chores than men.

In India, women and girls spend at least 20 hours more a week on household work.

Discrimination

Discrimination against women starts early with fewer chances for girls to go to school and poorer quality of education for girls than for boys.

"Each additional year of schooling has been shown to raise a woman's earnings by about 15 percent, compared with 11 percent for a man, to reduce fertility rates by five to 10 percent and to avert 43 infant deaths per 1 000 educated girls," the report says.

The report calls for action to be taken to "improve the terms and conditions of employment" for women.

Steps were needed to enforce the principle of "comparable worth by providing equal pay for work of equal value", improve occupational safety and health, reduce labour market vulnerability and guarantee freedom of association and the right to bargain collectively, it says. – *Sapa-DPA*

Women's literacy the aim of programme

Star 2/8/96 (355A)

African ministers of education, university vice-chancellors and a host of donors and top-level delegates met last week in Kenya. Shirley Woodgate reports

BY SHIRLEY WOODGATE

Africa's massive population explosion was outstripping literacy training, pushing up the 84 million illiterate women in 1990 to 87 million by last year, said Forum for African Women Educationalists (Fawe) founder, Fay Chung.

Her reasons for the twin problems: failure to cut back the birth rate on one hand, and to increase female education on the other, included the low starting base, rule by a string of undemocratic, totalitarian military regimes, ongoing conflict which had hit 20 countries in the last five years, crippling national debt (debt servicing in Africa was often higher than the amount set aside for health and education), and lack of attention to early childhood development.

Backing her claims, Professor Luke Uka Uche, editor-in-chief of the Pan Africa News Agency in Senegal, labelled Africa "the continent with the least educated women in the world", where only 54 out of every 100 000 females were enrolled in primary schools and 18 out of every 100 000 at secondary level in the sub-Saharan region.

Conversely, among developing regions the continent boasted the third highest number of female parliamentarians after east Asia, which has a 55% enrolment and Latin America and the Caribbean (68,2%).

This elitist trend indicated quality education was only accessible to the few who could afford it, while poverty, particularly in the city slums and the rural areas, was women's main hindrance to accessibility to education in Africa, he said.



Dr Mamphela Ramphele ... urged women to use their positions of power as platforms for action.

Joseph Kamotho, Education Minister in Kenya, where the Kikuyus celebrated the birth of a male child with five ululations, while a girl was only accorded four, said:

"The growth rate for primary school enrolment of girls increased by 0,4%, from 45,4% to 45,8% from 1990 to 1995 in Africa.

"That includes 19 countries in sub-Saharan Africa where girls' enrolment dropped. Overall, 66% of boys are at school, compared with only 56% of girls.

"The same pattern is revealed in the male and female adult literacy, where women lag by 19% despite overall rates climbing from 40% in 1990 to 57% in 1995. Less than half of African women (47%) are literate today, compared with two thirds (67%) of adult men."

Kenya's Information and Broadcasting Minister, Johnstone Makua, said African religious tradition gave males a higher value in society, backed by a common saying: "Educating a girl is like watering another man's garden."

Although Makua decried the fact that traditional beliefs had become the norms, and those who deviated were seen as rebels or society misfits, Nairobi University deputy vice-chancellor Florida Karane supported traditions which could be adapted for the benefit of society.

"Don't throw the initiation ceremony away, it is not bad that girls are taught to be women at a certain stage," she said.

Fawe chairman from Ethiopia, Gennet Zewide, stressed the detrimental effect of gender-biased female teachers and school books.

But there were not only problems, but solutions.

South African delegate Dr Maphela Ramphele warned that Africa should not move into the 21st Century without visible women at the top who could add a new dimension to leadership. She urged women to use their positions not as career paths, but as platforms for action.

Uche said 144 out of every 1 000 people in Sub-Saharan Africa were exposed to radio and only 23 out of every 1 000 had television access. This, combined with high illiteracy levels, meant few newspapers were read and Fawe should consider establishing its own radio and TV stations to improve the lot of women in Africa.

Chung saw part of the answer in delinking education from politics, and viewing quality education as a basic human right.

Better co-ordination was needed in Africa which must not follow other continents but set its own priorities based on what was practical and realistic today.

Teachers' training, status and salaries had to be improved, and parents and communities had to be involved in education.

Better use of resources was essential to improve the lot of the 40 million children aged six to eleven who were not attending school in Africa.

Tailor-made educational systems to include, among others, pregnant schoolgirls, was necessary as the continent moved towards acquiring technology equal to the best in the world.

Unicef representative Neil Mckee outlined his organisation's R1,75-million radio, video, drama, story book, song and poster "communications initiative" involving 14 countries and 572 research groups, focused on problems of the adolescent girl in Africa.

Denise Fedler-Gray, communications director for the Rockefeller Foundation which leads Unesco, the World Bank and a host of other international donors as Fawe backers, said girls' education was essential to the long term development of Africa.

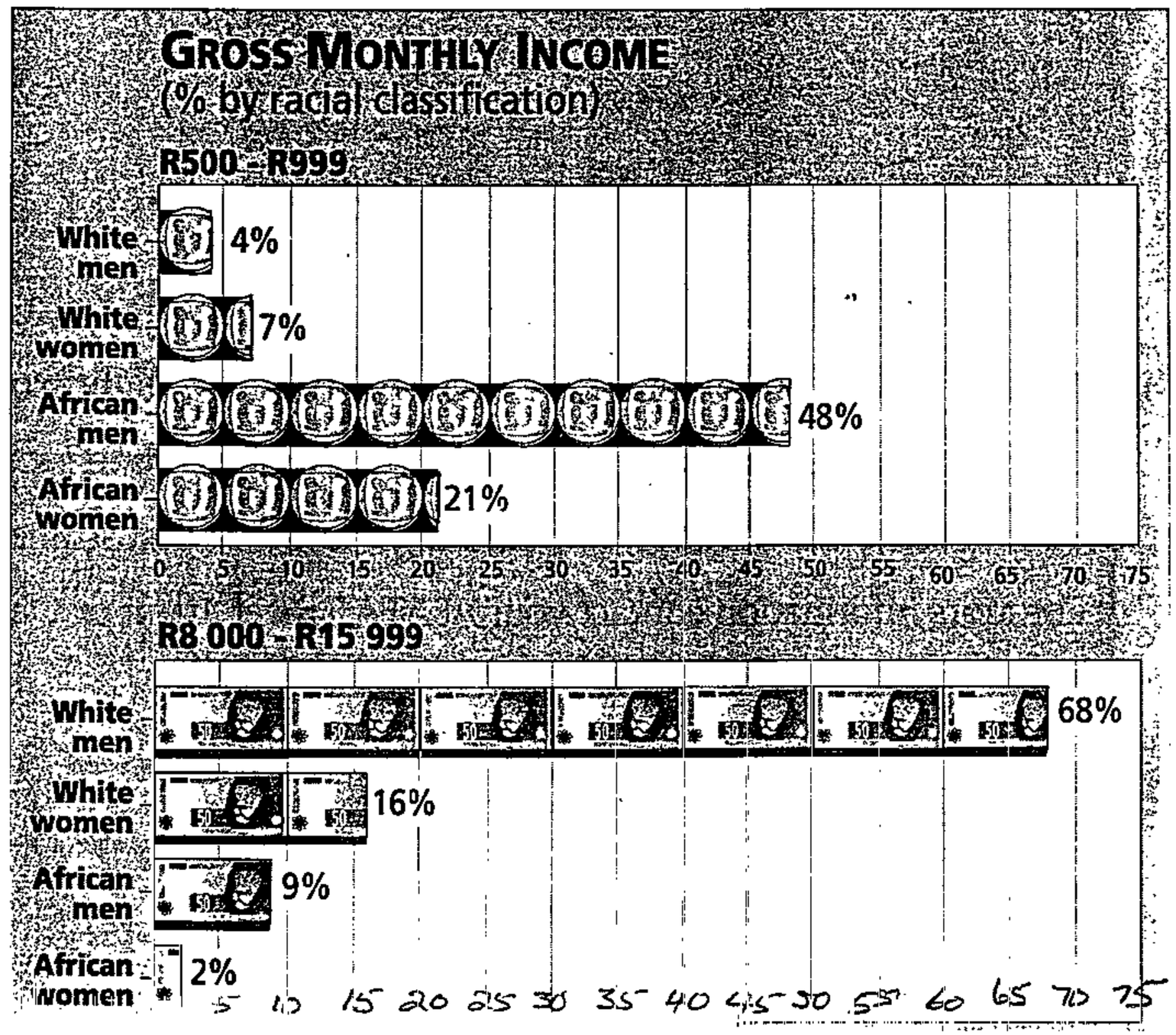
Flamboyant Guinean Minister of Pre-University Education and Professional Training, Aicha Bah, outlined the success of her country's 10-year policy aimed at 100% enrolment by 2008.

She said in 1989 only 28% of children were at school, 19% of them girls. Six years later the total had been pushed up to 46% of which 36% comprised females.

It was Zewide who stressed that ultimate success depended on teachers' and government backing for the campaign. She also highlighted the debt owed to donors and international agencies that had become Fawe partners in tackling education.

Tim Carrington of the World Bank's Economic Development Institute said countries which made the fastest progress in education, did so in tandem with family planning programmes.

This had been proved in Korea, where the economic miracle had been preceded by a 2 year education and family cut back policy which had transformed a nation of peasants into cogs of an industrial giant.



Launched by five African women ministers, Fawe takes the lead in female education

Star 2/8/96 (E) (356A)

The brainchild of Fay Chung, the Forum for African Women Educationalists (Fawe) was launched by five African female ministers of education aiming to establish a network of senior education policy-makers to speed up the pace of attaining education for all.

Backing Chung, who was at that time Zimbabwe's minister of education and currently serves as Unicef's chief of education, were Seychelles' current Tourism Minister Simone de Comarmond, Ghana's present Tourism Minister Vida Yeboah, Gabon's Education Minister Paulette Moussavou-Missambo and Burkina Faso's former Education Minister, Alice Tiendrebeogo.

Chung said her idea of meeting to compare problems and successes was conceived at a World Bank meeting for 40 African ministers of education in Manchester in 1990.

The first Fawe general assembly was attended by 19 female education policy-makers. Today, Fawe's membership includes 46 education ministers and university vice-chancellors from 27 countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

No bra-burning exercise, Fawe has also forged partnerships with 19 male ministers of education in Africa, who have shown commitment to girls' education.

Nineteen chapters have been launched to support policy initiatives at national level.

Fawe has links with governments, NGOs, donors (including the Rockefeller Foundation which has been the leading agency in supporting Fawe work programmes), media and religious organisations, professional groups, communities and parents, all focussed on helping Africa move towards education for all and the elimination of the gender gap in education.

South Africa's representative on the 12-strong executive committee is University of Cape Town deputy vice-chancellor Dr Mamphela Ramphele.

CITY ENGINEER THREATENS ACTION

Power cuts to suburbs as municipal strike starts

CT 13/8/96

MUNICIPAL strikers could have been responsible for the switching-off of some electrical substations in the suburbs, according to the city electrical engineer, who threatened to take disciplinary action if he found the culprits. **PETER DENNEHY** reports.

ELECTRICITY supplies in some suburbs were cut and operations at the council's two power-generating plants were wound down yesterday within minutes of the start of the latest strike by council employees.

About 2 000 members of the Independent Municipal and Allied Workers' Trade Union (Imatu), many of them whites striking for the first time in their lives, tried to crowd into the small Rygersdal Sports Club hall in Rondebosch at 2pm yesterday, as the rain poured down outside. There was standing room only, and not much of that.

The meeting lasted less than 20 minutes and moments after it ended, a worker said he had heard in the pub next door that the electricity supply to part of Woodstock had been interrupted. Many Imatu members work in the council's electricity branch.

The council confirmed that the supply to Salt River, rather than Woodstock, had been interrupted. Summer Greens had also suffered a power cut.

City electrical engineer Mr Fred Berwyn-Taylor said, more than an hour later, that these supplies had been restored.

"There is some wildcatting going on. Five substations were entered and switches were opened," he said. This meant someone had turned off some switches which should have been left on. Berwyn-Taylor thought it likely that this was connected in some way to the strike.

"It is tantamount to industrial sabotage," he said. "We intend to take disciplinary action if we find the person responsible."

Berwyn-Taylor said the council had a duty to supply its customers with budgeted electricity, because it is a basic service. A breakdown could affect traffic lights, sewage pump stations, and even television and radio transmitters. Many transmitters or repeater stations had their own reserve power supplies, he added, so the TV should not break down for a while at least.

He confirmed that the Steenbras hydro-electric power plant and the Athlone Power Station, which are used daily, would not be in operation today because of the strike. Members of another union would not do Imatu members' work, he explained.

Cape Town uses just over 900 megawatts (million watts) of electricity a day, of which about 700 are bought from Eskom and the remaining 200 are locally generated.

Locally-generated electricity is used at peak times, when Eskom's electricity is most expensive to buy.

Berwyn-Taylor said the lack of local generating capacity over the one-and-a-half day strike would lead to extra costs for the council of between R1,5m and R2m.

He said he had just come from a Cape Town City Council executive committee meeting at which a decision had been taken to buy the extra power needed from Eskom.

The alternative would have been to ration electricity by switching off power during certain times of the day — probably for at least part of evening peak time, which is from 5.30pm to 8pm.

The council has asked consumers to try to cut down their electricity usage in morning and afternoon peak times. The morning peak is from 7am to 9am.

Council spokesman Mr Ted Doman has also appealed to the public not to call for an ambulance except in cases of definite emergency, as that service now has minimal staff.

Meanwhile, at the strikers' rally yesterday, Imatu national executive committee (NEC) member Mr Alistair MacLeod said the strike was not only about money, but about principles. Members wanted recognition and appreciation, he said.

Another NEC member, Mr Bert van Dalen, said employers had laughed when Imatu representatives threatened to strike.

Their union is still 60% white. Its predecessor, which used to be white some years ago, never went on strike because it was against the law to do so at the time, and against union policy. But things have changed since then.

Mr Frik van Straten, head of Imatu's Western Province regional office, said the difference between the 8% they had been offered and the 10% they wanted, amounted to roughly the cost of a packet of cigarettes each month from each ratepayer.

Other unionists said the reality was that everyone was allowed to strike now, as long as some emergency staff were left in place — and unions which did not strike would not be taken seriously by their new political masters.

● One of the strikers, Mr John du Plessis, draped himself in ANC colours and did easily-recognisable imitations of both Archbishop Desmond Tutu and a slow-talking President Nelson Mandela.

The audience seemed to appreciate these tremendously, although the send-ups were at times unkind and tinged with political resentment. For example, in his Mandela impression, he advised women to take on double-barrelled surnames to get ahead in the new South Africa.

He also offered the alternatives of the gravy train either stopping at a station, or



A MOCKERY: Municipal striker Mr John du Plessis dons ANC colours and does somewhat unkind impressions of Archbishop Desmond Tutu and President Nelson Mandela. The smiling person in the placard picture he is carrying is

Recession is worse for women, says report

(355A) BD 6/8/96

Robert Taylor

LONDON — Women workers suffered more than men across the world in the economic recession of recent years, said a recent report published by the Geneva-based International Labour Organisation (ILO).

In two thirds of industrialised nations, the jobless rate for women has been from 50% to 100% higher than for men, the survey stated.

It also showed women worked longer hours for lower pay, receiving between 50% and 80% of men's wages worldwide.

"Equality of opportunity and treatment for women in employment has yet to be achieved anywhere in the world," ILO director-general Michel Hansenne said.

Women were playing an increasing role in the formal economy. In developing countries globally they made up 31% of the labour force, and by 2000 there will be as many in work as men in many industrialised economies.

Yet many jobs for women are either part time or in the unregulated informal sector where opportunities for discrimination and exploitation are rife. "Increasing employment opportunities for women is not sufficient; there must be action to improve the terms and conditions of such employment," the ILO report stated.

It recommended enforcement of international labour standards to ensure the principle of "comparable worth by providing equal pay for work of equal value", greater security for part-time workers, and also "appropriate" labour market regulation to protect women.

The report showed the problem starts early. Of nearly 1-billion adult illiterates in the world almost two thirds are female; 60% of 100-million children without access to primary education are girls. — Financial Times.

It's a long road to freedom for women

(365A)

BARRY STREEK
POLITICAL WRITER

CT 9/8/96

A NEW parliamentary committee would be established to monitor the implementation of an international convention to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, National Assembly Speaker Dr Frene Ginwala said yesterday.

In a National Women's Day message, she said: "We must recognise that we have a long road to travel before the realisation of the objective of effective equality and a non-sexist South Africa enshrined in our constitution."

Ginwala said Parliament was committed to translate the vision of the constitution into reality by ensuring there was a visible change in the quality of life of South African women.

"A parliamentary committee will monitor the implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the commitments made in Beijing.

"This committee will be asked to address the unacceptable levels of violence against women."

Deputy Speaker Ms Baleka Kgotsitsile said at a Women's Day celebration in Parliament yesterday that much had been done for women's rights, but there was room for improvement.

She said Parliament had reached its aim of women making up 50% of its staff.

Parliamentary pension and medical aid schemes had been upgraded and women staff now received housing subsidies.

Women's Day was all about heritage. Women should not just celebrate this day but take stock of what still had to be done, she said.

Unions cleared over labour woes

IMF blames SA tariffs for high wages

(355)

CT(BR)16/8/96

By Peter Fabricius

Washington — South Africa's protective import tariffs, not union intransigence, was primarily responsible for the excessive wages paid to skilled workers and the "dangerously high" unemployment levels, an IMF report said.

The report is in the IMF's latest yearly survey of South Africa's economy by its South African team. It said South Africa's import barriers were still too high and were keeping prices of manufactured products artificially steep, which allowed manufacturers to pay unproductively high wages to skilled labour.

The inflated costs hindered them from competing abroad and therefore from growing and creating new employment.

The IMF argued that tariffs on many categories of imports rose between 1994 and last year. It said South Africa's commitment to its tariff-reduction goals remained uncertain, though the country had signed the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs' import tariff reduction agreement in 1994.

The Washington-based organisation strongly backed proposals for a South African free trade area with the European Union, because it believed this would drive import tariffs down further. That would force South African manufacturers to become more internationally competitive, it said.

The report said South Africa's high unemployment rate was the country's chief economic challenge. The rate was 32 percent of the labour force, according to the 1994 October household survey released by the Central Statistical Service.

The survey, the service's most recent, calculated that the black unemployment rate was even higher, at 40 percent. Half of the unemployed blacks were in rural areas, half were younger than 30, 70 percent had never worked and almost all had less than a Std 10 education.

These figures suggested that most young unemployed blacks were handicapped not only by their limited skills, but also by "inflexibilities in the price at which they can offer their labour services".

IMF economists have suggested elsewhere in the world that this problem could be addressed by introducing lower wage rates for job-market entrants.

However, the IMF report said that the South African economy was absorbing almost all skilled workers, but at wage levels that made South African manufacturers uncompetitive internationally. — Independent Foreign Service

Provisions in Bill rejected

Reneé Grawitzky

THE SA Commercial Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Saccawu) yesterday categorically rejected the maternity leave and working hours provisions in the draft Bill on employment standards.

The draft Bill was discussed in a meeting between labour, government and business negotiators on Tuesday. Labour requested more time so that parties could negotiate the crucial clauses.

The union said the draft Bill proposed four months of maternity leave while labour was demanding six months of paid leave. The draft Bill does not specify that such leave would be paid.

Saccawu and labour as a whole have demanded that a minimum standard of a 40-hour week should be legislated. It has also rejected the suggestion that workers could work up to 12 hours a day on ordinary time, if a compressed working week was implemented to create flexibility. It was also opposed to the averaging-out of work time.

BD 16/8/96 (~~NEB~~) (355A)

TICS

Two men, 10 women on gender commission

(355A) CT 7/11/96

POLITICAL WRITER

INKATHA Freedom Party MP Professor Harriet Ngubane and two wives of ANC MPs have been appointed to the new 12-member gender commission.

The commission will play a monitoring role to ensure gender equality in legislation which is passed by Parliament.

The final list of people appointed to the Commission on Gender Equality was released yesterday.

The wives of ANC MPs are Ms Phumelele Ntombela-Nzimande, a University of Natal (Maritzburg) academic who is married to education portfolio committee chairperson Dr Blade Nzimande, and Ms Nomboniso Gasa, wife of foreign affairs committee chairman Mr Raymond Suttner.



APPOINTED: Harriet Ngubane

Another MP on the commission is Ms Thenjiwe Mtintso of the ANC.

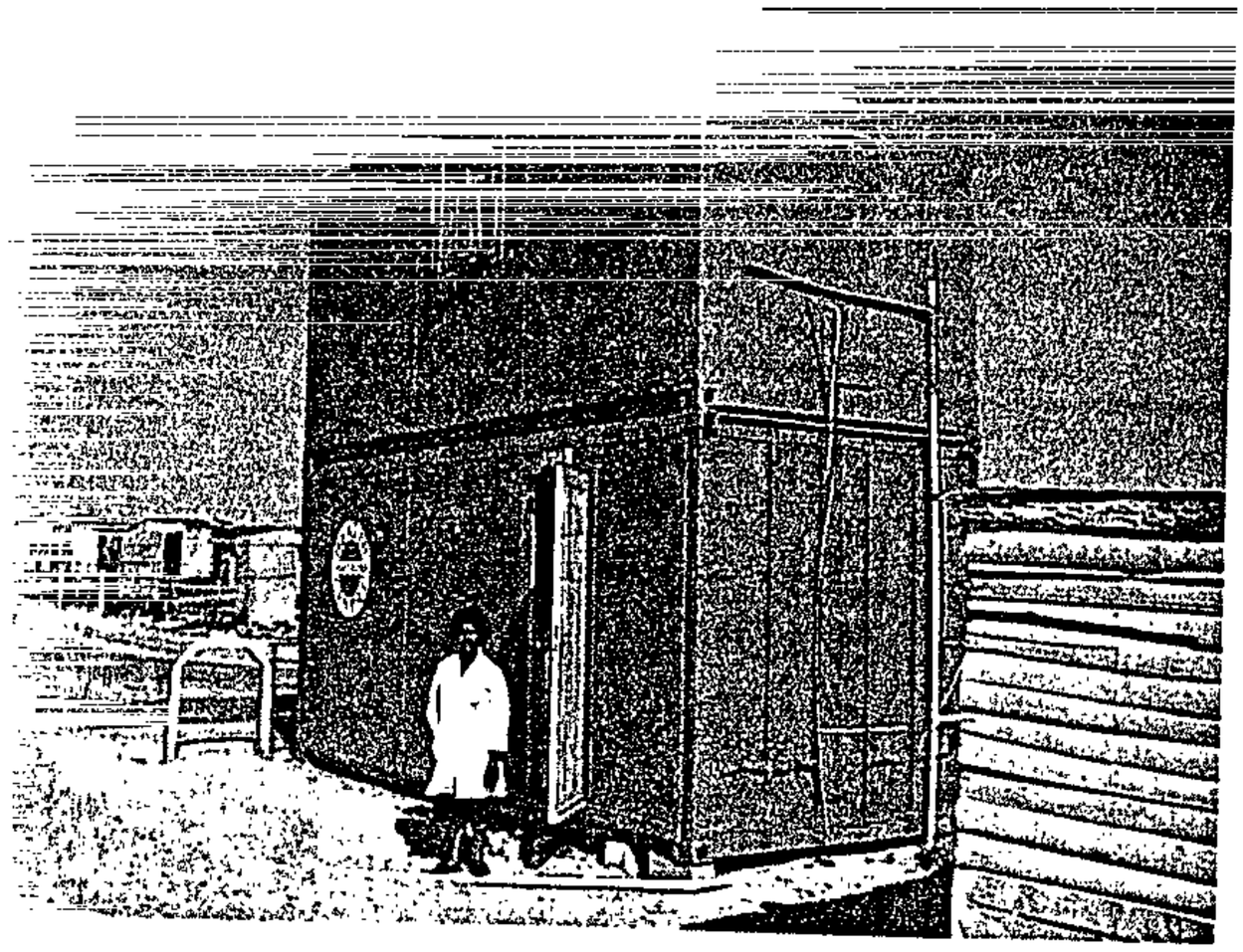
The only men appointed as commissioners were Mr Derrick Cooper and Mr Farid Esack.

The other commissioners are Ms Cathi Albertyn, Ms Zubeida Barmania, Ms Elize Delport, Ms Pinkie Mbowane, Ms Beatrice Ngcobo and Ms Viviene Taylor.

Ngubane is the sister of KwaZulu-Natal Finance MEC Dr Ben Ngubane.

She was professor of anthropology at the University of Cape Town until she was elected to Parliament in 1994. She is the IFP spokesman on land affairs.

An honours graduate from the University of Natal, she gained her doctorate at Cambridge University on Zulu medicine. She has taught at Oxford, Edinburgh and London universities.



TAINER CLINIC ... A township health centre in a "double-decker" shipping container

Containers keep people ship-shape

ST Times [Cmetro] 28/8/96

By FRED ROFFEY

A MOWBRAY-based organisation, has launched a primary health care operation with the establishment of 11 franchised health centres in Khayelitsha.

Saafroma (South African Association for Relief of Medical Ailments), has plans to establish 50 health centres in Cape townships and another 50 nationwide by the end of the year — many developing into new township billboards as company advertisements appear on the container-built structures to help pay for the costs.

The aim is to franchise health centres in underprivileged areas and staff them with local residents who have been trained as primary health care practitioners.

They will also be taught basic business skills such as product knowledge and stock control.

The centres will be linked to the formal health care sector and provide a meeting point for mobile health clinics.

Saafroma is building the centres from refurbished Safmarine containers, with one container stacked on top of another to form a double-storey unit.

The upper is used for living accommodation, while the downstairs container consists of a first aid station complete with hot and cold water, examination plinth, curtain for privacy and a retail section for the sale of toiletry items and nutritional foods.

The new outdoor advertising opportunities are expected to attract strong demand, as Saafroma has received many serious enquiries from outside the Cape and plans 250 centres by the end of 1995, with a total of 500 by the end of 1996.

Isiness gets back on rails

By FRED ROFFEY

market stalls.

The train will whistle its way out of Cape Town station on a route taking in many of the larger towns, where the 30 exhibitors involved in service provision will talk to people running small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

"The train is an ideal symbol for the role that SMEs can play in putting the South African economy back on the rails," said Hassan Kahn of the Cape Peninsula Informal Traders Association.

"Small Business Week has established itself as providing momentum for the country's growing small business movement."

He pointed out that cultivating the SME sector had proved to be the most effective route to fostering individual prosperity and a healthy economy in today's high unemployment era.

In the Western Cape more than 100 events will be featured, aimed at creating awareness of the significant role that SME's play in stimulating the economy through cost-effective job creation.

Workshops, exhibitions, conferences and seminars will be designed to encourage people to start their own business and to help those who already have.

Small Business Week is organised by the Small Business Development Corporation in conjunction with business support and development agencies.

with West expanding

have
by
ocal
with

ady
l 15
gets

irst
om-
ern-
pir-

in
om-
and
ing

"In the case of West Africa, it is a logical market for Cape Town because goods are easily sent from here by sea.

"And we cannot ignore Nigeria, as it is the biggest economy in the rest of Africa."

Wesgro is also involved in a Contact West Africa exhibition to be held in Accra, Ghana, from October 18 to 21.

Other local support comes from Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Tygerberg Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Cape Trade Centre, and the Western Cape co-ordinators, Exhibition Management Services.

Scholarships for clothing industry, fashion students

IN A bid to make South African clothing more competitive with overseas designs, new scholarships have been announced by a leading Cape Town manufacturer.

Seardel Investments Corporation has introduced four scholarships to the value of R200 000 for second-year fashion design and clothing production management students.

Joint managing director Dr Bernard Richards said: "Our company has been involved in the manufacturing of textiles and clothing for more than 30 years.

"There is a big demand for funding in tertiary education, and with South Africa receiving increased exposure to the international clothing industry, we will need more young achievers with innovative ideas."

The Aaron Searll Scholarships — named after the company's chairman — will be awarded annually over a period of 10 years.

Law firms in merger

ONE of the country's oldest law firms — Cape Town-based Bisset Boehmke & McBlain — has merged with Scheibert Wagner & Associates.

Founded in 1859, the firm is moving into labour, environmental, mining and mineral legal services following changing demands in SA.

Constant growth in the mining industry throughout Africa has led to many legal developments.

J J,

THE two Sout
peting in the I
voyeur and N
with final prep
ling 27 000-mil
race.

With only th
the start from
lina, on Septe
already taken

In the past
trants have wit
bility that ther
out of the ques

All yachts st
rigorous scruti
up to scratch, B
stop them from
sons.

However, sch
competitors fr

Full S

13h15	1 (3
13h50	1 (Pr
14h20	1 (3
14h55	1 E Sti
15h25	1 7 3
16h00	1 2 3
16h35	1 9 3

NUM: MILNER

VCE	WIN/PLA	DIVI
	2	
	2	
	13	
1	12	
	14	
	3	
	3	
	4	
2	13	
	9	
	9	
	2	
3	1	
	12	
	14	
	14	
	12	
4	7	
	4	
	1	
	1	
	4	
5	12	
	5	
	9	
	9	
	12	
6	10	
	3	
	11	
	11	
	3	
7	7	
	14	
	14	
	13	
8	1	
	3	
	1	
	1	
	10	
9	4	

Lack of female representation in SA trade unions causes concern

Star 11/11/96 (355A)

By Roseline Nyman

Women make up an increasing proportion of the South African labour force.

This is due to the growth in the traditionally female-dominated service sector and a corresponding decline in the male-dominated manufacturing sector.

This has resulted in an increase in the number of women joining trade unions. One would also expect to find more women in leadership positions.

But this is not the case. Women come up against a glass ceiling which prevents them from rising to positions of power in the trade unions.

While there are no up-to-date figures on the number of shop stewards in Cosatu unions, a survey conducted in 1991 estimated the figure at 25 000. Of these, only 14% (3 500) were women.

At the same time, total female membership of Cosatu affiliates was estimated at 36%.

If the number of women shop stewards were to be proportional to female membership, there should be 9 000 women shop stewards. This would be an increase of 250% on the current figures.

Being elected as a shop steward is the entry point to other leadership positions in the union. But given that there are so few women shop stewards, the likelihood of them occupying these positions is slim.

The Central Executive Committee (CEC) of Cosatu is the highest decision-making body in the federation after the congress.

It is made up of 80 delegates from 19 affiliates and Cosatu regions. It also includes the six Cosatu national office bearers (NOBs).

Lack of female representation in Cosatu structures starts right at the top. Of the six NOB positions, all but one (the first vice-president) are held by men.

Further down the line, the situation is very much the same. While attendance at the CEC varies from one meeting to the next, there is only a sprinkling of women at each gathering.

Women workers say they do not have time

The CEC of March 1995 was attended by 36 men and six women. In September, three women and 34 men attended.

In March 1996 there were 46 men and four women. In addition, all eight Cosatu regions have male regional secretaries.

Their attendance at the CEC tips the scales even further in favour of male representation.

All in all, women constitute an estimated 9% (six people) of the CEC, while men make up the other 91% (76 people).

While it is not surprising that the majority of office-bearers at union and federation level are male (since they are elected from a mostly male shop steward base), it is perplexing that there should be so few women shop stewards. After all, they are elected by a significantly female workforce.

Interviews conducted with 51 female members of the South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (SACCAWU), which has an overwhelmingly female membership, indicate that women workers do not elect women shop stewards mainly because women are not available for election.

Interviews with women workers reveal that they do not have time. Said one woman: "Time is very limited for me ... I have to look after my children. My husband will not look after the children during the week ... he says he sacrifices enough on Saturdays and Sundays."

Other reasons for women's reluctance to stand for election include:

- The increase in the number of families headed by women. A recent report (World Bank/Saldru, 1994) found that 26% of South African households are headed by single women (this includes unmarried, divorced and separated women).
- Lack of childcare facilities. The same survey revealed that only 6% of African children are in childcare.

The figure for all South African children is correspondingly low, at 9%.

- That women are not being taken seriously by male members and leaders.
- Sexual harassment.
- Women feel a lack of confidence.
- Insufficient education and training.

Women's participation has been on Cosatu's agenda since its 1985 inaugural congress. Nonetheless, nine years later at the 1994 congress, delegates noted their concern that: "Cosatu's long-standing resolutions around gender inequality issues have not been implemented effectively."

The recommendations which follow would go some way towards redressing the problems which prevent women from being elected:

- Cosatu should prioritise the negotiation of childcare facilities in the workplace.
- It should consider the implementation of a quota system at federation and affiliate level.

This should set certain targets for representation, for example 36% representation of women in leadership positions, or representation at federation level in proportion to the number of women members in each affiliate.

Such a system could be phased in over a period of time (say, three years) to ensure that women are available and equipped to take up positions.

- Cosatu should evaluate its employment practices to ensure that more women are employed as organisers and negotiators, and not only as administrators.

This article first appeared in the October edition of Labour Bulletin.

Don't blame unions for economic woes

B/Day 15/11/96

Racial privilege in the labour force plays a greater role in distorting and hampering SA's economy than does organised labour's wage demands, argues **Glenn Adler**

IN SEARCHING for guilt-free explanations for SA's poverty, the neo-liberals in the SA Foundation and elsewhere have dusted off the hoary labour aristocracy thesis which holds unions centrally responsible for unemployment.

The thesis shifts blame for poverty from those who ran the economy over the past century onto the most powerful formation committed to redistribution. However, the thesis is empirically flawed and the policies it justifies are inappropriate for SA.

The labour aristocracy thesis originated among late-19th century socialists who argued that a section of the working class had forsaken its revolutionary destiny in order to ally with the class enemy to maintain the status quo. In post-colonial Africa, some Marxists believed urban African workers, bureaucrats and expatriate entrepreneurs were co-participants in peasant exploitation.

This latter interpretation gained currency in the 1980s debt crisis. The international financial institutions saw the supposed "rent-seeking" behaviour of urban elites — including unionists — as a central cause of the crisis. Structural adjustment programmes aimed to remove policies favourable to urban workers, hitting wage earners directly through deindustrialisation and increased unemployment and indirectly through cutbacks that reduced the social wage.

The thesis influenced development thinking in SA via the programmes of international financial institutions and it has become an article of faith in right-of-centre economic arguments, such as the SA Foundation's Growth for All document.

Strong unions bid up the price of labour in comparison to the prevailing supply and to workers' contributions to productivity. In turn, the relatively high cost of labour persuades managers to invest in labour-saving machinery rather than labour-absorbing processes suitable to our economy.

Industry becomes too capital-intensive and growth yields high incomes for union members but does not alleviate unemployment. SA goods are thereby less competitive internationally and the country becomes vulnerable to increased imports — further deepening unemployment. Unions are at fault for their commitment to a living wage and to centralised bargaining which generalises gains.

Neo-liberals hope to weaken unions' ability to produce and generalise wage gains by:

- ☐ Curtailing bargaining councils' ability to extend wage agreements to non-parties;
- ☐ Introducing a second, deregulated tier in the labour market;
- ☐ Reducing the social wage through cutting state transfer payments; and
- ☐ Linking wage increases to productivity results.

These policies aim at a curious redistribution: from unionised formal sector workers to non-unionised workers and the unemployed. Strangely, little attention is drawn to other forms of redistribution, notwithstanding the SA Foundation's discovery that in 1993 the richest 10% of the population enjoyed average incomes approximately 67 times as high as the poorest 20%.

But does the labour aristocracy thesis fit SA reality?

The best source on workers' incomes is the Central Statistical Service's October 1994 household survey, which will be used to describe average monthly incomes of formal sector workers.

Black unionised workers have an average monthly income of R988, while black non-unionists' income is R591 — about 40% less. On the face of it, this appears to be a significant difference. However, average monthly income for white unionists is R2 651, while white non-unionists' income is even greater: R2 698. Both groups of white workers earn roughly 170% more than black trade unionists and about 350% more than black non-unionists.

The results are sharpened by taking education into account.

Black unionists with high education (secondary or more) have an average monthly income of R1 305, while their non-union counterparts earn 37% less, or R818. Black unionists with a low education (primary or less) earn R541, compared to their non-union counterparts' wage of R472, a gap of 13%.

By contrast, among less educated workers, white non-unionists earn four times and white unionists five times the income of their black counterparts.

Among workers with secondary education or more, white union members earn better than twice their black counterparts, while non-unionised white workers in this category earn more than three times black non-union members.

Unionisation and collective bargaining have allowed millions of black workers to advance towards the long sought goal of a living wage, overcoming generations of deprivation. But the effect of unionisation is considerably less than the labour aristocracy thesis would suggest. The effect is strongest among better-educated blacks, weaker among less educated blacks and completely absent among whites.

Overall, unionisation has less effect than education and far less effect than race, which continues to remain the most powerful determinant of income.

Indeed, less-educated whites who are not members of unions have incomes of R1 838, compared with R1 305 for black unionists with secondary education or more — a gap of 29%.

Income data does not support neo-liberals in their efforts to reverse union gains by deregulating the labour market. After all, it would be difficult to argue that the most significant differences are produced by the industrial relations system or by trade unions.

Nonetheless, black union members do receive more than their non-union counterparts. Given the low base of comparison, how significant is this difference? Does it give them a better life?

Whereas all white workers live in formal housing, nearly 25% of black workers, whether unionised or not, live either in shacks or hostels. The mean value of a white worker's home is five times that of his black counterpart.

Indeed, for both white and black workers, the mean value of non-union members' homes is greater than for union members. The labour aristocracy thesis would expect the reverse.

Furthermore, while there are no differences in building and household size between black workers, all white workers live in homes with two more rooms and two fewer people than their black counterparts.

The pattern repeats itself with respect to other amenities, such as ablution facilities and telephones.

Finally, nearly 50% of all black workers reported that at some point in the year before the survey, they did not have enough money to feed the children in their households. The figure for whites was less than 10%.

Black workers, as a whole, experience similar conditions of life, defined more by their status as township residents than by their occupation or trade union membership. If you are a black worker, it clearly pays to be a union member, but not nearly enough to differentiate you significantly from your non-union counterparts, nor to lift you out of poverty, intermittent hunger and overcrowded township life.

The findings cast doubt on the deregulation policies the thesis was constructed to justify: redistribution from unionised workers to the non-unionised will merely rearrange limited resources among the underprivileged.

The findings suggest the need for other adjustments, such as redressing the racial division of labour and redistribution from the richest 10% of the population. By dispensing with the labour aristocracy thesis, perhaps we can stop rounding up the usual suspects for economic problems and begin addressing the real causes of people's distress.

☐ *Adler is senior lecturer in sociology at Wits and a part-time senior researcher at Naledi, a Cosatu-linked research unit. This is a condensed version of a chapter he co-wrote in the recent publication Against the Current, edited by Jeremy Baskin.*

Average monthly income (rands), by race and education

Union status	Low education (primary or less)		High education (secondary or more)	
	Blacks	Whites	Blacks	Whites
Members	541	2 733	1 305	2 650
Non-members	472	1 838	818	2 713

Graphic: KAREN MOOLMAN Source: CSS

Government reviews workplace equity

CT(BR) 18/11/96

ROY COKAYNE

Pretoria — The last-in-first-out principle (Lifo) in regard to retrenchments, generally favoured by unions, could be discriminatory, says Tito Mboweni, the labour minister.

Mboweni said in the context of bringing people into the workforce who had traditionally been outside the system, Lifo was "reinforcing the pattern" that previously existed in South Africa.

Lifo could also affect the people affirmative action was intended to help.

Mboweni said the unions were in favour of Lifo because it protected workers who had been in the employ for longer periods.

He said Lifo was a difficult issue that needed people to talk about it and "find an amicable working-class decision".

"Our intention is to promote employment equity to remove discrimination in the place of work, to give greater opportunity to those who have suffered indignities in the past and to make our workplaces look more like our country both in racial and gender terms," he said.

Mboweni said anti-discrimination proposals in the Employment Equity Green Paper included the need for accelerated recruitment, promotion and training of blacks and women.

He said the success of employment equity was essential, and the government was expecting labour to play a crucial role in this regard.

"Equity is not, as some seem to believe, a luxury for a developing country. It is a prerequisite for development, prosperity and good industrial relations.

"But it cannot and should not mean that long-term prospects for promotion of white employees will be blocked. We want a skilled, trained workforce where every citizen is able to compete equally for jobs and promotion."

Turning to minimum wages, Mboweni said there was not a simple trade-off between minimum standards and jobs.

He said the government's acceptance of minimum labour standards was partly aimed at preventing unacceptable practices and partly dealt with some of the extremes of poverty in the workplace.

But, he said, the government recognised it could not legislate poverty away; that minimum standards must target the most vulnerable; that it must avoid measures which damaged job creation; and must avoid complex and unenforceable regulations.

Pregnancy Poser in the Workplace

Renée Grawitzky
HR EMPLOYERS

EMPLOYERS should take note of their responsibilities in the workplace, writes Renée Grawitzky.

Should special needs be taken into account when it comes to pregnant employees? Should they be given more leave than their male colleagues? Should they be paid more than their male colleagues?

These questions and more were raised by Andrew Levy & Associates in a recent survey conducted between 1 and 15 August 2014 among 1 000 employers in the Johannesburg area.

The survey, titled "Pregnancy in the workplace", was conducted for the purpose of gaining insight into employers' views on pregnancy in the workplace and to establish whether employers are aware of their responsibilities in terms of the Employment Equity Act and the Labour Relations Act.

The survey found that employers are generally aware of their responsibilities in terms of the Employment Equity Act and the Labour Relations Act, but that they are not aware of their responsibilities in terms of the Basic Conditions of Employment

Double figure wage increases expected

(355A)

Reneé Grawitzky

BD 7/1/97

WAGE increases this year could rise to double figures and exceed last year's overall average increase of 9,9%, Andrew Levy & Associates said yesterday.

Andrew Levy & Associates researcher Jackie Kelly said in the most recent wage settlement survey that although overall settlements last year represented the lowest average settlement figure since 1986, increases still outstripped inflation. With anticipated increases in inflation, settlements this year could exceed 9,9% and "pressure on employers to pull in the reins" could contribute to a particularly tough round of negotiations.

Although the overall average increase was 9,9% across all sectors, increases ranged between 5% and 17% with the new average minimum wage around R1 590 a month.

Kelly said agreements reached within centralised bargaining structures were lower than the overall average at 9,1%.

Wages continued to remain the major strike trigger, accounting for 57,3% of strikes. Other triggers included grievances (37%), discipline/dismissals (2,6%), retrenchments (1,8%) and recognition and bargaining levels (1,2%).

Last year 1,7-million man days were lost during strike action as compared to 1,6-million in 1995, 3,9-million in 1994, 3,6-million in 1993 and 4,2-million in 1992. A strike at Rustenburg Platinum mine and one in the clothing industry contributed to the loss of 784 000 man days, almost 50% of the total number of lost man days last year. One of the reasons for the levelling off of strike action, she said, was the fact that wage agreements negotiated within centralised bargaining structures were concluded without the parties resorting to lengthy industrial action.

A departure from the norm was the number of strikes by academic and administrative staff at tertiary institutions across the country, Kelly said. In addition, the work to rule by technical ground staff at South African Airways was a sign of a move by white collar workers to use their collective strength.

Judge slashes payout for sex harassment

(355A)

Deborah Fine

BD 5/2/97

A FORMER Altron Group employee broke down in tears yesterday afternoon when the Transvaal Labour Appeal Court overturned an Industrial Court ruling awarding her a sexual harassment claim of R730 000, and reduced the claim to R92 088.

Sharon Sowter, 41, of Sandton, a former computer software support adviser at Altron subsidiary Intertech Systems, was awarded substantial damages last year after the Industrial Court ruled her resignation from the firm in May 1993 had constituted an unfair labour practise.

Sowter was forced to resign after Intertech failed to take appropriate action when she complained of sexual harassment at the hands of a Dutch colleague, Atze Herder, in March 1993.

Two years after her resignation, Sowter was declared medically unfit to work after it was discovered she was suffering from a degenerative bone disorder.

Describing the company's failure to protect Sowter as "reprehensible and outrageous", Labour Appeal Court Judge Edwin Cameron said yesterday that the firm, nevertheless, could not be held liable for Sowter's incapacitation two years after the perpetration of the unfair labour practise.

Cameron awarded Sowter R92 088.

DISABLED WOMAN 'DEVASTATED'

High Court slashes sexual harassment payment

CT 6/2/97

(355A)

JOHANNESBURG: The Industrial Court ordered Intertech to pay a former employee harassed by a co-worker R733 751. Yesterday the High Court reduced the amount to R92 088.

THE High Court here yesterday dramatically reduced the payment to a woman who was forced to leave the employment of Intertech Systems after being sexually harassed by a co-worker.

On appeal by Intertech, Mr Justice E Cameron reduced the amount the company would have to pay Ms Sharon Sowter from R733 751,92 to R92 088.

He said the company should not be liable to pay disability benefits to her for a degenerative bone disease that left her unable to work nearly two years after she was forced to leave the company. The disability benefits formed more than R683 000 of the original settlement awarded by the Industrial Court.

Sowter said after the judgment that she was "devastated", adding that she feared for her safety, as she still received phone calls from Mr Atze Herder, who had harassed her at Intertech.

She was upset because she was no longer able to work and received no benefits, while Herder continued working for Intertech.

In its notice of appeal, Intertech conceded that an unfair labour practice had been committed and offered to pay Sowter R46 000, the equivalent of six months' pay.

The judge described this amount as "wholly inadequate" and ordered that 12 months pay, amounting to R92 088, should be paid.

In summarising the original case, the judge said Sowter had worked at Intertech for nearly two years before co-worker Herder began sexually harassing her both at work and out of the office.

Initially her complaints to her superiors had gone unheeded by the company until, after four months of incessant harassment by Herder, she had refused to continue working.

Two legal agreements were then signed. One between Sowter and Herder, in which he agreed to stop harassing her, and one between the two employees and Intertech, in which Herder agreed to resign.

Describing Herder's resignation as a "sham", the judge said Herder had been employed by the company as a consultant almost immediately, and continued to work at its offices. His tasks included investigating an alleged breach of computer system security focusing on Sowter, which the judge described as "astonishing".

Slating the actions of the company, both for its handling of the sexual harassment and for its conduct during the industrial court action, Judge Cameron said her forced resignation was effectively a dismissal and constituted an unfair labour practice, which he described as "outrageous".

He added that "the most egregious feature is the collusion between Intertech and Herder with the plan for him to resign".

In the appeal, Intertech conceded that the company's actions had amounted to an unfair labour practice, leaving the only issue in dispute the amount of the award.

Judge Cameron said that because nearly two years had elapsed between the time of her effective dismissal and her being regarded as medically disabled, the company could not be held liable for her disability.

He said that while there was little doubt that the unfair labour practice had led to her loss of disability cover with her employer, the law limited its responsibility for the initial acts because she was eminently employable and could have got other permanent employment in the interim.

Cosatu to stay away if talks on standards stall

Renee Grawitzky BD 26/2/97

COSATU has advised the National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) of its intention to embark on a national stayaway on May 12 due to insufficient progress being made in the negotiations on employment standards.

It is believed that Nedlac's executive council meeting on Friday would discuss Cosatu's decision to embark on industrial action.

Nedlac sources said there would have to be discussion on the type of initiative to be embarked upon in order to resolve the issues in dispute around the employment standards.

The main issues revolved around hours of work, maternity leave, variation of standards, Sunday work pay, child labour and night work.

The decision to embark on such action was agreed to at the federation's executive committee meeting last week.

The programme of action agreed to, which has subsequently been endorsed by the various regions, provided for the commencement of shopfloor pickets and demonstrations this week.

A snap survey showed that the majority of regions would finalise their plans only this week and would commence shopfloor demonstrations next week.

Cosatu's Wits region, for example, had resolved at the weekend that pickets and demonstrations would be held on March 4 and 5 while a rally would be held at the Library Gardens on March 25. In line with Cosatu's resolution on crime, a march against crime and in particular corporate crime would be held on March 8.

The new Labour Relations Act granted workers the right to engage in action to pursue socioeconomic demands. If workers followed the proper procedures they would be protected.

Cosatu has compiled with the initial requirements by notifying Nedlac of the federation's intention to embark on industrial action. In terms of the Act, the "matter giving rise to the protest action" will have to be considered by Nedlac or any other appropriate forum "in which the parties are able to participate in order to resolve the matter".

Finally, if no resolution is found and Cosatu still intends going ahead with the action on May 12, it will have to give Nedlac fourteen days notice of its intention to proceed with the action.

Commission wants more cash

APG 5/3/97

The Gender Commission will not be able to do its job properly on the budget it has been given, says chairman Thenjiwe Mtintso. (355A)

She was speaking at the first meeting of the commission, held at Parliament, where Justice Minister Dullah Omar announced that R1,96-million was available for the current financial year and R2,059-million for 1997/98.

Ms Mtintso, whose full-time salary alone will account for R212 400 of the budgeted amount, said she could not understand how the commission, which was supposed to have been set up in 1994, could be allocated only R2-million a year.

Half of the amount would go merely to ensure that the commission survived.

Earlier, Mr Omar said the 12-member commission could make a major impact in the struggle for equality and towards ending domination over women and the "terrible culture of violence" that affected women and children in particular. It could also help create a more humane society.

The commission is expected to monitor and review gender policy in organs of state, statutory bodies and business organisations, make inputs on legislation relating to gender issues, run education programmes and monitor compliance with international conventions. – Sapa

Affirmative appointments invalid, court declares

ARG 5/3/97

ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

Pretoria – The Pretoria High Court has ruled that the Department of Justice's affirmative action policy, implemented in 1995, discriminated against white male attorneys.

This followed a successful application by the Public Servants' Association for the court to declare the appointment of 30 senior state attorneys invalid as only women and blacks had been appointed.

Earlier in 1995 the department had advertised the posts, including positions for state attorneys, deputy state attorneys and state advocates.

Passing judgement yesterday, Judge J Swart said the appointments were not in line with the constitution, which demanded efficient public administration.

Judge Swart said it appeared that candidates appointed to the positions were sometimes not as well qualified as applicants who were turned down.

This would be a burden on society and unfair to more highly-qualified applicants if public service posts were earmarked for blacks or women only. It would amount to the exclusion of other applicants on the basis of race and gender, he said.

Judge Swart found that male applicants from the PSA had been unfairly discriminated against and declared the 30 appointments invalid.

He ordered Justice Minister Dullah Omar to ensure that the posts were filled in accordance with the provisions of the Public Service Act.

Commission wants more cash

ARG 5/3/97

The Gender Commission will not be able to do its job properly on the budget it has been given, says chairman Thenjiwe Mtintso.

She was speaking at the first meeting of the commission, held at Parliament, where Justice Minister Dullah Omar announced that R1,96-million was available for the current financial year and R2,059-million for 1997/98.

Ms Mtintso, whose full-time salary alone will account for R212 400 of the budgeted amount, said she could not understand how the commission, which was supposed to have been set up in 1994, could be allocated only R2-million a year.

Half of the amount would go merely to ensure that the commission survived.

Earlier, Mr Omar said the 12-member commission could make a major impact in the struggle for equality and towards ending domination over women and the "terrible culture of violence" that affected women and children in particular. It could also help create a more humane society.

The commission is expected to monitor and review gender policy in organs of state, statutory bodies and business organisations, make inputs on legislation relating to gender issues, run education programmes and monitor compliance with international conventions. – Sapa

'Small' budget angers gender commission

BD 5/3/97 (365A)

Tim Cohen

CAPE TOWN — The gender equality commission made a its debut yesterday with members complaining about an "inadequate" R1,95m budget and questioning why commissioners' salaries were lower than those of youth commission members.

At the first meeting of the commission, chairman Thenjiwe Mtintso said that a large majority of the commission's budget would be taken up by salaries, leaving it with few resources with which to perform its statutory functions.

Justice Minister Dullah Omar announced that the commission's 1996/'97 budget would be R1,96m, while its 1997/'98 budget would be R2,059m.

Mtintso's salary would be R212 400 and the six full-time commissioners would earn R163 000. Part time members would earn about R85 an hour.

Mtintso said the commission itself was not involved in negotiations about its budget and she therefore found it difficult to explain why youth commission members earned more than members of the gender equality commission.

The commission's overall budget compared poorly with that of the human rights commission, whose budget was R6m, and the youth commission which received more than the human rights commission. "If the human rights commission thinks they are getting only the scraps from the table, I hate to think what they think of our budget," Mtintso said, referring to recent complaints by the human rights commission.

Mtintso said the budget was inadequate if one considered the extent of patriarchy in SA and the legal responsibilities of the commission.

The commission was legally obliged to monitor government, the private sector, and the nongovernmental sector as well as provide investigatory and mediatory functions, she said.

The commission had to establish offices, particularly in some of the rural areas, to effect the protection of women's rights. These functions would be difficult to perform without an adequate budget.

Omar undertook to facilitate discussions between the commission and the state expenditure department on the issue.

DP MP Dene Smuts said she had no problem with the commission being granted a small budget, particularly before it was properly up and running.

The commission ought to concentrate on its "watchdog role" as a guardian of constitutional values.

And for this all that was required was "brains and a pen", she said.

Every second woman soldier is sexually harassed, survey shows

DD 10/3/97 (3798) (2)

Stephen Laufer

EVERY second female soldier and civilian in the defence department has been sexually harassed at work, a survey presented to a weekend conference on women in the military shows.

Delegates representing 17 885 female employees of the department were told 49% of women in civilian and military defence jobs said they had been subjected to sexist remarks or verbal insults by their male colleagues.

A quarter of those interviewed in the survey by the psychological services of the SA National Defence Force's (SANDF's) medical services said they had encountered offensive printed matter in the workplace, while 25% said offensive gestures had been used when they were addressed.

The conference, which was sponsored by the defence department — which includes the SANDF, the civilian defence secretariat and the defence ministry — called for the introduction of a policy outlawing sexual harassment within the military.

As a result, the military code of ethics, which currently did not specifically refer to sexual harassment as an infringement, would be reviewed, Maj-Gen Jackie Sedibe said yesterday. It could be expected that offensive actions of the kind uncovered by the survey would be declared an offence under the code.

The survey results on harassment reflected realities across SA society. The challenge was to find ways of allowing women to function at the highest levels of the military.

Delegates had been asked to assist in formulating policies and mechanisms to overcome the legacy of gender discrimination which had ensured that few women attained senior rank in the defence department. Besides problems with harassment, the conference had identified continuing discrimination in recruitment, training, and promotion.

There was also discrimination resulting from public service rules which did not allow women to include husbands and families on their medical insurance, and the issue would be addressed in talks with the relevant minister.

Woman generals from the US and Zimbabwe and representatives of a number of nongovernmental organisations attended the conference which was timed to coincide with international women's day.

The discussions would flow into the defence review process aimed at formulating a new policy on the future size and role of the SANDF, a member of parliament's defence joint standing committee Zou Kota said. Some of the conference suggestions aimed at removing obstacles to the progress of women within the military could require enabling legislation.

The survey also showed younger women felt there were fewer obstacles to achieving the highest ranks in the SANDF, while older women were less optimistic because promotion depended on passing courses often held far from home and required long absences from families.

Sedibe said women were permitted to serve in combat units, and accounted for 11,43% of the 77 382 uniformed SANDF personnel. More than half were noncommissioned officers, with a further 25% serving at officer level.

It was learned separately talks were under way on the participation of women in SA peacekeeping units should they be deployed outside the country.



A conference on the role of women in SA's defence department was held in Kempton Park at the weekend. Attending the conference were Maj-Gen Jackie Sedibe, left, and MP Zou Kote. Picture: GARTH LUMLEY

Mboweni tells unions to act on discrimination

Women's position 'must improve'

ARG 14/3/97 (35GA)

ALIDE DASNOIS
BUSINESS EDITOR

The trade union movement is lagging far behind in tackling discrimination against women, Minister of Labour Tito Mboweni has charged.

In a speech to the national bargaining conference of the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union in Johannesburg, Mr Mboweni said he had the impression that organised labour was committed to tackling race inequality but not gender inequality.

"The union movement is lagging far behind Parliament, Cabinet, Government and even business. It is now time for the union movement to address this in action without making excuses or simply passing resolutions," Mr Mboweni said.

"And have you really taken steps to address inequalities in the workplace?

"How long is it going to continue that women are restricted to the low-wage jobs in the sector?" he asked.

The minister said the ball was "primarily in management's court".

But he asked the union: "Are you explaining the need for change to your members or are you sitting back and blaming management?"

On the controversial issue of labour market flexibility, Mr Mboweni said "much nonsense" was spoken about this.

Job creation had to be a priority, with unemployment estimated at up to 33 percent. And in some sectors, he said, wage levels and labour unrest did discourage job creation.

"There is no running away from this. Wage levels which are unrelated to productivity and the structure of that sector may lead to fewer jobs. And labour unrest may lead employers to favour machinery rather than people – which is one of the major reasons for improving our dispute resolution system."

Mr Mboweni said South Africa's labour market was not efficient enough.

"Our approach is that where there are unnecessary rigidities in our labour market and in our economy and they must be removed. But this should not be done in ways which undermine labour security and union rights in particular.

"We do not support the view which calls for deregulation," he said, noting that in some areas more regulation, not less, was needed. In other instances, the market was too inflexible," said Mr Mboweni.

Examples cited by him included:

- A "one size fits all" approach to wage setting which in some cases did not take account of differences in regions, sectors and small or new businesses;
- Restrictions on firms working on a continuous basis, reducing employment levels and productivity of investment;
- Excessive overtime, with social and health effects and a regulatory framework which should be changed so that more people worked rather than the same number of people working more; and
- Archaic and complex employment conditions set by some bargaining councils which protected labour security in "a narrow and old-fashioned way" and which could discourage small businesses.

His department's call for "labour security with flexibility" was not a "compromise between the left and the right", he said.

BUSINESS

SA needs more women directors

(356A) Sowetan 20/3/97

By Abdul Milazi

CORPORATE South Africa needs to do something soon to correct gender imbalances in the workplace to reflect the country's new democratic order.

This sentiment was expressed by Markinor managing director Sue Grant at a Women in Management Conference in Sandton recently.

Grant says while women have made gains as directors in recent years, they still do not occupy an equal ratio of board positions as men.

She argues that men also are paid more on average, have had a head start in business and occupy 49 times more board positions than women.

In America, 17 percent of companies belonging to the Fortune 500 group still have no women on their boards, compared to 30 percent four years ago. Women now also hold ten percent of all board seats compared to seven percent in 1994.

"While about 600 boards seats are held by women, only 400 occupy these seats as some hold more than one seat at a time," says Grant.

She says a survey of 604 listed and 378 unlisted companies in South Africa last year showed that women only make up 2 percent of board members.

However, she says, this is significant growth when compared to April 1995 when women made up a paltry 0,5 percent of board members.

"This still isn't good enough, though. Half of those companies' board members should be women."

Women tend to occupy middle and junior management positions, but very few top management positions, with an average monthly income of just over half of men's average salary.

"Why do men get paid on average so much more and have the better jobs? We South Africans have an Equity Act, but that doesn't mean there is equality.

"Putting equality into law and enforcing it doesn't really work successfully. Women have to go that extra mile and fight for their rights because they are not just going to be handed to them."

She argues that women advance slower than men with the same qualifications, are given fewer responsibilities and are watched and scrutinised more than their male counterparts.

Grant also argues that ending discrimination should be accompanied by measures to accelerate the hiring, training and promotion for historically disadvantaged groups.

Almost half SA's new graduates are women

Susan Russell

(BD) (359A) BD 21/4/97

THE gender imbalance that existed among SA's graduates a decade ago has almost disappeared, with women now making up almost half the number of people who graduate from local universities, according to latest figures.

Results of a Human Sciences Research Council survey published this month show that women now make up almost 50% of graduates, against 39% in 1985. The HSRC analysis is based on figures from 1980 to 1994.

However, the survey also found that during the same period, women were underrepresented in high-paying occupations and earned income packages that were considerably lower than those of their male counterparts.

During this period the number of women who qualified in the human, medical and management sciences increased while the natural sciences remained largely male-dominated.

At the same time the number of graduates who qualified in natural sciences decreased from 22% in 1985 to 17% in 1994, while the percentage of human and management science graduates increased [illegible] to 48% and 26% respectively.

By 1994 more than 35% of graduates held postgraduate qualifications, although the medical sciences lagged in this respect with only 18% completing a second degree.

The top wage earners in 1990 and 1994 were self-employed stockbrokers.

PRIL 23, 1997

Women set to play bigger role in local councils

Moosa unveils quota plan

ARG 23/4/97 (355A)

ANDREA WEISS
METRO CORRESPONDENT

Affirmative action for women in municipalities is one of the proposals for new laws to regulate local government after 1999.

The Government released a discussion document yesterday proposing employment quotas in municipalities and reserved council seats for women.

The process of drafting the law has been described as second in importance only to the new constitution.

Among ideas under consideration are a proposed system to remove councillors who fail to represent their communities.

The document suggests giving mayors executive powers, rationalising the number and size of councils and addressing economic needs of disabled people.

Constitutional Affairs Minister Mohammed Valli Moosa describes the process as of "vital importance".

Mr Moosa has invited municipalities to analyse their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and submit their findings by the end of May so that they can be incorporated into lawmaking.

Municipalities are asked to make "a special effort" to ensure that women are fairly represented at these meetings.

The document emphasises the need to ensure that women are adequately represented on councils and in administrations, possibly through a quota system.

While women are well represented at provincial and national level, the document says they make up only about 20 percent of local councillors. This figure is even lower for executive structures.

The document suggests that municipalities take more initiative in trade and investment instead of leaving this to the Government.

Other suggestions include:

- Defining the share of national revenue municipalities should be entitled to and streamlining the system of intergovernment transfers.
- Defining types of municipalities within a single and two-tier system.
- Encouraging public-private partnerships to ensure that "the best quality of service is provided at the lowest cost to the maximum number of residents".

Workload is daunting, but the gender commission just has to soldier on

Star 10/6/97 (359A)

By Kerry Cullinan

Gender equality sounds like an impossible dream. Yet the 12 commissioners appointed in March to head the Commission on Gender Equality are tackling their task of promoting equality between men and women with a gusto and speed seldom seen in the public sector.

Headed by Thenjiwe Mtintso, a former ANC MP, the commission has already held three consultative workshops. These have brought together government departments, provincial governments and non-governmental organisations to discuss what is already being done to promote gender equality, what the gaps are, and what these structures expect from the commission.

Recently the commissioners held a strategic planning workshop to set out a skeleton programme of action. This will be fleshed out after meetings with women in the nine provinces.

"We want to be known as a hands-on commission; a people-ish commission, not some elite structure that sits in Pretoria," says Mtintso.

To achieve this, the CGE has made women in rural and informal areas and domestic and farm workers its main targets. It will also focus on the country's poorest provinces: Northern Province, Northern Cape, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal. It aims to set up offices there and has assigned commissioners to these provinces.

This targeted approach makes sense, given that the Commission on Gender Equality Act's brief to the commission is rather broad.

It effectively charges the commission with the responsibility of being society's main watchdog over gender relations. The commission is supposed to monitor virtually all society's structures: state, statutory bodies, public bodies and businesses.

It must educate people about gender equality, evaluate laws for gender bias, and recommend laws that will promote gender equality.

It must investigate "gender-related issues" including complaints from the public, liaise with other organisations concerned with the same issue, as well as conduct research.

This is a tall order, especially on a budget for its first year of just more than R2-million. But Mtintso is not the type of person to be put off by a seemingly impossible task.

"We are virtually operating from our bags," she says, admitting that a lack of resources and red tape were making it difficult for the commission to set up offices and employ staff.

At present, the commission is squatting in the Department of Justice's Pretoria offices, and four justice department staff are helping out.

It is also a daunting task, given that the consultative meetings exposed the lack of gender sensitivity in government departments.

Only 12 out of 27 attended the commission's consultative workshop, with 15 failing to even respond to the invitation.

Only seven departments have set up gender units, even fewer have worked out gender policies, and there is no uniform approach to gender equality.

The non-governmental sector is better organised, but it lacks co-ordination. "The NGOs feel they lack the muscle to lobby and are keen to use the gender commission."

The commission's first step, says Mtintso, is to identify what needs to be done. "Once we have a programme of action, we will present it to business and civil society and ask for assistance. We want to concentrate on the work that needs to be done rather than getting money for the commission."

Commissioners have identified five broad building blocks for the programme of action.

The first is policy and research. The priority here, says commissioner Vivienne Taylor, is to develop a "gender policy framework" for the country.

This will set out what gender means in South Africa and establish benchmarks against which progress in the move towards gender equality can be measured.

The second task is to assess how women's social needs – for things such as water, land and housing – impact on the development of women.

Thirdly, customary, traditional and religious attitudes are to be scrutinised to determine which keep women subordinated. Customary law will get special attention.

Fourth, the commission aims to tackle safety and security, especially violence against women.

Finally, it will look at the media's role in gender relations.

Six committees have been set up to carry forward the commission's work. These are:

- Policy, planning and research, chaired by Mtintso.
- Public education and information, chaired by ex-unionist Pinkie Mbowane.
- Liaison, headed by Beatrice Ngcobo.
- Legal matters, headed by advocate Elise Delport.
- Finance and fundraising, headed by former academic Farid Esak, one of two male commissioners and at present acting chief executive officer of the commission.
- International relations, also headed by Mtintso.

An office is also being established in Cape Town under Taylor, an academic, to monitor government policy and legislation.

The commission plans to launch its programme of action in August, after women's structures in the provinces have had their say on what they want the CGE to do.

The commission's work schedule is punishing, especially as only seven of the 12 commissioners are in fulltime employment. But as many South African women live in desperate poverty and national women's organisations championing them are virtually non-existent, commissioners have little choice but to shoulder the massive responsibility.

■ *Kerry Cullinan is a journalist for the Institute for Democracy in South Africa.*

Paper on gender policy will focus on treatment of women

By CLIVE SAWYER
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Treatment of women by the judicial system will come into sharper focus in the coming weeks with the launch of the Justice Department's discussion paper on gender policy.

Laws on rape, domestic violence, maintenance and inheritance have been a source of frustration to women, and non-governmental organisations providing services to them, for years.

"The reality is that women have largely been rendered invisible in the legal system," says the discussion paper, unveiled yesterday by Deputy Justice Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang. The reforms proposed include the rewriting of laws, changes to the way courts operate, and the attitudes of personnel.

Among the laws targeted for rewriting is that on rape, with a proposal that its definition be broadened from the narrow one based on forced heterosexual sexual intercourse, to include forced oral sex and penetration with objects other than the penis or parts of the body.

Justice Minister Dullah Omar said many practical steps were already being taken which did not require fresh legislation, including training and the revamping of facilities for women and children at courts.

However, he emphasised that the department wished to intensify these reforms. The Law Commission was examining several issues, and NGOs had been asked to submit proposals to the commission. This made it difficult to estimate when the reforms being considered would be put to Parliament as legislation.

(366A) Star 21/6/97

A key proposal in the gender policy is the establishment of a national women's justice programme within the Department of Justice's gender directorate.

This would operate as a central focus for advancing women's access to justice and ensuring that the legal system responds to women in an appropriate and affordable way.



DULLAH OMAR: Many practical steps already taken.

Proposed reforms for the Department of Justice include: increasing representation of disadvantaged groups in management, with a target of 30% women by 1999; child-care facilities for staff; eradication of sexual harassment; and integration of the concerns of women into mainstream policy and planning. Strategies to achieve these goals include ensuring that posts are advertised in media used by disadvantaged groups, and appointing selection panels of women.

In its section on access to justice, the gender policy document proposes goals including enhancing access to legal information and advice, and use of accessible language.

In its section on crime, safety and security, the document proposes: co-operation between the Department of Justice and the National Network on Violence Against Women; possible "safety audits" in communities; and identifying places of potential danger such as streets with poor lighting, with encouragement to communities to make changes.

It also proposes that bail laws and policies should reflect the danger to women victims of violence when the accused is known to them and lives in the same home or community.

Included among other proposals are: an investigation into financial compensation and other forms of support for victims; setting up a unit in prosecutors' offices supporting women victims of crime and their families; and a multidisciplinary task force to review rape and other sexual-assault laws.

In its proposals on court facilities, the paper puts forward a range of measures, from setting up child-care facilities, to establishing gender desks in courts, to developing alternative dispute-resolution mechanisms.

It says changes should be made to court processes in sexual-assault and domestic-violence cases. These should include allowing a "support person" to accompany the woman to increase her confidence so that she can express herself freely.

Another proposal is for screens to ensure a defendant is not in view of a woman witness when she is giving evidence of his violence against her. Women witnesses should be allowed to give evidence in such cases in camera, the paper says.

It proposes that the Western Cape sexual assault court project should be evaluated with a view to possibly implementing similar projects in other courts.

THE BIG STORY

Fairer deal on way for women in court

Justice Department to launch discussion paper on gender policy

ARG 25/6/97 (355A)

TREATMENT OF WOMEN BY THE JUSTICE SYSTEM WILL COME INTO SHARPER FOCUS IN THE COMING WEEKS WITH THE LAUNCH OF THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT'S DISCUSSION PAPER ON GENDER POLICY, REPORTS POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT CLIVE SAWYER

Laws on rape, domestic violence, maintenance and inheritance have been a source of frustration to women, and non-government organisations providing services to them, for years.

"The reality is that women have largely been rendered invisible in the legal system," says the Justice Department's discussion paper on gender policy, which has been unveiled by Deputy Justice Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang.

The proposed reforms include the rewriting of laws, changes to the way courts operate, and the attitudes of personnel.

Among the laws targeted for rewriting is that on rape, with a proposal that its definition be broadened from the narrow one based on forced heterosexual sexual intercourse, to include forced oral sex and penetration with objects or parts of the body other than the penis.

Justice Minister Dullah Omar said practical steps were already being taken which did not require new legislation, including training and revamped facilities for women and children at courts.

However, he emphasised that the department wished to intensify these reforms.

The Law Commission was examining several issues, and NGOs had been asked to submit proposals to the commission.

This made it difficult to estimate when the reforms being considered would be put

'Women who are in custody awaiting trial or serving a prison term should be treated with dignity'

women appropriately and affordably.

Proposed reforms for the Department of Justice include:

- Increasing representation of disadvantaged groups in management, with a target of 30 percent women by 1999.
- Child care facilities for staff.
- Eradication of sexual harassment.
- Integration of the concerns of women into mainstream policy and planning.

Strategies to achieve these goals include ensuring that posts are advertised in media used by disadvantaged groups, and appointing selection panels of at least 40 percent women.

In its section on access to justice, the gender policy document proposes goals including enhancing access to legal information and advice, and use of accessible language.

In its section on crime, safety and security, the document proposes:

- Co-operation between the Department of Justice and the National Network on Violence Against Women.
- Possible "safety audits" in communities, identifying places of potential danger like streets with poor lighting, with encouragement to communities to make changes.
- Bail laws and policies should reflect the danger to women victims of violence when the accused is known to them and lives in the same home or community.
- Financial compensation and other forms of support for victims should be investigated.
- The establishment of a unit in prosecutors' offices supporting women victims of crime and their families.
- A multidisciplinary task force to review rape and other sexual assault laws.

The document says changes should be considered to sentencing practices for sexual assault ca



COLIN DAN

term should be treated with dignity.

In its proposals on court facilities, the paper puts forward a range of measures from setting up child care facilities, to establishing gender desks in courts, to developing alternative dispute resolution

ensure a defendant is not in view of a woman witness when she is giving evidence of his violence against her.

Women witnesses should be allowed to give evidence in such cases in camera.

The paper suggests a range of amendments to the Mediation in Certain Divorce Matters Act, including giving family advocates the status of officers of the court and enablin them to take appropriate action

"The reality is that women have largely been rendered invisible in the legal system," says the Justice Department's discussion paper on gender policy, which has been unveiled by Deputy Justice Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang.

'Women who are in custody awaiting trial or serving a prison term should be treated with dignity'

The proposed reforms include the rewriting of laws, changes to the way courts operate, and the attitudes of personnel.

Among the laws targeted for rewriting is that on rape, with a proposal that its definition be broadened from the narrow one based on forced heterosexual sexual intercourse, to include forced oral sex and penetration with objects or parts of the body other than the penis.

Justice Minister Dullah Omar said practical steps were already being taken which did not require new legislation, including training and revamped facilities for women and children at courts.

However, he emphasised that the department wished to intensify these reforms.

The Law Commission was examining several issues, and NGOs had been asked to submit proposals to the commission.

This made it difficult to estimate when the reforms being considered would be put to Parliament as legislation.

A key proposal in the gender policy is the establishment of a National Women's Justice Programme within the Department of Justice's gender directorate.

This will operate as a central focus for advancing women's access to justice and ensuring that the legal system responds to

In its section on access to justice, the gender policy document proposes goals including enhancing access to legal information and advice, and use of accessible language.

In its section on crime, safety and security, the document proposes:

■ Co-operation between the Department of Justice and the National Network on Violence Against Women.

■ Possible "safety audits" in communities, identifying places of potential danger like streets with poor lighting, with encouragement to communities to make changes.

■ Bail laws and policies should reflect the danger to women victims of violence when the accused is known to them and lives in the same home or community.

■ Financial compensation and other forms of support for victims should be investigated.

■ The establishment of a unit in prosecutors' offices supporting women victims of crime and their families.

■ A multidisciplinary task force to review rape and other sexual assault laws.

The document says changes should be considered to sentencing practices for sexual assault cases, abolition of the cautionary rule, the rules allowing the admission of evidence of the complainant's sexual history, and the definition of rape.

Rape, as defined at present, covers only forced heterosexual sexual intercourse.

The paper says measures should be taken to ensure that women who are in custody awaiting trial or serving a prison



COLIN DAN

term should be treated with dignity.

In its proposals on court facilities, the paper puts forward a range of measures from setting up child care facilities, to establishing gender desks in courts, to developing alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

It says changes should be made to court processes in sexual assault and domestic violence cases.

These should include allowing a "support person" to accompany the woman to increase her confidence so she can express herself freely.

Another proposal is for screens to ensure a defendant is not in view of a woman witness when she is giving evidence of his violence against her.

Women witnesses should be allowed to give evidence in such cases in camera.

The paper proposes that the Western Cape sexual assault court project should be evaluated with a view to possibly implementing similar projects in other courts.

It says girls should always be allowed the presence of a support person, and the use of video equipment should be examined so that girls are not required to be present in court to give evidence.

The paper suggests a range of amendments to the Mediation in Certain Divorce Matters Act, including giving family advocates the status of officers of the court and enabling them to take appropriate action on behalf of children.

It also puts forward changes to the legal profession to make it more representative.

Other proposals include a review of the structure of the law degree, inclusion of gender issues in law courses, and measures to promote use of women lawyers.

Responses to the Justice Department on gender policy must be made by July 25.

A woman finds the way through establishment undergrowth to science apex

When Pat Shipman received her doctorate in fossil analysis, she sent a resumé of her thesis to the University of Chicago Press for consideration as a textbook. Her manuscript was returned, but for some reason she was never sent the reviewers' comments.

It later transpired that one reviewer had declared her research so substandard that she must have slept with one of her superiors.

Shipman responded to this outrageous slur in the most dignified way possible – by rising to become Adjunct Professor of Anthropology at Pennsylvania State University and going on to write several noted books, most recently *The Wisdom of Bones*, co-written with her husband, Professor Alan Walker, with which they jointly won the £10 000 (R75 000) Rhone-Poulenc Science Book Prize.

Incidentally, the rejected manuscript, *Life History of a Fossil*, was picked up by Harvard University Press and, 16 years after its first print run, is still selling well.

Shipman's experiences in a predominantly male environment make her well qualified to assess the consequences of women "invading" science, which she plans to make the subject of her seventh book.

Most of her previous books have focused on the science of fossils and human evolution, but she has trod controversial ground before in *The Evolution of Racism*, a brave and much-admired attempt at ignoring political correctness to explain the evolution of different races.

She and her husband fell in love over a hominid fossil skull in Kenya 23 years ago.

They said they had thought of suing the reviewer, but, "What would be the point?" Shipman shrugs. "In the end, it only destroys you."

She abandoned her scientific career in 1990 to concentrate on writing. "I really felt I had to write about women moving into science, as it's such an important issue."

Clever women, especially those trying to rise through the ranks of the scientific establishment, have always felt opposition from their male colleagues.

However, Shipman's book will focus not on whether discrimination happens, but on why. What are men afraid of?

"Judgments are based on evidence, so it shouldn't matter what background a person has. Their performance and productivity should be what matters," she said.

Shipman will be taking a distinctly anthropological approach. She compares the rise of women in science to a clash of cultures: "An invasion is occurring. The people who are there to begin with, men, respond to this invasion by closing ranks and patrolling their borders."

She also points out that, in this case, there is a curious reversal of territorial infringement, because it is the subordinate culture invading the dominant one.

However, she is at a loss to explain why men should perceive the rise of women as an "invasion". She thinks it is instinctive and innate, a "basal reaction'", and suggests outdated stereotypes are still to blame.

Shipman hopes her book will "map out the landscape" for women scientists so they know where to tread in this difficult jungle. – The Times, London

Fighting for women

Sowetan 1/8/97 (335A)

The Commission on Gender Equality is determined to uplift women despite obstacles placed before it. **Sharon Chetty** examines the situation...

AMID THE CHAOS of a temporary office, lack of equipment and inconsistent payment, the members of the Commission on Gender Equality are still able to be philosophical about their work and keep a sense of humour.

"Our task is like having to work through the carcass of a huge elephant, but Government has not given us the implements with which to eat it," said chairwoman Thenjiwe Mtintso.

Setting up the commission has been dogged by frustration, which pretty much mirrors the lot of women in this country, she said.

After public hearings and debate, the commission was set up in March. But while the African National Congress-led Government did the politically correct thing by establishing such a body, getting it up and running is proving more difficult.

The commission, although created and funded by Government, is an independent body and must monitor state efforts to bridge the gender gap.

But it still find itself battling against mostly white, male bureaucrats who have no interest in seeing the commission running smoothly, said Mtintso.

Office space was "begged" from the Ministry of Justice, three secretaries are on loan to them and the only computer being used is Mtintso's own.





Dr Ellen Kornegay and Thenjiwe Mtintso ... tackling the inequality of women.

PICS: SHARON CHETTY

Tiny budget

A budget of a mere R2 million for the first year of operation – an amount insufficient to cover even staff renumeration – was given to them without anyone explaining how the figure was arrived at.

"We find ourselves literally at the mercy of white male bureaucrats," said Mtintso of their frustrations in dealing with Justice officials as that ministry has political responsibility for the commission.

While this Government can boast the quota of women in Parliament and about setting up the Gender Commission, political commitment is not enough, said Mtintso. There has to be a strategy for implementation.

The Ministry of Justice denies that officals are being deliberately obstructive. The official who decided arbitrarily on the R2-million budget is no longer there, *Sowetan* was told.

But while battling with bureaucrats has become a daily chore, Mtintso and the rest of the commissioners are forging ahead.

Because the undermining of women permeates all sectors of society, the commission needs to have an "amoeba-like approach" to be effective, she said.

Links have been made with the numerous organisations dealing with gender issues and workshops have been run to assess the state of affairs.

"There are many groups working in civil society, but there is no coordinated approach. Also, there's a big gap between Government and civil society, and many of the organisations lack resources.

"We are looking at a coordinated strategy. We cannot talk about gender in a vacuum," said Mtintso.

The priority would be women in rural areas, women in informal settlements, domestic workers and the barely skilled and self-employed.

Full-time offices will be opened in KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape, while the head office will remain in Gauteng.

In areas where there are no offices, commissioners from Pretoria will be responsible for various regions.

On the eve of Women's Day on August 9, a "state of women in South Africa" report will be made public. It contains information obtained from an evaluation involving 77 organisations.

In November, a programme of action will be launched. A key part of it will be research. The commissioners are also looking at setting up a gender hotline and are in the process of producing a video about gender inequality.

Some of the issues they plan to tackle will include legislation like customary law where it affects women negatively.

They are also looking at the relationship between the Constitution and traditional authority, and if that erodes gender rights.

Religious law that discriminates against women will be challenged too.

Race is easy to deal with, said Mtintso. Even die-hard racists can close the door on the issue when they get home. But the same cannot be done with gender – it is the one issue that cuts across all lines, she emphasised.

Complementary body

A complementary body, the Office on the Status of Women, was also established in March to act as Government's internal monitor.

It is based in Deputy President Thabo Mbeki's office and its main task is to "develop systems and mechanisms to advance gender equality in government," said its head, Dr Ellen Kornegay.

While the number of women employed by Government needs to be increased, there also has to be a process to make Government institutions less hostile for women, she said.

"If we get the process right, then the numbers will stay ... it is important that the environment is affirming and enabling."

Between now and December, the office will be conducting research into all Government departments. At the end of the assessment, it will have a comprehensive report on the status of women in Government.

"We would like to see each department having a gender focal point," Kornegay said.

Affirmative action has little impact on women – report

90% of managers white

ALIDE DASNOIS
BUSINESS EDITOR

Affirmative action is working better for black people than for women, a study by the University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Business shows.

The Breakwater Monitor study of 64 companies shows that the number of black – African, coloured and Asian – people in management positions climbed 60% between 1994 and 1996, while the number of women managers, black and white, climbed only 21%.

In the top 15 companies surveyed, the number of black managers rose 68%.

Commenting on the results in the latest issue of the Graduate School of Business magazine *Perspectives*, researchers Angus Bowmaker-Falconer, Frank Horwitz, Harish Jain and Simon Taggar found that white managers still account for nearly 90% of all managers in the sample.

They warn that the figures may be biased towards "progressive" companies because the 64 companies which participate do so voluntarily.

The national norm for black managers may be much lower, they say – possibly as low as 1%.

At current rates of progress, assuming the number of managers grows by 6% every two years, blacks will still make up only 32% of managers by 1998 in the top 15 companies, and just over half of all managers by the year 2000.

But, say the researchers, there are signs of progress. More than 70% of all new management recruits in the top companies today are African, compared to just over 20% two years ago, and 42% of all management promotions are African.

Though Africans make up only 16% of managers in leading companies, the number has risen 6% in 18 months.

However, the number of women in management, even in leading companies, has risen by only 1% over the same period.

"Certain organisations have clearly taken up the challenge of transformation in a rigorous way, with changed organisational structures upskilling the workforce.

"The approach taken in more successful organisations includes external recruitment coupled with internal development, advancement and involvement of employees in the process."

The researchers say the leading companies in the sample of 64 included those in the fast-moving consumer goods, general retail or financial services sectors, multinationals and commercialised public corporations.

A disturbing trend in the labour market, they find, is restructuring which has led to a net loss of 9 600 jobs in the sample of 843 011 jobs – just over 1% – over two years. Job loss was greater among the top companies, which shed more than 3% of jobs over the period.

It's time to end state neglect of women

M+G 8-14/8/97

(28?)(35SA)

Joanne Fedler

Since South Africa put August 9 on its books as a day in which the whole population can take a day off, go on a picnic, a frolic in the park or host a braaivleis, there have been many achievements.

The South African government has been very busy since 1994. The president's writing hand must be cramped by now — he has signed and ratified so many documents that enshrine women's equality and rights.

South Africa's equality clause in the Constitution is one of the most progressive worldwide. The South African Law commission has recently published a draft Bill on domestic violence which, if passed, would be one of the most far-reaching pieces of legislation on the books.

We have a Termination of Pregnancy Act which allows a woman to terminate an unwanted pregnancy. Marie Stopes Clinics advertise terminations with free abandon on bus shelters and public garbage cans.

The Department of Justice has published a gender policy which promises and promises and promises some form of justice to women.

"National machinery" with the word gender thrown in at every possible opportunity has been set up to deal with "the girls" (as if gender is synonymous with women and men do not have a gender).

We are, for all intents and purposes, a deeply gender-sensitive country with progressive gender politics. We are really a Snac — a Sensitive New Age Country. It would appear as if there is much to celebrate.

But many women on National Women's Day will not celebrate beyond having the obligatory boerewors roll. We are tired of hailing documents and constitutions and international commitments as the benchmark of what we have achieved.

South African women are in a state of mourning because no matter what commitments the government undertakes (and it has undertaken many), women and children continue to be raped, assaulted and murdered. It is almost as if the rate of violence against women and children has been inversely proportional to the democratisation of our society and the commitment to gender-sensitive policies.

Our legal system is rotten to the core, staffed with inefficient and overworked civil servants, who blame the system when whoops!, another real criminal slips through the loopholes and another little corpse finds its lonely way to the mortuary.

Magistrates and judges continue to hand down judgments in femicide, rape and battery cases which are comical in their misogyny. Seemingly these days, the legal system is softer on paedophile murderers than on tax-evaders. Or traffic fine defaulters. No wonder we easily slide back into our old evil ways and fondly remember the days of the death penalty when rights were not only the valued birthright of rapists and child molesters.

In this context, what can National Women's Day mean for our society? I would like this day to be something more than a platform for politicians to recommit to everything they have already committed themselves to.

If we have a moment to revive the integrity of the history of the day in which women took to the streets to protest against the pass laws, we may recover something of what we have lost.

On this day, women marched to the Union Buildings, showing their force and strength in numbers. Women claimed their right to be free from the oppression of the pass laws which would restrict their movements and break up their families. They did not wait for liberation to rain down on them like manna. They demanded.

In a matter of months, political parties will be canvassing votes and shmoozing with us mortals to ensure our little X marks their spot for the 1999 elections. It's time that women showed our strength in numbers and refused to vote for parties that do not commit themselves to ending violence against women and children — with concrete plans of action and budgets to match.

We want education in schools to ensure our youths grow up with a deep sense of the right to bodily integrity. We want judgments that put an unequivocal end to the free reign of the batterers, rapists and murderers.

To PAGE 28

WATHINT' ABAFAZI

We salute the role of women in the struggle and ask you to celebrate the launch of four stories from the community of Zwelethemba in Worcester:

This is my life by Mirriam Moleleki
My storie loop so by Nongeteni Mfengu
Not the end of the world by Nothemba Ngcwecwe
Umzabalazo by Neliswa Mroxisa

Available from selected booksellers or Kagiso Publishers
Tel: 021-471-368
Fax: 021-448-8662

Time to end state neglect

(28?)(35SA)

From PAGE 26

M+G 8-14/8/97

We want state-funded shelters. We want an efficient maintenance system. We want to celebrate National Women's Day our way — free from all forms of violence.

It is time that the government recognised that unless it acts to end violence against women, the only "national machinery" that will work is state-funded AK-47s for women, so that we can protect what the government has promised it will protect.

Joanne Fedler is director of the Tshwaranang Legal Advocacy Centre

Too few women in top jobs

Barbara Ludman

They pour out of matric by the thousands: bright young women, a world of opportunity at their feet. At university, they can follow any course open to their male counterparts. But, invariably, most choose to train for the same low-paying, stress-inducing professions women have gone into for decades: education, social work, nursing — the caring professions.

The Human Sciences Research Council has looked at the percentage of women with postgraduate qualifications — achieving honours degrees, postgraduate diplomas or higher — in a range of fields over the decade ending in 1995.

Here's what the Register of Graduates found: in economics, management, commerce and administration, female representation was 26%; in engineering, agriculture and architecture, it was 9%; and in law, 37%. In the medical field, women made up 51% of postgraduates over the decade. Not surprisingly, they constituted 57% of all postgraduates in education.

Perhaps it's changing. At the University of Cape Town, the enrolment is more than 50% female in the faculties of arts, music and education — but also in law and social sciences. The faculties of engineering, science and commerce are still heavily male. Microbiology is one of the biological science occupations where women are more heavily represented than men, according to the Central Statistical Service's Manpower Survey for 1994 (the most recent year available). Women have barely a look-in in such fields as marine biology or genetics.

And in medicine, where do they score? As medical assistants, inspectors, or researchers; as pharmacists or dieticians; as therapists of all kinds; and — unsurprisingly — at all levels of nursing. There are, of course, exceptions: but if you're looking for a surgeon, a dentist, a veterinary surgeon, or any other medical specialist — even a gynaecologist — you'll have to search very hard for a woman.

It's a pattern repeated in other fields: men occupy the higher-paid, more glamorous posts; women go for the supportive roles.

"We can't continue to be in denial; women are still opting for the traditional occupations," says criminology professor Anshu Padayachee of the University of Durban-Westville.

But she's optimistic. Although her course used to be male-dominated, more and more women are taking it — and other law courses, whereas "twenty years ago, you could count the number of women lawyers in private practice on both hands", she says.

It's a question of economic empowerment: "Most people go into a profession with this long-term view that there's a market out there. You go into those professions where you can see there is going to be economic empowerment." So they're moving into pharmacy as they're welcome there; they take arts and education as there may be jobs at the end of the line.

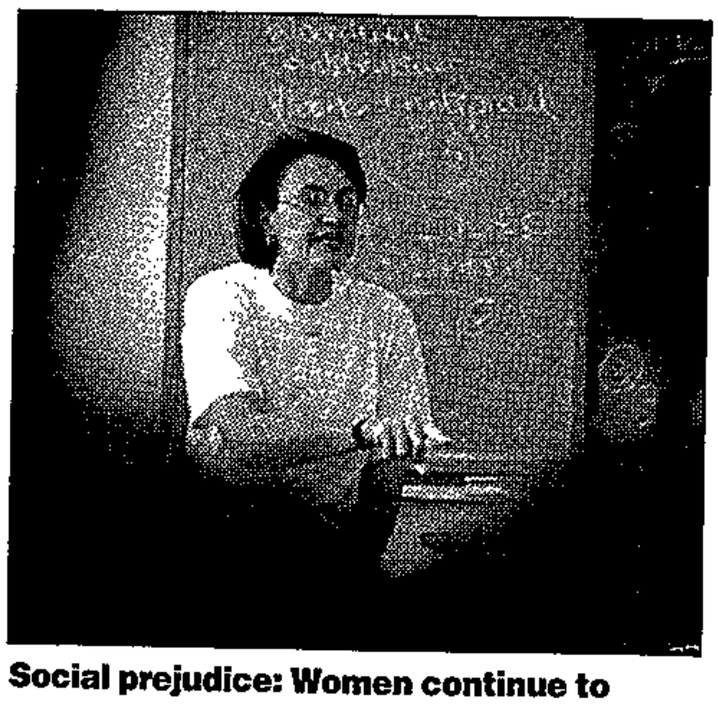
"When the country's crying out for technologists and engineers, why do women not enter those professions? Women want a guarantee that they will be given a chance, and the guarantee can only come from the marketplace. We need to be more aggressive."

It's difficult when one is brought up to believe women's work is different from men's.

"It's partly to do with the way in which women are encouraged to think when they're at school: the socialisation process," says Dr Sheila Meintjes, who teaches the politics of gender in the political studies department at the University of the Witwatersrand.

"But I think you're going to see a change in the next decade or so. The constitutional message about equality will begin to have percolated through. And you've got changes emerging globally in terms of management structures from more hierarchical to flattened structures, a preferred modus operandi for women."

But there will be little gain without pain, at least for some. "This doesn't mean to say that the patriarchy is going simply to open its doors without some kind of a struggle. I think what we're going to see are increasingly more publicised cases of sexual harassment. It goes together: an increasing incidence of woman abuse as opportunities open up for women."



Social prejudice: Women continue to work in professions associated with their gender. PHOTO: HENNER FRANKENFELD

Moreover, because of social prejudices in South African society, "as professions become increasingly feminised, it is possible that their status may drop". For example, a doctor's status is quite high here, but that could change — "as it has in Russia, where women dominate the profession".

But Meintjes is optimistic. "As we get the critical mass of women in real decision-making areas in the government, in the civil service, in Parliament and in the executive, so people will see an improvement in the whole way in which women are viewed. But it won't be without that backlash.

"In a sense South Africa is having to deal with the backlash before we've even started." By and large, however, "we're at a wonderful moment of terrific opportunity — a process of transition which can really benefit women in South Africa, and I think many women are taking advantage of these opportunities".

M+G (POM) 8-14/8/97 (355A)

Big hopes, little funding

M+G 8-14/8/97 (355A)

Although South Africa is a leader in gender equality, future plans for the promotion of women are uncertain, writes **Ferial Haffajee**



Power play: One in three MPs in Parliament is a woman

South Africa's innovative plans to advance the nation's women could be stymied by a budget too low for the newly formed Commission on Gender Equality to do its work.

The government has granted the commission a budget of only R2-million — much less than that granted to commissions like the youth and truth commissions.

This is the commission everybody has been waiting for to begin breathing life into the range of structures which has placed the country at the forefront of gender equality — on paper at least. South Africa is among the world leaders in the number of women in government: one in three MPs in Parliament is a woman.

This commission has many tasks: it must co-ordinate the web of gender policies of local, provincial and national governments and begin to weed out the myriad discriminatory laws and practices still on the statute books.

Although under-funded, the commission has set itself a work programme and helped complete the country's first progress report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Cedaw).

The report, released this week, is more sober than the upbeat optimism which greeted the adoption of the convention in 1995. In both the public and private sectors, women lag far behind and there are fears that Parliament could be denuded of the large quota of women who have been behind key advances like abortion rights as well as improvements in health and welfare benefits for women.

South Africa may drop the current proportional representation system in favour of a constituency-based election system, but, according to the report, the proportional system gets more women into the government.

A PhD study by a United States student has found many women MPs may not be available for re-election no matter which electoral system is chosen. She found that "marriages were breaking up, friends were abandoned and children were feeling neglected". They also said the transition to the hard world of politics had not been an easy bridge to cross.

In a country where more than one million women were raped last year and only 4 100 rapists convicted, the need for political lobbying to tighten bail laws, educate magistrates and judges and secure better policing are essential. "Progress has been incredibly slow in the field of sexual violence," says Lisa Vetten of the Sexual Harassment Education Project.

Changes to bail and sentencing necessary to beef up the conviction rate for rape has not happened, often with disastrous consequences, as the case of Mamokgethi Malebane has shown.

Vetten also says the setting up of special rape courts has been dismal; there is only one in Cape Town. But the justice department has promised more; they have also agreed to training which will enable them to prosecute rape cases more effectively and to stop the "second rape" many women say they suffer at court.

The courts are at the coalface of the fight against the rape epidemic, but the Cedaw report has found that there are only 56 women magistrates of a total of 1 175, and of the country's 186 judges, only 10 are women.

Affirmative action for women in the rest of the public sector appears to have fared slightly better. Just less than half of all new appointments to the public service have been women and the government has set itself a quota where in four years' time one in three middle and senior managers should be a woman.

In the private sector, women are climbing the corporate ladder faster than before. The number of directorships held by women has doubled in the past year, but 65% of these have gone to white women which could indicate that black women may have a longer wait.

Lawyer Christine Qunta who has written about affirmative action in South Africa says: "It is a matter of concern that appointments are still made along racial lines. There may be a pattern developing where white women may be used as a buffer against the progress of black women and men."

Qunta says the barometer of progress should be to begin assessing the role that black appointees play on boards. It shouldn't be a colour by numbers process, but "black women should be asking themselves what business skills and perspectives can they can bring to a board and why they are being appointed".

Studies by the education department show that the numbers of boys and girls enrolling at the schools almost match. But the drop-out rate among young women is worryingly high and there are no plans to keep them in the system. And although more women have registered for matric since 1993, their pass rate is lower than that of their male counterparts.

The knock-on effect means the jobless queues are swelling with unemployed and unemployable women. The latest figures from the Central Statistical Service show that 38% of economically active women are unemployed.

MAIL & GUARDIAN
August 8 to 14 1997

'No more' to violence against women

355A

Colleen Lowe Morna

It is an indictment of all of us that Women's Day 1997 should be celebrated in the shadow of Mamokgethi Malebane's grave. The slaying of this seven-year-old a day before she was to testify against her self-confessed rapist is not only about the inadequacies of our bail laws; it is about the failure of our society to deal with gender-based violence.

As we are often reminded by psychologists, rape is not about rampant sexual desire, but an assertion of power. No aspect of gender inequality is more reflective of the glaring gap between rhetoric and reality than the escalation of the crime at the very moment that we are shaping a new society based on principles of equality and human rights.

The South African Constitution is one of the few in the world to explicitly outlaw discrimination based on gender. How does one square this with a 1994 Interpol survey showing that South Africa has the highest incidence of reported rape in the world?

The South African Police Service estimates that only one out of 35 rape cases is reported. In March, Minister of Safety and Security Sydney Mufamadi announced that serious crimes had declined in nine out of 20 categories. Rape was one of the categories in which there had been an increase.

Historically, violence against women has been viewed as a "problem" rather than a "crime": a matter to fester behind closed doors.

To the credit of Deputy Minister of Justice Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, who has spearheaded an awareness-raising campaign on violence against women, the issue is receiving more profile and attention than in the past.

But the justice system continues to send out confusing messages. On the one hand, we have the strong statement made by Chief Justice Ismail Mahomed upholding a stiff sentence meted out to a Cape Town rapist: "The time has come for this court to say that the women of South Africa are entitled to walk the streets of the country in peace." Yet within weeks, the same court system fails a seven-year-old girl.

There was a sense of *déjà vu* when Minister of Justice Dullah Omar announced at Malebane's funeral that he would tighten bail laws to prevent a repeat of the tragedy. One remembers a certain justice minister who said similar words, and specifically pledged to protect the girl child, after the rape of two sisters in Observatory, Johannesburg, early in the new year.

It has struck me that no matter what changes are made to our criminal justice system, the ultimate answer lies in all South African — but especially the men — saying "No more".

The National Non-Governmental Organisation Coalition, in partnership with Agisanang, an NGO which has spearheaded the drive to involve men in the fight to eradicate violence against women, is planning a major march against violence on November 24, the eve of International Day of No Violence Against Women.

It is too late for Mamokgethi. But is it too late for the rest of South Africa?

Colleen Lowe Morna is an adviser to the Commission on Gender Equality

WOMEN IN BUSINESS

Wip hand

(350A)

ET (BDR) 8/8/97

ANN CROTTY



There is a tendency to view Womens' Investment Portfolio Holdings (Wiphold) as a romantic rags to riches story: four black women clubbing together to do battle in a male-dominated business world. In no time, and against the odds, Wiphold is sitting with assets worth over R170 million. It's almost too good for Hollywood.

There is also a tendency to look on it cynically: four astute black businesswomen, irked by the unending largesse that was poured on black males in an attempt to satisfy the demands of black empowerment, decide to move in for their own slice of the empowerment pie.

Wiphold, which has just reported an enthusiastic response to its public offer of shares, has built up an impressive investment portfolio over the past 24 months.

Three years ago four women — Nomhle Gcabashe, Louisa Mojela, Wendy Luhabe and Gloria Tomatoe Serobe — scraped together R500 000 and started the first women-only empowerment group. It was a brave step. Not only did it involve more money than the women personally had, it also required a considerable amount of time and energy, not to mention chutzpah.

What is less well known — although well documented in the Wiphold prospectus — is how the women used their money, their persuasive skills and their talent to create a R172 million investment company and pick up a handsome profit for themselves.

The key components here are: a company prepared to sell a stake to Wiphold and a financial institution prepared to devise a scheme to fund the purchase of the stake. Typically, this would involve ownership of the shares resting with Wiphold and the shares being pledged as security to the financing institution. The institution owns the dividend income and offsets this against the associated interest costs. This means Wiphold's main effective interest in the shares is an entitlement to the votes.

These are the key features of most empowerment deals and explain why empowerment groups with almost no financial resources are able to build up substantial holdings. But considerable debt is accumulated in the process.

Success for an empowerment company hinges on the value of the acquired assets appreciating more rapidly than the increase in the cost of the debt used to fund the acquisition.

To date, Wiphold has chosen its acquisitions well. The total value of their investment portfolio stands at R173 million while the total investment cost is R112,9 million. This R60 million capital profit, equivalent to 53 percent appreciation, was achieved in about a year. Not bad for a few women with limited experience in big business.

But the R60 million is not all profit. Provision has to be made for the cost of the debt used to acquire the assets. According to the prospectus, the funding requirement is R131 million — leaving a net profit of R41,6 million.

Then there is the cost of investments written off, chief of which is R6,5 million relating to an option on Norwich shares. There is also a Pepsi write-off of R154 595. Both amounts will be paid off from the proceeds of the subscription. It is difficult, however, to gauge what was the cost associated with the decision not to pursue three investments — WIP Rosia, WIP Motors and Ericsson.

For the Wiphold women the cost of the acquisitions is not just debt-related. A number of companies have imposed restraints. In terms of the Afrisun restraint, Wiphold cannot become involved in the gaming industry. The Bidvest restraint requires that Wiphold be an empowerment vehicle — with at least 14,4 percent of the equity and voting shares being beneficially owned by or held for the benefit of women — until November 29 2001. It is also required to assist Bidvest in the development of its business.

One irksome feature is how Wiphold assumes, in a paternalistic fashion, to be acting on behalf of women in general. And their new partners may be unhappy if they fail to generate the sort of support they suggest they can.

However, businessmen who have struck deals with Wiphold, with some initial apprehension, in general express delight with their new partners.

"We've done deals with a few empowerment groups — our tie-up with Wiphold is probably the best," remarked one businessman. Another, a tad chauvinistically, remarked: "We like their objectives, they've matured considerably and look at things very commercially now."

Gender equality: a long way to go

(355A) ET 8/8/97

KARIN SCHIMKE
POLITICAL WRITER

"AND finally," this interview ends, "your name is spelt Thenjiwe Mtintso?"

"Yes."

"And your title is chairman of the Commission for Gender Equality?"

"No. I'm the chairperson of the commission."

Ms Mtintso breaks into laughter and dispels the awkwardness of the faux pas.

Whether God is a man or a woman, whether the access points to underground pipes are called manholes or personholes and whether women are physically and emotionally better suited to child rearing are subjects of passionate household debate.

But the underlying issues of gender equality are far deeper than that. Which is why the Constitution bans discrimination on the basis of gender, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation and marital status. It is also why we have a gender commission and an Office for the Status of Women.

But still, three years into democratic government, the poorest people in the country are women — black, rural women. The fact that their lot has not changed, raises the question: Is the government really committed to improving the fate of the girl child?.

It could also be asked whether an abundance of gender structures is not simply an expensive pacifier.

Ms Pregs Govender, who chairs the parliamentary ad-hoc committee on improvement of quality of life and status of women, says there is much to be hopeful for.

"However, between the vision and the objective, between commitment and concrete change, is reality, with its compromises, trade-offs and established power. We have seen structures that needed effective resourcing and authority being placed at unacceptably low levels in the hierarchy with little or no power to influence the budget and broader economic policy."

An example is the gender commission, which, by all accounts, is severely hamstrung because of its paltry R2-million budget. The amount does not even cover salaries.

If it is too little money for the commission to fulfil its mandate, then it is R2m the country cannot afford, some may argue.

Mtintso says she realises resources are scarce, but since the government made a commitment to gender equality, it must ensure that the commission is fittingly resourced.

"It would be unfortunate if there were to be a perception that a gender commission set up to eliminate gender equality, itself suffers from gender inequality," she says.

Deputy Finance Minister Ms Gill Marcus says that to focus on the under-financing of the gender commission would be the wrong approach. There are several commissions, many of which are under-funded, she says.

"The critical thing is we are building institutions that protect civil society, but it's never instantaneous. We are at a formative stage ... creating institutional awareness. We have to wait — maybe decades — for the culture, ethics and permeation of ideas to take root."

Signs of institutional reform are there. According to Marcus, in 1994 only 3% of public service senior managers were women. In 1997 the number has risen to 10%.

Out of 400 members of the National Assembly, 110 are women, two of whom hold key leadership positions in the national legislature. Of a national cabinet of 25, four are women, and out of 15 deputy ministers, seven are women. Compared with apartheid South Africa, says Marcus, we are not doing too badly.

Contrary to the old-regime myth that the average South African citizen was white, male, middle-class and living in the city, statistics show that Joe Soap is actually Joan Soap. She is poor, works in jobs no one pays her for (looking after children and the elderly) and lives far from the city and services.

Does it make any difference at all to her that we have lots of women politicians, a gender commission and women in the civil service who are finally cracking the glass ceiling?

It will take time. Ms Lindiwe Zulu, deputy Speaker of the Gauteng legislature, says she doubts that it will happen in our lifetime, and it will never happen if women are not represented in top positions.

But the so-called national machinery of gender equality could lapse into disuse, as it has in other countries. Dr Cathi Albertyn of the Gender Research Project notes in an article that, learning from international experience, we must guard against marginalisation of gender structures, an entrenched bureaucracy — often hostile to gender concerns — and a lack of outside pressure from a strong women's movement.

She also warns against structural problems, such as a lack of financial and human resources and a fragmentation of administrative organisation between and within government departments and various structures.

Western Cape Human Rights Commissioner Ms Rhoda Kadalie believes that the way to avoid these problems is to consolidate the work of many commissions so that offices, employees and equipment can be shared.

"(The commissions) are all empire-building at the moment," she says. "We do what we can with our money, but the more we do, the more resources we need."

She believes a human rights commission, subdivided into special interest group "desks" for gender, youth or the disabled, could best protect human rights.

"The gender commission is not getting enough, but I will never see the money we spend on it as being a waste," says Marcus. "If you live in a society that suffers the extent of child-abuse that we do, where people rape as easily a three-year-old as an 83-year-old, women are vulnerable. The consciousness needs to start somewhere."

Faux pas aside, perhaps the consciousness does start with "chairperson" rather than "chairman".

The structures that safeguard women's rights

- The Constitution: The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on grounds of gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status or sexual orientation. It also recognises the right to bodily and psychological integrity, including the right to make decisions about reproduction and security in and control over your body.
- At an international level the government ratified the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.
- The Commission for Gender Equality can monitor, investigate, research, educate, lobby, advise and report on issues concerning gender equality in civil society.
- Government departmental gender desks monitor the work of the department to ensure that policy and programmes are run in a gender-sensitive way. By May this year, 11 out of 28 departments had some form of gender unit.
- The Office on the Status of Women, situated in the Deputy-President's office, supports and co-ordinates the work of departmental gender units and provincial offices on the status of women.
- The parliamentary committee on the improvement of quality of life and status of women is a multi-party parliamentary committee set up to monitor and oversee the government's progress in improving the quality of life of women, especially in relation to commitments made by the government.

March toward liberation halted at gender equality

(350A) BD 8/8/97

THE march to political liberation had been achieved in SA but the march towards equality had barely begun, the Commission on Gender Equality said in a report yesterday.

The report, which contains the commission's preliminary analysis of the state of gender equality in SA on the eve of Women's Day tomorrow, was released at a launch and cultural presentation in Johannesburg.

"The constitution contains some of the most far-reaching provisions for gender equality of any constitution in the world," said commission chairman Thenjiwe Mtintso.

"Women constitute one quarter of all legislators at national and provincial level, placing SA seventh in the world league of participation by women in politics."

She said that despite delays, the national machinery for advancing gender equality was falling into place. This included the office on the status of women in the deputy president's office, gender units in line departments, similar structures at provincial level and the gender equality commission charged with promoting and protecting gender equality in all spheres of life.

"Yet," the report said, "we have not extended the fruits of democracy to the majority of women who are black, poor, often living in rural areas, on farms or informal settlements in the urban areas, without formal employment and vulnerable to violence."

Gender structures established so far were fragile, with 17 departments and one province (Western Cape) having no gender structures at all. Most of the structures lacked resources.

"For example, the budget of the commission does not even cover the salaries of commissioners, let alone staff, let alone operations. The inevitable conclusion is that the government is not putting its money where its mouth is," the report said.

Indications that women in the legislature were not keen to run again in the 1999 elections were a concern and threatened to reverse the hard-won political gains women had made.

There were also no clear policy frameworks within the economic sector which reflected a clear commitment to gender equality, the report said.

"Deeply entrenched, sexist attitudes are daily served up in popular culture and the media without so much as a thought that such comments may be out of place in today's SA.

"Attitudes, ideas and practices reflect, on the whole, the deeply patriarchal character of our society which cuts across ethnic and religious divides. As Constitutional Court judge Albie Sachs puts it: 'It is a sad fact that one of the most profoundly nonracial institutions in SA is patriarchy'." — Sapa.

Uphill road to gender equality

Sowetan 11/8/97

Structures for women are fragile, under-resourced and lack expertise

By Charity Bhengu

THE report on the Commission on Gender Equality was released in Johannesburg on Thursday to coincide with International Women's Day, but most South African women do not know what this body is and what it has been doing since its inception in March.

A snap survey by *Sowetan* over the weekend found that even professional and elite women learned about the commission for the first time during our survey.

Miss Malindi Bombaas, a personnel assistant at Makwetla and Associates is one of women who confessed that they had no knowledge of what the commission was.

She said it was the first time she had ever heard of it when *Sowetan* interviewed her.

A few other women had a little knowledge of the commission as they belonged to women's organisations and had made submissions to it.

Ms Anu Pillay, a senior assistant registrar of the Students Representative Council department at Witwatersrand University said she was not clear as to which direction the commission would take to tackle the oppressive conditions in which most women found themselves.

She also doubted if it would be effective as it has limited resources.

She said: "Although the commission has the potential to play an important role in documenting human rights violations against women, I don't see how it will survive with such a small budget. It is not going to have enough power or mechanisms to achieve its goals."

A general concern among other women like Mrs Patricia Khumalo, a policy coordinator for Gauteng Sexual Harassment Education Project, was that a lot of work needed to be done in relation to sexual harassment at the workplace.

"The majority of women still suffer in silence because of fear of losing their jobs."

> **"A snap survey showed most women do not know what this extremely important body is, or what it does"**

The commission was established in terms of the Constitution of South Africa this year to monitor the status of women and promote respect for gender equality.

It began its work in April with 12 commissioners, serving 36 million South Africans steeped in centuries of patriarchy.

Commission chairperson Thenjiwe Mtintso said with extremely limited resources, it became clear that there was no way the commission could undertake the task alone.

She said: "When we consider how far South Africans, particularly women, have come since the historic march on Union Buildings in 1956, we have much to be proud of. Yet so much remains to be done.

"While the structures for advancing gender equality – which include the commission, the establishment of the office on the status of women and the upcoming employment equity legislation – were falling into place, these structures were still fragile. They were severely under-resourced and lacked expertise."

Mtintso said there had been no movement on the issue of anti-discrimination legislation.

There were also no clear policy frameworks within the economic sector which reflected a commitment to gender equality.

Women on the rise

Sowetan 13/8/97

Although women in South Africa have always been kept out of the limelight, they have taken significant steps to change this situation. **Sharon Chetty** explains...

(355A)

BOARDROOMS may still be the domain of a "boy's club", but women are slowly, but surely, making inroads into this terrain.

And while the number of women holding company directorships and seats on boards may not be vast, the tide is slowly turning – within two years, the number of women directors have more than doubled.

Although there are only 12 black women out of a total of 65 who hold 88 directorships of listed companies, in 1995 there were a mere 42 women directorships, according to McGregor Information Services, whose last survey was done in May.

But there is still a lot of catching up to be done. Business has traditionally been a hostile environment for women, and in this country, the opportunities for black women were next to nil.

It wasn't only about hitting the proverbial glass ceiling, but mainly about education and training:

Most black women older than 20 have no tertiary training or even matric.

Yet in post-apartheid South Africa, women – working mostly in consortia and albeit with borrowed money – are prominent in new ventures and have invested in everything from mining houses and radio stations to financial institutions.

That is because women, and black women in particular, have shown that if given a chance "we'll seize the moment", says Jean Ngubane, the managing director of Nozala, a black women-led investment company.

In just over a year, Nozala – which includes Dawn Mokhobo, Joan Joffe and the first black woman judge, Navanetham Pillay, in its team – has secured several strategic partnerships.

Through the National Empowerment Consortium, it has a six percent stake in Johnnic; another partnership led to the R120-million purchase of a third of the Fedics Group; and it has an interest in Educor, an educational and personnel placement group. There are smaller investments in telecommunications and media organisations.

Ngubane is confident that the sector is not merely going through a phase by touting the partnership of women's interest groups.

"There has been a re-emergence of women's interest in business. We are now feeling free to organise ourselves and get to places which we never thought of before."

It is tempting to wax lyrical about Ngubane. Until her appointment to the board of New Africa Investments Ltd, she had only worked in rural, women's and church non-governmental organisations.

But, she says, her "long years of lobbying and articulating women's issues" has been her best teacher.



Jean Ngubane ... there has been a re-emergence of women's interest in business. PIC: SHARON CHETTY

"You have to be able to lead ... to have a vision, and to be clear about what you are doing. Leaders are made, not born," says Ngubane.

New leadership

"One can learn to analyse a situation or to understand an environment. There is a new leadership in this country that has proved that it has skills which cannot only be learned in schools."

Despite the need to make a profit, women business leaders now have to contribute to the development of the country, and especially that of women in outlying areas.

"Yes, business is about competition, there's no doubt about that. But we know that opportunities must be created for others," emphasises Ngubane.

Her past activism has ensured that she has easy access to women in rural areas, who are the most marginalised section of society.

"Everyone must have access to economic activity, not just the skilled and sophisticated."

Moving away from an "abnormal and extremely chauvinist" society would require much more commitment and support from business and Government, she believes.

Part of Nozala's aim is to focus on owning and running institutions that have traditionally employed women, but never allowed for their ownership, like the catering giant Fedics.

Nozala means "life-giving" in isiZulu and the name was chosen to reflect the women's aim to aid development, growth and prosperity, says Ngubane.

Pioneers of women business leadership – Louisa Mojela, Gloria Tomatoe Serobe, Wendy Luhabe and Nomhle Gcabashe, who started the Women's Investment Portfolio (WIP) three years ago – have also set a precedent by offering the first public share scheme for women only.

Wiphold, now a well-established R172-million investment arm, offered women a stake in a range of companies from clothing chain Smart Centre to finance house Baobab.

By the close of the offer last week there had been an enthusiastic response, including many from men interested in investing on behalf of their mothers or wives, says Mojela, WIP's executive director. Its target was new women investors, especially those from rural areas, and offered one of the simplest schemes – a minimum of 300 shares were sold at R2 each.

"We expect to have all women involved, from the Sandton housewife to those in rural KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape."

A former employee of Standard Corporate and Merchant Bank, Mojela says the "environment is very enabling for women at the moment ... it all depends on how women want to exert themselves".

Fundamental problems

She nevertheless points out some of the fundamental problems encountered by women – no ready cash, a lack of contacts or a network and the fact that often women are not good at negotiating with businessmen.

Mojela and her colleagues have become dab hands at negotiating deals, usually with white men unaccustomed to black women as equals.

"Men are funny animals – the moment they realise they can't intimidate you, they will relate to you as partners and associates and show you respect," she says.

While there are now numerous opportunities available to women, Mojela cautions that a high degree of commitment is needed.

"There's no use starting something and not seeing it through."



Fridge Master MD Bronwen Phillips is Businesswoman of the Year. Picture: COBUS BODENSTEIN

'Gender imbalances cut across all races'

Belinda Beresford

BD 21/8/97

ONE fifth of all SA woman are in professional, technical and managerial occupations, compared to 12% of SA men, World Bank representative to SA Judith Edstrom said yesterday.

Edstrom was speaking at the annual Executive Women's Club of SA banquet in Johannesburg last night at which Fridge Master MD Bronwen Phillips was named as Businesswoman of the Year. (355A)

Edstrom said that the gender imbalance in the managerial and professional fields existed across all race groups. However, the proportions in managerial positions were about equal for Asian and white men and women, she said.

Citing unpublished data by a World Bank staff member, Edstrom said women's participation in the work force varied from 13% for black women to 40% for white women. Although women's employment rates were lower compared to countries with similar per capita income, they were much higher relative to male employment.

Women had an average of 1,2 years more education than men, although the difference varied between two extra years for blacks to no difference for whites.

(2) no, the current system is slow and as a result beneficiaries have to wait long for their benefits. Accommodation facilities are poor and in some areas there is no electricity. The Department of Health and Welfare in the province decided to outsource the payment function in order to improve the service;

(3) the process is slow, resulting in long queues with inadequate facilities such as shelter and toilet facilities; and

(4) beneficiaries received payment in January, March, May and July.

Elimination of discrimination against women: report

687. Ms P GOVENDER asked the Minister for Welfare and Population Development:

With reference to the report being compiled by the Government on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), (a) (i) what stage has been reached in compiling the report, (ii) (aa) which departments (aaa) have and (bbb) have not submitted reports and (bb) why have the departments which have not yet submitted reports, not yet done so, (iii) what steps are being taken to ensure that departmental reports are being submitted and (iv) what is the time-frame for the completion of the report being compiled by the Government, (b) in respect of the reports so received, which departments (i) have taken positive steps towards implementing CEDAW and (ii) are behind schedule in respect of the implementation or planning for the implementation of CEDAW and (c) in respect of the processing of the report, (i) when is Parliament going to have the opportunity to consider and make inputs in respect of the report and (ii) when is civil society going to have the opportunity to comment on and make inputs in respect of the report? N1177E

The MINISTER FOR WELFARE AND POPULATION DEVELOPMENT:

(a) (i) The first draft Report of Government on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is finally completed and comments are being invited from interested parties. It has been made available on the Internet and distributed by the Ministry for Welfare.

The planning process entailed the following steps:

At an intergovernmental meeting on 12 December 1996 departments were informed of the report writing process and their writing obligations, and given clear time-frames. On 20 January 1997 an Editorial/Drafting Committee was agreed upon. On this occasion a list of departmental contact persons (and departmental representatives on the Editorial teams, if they were different persons) was drawn up in order to facilitate communication.

Departmental reports were due for submission on 21 February 1997. On that day only nine departments submitted their reports. A series of extensions had to be granted. Because all reports were still not available by mid-April 1997, the initial drafting cycle had to be adjusted. The Editorial Committee, charged with producing the country report, was totally dependent on departmental reports.

The Editorial Committee comprises a designated person each from Justice, Foreign Affairs and Welfare, and two consultants.

(aa) (ii) By 22 August 1997 only two departmental reports, i.e Finance and Posts,Telecommunications and Broadcasting remained outstanding.

Submission of Reports

	(aaa) Departments who submitted reports	(bbb) Departments who have not yet submitted reports
1	Agriculture	Finance
2	Arts, Culture, Science and Technology	Posts, Telecommunications and Broadcasting
3	Constitutional Development	
4	Correctional Services	
5	Defence	
6	Education	
7	Environment and Tourism	
8	Foreign Affairs	
9	Health	
10	Home Affairs	
11	Housing	
12	Intelligence Services	
13	Justice	
14	Labour	
15	Land Affairs	
16	Minerals and Energy Affairs	
17	Public Enterprises	
18	Public Service and Administration	
19	Public Works	
20	Safety and Security	
21	Sport and Recreation	
22	Trade and Industry	
23	Water Affairs and Forestry	
24	Welfare	

(bb) The respective Ministers will have to explain why their departments have failed to submit reports. The Secretariat and the Editorial Committee have gone to lengths to support departments, provided all of the necessary information and reasonable dead-lines as well as to accommodate the problems of departments, hence the many extensions. A variety of reasons were forwarded to the Secretariat for the late submission, but we are unable to say what the particular difficulties were or are for the department who are still in default.

(iv) Subsequent to the first due date, a progress report was written to Dr. Pahad, in the office of the Executive Deputy President, requesting their office to write to departments urging them to submit by the extension date 7 March.

Notwithstanding the extension, the slow submission rate prevailed. In April, the Minister for Welfare and Population Development verbally raised the matter in Cabinet and followed this up with written reminders.

The Office of the Minister for Welfare and Population Development was engaged in a continuous telephonic follow-up exercise with departments. In addition, since December this office provided information and assistance whenever departments indicated difficulties.

(v) Projected time-frame for completion of the report. Due to slow submission of input by departments, the initial dates were changed and this amended time frame was followed:

Activity	Expected date
Five members of the Editorial Team were each responsible for writing up a few articles of the Convention. After studying each departmental report they had to compile a national response. One member was assigned the Editor. Submit collated response to editor	30 May 1997
Drafting Committee met to review and correction of first draft.	19 June 1997
Second draft distributed to interested parties and role-players	22 July 1997
A national workshop to review the first draft report	22 August 1997
The editor incorporates workshop comments to report	5 September 1997
Draft reports ready for submission to Cabinet.	11 September 1997
Public hearing by the Ad Hoc Committee on CEDAW	3rd week of September 1997

(b) (i) and (ii) It is not easy to answer this question now because of the process which was followed in getting the responses from departments. Studying the submission, the draft team focused on the information that aimed at addressing questions to be covered by the CEDAW obligations. In answering the

question, all departments were provided with a list of questions by the Drafting Committee covering the following areas:

- Legislation to be put in place to eliminate discrimination against women
- non legislative initiatives introduced to eliminate discrimination
- measures introduced to eradicate discrimination
- availability of desegregated data.

The information received therefore, covered areas of legislation, policies and programmes they are putting in place in line with the process of transformation taking place in the country and in particular the equal opportunity process in departments. On the basis of the questions provided, it would therefore not be fair to say whether departments are implementing CEDAW or not. Now that we have a report which is a benchmark for the country, it is recommended that the Office on the Status of Women (OSW) using the report as a tool, begin to monitor the implementation of CEDAW and to provide a report within a given period to the CEDAW Ad Hoc Committee on progress made and areas which need attention.

(c)(i) The report has been submitted to Core Ministries (Foreign Affairs, Justice, Welfare and the Deputy Ministry in the Office of the Executive President) through the Minister for Welfare and Population Development on 22 July 1997 and will be submitted by the second week of September to Cabinet and then later this year to Parliament.

The original report writing process included provincial and national public hearings. The Core Ministries, co-ordinating the delivery of the CEDAW report, will have due to time constraints, decided on public hearings of the report by the CEDAW Ad Hoc Committee to solicit further input to the report. The existing brief of the Drafting Team ends with the submission of the Draft Report to the Core Ministries.

(ii) We clearly will not have a problem to make this report available to the public and I envisage that the Ad Hoc Committee will also play a role in this regard.

Irregular promotions

953. Mr J A JORDAAN asked the Minister for the Public Service and Administration:

(1) How many irregular promotions have been found by the White Commission of Enquiry to have taken place in each government and provincial department;

(2) whether all these irregular promotions have been set aside; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3) what is the total amount that was found to have been overpaid in salaries in this regard;

(4) whether this amount has been recovered; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;

(5) whether the Public Service Commission has completed its investigation into the slow rate of progress in the implementation of the commission's recommendations; if not, why not; if so, (a) what were the findings and (b) what action has been taken to improve the position? N1655E

The MINISTER FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION:

(1)(a) To date, promotions of approximately 4 000 people were found to be irregular.

(b) All 4 000 promotions were set aside. However, not all investigated cases were set aside since, of the 4 000 promotions, 648 promotions were found to be in order and confirmed.

(c) Approximately R7,2 million has already been calculated as overpayment by Departments/Provincial Administrations. However, most Departments/Provincial Administrations are still in the process of determining the exact amounts owing to the State.

(d) A large portion of the overpayments has not been recovered yet as the Department of State Expenditure is still in the process of developing guidelines and standard formulae for Departments/Provincial Administrations to follow when determining overpayments.

(2)(a) The Portfolio Committee on the Public Service and Administration conducted hearings on the 7 and 8th August 1997, with all the Heads of Departments/Provincial Administrations to whom the Judge White Commission has referred cases of irregularities. It was evident at this forum that most Departments/Provincial Administrations were experiencing problems with the implementation of the Commission's findings. The following are some of the problems experienced:

(i) No clear guidelines exist for the calculation of overpayments.

(ii) There is no uniform approach amongst Departments/Provincial Administrations when calculating over payments as each follow their own procedures especially with regard to the following:

- Income Tax
- Contribution to the Government Employees Pension Fund
- Motor Finance Scheme for Senior Officers
- Interest on overpayments

(iii) As pointed out by the Commission, huge amounts are to be repaid by some officials which will result in undue financial hardship. It seems that most repayment periods will be longer than 12 months with the result that approval from Treasury will be needed.

(b) At the hearing, Departments/Provincial Administrations were instructed to set aside promotions immediately on receipt of the findings of the Commission as this in itself would constitute savings. The calculation of overpayments could be done at a later stage.

As already mentioned, the Department of State Expenditure has been requested to develop a set of clear guidelines and standard formulae which Departments/Provincial Administrations can use to do the calculations on an equitable manner.

Minister/Deputy: remuneration for speaking engagements

968. Mr K M ANDREW asked the Minister of Finance:

(1) Whether he and/or his Deputy minister accepted remuneration for any speaking engagements during the period 1 June 1996 up to the latest specified date for which information is available; if so, (a) for how many speaking engagements and (b) what total remuneration did he and/or his Deputy Minister receive as a result;

(2) whether this remuneration was retained by his Department; if not, to whom was it paid out; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3) whether any state resources, including transport for Ministerial staff and transport provided by the State, were employed in preparing for and attending these engagements; if so, (a) what are the details concerning the resources so employed and (b) what was the total cost incurred in employing such resources? N1670E

The MINISTER OF FINANCE:

(1) No

(2) Not applicable

(3) No.

Cites: department's role in downlisting elephant

970. Mr P F SMITH to ask the Minister of Foreign Affairs:

(1) Whether he or his Department played a central role in securing the decision of the South African Government to support the requests of Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe to downlist the elephant from Appendix I to Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (Cites); if so, (a) on whose authority

'Women more keen than men to set up own business'

Patrick Wadula

THE small and medium-sized enterprise sector in Mpumalanga is dominated by women in garment manufacturing who, through their own initiative, have set up their own businesses.

Felani Mahlangu, business consultant of the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce (Nafcoc) affiliate Midveld Industrial Chamber, said yesterday that unlike men, women had come to the chamber "in droves" to seek ways of employing themselves. Men had sought jobs.

"We have to move away from the need to be employed and rather employ ourselves by setting up our own businesses," he said.

Areas of business undertaken by the chamber include steelwork, woodwork and confectionery. About 80% of men who approached the chamber were involved in repair services of various types.

Mahlangu said 70% of the women in the chamber were involved in home-based garment manufacturing. The chamber had formed 18 groups, seven of which were owned by women.

Three years ago there were more than 22 groups.

He urged small businesses to develop their business skills to avoid bankruptcy. However, there was a lack of funds for technical and business courses. The chamber was also lobbying government for an industrial site for small businesses, he said.

The chamber was instructing its members on how to tender for provincial contracts.

A spokesman at the provincial government's small and medium-sized enterprises desk said government was developing a comprehensive business database for Mpumalanga.

She said the business desk was involved in establishing three small business support institutions.

"This would be done by identifying suitable organisations which might be interested in setting up in the province."

The official said increased funding and greater support for small firms in the province were important to improve the sector's chances of participating in emerging opportunities.

Business chambers, associations and the provincial small business council had to be strengthened to contribute meaningfully to help develop the smaller firms.

(335A) (BD) (186) BD 8/9/97

CAPE TIMES
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1997 ★

TOUGH LINE ON HARASSMENT

A wink is as bad as a nod to metro workers

GOOD INTENTIONS don't count if anything you say or do is construed as sexual harassment by a fellow metro council worker, male or female. **CLAUDIA CAVANAGH** reports.

CAPE Metropolitan Council employees who are loose tongued, fond of a cuddle and enjoy the occasional dirty joke could be in for a rude shock with the imminent introduction of the council's strict new sexual harassment policy.

Believed to be the first of its kind for councils in the Western Cape and possibly the country, the policy warns employees that simply calling a colleague "honey, dear or sweetheart", regaling fellow workers with an off-colour joke or "puckering one's lips suggestively" may well land them in hot water.

"Compliments like: 'Nice legs! You look sexy in that outfit!' can make individuals feel uncomfortable or worse," cautions the policy document approved last week by the CMC's human resources committee.

It is anticipated that the document will be given the green light by the full metropolitan council by the end of the month.

Squeezing a worker's shoulder, putting a hand around his or her waist or "making obscene signs with one's fingers or hands" are all unwise actions that could result in a complaint being laid.

And don't think only women are victims in these cases. "Studies show that the number of non-traditional sexual harassment complaints is increasing," says the document.

"Even a wink across a table, with no connotations attached, could be construed as harassment," chairman of the committee Mr David Dlali said yesterday.

He agreed that the policy was tight, stressing that it was a "first step in the right direction" rather than carved in stone.

"The CMC is adopting a pro-active approach from which Metropolitan Local Councils can take a lead," he said.

Chairman of exco, Mr Pierre Uys, said the policy "must be strict".

"For both sides' sake, people must have clear guidelines so that they know where they have to stop," he said.

Calling a colleague "honey, dear or sweetheart", regaling fellow workers with an off-colour joke or "puckering one's lips suggestively" may well land Metropolitan Council employees in hot water.

The comprehensive policy, also offers advice for specific situations.

If, for instance, someone means no harm by "friendly " behaviour and "harmless" joking, not intending to hurt anyone's feelings, is he or she still guilty of sexual harassment or discrimination?

"Probably yes," the document advises. Apparently, guilt in this case is determined by how the behaviour is received and not necessarily by how it is intended.

"Anyone in a command position who uses or condones any form of sexual behaviour to control, influence or affect the career, pay or job situation of a council employee is engaging in sexual harassment," in terms of the new policy.

"Any employee who makes deliberate or repeated unwelcome verbal comments, gestures or physical contact of a sexual nature in the workplace is also engaging in sexual harassment.

"If you feel that you may have sexually harassed someone," it urges, "Apologise."

Then ask another person or a supervisor for advice and help.

Recipients of unwelcome attentions should first try to solve the problem informally.

If this doesn't work, a specially formed "harassment grievance committee" will be called in to investigate.

If it finds that the incident did indeed occur, the culprit could, depending on its seriousness, escape with a warning or face a disciplinary hearing.

Whatever happens, the issue must be tackled, says the document: "Ignoring sexual harassment won't make it go away. Doing nothing about it can only increase the likelihood of your organisation being involved in legal disciplinary action."

(~~44~~) (~~365~~) CT 10/9/97 (355A)

would be successful, she described

Sexual harassment guidelines mean life will never be the same at the council

(356) (356A) ARG 13/9/97

DEIRDRE HUSSEY

Men who work at the Cape Metropolitan Council say life will no longer be the same if they are banned from touching, winking at or cracking naughty jokes with colleagues.

But many women at the council are delighted at the prospect of being freed from the flirtation and off-colour jokes of their male colleagues.

The council's proposed policy to end sexual harassment among its employees includes a proposed ban on puckering the lips in a suggestive manner, calling anyone "honey, dear or sweetheart" or making obscene gestures.

Any squeezing of parts of the anatomy such as shoulders and waists will be frowned upon.

Every male employee canvassed by Saturday Argus thought the new policy was "ridiculous" – but the women workers were divided.

Some agreed with their male colleagues that the new policy went too far.

Others were delighted that they would be protected from the unwanted advances and lewd suggestions of the men who work with them.

All those interviewed said they had been unaware of the proposed new policy until they had read about it in the press this week.

"I had no idea about the plan and I think it is ridiculous, " said a female administrative employee, who, like her colleagues, asked not to be named.

"It is a bit harsh," said a male employee. "It seems like what they are saying is that all men have on their minds is getting cheap thrills from female employees."

"It's a bit pathetic and goes too far," said a female official, to a chorus of agreement of her male colleagues.

"I don't think it ridiculous or harsh," added a woman colleague. "This is a very sexist society we live in. If extreme measures have to be taken in order to sensitise males and females to what is offensive behaviour, then so be it."

"It is a thick document that covers a range of areas - from how to deal with sexual harassment, to what can be construed as sexual harassment," said Senior Industrial Relations Officer Manka Krieg.

"The document makes people aware of what may be offensive to other colleagues."

Ms Krieg said many female employees welcomed the plan but many male employees had perceived it as a "direct attack on them.

"We have tried hard to make it a gender-neutral document, that does not focus on the behaviour of men or women but the behaviour of people," she said.

The council is due to pass the new policy next month.

cultural activities.

The bill does not outlaw merce- both the amount and the jail

resolution and all workers.

"There can be no doubt as to

Most say winks and jokes rules go too far

Star 13/9/97

By DEIRDRE HUSSEY

Men who work at the Cape Metropolitan Council say life will no longer be the same if they are banned from touching, winking at or cracking naughty jokes with colleagues.

But many women at the council are delighted at the prospect of being freed from the flirtation and off-colour jokes of their male colleagues.

The council's proposed policy to end sexual harassment among its employees includes a proposed ban on puckering the lips in a suggestive manner, calling anyone "honey, dear or sweetheart", or making obscene gestures. Any squeezing of parts of the anatomy such as shoulders and waists will be frowned upon.

Every male employee canvassed by our correspondent thought the new policy was "ridiculous", but the women workers were divided.

Some agreed with their male colleagues that the new policy went too far. Other were delighted that they would be protected from the unwanted advances and lewd suggestions of the men who work with them.

All those interviewed said they had been unaware of the proposed new policy until they had read about it in the press this week. The council is due to pass the new policy next month.

Harsh

"I had no idea about the plan and I think it is ridiculous," said a woman administrative employee, who, like her colleagues, asked not to be named.

"It is a bit harsh," said a male employee. "It seems like what they are saying is that all men have on their mind is getting cheap thrills from female employees.

"It's a bit pathetic and goes too far," said a female official, to a chorus of agreement from her male colleagues.

"I don't think it's ridiculous or harsh," added a woman colleague. "This is a very sexist society we live in. If extreme measures have to be taken, then so be it."

"It is a thick document that covers a range of areas, from how to deal with sexual harassment, to what can be construed as sexual harassment," said senior industrial relations officer Manka Krieg.

"The document makes people aware of what may be offensive to other colleagues."

Krieg said many female employees welcomed the plan but many male employees had perceived it as a direct attack on themselves.

"We have tried real hard to make it a gender-neutral document, that does not focus on the behaviour of men or women but the behaviour of people," she said.

Gender commission striving to remove inequality

In the wake of the DP criticism of statutory bodies, Commission on Gender Equality head Thenjiwe Mtintso argues for the commission's right to exist

THE Democratic Party (DP) report on seven out of the 40 independent commissions and statutory bodies in SA is an important contribution to the debate on the effectiveness of these institutions. Every publicly funded body should be open to such scrutiny and the gender equality commission is no exception.

I am disappointed, however, that the DP conclusion that the gender commission "must be absorbed into the Human Rights Commission" is based on such scant evidence of its role and performance and with disregard for debates which informed the decision to enshrine a gender commission in the constitution.

The DP claim that it failed to speak to anyone at the gender commission is a blatant lie. DP researcher Julia Frielinghaus spoke to me and on August 25, spoke to Farid Esack, the acting CEO, who provided her with written responses to her questions. Four days later, DP MP Dene Smuts was present at a report on the first six months of the work of the gender commission to the ad hoc committee on the quality of life and status of women in Parliament. She was among those who congratulated the commission on its performance in the short time that it had been in existence. The failure to reflect this information throws into question the objectivity of this report.

The DP concedes that the gender commission "has not been accused of any wasteful spending". Its figures show that gender commissioners are the lowest paid of all commissions and that its budget for this year of R2m — which allows for no gravy, let alone any train — is by far the lowest of all commissions.

The DP fails to make any mention of what the commission has achieved within the constraints of a budget which is insufficient to pay the salary of commissioners, let alone staff, offices or operations.

For the record: very soon after its establishment, the commission held a series of information and evaluation workshops (sponsored by the commonwealth secretariat) on what organisations across SA society are doing to advance gender equality. A report on these findings, together with an analysis by the commission which concluded that the "march to gender equality in SA has barely just begun", was published on Women's Day (August 9).

These findings informed the commission's strategy and programme of action in six areas: creating a gender framework and institutional capacity for redressing gender imbalances; public awareness and education; law and justice; safety and security; and economic and political empowerment. Had the DP bothered to consult these documents, it would have found that performance-based and activity-based costings are the commission's guiding principles.

BD 13/10/97

We agree that "gender issues are also human rights issues". However, the commission was created on the grounds of strong arguments put forward at Kempton Park (to which the DP was a party) that at this moment in our transformation, we require a concerted campaign to eradicate gender inequality.

Globally, it is now acknowledged by even the most conservative of bodies (like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank) that the eradication of gender discrimination is both a fundamental human right and a key to economic development. Virtually every country in the world has some mechanism for the eradication of gender inequality. In many countries, this takes the form of a government ministry.

After many years of debate and in recognition of the fact that the struggle to achieve equality has to take place throughout society, women in SA argued for a "package of structures" fanning through government, overarched by an independent commission.

To compare the functions and budgets of such a commission with that of the Katz commission on taxation (which the DP cites as one of the commissions with a "well-defined task") displays a shocking narrow mindedness. How the transformation of the glaring discrepancies between men and women in SA (of which taxation is one of thousands of examples) can begin to be compared to the reform of the tax system is perplexing. Anyone who suggests that tasks confronting the gender commission are not well-defined must be living on a different planet.

without gravy or a train.



OBED ZILWA

Women power: delegates at the Femmes Chefs des Entreprises Mondiales congress yesterday, from left, Lettitia Ndema and Thandeka Anne Gebhardt from South Africa, Dewi Motik and Chwayita Mboni from Indonesia and South African Hester Obisi

SA women flex business muscle

ARG 15/10/97 (356A)

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

More than 400 women entrepreneurs from 30 countries are in Cape Town to meet their contemporaries, to set up partnerships and to invest in businesses.

Cape Town is hosting the 45th annual congress of Les Femmes Chefs des Entreprises Mondiales, an international body of women entrepreneurs.

The congress, run by the National Association of Women Business Owners, was opened yesterday by Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

South African women have begun to flex their economic muscle, opening 60% of new businesses.

Ms Mlambo-Ngcuka said the conference was an ideal opportunity for local businesswomen to network with entrepreneurs around the world, learn new techniques and create new opportunities.

"Business is all about partnerships. Women in business need exposure in networking, much more so now," Ms Mlambo-Ngcuka said.

She said small and emerging businesses were faced with many challenges and obstacles, such as lack of access to finance, a shortage of support institutions to provide training, a limited skills base and an inability to identify new markets.

She said the Government was looking at ways of addressing these problems, but needed the support of the private sector.

She felt bodies such as the Association of Women Business Owners had a major role to play and urged the association to "come to the party" with Government to address problems and to enable women to move from the periphery to the mainstream of business.

Ms Mlambo-Ngcuka said women needed to identify the role they wanted in the "African renaissance", adding that the continent was a major investment destination of the future.

President of the association Pam Golding said the conference was aimed at encouraging women of all cultures and walks of life to become entrepreneurs.

Women in South Africa faced much adversity during the apartheid era and had little contact with one another because the law forbade it.

Women now needed to take their place in the global marketplace.



ROY WIGLEY

Party time: celebrating the congress opening were, from left, Gamza Hendricks, Sharon Town and flower seller Gina Hartzenberg

Don't call me 'honey', sweetheart – I'm working

Council takes stand on sexual harassment

~~73~~ (356A) ARG 15/10/97

ANDREA WEISS
CITY EDITOR

Calling a colleague "honey", "dear" or "sweetheart" could get you into hot water at the Cape Metropolitan Council which is in the process of adopting a sexual harassment policy.

The council's executive committee this week approved the policy which will go to the full council at the end of the month.

It will only be implemented following a six-month lead-in, after workshops have been held with all members of staff to explain the policy to them.

The council defines sexual harassment as a form of discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Such behaviour is considered harassment when it affects an employee's job, pay or career, if it interferes with someone's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Among the behaviour which the policy identifies as possible sexual harassment is squeezing a worker's shoulder or putting a hand around his or her waist, puckering one's lips suggestively or making obscene signs.

Other problem behaviour might be telling off-colour jokes, pin-ups in the office, or making suggestive remarks or references about a worker's physique or sexual activity.

Under terms of endearment, the policy notes that calling a co-worker "honey", "dear", or "sweetheart" could also lead to problems.

"The effect is the primary issue rather than the intent. Even if the person 'means nothing to you' or you have 'used the term for years' you should be aware that these expressions are inappropriate."

Recommended action for employees who are on the receiving end of sexual harassment is that they use an informal method of resolution if the behaviour is minor, but to consider formal channels if the behaviour is serious and repeated.

Serious behaviour would include someone asking for sexual favours in return for promotion or making supervisory decisions because of a person's gender.

A harassment grievance committee will also be established to investigate any reported incidents, to enforce strong sanctions against violations and to take responsibility to see that sexual harassment is stopped.

Supporting documentation supplied by the human resources department said the council had handled only one serious case of sexual harassment last year, which ultimately led to a dismissal.

"Many informal complaints are received, but there is a reluctance to follow through on a formal basis.

"The fact that this policy is not a result of a knee-jerk reaction to some or other serious case is in favour of the Cape Metropolitan Council.

"This indicates the council is a pro-active employer that wants to take a clear stand against sexual harassment in all its forms."

27708

SANDF must testify on bias claim

The South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) has subpoenaed the SA National Defence Force chief to account for allegedly discriminatory regulations against women.

The subpoena was served on General Georg Meiring in Pretoria this week and he is set to appear before the commission on Monday, according to the commission.

The commission's senior legal officer Liesl Gerntholtz said the subpoena was the result of a complaint lodged by navy employee Penny Janes in Simon's Town.

Janes asked the SAHRC to challenge army regulations that prevented her from registering her family on the army's medical facilities.

Army administrators allegedly informed Janes that her husband and child would not be entitled to medical benefits because she was married.

Gerntholtz said the SAHRC would investigate the discrimination on grounds of gender and marital status and whether the defence force was in violation of the constitutional right to equality.

■ The Commission on Gender Equality yesterday put its weight behind the complaint lodged by Youth for Islamic Enlightenment and Development to have the Radio Islam licence revoked if its management continued to discriminate against the employment of women broadcasters.

Commission chairman Thenjiwe Mtintso said they would await the outcome of the Broadcasting Complaints Commission's hearing today on Radio Islam's violation of its licence regulations, which entrenched affirmative action and women empowerment, before taking action.

Star 16/10/97 (354) (365A)

Gender body wants millions to pay staff

Cape Town – The Gender Commission, which polices government policies and actions to ascertain whether women are fairly treated, has asked Parliament for the go-ahead to appoint 41 members of staff at a cost of R5-million a year.

The post of chief director should carry a yearly pay package of R343 906, while four directors should be paid R285 557 each, according to a motivation by commission chairman Thenjiwe Ntintso.

It says that four deputy directors should be paid R185 497 a year – a total of R741 988, and five assistant directors should earn R132 072 a year – a total of R660 360.

The commission was granted powers under the constitution to recommend to Parliament the adoption of new laws, investigate gender-related issues, resolve disputes or rectify omissions, and refer matters to the Human Rights Commission or the public protector.

According to the DP, the chairman earns R212 400 a year while full-time commissioners earn R163 260.

The party suggested that as the Gender Commission's powers were "essentially the same" as those of the Human Rights Commission, it should be abolished and its functions transferred to the HRC.

■ Some of the suggested salaries are higher than those earned by an MP. – Parliamentary Bureau

Pressure grows for six months' baby leave

(356A)

Star 4/11/97

POLITICAL STAFF

Cape Town

Pressure is mounting within the ANC for labour legislation, making its way through parliament, to allow for six months' paid maternity leave rather than the four months provided for at present.

The Basic Conditions of Employment Bill, which will be debated in the national assembly tomorrow, provides for four, instead of the three in existing legislation, but it does not make provision for paid leave.

This will be investigated further by a ministerial task team who will consider the impact on the Unemployment Insurance Fund.

Consideration will also be given to how to resolve the problem of payment of domestic workers and of other non-unionised workers, according to the labour department.

The bill, which provides for a 45-hour working week, was accepted by the labour portfolio committee with opposition from the National and Democratic Parties.

The ANC initially wanted employers to pay for the maternity leave but the labour department suggested that maternity-leave costs should be further investigated by the task team.

The ANC women's caucus in parliament, meanwhile, said anything less than six months' maternity leave "is inconsistent with commitment to gender equality".

▶ See Business Report

Funds crisis for gender body

355A ARG 6/11/97

The Gender Commission faces a financial crisis that could bring it to its knees and raises serious constitutional and legal questions, commission chairwoman Thenjiwe Mtintso says in a report to Parliament.

She warned this week that the commission, whose allocation of R2,059-million was insufficient to cover commissioners' salaries, could find itself unable to pay the staff it was hiring, or the lease on its new premises.

Yesterday the commission's acting chief executive officer, Dr Farid Esack, said that although donors had released almost R1-million for projects, the commission could not touch the money because it did not have a qualified accounting officer.

On October 14 the commission had presented its additional funding requirements for the current year to the Treasury Committee. But the committee had deferred a decision to January 1998. – Sapa

Gender body's dilemma 'raises serious questions'

(355A) BD 6/11/97

CAPE TOWN — The Gender Commission faced a financial crisis that could bring it to its knees, raising serious constitutional and legal questions, the commission's chairman Thenjiwe Mtintso said in her report to Parliament this week.

She warned that the commission, which had not been given enough money this year to even cover commissioners' salaries, would "very shortly" be forced to resort to unauthorised spending. It could also find itself unable to pay the staff it was hiring, or the lease on the new premises it was to move into this month.

And yesterday the commission's acting CEO, Farid Esack, said that although donors had released almost R1m for projects, the commission could not touch the money because it did not have a qualified accounting officer.

Esack, who is himself a commissioner, said the money was being held by the justice department.

"We can't open an account because I'm the person handling finance and I'm utterly incompetent; I'm an academic, a theologian."

Mtintso said in her report that when the commission was constituted in March this year it had been allocated a budget of R2,059m, a sum insufficient to cover the salaries of commissioners, let alone staff or operations.

A R1,9m rollover of funds allocated the previous year, which was promised by Justice Minister Dullah Omar, had not materialised.

On October 14 the commission had presented its additional funding requirements to the Treasury Committee, a body that includes Deputy President Thabo Mbeki and Finance Minister Trevor Manuel, and deals with urgent requests for funding.

It was with shock that the commission had learned the committee had deferred a decision to January 1998.

Mtintso said the commission had raised R3,2m from donors. These funds were predicated on having an accounting officer, staff, and basic infrastructure in place.

"It is a cause of concern that we are receiving a more enthusiastic response from external donors than from the very government we serve," she said.

"The failure to adequately resource a body established by the Constitution and an Act of Parliament raises constitutional and legal issues, as well as throwing into question government's commitment to gender equality."

Chairman of the parliamentary committee on the status of women, Pregs Govender, said yesterday her committee would take up the issue.

She did not believe the Treasury Committee could delay a decision until January, and it should be challenged on this. She said there had been a call for a review of commissions, but a distinction had to be made between the Gender Commission and those which had mismanaged resources and received excessive funding.

She noted that government had signed the Convention for Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, which obliged SA to ensure the functioning of whatever machinery — such as the commission — it established.

Mtintso said in her report that since it began work the commission had conducted a series of information and evaluation workshops which had led to the first "state of the nation" report on progress towards gender equality in August.

It had also held a workshop on customary law, and initiated a review of legislation and discussions on anti-discrimination legislation. — Sapa.



Women managers are thin on the ground in SA

Old boys' network still alive and well

(355A)

ARG 10/11/97

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Johannesburg – Minority women are less likely than white women to rise to managerial positions in the corporate sector, with black women the most under-represented group in management in the United States, according to a study published recently.

Moreover, women managers as a whole earn less than male managers, the report continued, with minority women, on average, earning less than white women. In South Africa the situation is even worse. According to a recent Central Statistics Services (CSS) report, 48% of all South African women and 57% of African women recorded as working, whether as employees, employers, or in self employment, are in the community, social and personal services sector. Many of these women are domestic workers.

As in other countries, South African women are concentrated in certain sectors of the economy and in particular occupations. Only three percent of all South African women recorded as working are classified as managers and senior officials, and four percent as professionals, according to the CSS survey.

Sixteen percent of women are classified as associate professionals or technicians, 20% as clerks, and 12% as service or sales workers and 36% as elementary or unskilled workers.

Some interesting facts are revealed with the gender breakdown in trade union membership. The department of labour had a record of 2 690 727 members of 248 registered trade unions in 1995. Registered membership thus accounts for just over a fifth of the total economically active population.

Trade union membership is higher among wage and salary earning men (35%) than women (29%). Membership was higher among Africans (30% for men and 36% for women) than for women and men in any other race groups and Indians were the only race group in which a higher proportion of women (32%) were trade union members than men (29%).

Women do not, however, achieve even these levels of representation among trade union leadership. On the whole, South African women have not reached gender equality in the different sectors of society, says Tumika Daima, Women's National Coalition media officer.

Women managers earn less than male managers, and minority women earn less than white women

She says that in business, where there are opportunities of promotions, "the old boys give it to the old boys".

The general thinking is that women work to supplement men's incomes. Women are not seen as breadwinners in their own right or trying to carve out a career path for themselves, Ms Daima says. They are seen as temporary casual workers. Women, more often than not, do not get advanced in their careers, in Ms Daima's view.

She points to the newspaper industry as an example of old boys' networks in operation. There are, she says, very few women editors except for the fashion and style pages.

There should be more of a sisterhood among women, Ms Daima says. And for women to trample on others to get what they want is "anti-human and anti-social". Women should be sharing strategies and information and should believe more in the concept of sisterhood.

Still, black women in South Africa are in the worst of position she says. This is a reflection of society as a whole.

Black women have it doubly hard. When they do advance, they always have the stigma of affirmative action attached to their advancement. And once this idea takes root, it's hard to get rid of.

The situation in the United States is not that much better than in South Africa, according to recent facts and figures released there.

According to a Newsday report, Catalyst, a non-profit group that studies women in business, which released the recent information, "counters the perception that being a member of two minority groups (women and an ethnic minority group) gives one an advantage", says Katherine Giscombe, who directed the study.

Charlotte Pamphile, New York state director of franchising for Southland Corp, says she was not surprised by Catalyst's findings. "I think that if people were more receptive to people of other cultures and backgrounds in terms of the nurturing process, it certainly would help," says Pamphile, the only woman in her office and one of a "handful" of blacks.

The report, based on US Census data for 1994 and 1995, shows minority women make up 24% of the US female work force, but account for only 15% of women in managerial positions – from first-level supervisor to president.

There are differences in management participation among subgroups, however. Of the 57,8 million women in the US work force, 77,4% are white, 12,1% are black, 7% are Latinate and 3,6% are Asian or "others". But of the 2,9 million women who hold managerial and administrative jobs, 85,7% are white, 6,6 % are black, 52% are Latina and 2,5% are Asian or "other." The wage gap between male and female managers is also wider on average for women minorities.

For every $1 white male managers earn, minority male managers earn 73 cents; white women managers earn 59 cents; and the average for minority women managers is 57 cents.

The median weekly earnings of Asian or "other" women managers were $593 , higher than any other female group. White women managers earned $528, black women managers earned $514 and Latinate women earn $423 a week. Ms Giscombe says discrepancies between subgroups might be caused by differences between industry sectors, varying educational attainment and geography.

Give the gender commission an equal chance

BD 13/11/97

SA's commission on gender equality has been given a raw deal, says **Colleen Lowe Morna**

THE strangling of the commission on gender equality before it has even had a chance to breathe is a tragic reflection of the glaring gap that exists between rhetoric and reality where commitment to gender equality in the new SA is concerned.

As one of the six institutions for the promotion of democracy entrenched in the constitution, the commission came into being in March with a predetermined budget of R2m: a sum insufficient to pay the salaries of commissioners, let alone staff, offices or operations.

The budget, drawn up by white male bureaucrats, consists of line items in multiples of 11 (publications R11 000; transport R22 000; computers R44 000; furniture R55 000 and so on). At best, the budget is a reflection of the gross ineptitude of the public service, at worst a pathetic reflection of the sexism which pervades our society.

Efforts by the commission to get a reasonable budget approved during the course of the financial year have resulted in a government paper merry-go-round. This resulted in the commission being told to make another submission in January, by which time the commission might well have been forced to shut its doors.

In these days of scepticism about commissions generally, it is worth reflecting on why the commission was established, and what it has achieved with the limited resources at its disposal.

To mention a few salient facts:

☐ Under customary law, which still governs the majority of women, especially in rural areas, women remain dependants all their lives, under the guardianship of their fathers, sons and male relatives. When husbands die, women have no claim to property, which is divided among male relatives;

☐ Very few women in SA own, or have access to, land;

☐ Three-quarters of those who are illiterate in SA are women;

☐ Women constitute the majority of unemployed people and among those who are employed the biggest category is domestic workers. A white man is 5 000 times as likely to be in top management as an African woman;

☐ Women constitute only 10% of decision-makers in the public service, 25% of legislators in national and provincial parliaments and 18% of councillors in local government; and

☐ One in every three SA women is regularly battered by her husband. One in three SA women can expect to be raped in their lifetime — the highest such statistic in the world.

Virtually every country in the world has some mechanism in place for advancing gender equality. Drawing on international experience, SA opted for a "package" of mechanisms, including gender units in all government departments, a co-ordinating office on the status of women in the deputy president's office and an independent commission with monitoring and investigative powers over both the private and public sectors.

In its short existence, the commission has:

☐ Initiated information and evaluation workshops which yielded the first "state of the nation" report on gender equality on August 9. Similar workshops will now take place in each province;

☐ Held a strategy workshop on customary law, will be holding public awareness workshops on the SA Law Commission paper on harmonising customary and civil marriages and is initiating "age of majority" legislation;

☐ Taken up the case of a Muslim radio station barring the voices of women which could lead to a ground-breaking constitutional court case on the twin provisions in the Bill of Rights for gender equality and religious freedom;

☐ Initiated an inventory of legislation which still discriminates against women and is advocating anti-discrimination legislation;

☐ Commissioned a gender baseline study to set targets for achieving of gender equality;

☐ Designed a massive public education campaign and convened a ground-breaking workshop on gender and the media in September which will now become an annual event to examine the role of the media in transforming gender relations;

☐ Launched initiatives on gender in the private sector and on violence against women;

☐ Played a key role in the adoption of a declaration on gender and development by the heads of state of the Southern African Development Community in Blantyre, Malawi, in August.

The commission's budget constitutes 2,6% of the budgets of all commissions; and 0,00000002% of SA's 1997/98 budget.

Ironically, a commission set up to end discrimination against women finds its commissioners being paid the lowest salaries of all commissions.

Yet, the gender commission, which vowed at its first meeting to avoid a culture of ostentation, has not made this the central focus of its work. Its commissioners use their personal laptops and make their homes available for meetings as they wait patiently for proper offices to work from.

Most organisations in a similar situation would have packed up long ago.

Herein lies the great strengths and weakness of the commission. Worldwide, women have kept families, communities and nations alive through survival instincts so strong and so unspoken that they go unnoticed. Is this how we understand gender equality in SA? If not, let the gender commission begin its tasks on an equal footing.

☐ *Lowe Morna is a gender and development specialist and an adviser to the commission.*

Keep them 'barefoot and pregnant'

CT 13/11/97 (366A)

COLLEEN LOWE MORNA

THE strangling of the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) before it even had a chance to breathe is a tragic reflection of the glaring gap between rhetoric and reality where commitment to gender equality in the new South Africa is concerned.

As one of six institutions for the promotion of democracy entrenched in the Constitution, the CGE came into being in March with a predetermined budget of R2-million: a sum insufficient to pay the salaries of commissioners let alone staff, offices or operations.

The budget, drawn up by white male bureaucrats, consists of line items in multiples of 11 (publications, R11 000; transport, R22 000; computers R44 000; furniture R55 000 and so on). At best, the budget is a reflection of the ineptitude of the civil service; at worst a reflection of the sexism which pervades our society.

Efforts by the CGE to get a reasonable budget approved during the course of the financial year have resulted in a paper merry-go-round the upshot of which was to be told to make another submission in January, by which time the commission may well have been forced to shut its doors.

In these days of scepticism about commissions generally, it is worth reflecting on why the CGE was established, and what it has achieved with the limited resources at its disposal.

To quote a few salient facts:

● Under customary law, which still governs the majority of women especially in rural areas, women remain dependents all their lives under the guardianship of their fathers, sons and male relatives. When husbands die, women have no claim to property, which is divided among male relatives.

● Very few women in South Africa own, or have access to land.

● Three-quarters of those who are illiterate in South Africa are women.

● Women make up the majority of unemployed and, among those who are employed, most are domestic workers. A white man is 5 000 times more likely to be in top management than an African woman.

● Women constitute only 10% of decision makers in the public service; 25% of law makers in national and provincial parliaments; and 18% of councillors in local government.

● One in every three South African women is regularly battered by their husband. One in three South African women can expect to be raped in their lifetime — the highest such statistic in the world.

Virtually every country in the world today has some mechanism in place for advancing gender equality. Drawing on international experience, South Africa opted for a "package" of mechanisms including gender units in all government departments, a co-ordinating Office on the Status of Women in the deputy president's office and an independent commission with monitoring and investigative powers over both the private and public sectors.

In its short existence, the CGE has:

● Initiated information and evaluation workshops which yielded the first "state of the nation" report on gender equality published in August. Similar workshops will now take place in each province.

● Held a strategy workshop on customary law, will hold public-awareness workshops on the South African Law Commission paper on harmonising customary and civil marriages and is initiating age of majority legislation.

● Took up the case against a Muslim radio station that barred the voices of women which could lead to a ground-breaking Constitutional Court case on the twin provisions in the Bill of Rights for gender equality and religious freedom.

● Initiated an inventory of legislation which still discriminates against women and is advocating anti-discrimination legislation.

● Commissioned a gender baseline study to set targets for achieving of gender equality.

● Designed a massive public-education campaign and convened a ground-breaking workshop on gender and the media in September which will now become an annual event to examine the role of the media in transforming gender relations.

● Launched major initiatives on gender and the private sector and violence against women.

● Played a key role in the adoption of a declaration of gender and development by the heads of state of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Blantyre in August.

The CGE's budget constitutes 2,6% of the budgets of all commissions; and infinitesimal percent of South Africa's 1997/98 budget. Ironically, a commission set up to end discrimination against women finds its commissioners being paid the lowest salaries of all commissions.

Yet the CGE, which vowed in its first meeting to avoid a culture of ostentation, has not made this the central focus of its work. Its commissioners use their personal laptops and avail their homes for meetings as they wait patiently for proper offices to work from.

Most organisations in a similar situation would have packed up long ago.

Herein lies the great strength and weakness of the CGE: worldwide, women have kept families, communities and nations alive through survivalist instincts so strong and so unspoken that they go unnoticed. Is this how we understand gender equality in South Africa? If not, let the gender commission begin its task on an equal footing.

❑ *Colleen Lowe Morna, a gender and development specialist, is an adviser to the CGE.*



A WOMAN'S PLACE: Despite numerous attempts to change traditional role models, rural women are still governed by unfair and gender-biased customary laws.

Different folks, different strokes

(355A) Star 15/11/97

By JACKIE CAMERON

These are two of the recent sexual harassment cases arbitrated by the CCMA this year.

The Black G-string Panties:

■ Shantal Pretorius resigned as a secretary at a Southern Life Association office in Rustenburg after her boss allegedly gave her kinky gifts, suggestive cards and made a joke that he wanted to rape her.

Johan Britz allegedly asked her at the job interview whether she "sleeps around with males" – but she replied that she was a virgin.

Pretorius was often asked to work late and accompany her boss on business trips. Britz allegedly put his hand between her thighs while the pair were travelling together in her car. Once he allegedly ordered her to take off her bra – and threatened to leave her behind in another town if she did not do so.

Britz said Pretorius wore revealing clothes "to get attention from male clients", and that she liked wearing black G-string panties under transparent white clothing. He said he could also see Pretorius' underwear "because of her sitting position", and claimed that he bought her a pink G-string "to improve the image of the company".

He denied putting his hands between Pretorius' thighs, but said she should have stopped the vehicle. Failure to do so was tantamount to "silent permission".

Commissioner Sipho Radebe said he was "at pains to understand how on earth a pink G-string can improve a financial institution's image" or how the type of underwear favoured by an employee related to work duties.

He believed Britz had "forced" Pretorius to work overtime to be alone with her in the office, and was convinced that Britz had put his hands between this woman's legs. The virginity issue was "the height of degradation to female employees" as a criterion to determine the quality of work, and it constituted sexual harassment.

Radebe said Pretorius had made a concerted effort to "thwart unwelcome advances" and awarded her nine months' pay for constructive dismissal.

Doing it with a Broomstick:

■ Mogamat Sadulla, of Kimberley, was fired after a spate of "dirty little talks" with employee Istel Kruger.

The final straw for Kruger was Sadulla's alleged suggestion that it would be "lekker" to watch a blue movie together, and an alleged question "whether Kruger uses her finger when she gets a sexual urge".

Kruger replied that she only watched blue movies alone and – "because the only physical objects she noticed at that moment were rakes" – told him she relied on a broomstick for gratification. The woman, a mother of two, claimed she was a lesbian "and thus not interested" in discussing sexual matters with Sadulla, before reporting the incident to her boss.

Another employee, Rochelle Stark, testified that Sadulla had told her she was wearing the same underwear as another woman in the office "and it obviously was not a bra". Sadulla then allegedly drew a small picture of a G-string on Stark's desk calendar.

Sadulla said Kruger had initiated the last lewd discussion, and admitted referring to a blue movie which starred two lesbians. He denied most of the other allegations, but said he could not think of a motive for Kruger to make up the story.

Commissioner Corrie Cloete said Kruger admitted, under cross-examination, that she had initiated the conversation and that she had "introduced fresh material and notions, especially about her own sexual life or private bodily parts".

"I was left with the impression that the conversation ended normally, without any hint at ill feeling, misunderstanding or grudges remaining, as normally happens between aggressor and victim," Cloete said, before ordering that Sadulla – a married father of two – return to work.

When office flirtation takes on a sinister tone

Star 15/11/97 (355A)

By JACKIE CAMERON

The next time you accidentally stumble and reach for the nearest protruding part, think carefully before you touch. And if you're contemplating talking dirty into the nearest female ear, consider biting your tongue.

The boardroom battle between the sexes has hotted up, and it's expected to get even hotter as work winds down and libidos wind up in time for the annual Christmas office party.

The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, a watchdog body set up to guard against unfair labour practices, this week reported a sharp increase in the number of sexual harassment cases it has been umpiring.

"We have handled 20 000 cases nationwide since we opened our doors a year ago. An interesting emergence is that of human rights issues and disputes in the workplace," said senior CCMA commissioner Kenny Mosime.

"We are dealing with cases ranging from sexual harassment, to Aids and gay and lesbian discrimination in the workplace, which means that people are taking employers to task on human rights abuses as they are played out at work."

Most of these cases are settled at the conciliation stage, a confidential hearing aimed at reaching mutually agreeable solutions, because employers and employees wish to avoid the embarrassing glare that the next step – arbitration – can bring.

Lawyers are not allowed to attend conciliation sessions.

At arbitration, the commissioner acts in a similar way to a judge and is empowered to award damages of up to one year of an employee's salary, Mosime said. Records of the evidence are kept and can be made public.

Commissioner Nerine Kahn told the *Saturday Star* this week that a clear trend was emerging: many sexual harassers step up their activities at office parties, and those usually inhibited throw caution to the wind to take their chances.

"We're expecting an increase in the reporting of sexual harassment cases by the time this festive season has ended. Office parties seem to spark more activity in this area."

Kahn said most cases were registered as unfair or constructive dismissals – the latter involves people resigning because work becomes intolerable.

She added that during conciliation proceedings, sexual harassment emerged as a major factor in office politics and as a cause of unhappiness.

"We try and settle most of these cases with confidential inquiries, partly to protect the woman. These cases can also be difficult to prove – it's like a rape case. We are completely neutral in these inquiries."

Most sexual harassment between employers and employees takes place in corporations and in the domestic workplace.

Kahn said men were also preying on young women who just stepped into their first job and, on at least one occasion, a homosexual man paid up after harassing his heterosexual employee.

The clergy has not escaped the clutches of the CCMA: a married church minister recently confessed to a Gauteng commissioner that he had been having an affair with his secretary and that the end of this relationship had facilitated a breakdown in labour relations.

Commissioner Anne Mullins said: "There is no legal definition for harassment, but it's generally accepted that sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual advance which has a negative impact on a woman.

"We apply the 'reasonable woman test', rather than the so-called 'reasonable man test'. In South Africa, many people do not understand what it means to harass a woman. There is often a fine line between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour."

> *'Many people do not understand what it means to harass a woman'*

Commissioners sketched some recent sexual harassment scenarios which emerged in private consultations with warring employers and employees:

■ A corporate executive claimed he was "just leaning to get closer to the computer" when his secretary complained that he regularly put his hand on her leg.

■ A domestic worker had a sexual relationship with her male employer for two years because she felt she had no choice and feared losing her job. She did not want the relationship to come out in into the open because she did not want to hurt his wife's feelings.

■ A company boss suggested that his secretary had been on diet because she was trying to seduce him. Later, in the filing room, he put his arms around the woman, but removed them when someone came in.

■ A manager often asked a young woman employee to work extra hours. In one incident he touched her breasts but later alleged it was an "accident, an error of reaching out".

■ A boss decided to seize the opportunity with his female worker when she stepped into the toilet at an office party, held at his home. Her husband spotted them, as another reveller heard the troubled woman shout out to her boss to "stop it". His explanation at the hearing was that he wanted to point out that she had not locked the toilet door.

Kahn has a warning for employers about sexual harassment at work-related parties: "The buzzwords in labour relations are questions over whether something happened in working hours, or at the premises."

Meanwhile, psychologists and women's rights activists say sexual harassment is probably not on the increase, but that women are coming forward with the growing awareness of their rights and how to exercise them in our new democracy.

Lisa Vetten, of the Sexual Harassment Education Project, says: "Sexual harassment generally happens where there is a huge power imbalance between the two people. One is a supervisor and the other an employee, who fears losing her job. Single parents and sole breadwinners are also vulnerable, particularly if they are unskilled."

Her advice to the harassed: "Don't ignore it. It usually doesn't go away. Approach the man directly, and preferably informally at first, and tell him what it is that you don't like or makes you feel uncomfortable.

"A letter can be helpful, and is concrete proof that you have attempted to solve the problem.

"Many men can't believe that what they are doing is sexual harassment, that it's a bluff. Many harassers believe their victims find them attractive. Some hide their intentions with jokes."

Formal action includes laying a grievance with a company or criminal charges at the police station.

You find "blatant harassers" who make suggestions and then follow up with assault, some who "start with a tap on the shoulder and gradually move closer to the private parts", while others "forever fall and trip over their feet" before reaching out.

"Some harass under the guise of being chivalrous, and some buy gifts and send notes," Vetten said.

HANDS-ON APPROACH



FEELING THE PINCH: Whether you are a man or a woman, you do not have to tolerate unwanted sexual advances. This picture was posed

Harassment set to hot up at office Christmas parties

A labour-watchdog organisation has warned that many sexual harassers step up their activities at office Christmas parties, as work winds down, and libidos wind up at the end of the year. The warnings come at a time of a sharp increase in cases of sexual harassment, writes ***Jackie Cameron.***



Too hot to handle: there has been a sharp increase in the number of office sexual harrassment cases

(335A) ARG 15/11/94

The next time you accidentally stumble and reach for the nearest protruding part, think carefully before you grab.

And if you're contemplating talking dirty into the nearest ear, consider biting your tongue.

The boardroom battle between the sexes is hotting up, and it's expected to get even hotter as work winds down and libidos wind up in time for the annual Christmas office party.

The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, a watchdog body set up to guard against unfair labour practices, this week reported a sharp increase in the number of sexual harassment cases they have been umpiring.

"We have handled 20 000 cases nationwide since we opened our doors a year ago," said senior CCMA commissioner Kenny Mosime.

"We are dealing with cases ranging from sexual harassment, to AIDS and gay and lesbian discrimination in the workplace. Which shows that people are taking employers to task on human-rights abuses which occur at work."

Most of these cases are settled at the conciliation stage, a confidential hearing aimed at reaching mutually agreeable solutions, because employers and employees wish to avoid the embarrassing glare that the next step – arbitration – can bring.

Lawyers are not allowed to attend conciliation sessions.

At arbitration, the commissioner acts in a similar way to a judge and is empowered to award damages of up to one year of an employee's salary, Mr Mosime said.

Records of the evidence are kept and can be made public.

Commissioner Nerine Kahn said this week that a clear trend was emerging: many sexual harassers step up their activities at office parties, and those who are normally inhibited, throw caution to the wind.

"We're expecting an increase in the reporting of sexual harassment cases by the end of the festive season. Office parties seem to spark more activity in this area. Some people,

"We are seeing cases in the corporate environment. And a lot of domestic workers are telling us that they have been harassed by their male employers. We are not getting reports from workplaces like the factory floor. If it is happening there, it's not being reported."

Ms Kahn said men were also preying on young women in their first job. And, on at least one occasion, a homosexual man paid up after harassing his heterosexual worker.

The clergy has not escaped the attention of the CCMA: a married church minister recently confessed to a Gauteng commissioner that he had been having an affair with his secretary. The end of their personal relationship led to problems at work.

'Sexual harassment happens when there is a power imbalance between two people'

Commissioner Anne Mullins said: "There is no legal definition for harassment, but it's generally accepted that sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual advance which has a negative impact on a woman.

"We apply the 'reasonable woman test', rather than the so-called 'reasonable man test'. In South Africa, many people do not understand what it means to harass a woman. There is often a fine line between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour."

Commissioners sketched some recent sexual harassment scenarios which emerged in private consultations with warring employers and employees:

■ A corporate executive claimed that he was "just leaning to get closer to the computer", but his secretary complained that he regularly put his hand on her leg.

■ A domestic worker had a sexual relationship with her male employer breasts but later claimed it was an accident.

■ One boss decided to seize the opportunity with a woman worker as she entered the toilet at an office party held at his home. Her husband spotted them, as another reveller heard the woman shout out to her boss to "stop it".

His explanation at the hearing: he wanted to point out that she had not locked the toilet door.

Ms Kahn has a warning for employers about sexual harassment at work-related parties: "The important question is whether something happened during working hours, or on the premises.

"When it comes to parties, as far as I am concerned, you would not be at the Christmas party if you weren't employed by that particular company."

Meanwhile, psychologists and women's-rights activists have said that sexual harassment is probably not on the increase, but that more women were reporting such incidents as they became more aware of their rights and how to exercise them.

Lisa Vetten, of the Sexual Harassment Education Project (Shep), said: "Sexual harassment generally happens where there is a power imbalance between the two people.

"One is a supervisor and the other an employee, who fears losing her job.

"Single parents and sole bread winners are also vulnerable, particularly if they are unskilled."

Her advice to the harassed: "Don't ignore it. It usually doesn't go away. Approach the man directly, and preferably informally at first, and tell him what makes you feel uncomfortable.

"A letter can be helpful, and is concrete proof that you have attempted to solve the problem. Many men can't believe that what they are doing is sexual harassment. Many harassers believe their victims find them attractive. Some hide their intentions with jokes."

Formal action includes laying a grievance with a company, or crimi-

---

These are some of the recent sexual harassment cases arbitrated by the CCMA this year. In most cases, they are settled to ensure the battles do not reach the public arena:

■ **The Black G-string Panties:** Shantal Pretorius resigned as a secretary at a Southern Life Association office in Rustenburg after her boss allegedly gave her kinky gifts, suggestive cards and made a joke that he wanted to rape her. Johan Britz allegedly

Commissioner Sipho Radebe said he was "at pains to understand how on earth a pink G-string can improve a financial institution's image" or how the type of underwear favoured by an employee related to work duties.

He believed Mr Britz had "forced" Ms Pretorius to work overtime to be alone with her in the office, and was convinced that Mr Britz had put his hands between her legs. The virginity issue was "the height of degradation to female employees" as a criteria to determine the

was a lesbian "and thus not interested" in discussing sexual matters with Mr Sadulla, before reporting the incident to her boss.

Another employee, Rochelle Stark, testified that Mr Sadulla had told her she was wearing the same underwear as another woman in the office "and it obviously was not a bra". Mr Sadulla then allegedly drew a small picture of a G-string on Ms Stark's desk calendar.

Mr Sadulla said Ms Kruger had initiated the last lewd discussion and admitted referring to

crude language to the extent that her days had become intolerable.

Mr Petrus Smal allegedly used the "f.... word towards his black employees ... after times of biblical devotions" in the morning. When Mrs Du Preez changed a plug, Mr Smal allegedly asked her why she was crouched "in such an ugly position" before suggesting that he would like to sit down and look at her from a particular angle for a lengthier period of time.

Mr Cr[illegible]

Office Christmas parties, as work winds down, and libidos wind up at the end of the year. The warnings come at a time of a sharp increase in cases of sexual harassment, writes ***Jackie Cameron.***



Too hot to handle: there has been a sharp increase in the number of office sexual harrassment cases

ARG 15/11/97

stumble and reach for the nearest protruding part, think carefully before you grab.

And if you're contemplating talking dirty into the nearest ear, consider biting your tongue.

The boardroom battle between the sexes is hotting up, and it's expected to get even hotter as work winds down and libidos wind up in time for the annual Christmas office party.

The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, a watchdog body set up to guard against unfair labour practices, this week reported a sharp increase in the number of sexual harassment cases they have been umpiring.

"We have handled 20 000 cases nationwide since we opened our doors a year ago," said senior CCMA commissioner Kenny Mosime.

"We are dealing with cases ranging from sexual harassment, to AIDS and gay and lesbian discrimination in the workplace. Which shows that people are taking employers to task on human-rights abuses which occur at work."

Most of these cases are settled at the conciliation stage, a confidential hearing aimed at reaching mutually agreeable solutions, because employers and employees wish to avoid the embarrassing glare that the next step – arbitration – can bring.

Lawyers are not allowed to attend conciliation sessions.

At arbitration, the commissioner acts in a similar way to a judge and is empowered to award damages of up to one year of an employee's salary, Mr Mosime said.

Records of the evidence are kept and can be made public.

Commissioner Nerine Kahn said this week that a clear trend was emerging: many sexual harassers step up their activities at office parties, and those who are normally inhibited, throw caution to the wind.

"We're expecting an increase in the reporting of sexual harassment cases by the end of the festive season. Office parties seem to spark more activity in this area. Some people, and their companies, think they can get away with this kind of behaviour if a party isn't held at the office.

"But we take the view that an office party is still connected to the workplace if it is organised by the employer."

Ms Kahn said most cases were registered as unfair or constructive dismissals – these involve people who resign because work becomes intolerable – but that sexual harassment emerged as a major factor in office politics and unhappiness during conciliation proceedings.

"We try and settle most of these cases with confidential enquiries, partly to protect the woman. These cases can also be difficult to prove. It's like a rape case."

Most sexual harassment between employers and employees takes place in corporations and in the domestic workplace.

"We are seeing cases in the corporate environment. And a lot of domestic workers are telling us that they have been harassed by their male employers. We are not getting reports from workplaces like the factory floor. If it is happening there, it's not being reported."

Ms Kahn said men were also preying on young women in their first job. And, on at least one occasion, a homosexual man paid up after harassing his heterosexual worker.

The clergy has not escaped the attention of the CCMA: a married church minister recently confessed to a Gauteng commissioner that he had been having an affair with his secretary. The end of their personal relationship led to problems at work.

'Sexual harassment happens when there is a power imbalance between two people'

Commissioner Anne Mullins said: "There is no legal definition for harassment, but it's generally accepted that sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual advance which has a negative impact on a woman.

"We apply the 'reasonable woman test', rather than the so-called 'reasonable man test'. In South Africa, many people do not understand what it means to harass a woman. There is often a fine line between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour."

Commissioners sketched some recent sexual harassment scenarios which emerged in private consultations with warring employers and employees:

■ A corporate executive claimed that he was "just leaning to get closer to the computer", but his secretary complained that he regularly put his hand on her leg.

■ A domestic worker had a sexual relationship with her male employer for two years because she felt she feared losing her job. She did not want to publicise the relationship because she did not want to hurt his wife's feelings.

'He claimed he was just leaning to get closer to the computer'

■ A company boss suggested that his secretary had been on diet in an effort to seduce him. Later, he put his arms around the woman in the filing room, but moved away when someone came in.

■ A manager often asked a young woman employee to work extra hours. In one incident he touched her breasts but later claimed it was an accident.

■ One boss decided to seize the opportunity with a woman worker as she entered the toilet at an office party held at his home. Her husband spotted them, as another reveller heard the woman shout out to her boss to "stop it".

His explanation at the hearing: he wanted to point out that she had not locked the toilet door.

Ms Kahn has a warning for employers about sexual harassment at work-related parties: "The important question is whether something happened during working hours, or on the premises.

"When it comes to parties, as far as I am concerned, you would not be at the Christmas party if you weren't employed by that particular company."

Meanwhile, psychologists and women's-rights activists have said that sexual harassment is probably not on the increase, but that more women were reporting such incidents as they became more aware of their rights and how to exercise them.

Lisa Vetten, of the Sexual Harassment Education Project (Shep), said: "Sexual harassment generally happens where there is a power imbalance between the two people.

"One is a supervisor and the other an employee, who fears losing her job.

"Single parents and sole bread winners are also vulnerable, particularly if they are unskilled."

Her advice to the harassed: "Don't ignore it. It usually doesn't go away. Approach the man directly, and preferably informally at first, and tell him what makes you feel uncomfortable.

"A letter can be helpful, and is concrete proof that you have attempted to solve the problem. Many men can't believe that what they are doing is sexual harassment. Many harassers believe their victims find them attractive. Some hide their intentions with jokes."

Formal action includes laying a grievance with a company, or criminal charges at the police station, said Ms Vetten.

You find "blatant harassers" who make suggestions and then follow up with assault, some who "start with a tap on the shoulder and gradually move closer to the private parts".

"Some harass under the guise of being chivalrous, and some buy gifts and send notes," Ms Vetten said.

Dorianne Weil, (better known as Dr Dee on her radio advice show), said: "Women who have some self-respect and understanding of what's going on will not allow it to take place. Women who have more self-respect tend not to find themselves in a position where they are harassed.

"What happened to the good old days when you could flirt a bit? There's nothing wrong with playfulness within boundaries. Men must not be afraid to smile at women," she said.

These are some of the recent sexual harassment cases arbitrated by the CCMA this year. In most cases, they are settled to ensure the battles do not reach the public arena:

■ **The Black G-string Panties:** Shantal Pretorius resigned as a secretary at a Southern Life Association office in Rustenburg after her boss allegedly gave her kinky gifts, suggestive cards and made a joke that he wanted to rape her. Johan Britz allegedly asked her at the job interview if she "sleeps around with males", but she replied that she was a virgin.

Ms Pretorius was often asked to work late and accompany her boss on business trips. Mr Britz allegedly put his hand between her thighs while they were travelling in the car. Once he allegedly ordered her to take off her bra, threatening to leave her behind in another town if she didn't.

Mr Britz said Ms Pretorius wore revealing clothes "to get attention from male clients" and that she liked wearing black G-string panties under "transparent" clothing. He said he could also see Ms Pretorius' underwear "because of her sitting position" and claimed that he bought her a pink G-string "to improve the image of the company". He denied putting his hands between Ms Pretorius' thighs, but said that she should have stopped the car. Failure to do so was tantamount to "silent permission".

Commissioner Sipho Radebe said he was "at pains to understand how on earth a pink G-string can improve a financial institution's image" or how the type of underwear favoured by an employee related to work duties.

He believed Mr Britz had "forced" Ms Pretorius to work overtime to be alone with her in the office, and was convinced that Mr Britz had put his hands between her legs. The virginity issue was "the height of degradation to female employees" as a criteria to determine the quality of work, and it constituted sexual harassment.

Mr Radebe said Ms Pretorius had made a concerted effort to "thwart unwelcome advances" and awarded her nine months' salary (about R10 000) for constructive dismissal.

■ **Doing it with a Broomstick:** Mogamat Sadulla, of Kimberly was fired following a spate of "dirty little talks" with fellow employee Istel Kruger. The final straw for Ms Kruger was Mr Sadulla's alleged suggestion that it would be "lekker" to watch a blue movie together, and an alleged question whether she "uses her finger when she gets a sexual urge".

Ms Kruger replied that she only watched blue movies alone and "because the only physical objects I noticed at that moment were rakes", told him that she relied on a broomstick for gratification.

The woman, a mother of two, claimed she was a lesbian "and thus not interested" in discussing sexual matters with Mr Sadulla, before reporting the incident to her boss.

Another employee, Rochelle Stark, testified that Mr Sadulla had told her she was wearing the same underwear as another woman in the office "and it obviously was not a bra". Mr Sadulla then allegedly drew a small picture of a G-string on Ms Stark's desk calendar.

Mr Sadulla said Ms Kruger had initiated the last lewd discussion and admitted referring to a blue movie starring two lesbians. He denied most of the other allegations, but said he could not think of a motive for Ms Kruger to make up the story.

Commissioner N Cloete said Ms Kruger admitted, under cross-examination, that she had initiated the conversation and that she had "introduced fresh material and notions, especially about her own sexual life or private bodily parts".

"I was left with the impression that the conversation ended normally, without any hint at ill feeling, misunderstanding or grudges remaining, as normally happens between aggressor and victim," Mr Cloete said, before ordering that Mr Sadulla, a married father of two, return to work at Jules Katz (Pty) Ltd.

■ **Foul Mouths and Footsie-Footsie:** Annie du Preez, a general office worker, resigned from The Car Connection in Meyerton after alleging that she had been sexually harassed by the company owner and offended by his crude language to the extent that her days had become intolerable.

Mr Petrus Smal allegedly used the "f.... word" towards his black employees ... after times of biblical devotions" in the morning. When Mrs Du Preez changed a plug, Mr Smal allegedly asked her why she was crouched "in such an ugly position" before suggesting that he would, like to sit down and look at her from a particular angle for a lengthier period of time. Mrs Smal also offered to sew a car (company) logo "onto one of her breasts", and suggested that she wanted to play "footsie-footsie" with him one morning when she served tea.

Mr Smal said he could not remember all the incidents, but said he had not had any intention to sexually harass Mrs Du Preez. He said he had not personally wanted to sew car logos onto Mrs Du Preez' shirt, and was "reprimanding her in a nice way" about her "un-ladylike" position the day she changed the plug. Mr Smal denied using bad language towards his staff and said he "used profanities in the course of his normal speech".

Commissioner Advocate Botha ruled that Mrs Du Preez had been constructively dismissed and ordered Mr Smal to pay her R6 000. "I am afraid that Mr Smal is not as innocent as he would have wanted people to believe.

"His behaviour might not have been intentional and I accept that it was not. Males in our society need some education on acceptable behaviour."

Women still 2nd in workplace

355A

Sowetan 27/11/97

By Isaac Moledi

MALE culture still remains the most important barrier for women to enter the human resources workplace, the University of South Africa's department of business management has revealed.

In its findings, recorded in a survey conducted among 628 women who are members of the Institute of People Management (IPM), Unisa also revealed that women's most serious problem at work is that they are not given promotion or they lose their jobs because they are female.

The findings were presented in a paper by Unisa department of business management's Professor Barney Erasmus at the National Productivity Institute's annual two-day economic, business management, and manpower management (EBM) research conference at Technikon Pretoria yesterday.

"The most important suggestion that can change the workplace is to ensure equal opportunities. Most of the women loved their jobs and feel that they are very productive," said Erasmus.

In another survey on job satisfaction issues in the workplace, more than 93 percent of the random sample of the 1 764 members of the Women's Bureau of South Africa thought that their productivity contributed most to their job satisfaction.

Eighty four percent of the respondents said that they liked what they were doing at their workplaces. The respondents valued the opportunity to learn new things.

The lowest priority on the job satisfaction list was pay. Other items that were low in priority were the benefits they receive, job training opportunities, job security and flexible working hours.

In another paper, prepared with business management lecturer Monica Brink, Professor Erasmus said healthy labour relations formed an essential part of any successful organisation. All employees should be aware of at least the basic tenets of labour relations in organisations, he said.

Labour relation principles

The purpose of this study was to determine in which areas management required training in labour relation principles. The training needs of top, middle and lower management were identified and prioritised.

According to the study, all management levels considered training in negotiation skills important. Training in the formulation of labour relations was considered another priority.

Other high-priority items included communication structures, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and the relevant roles of managers and workers.



Harassment rife in medical field

Star 28/11/97

Profession still a man's world, and women doctors are seen to be of no significance, writes Liz Walker

(93) (355A)

While serious attempts are currently under way to redress and counter-balance the effects of apartheid in many sectors of our society, the fact remains that discrimination, be it on the basis of race or sex, continues to hamper and blight the lives of many South Africans.

A survey conducted by Dr Anne Wright for the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of the Witwatersrand revealed significant evidence of sexual harassment in the medical profession. Having recently conducted research into the South African Society of Medical Women, I was struck by the familiarity of her findings with my own.

She wrote: In my interviews with women doctors they made the following comments:

■ It was a man's world and I think women were seen as of no significance. I was on the British and South African registers and I wanted to go to meetings here. They said: "You can't, they are held at the Durban club and it doesn't admit women." They said they would try and arrange for me to go through the back door – really the back door. I said I would report them. I didn't see why I should be deprived of going to a meeting.

■ Male doctors were pushing us aside, we had to elbow our way through ... we had come to a profession that was closing doors and we had to do something about it.

■ You had to convince the men that you were as well-qualified as they were and you had to work hard if not harder to establish yourself.

■ When it became known to the powers that be, that I was married, I was replaced by a man because, of course, males could work if they were married.

■ I got a job in the surgical section but with the proviso that "if you don't do well we will never take on another woman again". (When she approached the professor of surgery requesting to pursue a specialist qualification, she was told: "I will not accept any woman for this exam. Surgery is not for women."

All of these comments were made by woman doctors practising in South Africa in the 1930s and 1940s. Yet some 60 years later women medical students revealed similar experiences and frustrations. When women students were asked to describe their experiences of sexism and sexual harassment, they identified:

■ Being asked to wipe a surgeon's brow and make tea for him where male students were not asked.

■ Sexist comments by heads of units, for example, "surgery is not for women" and "the boys will know the answer".

■ Being told that women never specialise, all become GPs, wasting our and medical schools' time.

■ (Calling) students "the young doctors and girls".

■ Sexual comments, jokes, staring, running his hands down my chest in a supposed "clinical demonstration".

The "feminisation of medicine" in South Africa has certainly resulted in an increase in the number of women doctors over the last two decades.

In 1984, 14% of registered doctors were women. This figure increased to 20% by 1994. Currently, the number of first-year women medical students at both Wits and UCT is approximately 60%.

It would be incorrect to state that sexism and sexual harassment is unique to the Faculty of Health Sciences at Wits. The fact that a survey was conducted shows that the faculty recognises the existence of the problem and is trying to change it.

If discrimination is so persistent in a profession comprising privileged women who have recourse to challenging such discrimination, how much more difficult must it be to challenge the daily, unrecorded existence of sexism and sexual harassment experienced by the majority of South African women?

Redressing this legacy needs to become a priority – not only for professional bodies and employers – but, importantly, for the Gender Commission. Gender discrimination is one of the legacies of the apartheid past and needs to be accorded equal importance in the current context of redress and transformation.

■ *Liz Walker is a lecturer in the Department of Sociology at Wits University.*

Economic lot of SA women not changed

(355A
Star 4/12/97

By Vida Tong

The challenge facing South Africa is to ensure political achievements for women filter down to all women, says Gender Focal Point spokesman Anne Githuku-Shongwe.

Speaking at the African Regional Gender Round Table in Johannesburg this week, she said political empowerment of women had seen their representation in Parliament grow to about 26%, but there was little difference to "the economic lot of women in general".

The round table is part of the UN development programme to follow through on commitments made at the Fourth World Conference for Women held in Beijing in 1995.

"There's been a lot of political rhetoric about gender equality, but women in poorer rural areas don't see any difference in their lives," she said.

Githuku said many women were still victims of domestic violence and for many of them economic advantages were still zero.

"We have an annual budget of R2-million and with this we're helping local councils know what their focus needs to be and how to make it happen."

Her group and the national network for violence against women as well as other non-government organisations are setting up programmes at provincial level.

Firms found wanting in support for single parents on their staff

BD 5/12/97 (355A)

Zilla Efrat

WORKING women with children, and single parents who have to work, are faced not only with hair-raising stories of negligent or brutal nannies, and the guilt of leaving their children, but by the absence of support from companies for this growing need in the working population. And they face little relief for child care costs.

The Receiver of Revenue gives no tax breaks for creche or education expenses and, surprisingly, few companies offer daycare facilities to their staff. The rapidly rising costs of quality schooling and childminding can take a big bite out of a working mother's after-tax pay packet— especially if she has more than one child. Keeping just one infant at a creche could cost anywhere from R40 — if it is among the limited facilities subsidised by the state — to R780 a month. Relying on the untrained domestic worker will cost more, if one pays an acceptable wage plus overtime, and provides food and accommodation.

According to Steph Dawson, director of placement agency Choice Child Care, hiring a full-time professional nanny or trained au pair will set one back between R2 000 and R4 000 a month, depending on the candidate's experience and qualifications.

Entering the school system will do little to ease the burden. Annual fees for state schools can vary between R1 000 and R5 000 a child, while those at private schools range from R3 500 to close on R20 000.

Dawson estimates that the costs of ordinary aftercare can range between R10 and R20 a day, depending on the type of lunch provided and the hours spent at the facility. However, hiring a student, au pair or "granny nanny" to supervise homework and do lift schemes in the afternoons will cost about R18 to R25 an hour.

Many SA companies offer staff educational bursaries for their children (these are taxed), but despite critical skills shortages and the high costs of replacing trained people, few provide daycare facilities on their premises.

Contribute

Elzabe Human, the welfare and population development department's social workers' chief, says fewer than 10 of the daycare centres registered in the greater Johannesburg area — SA's economic heartland — are known to be run by companies for their staff. And Susan Nieuwoudt, Human's counterpart in Pretoria, is aware of only five such facilities in that city.

These are provided by employers like the Police College, SA Defence Force, the CSIR and one private company in the Centurion area. There is a mid-town facility used mainly by government departments.

Even if companies do provide creches or on-site nursery schools, there is no free ride. Companies like Liberty Life, M-Net/Multichoice and BMW SA subsidise their facilities, but employees using them still have to contribute, though at much lower rates than they would for comparable centres run by the private sector.

For example, employees making use of BMW SA's Early Learning Centres at its Rosslyn factory outside Pretoria and head fofice in Midrand will all pay the same monthly fee of R160 next year — well below normal rates.

Started last year, Liberty Life's creche in Braamfontein is possibley the largest company-run facility in the country with 100 children aged between two months and three years old.

According to principal Brenda Havenga, about one quarter of the children attending the creche, receive bursaries from the Liberty group and staff members with children enrolled take a salary sacrifice which helps them on the tax front.

The M-Net/Multichoice Nursery School has been going for nine years and caters for 11% of the pay-TV group's employees, looking after 80 children aged between three and six years old. Principal Lorraine Lindsay says the group is building a new facility.

Other companies believed to offer daycare facilities include SAA, Spoornet, Vodacom, Nedcor and SPL. In the US, companies investing in daycare operations receive favourable tax credits, and in the Netherlands, government, employers and parents each contribute a third to the costs of a workplace nursery. In addition to little encouragement from the state, SA companies looking to start daycare centres appear to face other hurdles.

Times Media Limited, Business Day's joint owner, considered starting a creche for its staff.

But deputy chief operating officer Neil Jacobsohn said the municipal health requirements were "quite extreme", demanding facilities like miniature toilets, access to the outdoors and permanent nursing staff.

"In addition to complicated building requirements, we would have incurred a tremendous insurance liability, and the noise would not have been that convenient," he said.

CMC squeeze on touchy subject

CT 9/12/97

CLAUDIA CAVANAGH
METRO EDITOR

(355A)

THE bottom line is about to be set for Cape Metropolitan councillors. From tomorrow when the full council meets for the last time this year, loose-tongued councillors with wandering hands beware! Hot on the heels of a strict new sexual harassment policy for council workers, comes a similarly stringent one for politicians.

"Our councils still have a long way to go on gender issues and if something applies to employees it should affect councillors as well," ANC councillor Ms Daphne King told the Cape Times yesterday.

And if anyone was unsure about where to draw the line, they'll have no excuses if the council adopts the policy.

One should look out for the following which may constitute sexual harassment, says the document:

- The puckering of one's lips suggestively or making obscene signs with fingers or hands.
- Telling off-colour jokes.
- Pin-ups, particularly those of scantily clad "individuals".
- Squeezing a worker's shoulder or putting a hand around his or her waist.
- Suggestive remarks or reference to someone's physique or sexual activity, however subtle.
- Calling a co-worker honey, dear or sweetheart — except if used "as a term of courtesy".

Ultimately though, it is the recipient of the remark, gesture or physical contact who will decide if it's unwelcome.

But, ordinary old sex in the workplace should not be confused with sexual harassment.

"Sexual harassment isn't about sex or healthy personal relationships. It is an expression of power by one individual over another ..."

Victims of sexual harassment must never ignore the problem but should attempt to resolve it, advises the document. One could confront an offender with: "You're an efficient councillor but I can't concentrate on the task with you rubbing my arm."

The more formal route is a complaint to the execo.

Real power is economic

Job barriers still limiting women

(355A)

Sowetan 12/12/97

Those in top jobs earn less than men

By Abdul Milazi

WOMEN are still finding it difficult to get top positions in the corporate world despite some improvement in their participation in the workplace.

The latest International Labour Organisation (ILO) report says most women continue to suffer from occupational segregation and rarely break through the "glass ceiling" separating them from top management positions.

The term "glass ceiling" was coined in the 1970s in the United States to describe the artificial barriers created by attitude and company prejudices which prevented women from occupying top executive positions.

The ILO says while progress has been made in closing the gender gap in the workplace, those who manage to reach the top earn less than men doing the same job.

ILO labour expert Linda Wirth says: "In spite of the overall progress of women in middle management, women have failed to reach leading positions in major corporations and private sector organisations, irrespective of their abilities."

She further reveals that about half of the world's workers are in sex-stereotyped occupations where males or females predominate to such an extent that the occupations themselves can be considered as "male" or "female".

Highly qualified

"Management is typically viewed as a male occupation," argues Wirth.

She says in the US, where women are highly qualified, they now constitute 46 percent of the managerial workforce. In Canada, women account for 42 percent of all managers.

However, an ILO survey found that women held only 2,4 percent of the highest management jobs and accounted for only 1,9 percent of the highest-paid personnel throughout the world.

Weekly earnings of women managers in the US in 1995 was only 68 percent of their male counterparts.

In Japan the percentage of women directors of companies increased from nine to 13 percent since 1970.

A latest survey commissioned by the government of that country (Japan) reported that women's share in the professional and technological occupations grew from 31 to 42 percent since 1950.

However, the percentage of women holding positions as top managers of major corporations increased only from one to two percent during the same period.

In Brazil only three percent of top executives are women, while the figure was also between one and three percent in Germany.

Wirth says the hurdles facing women aspiring to management jobs can be so formidable that they sometimes abandon efforts to make it to the top of large firms.

WOMEN WORKERS—

1998

Task team urges creation of single-sex schools

Report to minister proposes new path to protect rights of girls

By Edwin Naidu

Single-sex schools for girls should be established to enhance the educational experience and outcomes of females, the Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) has recommended in a report to Education Minister Professor Sibusiso Bengu.

The report, to be handed over to Bengu in Pretoria today, also said there should be gender equity training as part of the syllabuses at schools, and the rights of girls should be protected in broad national policies on women, for example, policies on violence against women or their economic empowerment.

It recommends that the national Department of Education's legal team should draft legislation to deal with the creation of single-sex schools, as well as laws on schools policy and a set of standard procedures for intervening in child abuse and all forms of sexual harassment cases.

However, the report concedes that legislation is not sufficient to combat the problems alone and that there should be a concerted effort by schools, school governors and active participants at all levels to eliminate violence.

The team, chaired by Dr Ann-Marie Wolpe of the education policy unit at the University of the Western Cape, proposed the department of education should provide funding for the establishment and maintenance of single-sex girls' schools where specific circumstances warrant the need for such schools.

The report recommends that provincial education departments support small-scale projects in a range of different types of schools to develop models of single-sex strategies for a range of purposes.

At district level, the team recommends that particular attention be given to gender issues in the catchment area which may, as a result of the establishment of single-sex girls' schools, have a disproportionately large group of boys.

Special measures may be necessary to ensure that the needs of girls in these schools are addressed, and to ensure that aggression directed at girls in the single-sex school is avoided.

The report said that the department should develop an interim policy on sex- and gender-based harassment and violence, including sexual harassment, which would give managers powers to act against discrimination, gender violence and harassment.

The task team was appointed by Bengu late in 1996 to investigate whether there should be a separate gender equity unit within the department and also to recommend guidelines and strategies which may be adopted to enable such a unit to achieve its overall aims, to establish a structure to achieve this and to recommend appropriate legislation.

The report defines gender equity as a strategy concerned with the promotion of equal opportunity and fair treatment for men and women in the personal, social, cultural, political and economic arenas.

Gender equity entails meeting the needs of men and women and boys and girls for them to compete in the formal and informal labour market, take part in civil society and to fulfil their family roles without being discriminated against because of their gender, according to the report.

Among the proposals was the setting up of a gender equity unit to be located under director-general Dr Chabani Manganyi's office so that efforts could be made to drive gender equity throughout primary schooling and tertiary education and other aspects of life.

The report took into account every level of educational provision, from pre-school educare to tertiary education.

It is designed to assist researchers, practitioners in all fields and levels of education, organisations dealing with gender matters, parents and the general public.

Bengu is expected to thank the task team for their efforts before studying the contents of the report and deciding on implementing any of the recommendations.

Concerted effort needed at all levels to eliminate violence

Training on gender equity must form part of syllabus

SMALL BUSINESS FOCUS

More black women in Cape make a business of success

Programme shows way to create new jobs

(355A)

ARLT 30/1/98

LLEWELLYN JONES
BUSINESS REPORTER

More black women are making their mark in small businesses in the Western Cape with the help of the Centre for Entrepreneurship, a programme provided by the University of Stellenbosch Business School.

The centre was established last year with R360 000 from Absa to be spread over three years.

Project co-ordinator Fatima Allie said the programme was designed to help women generate business ideas, overcome barriers, run their businesses more efficiently and improve their personal skills.

Ms Allie said the programme had been particularly successful in preparing the ground for new businesses and jobs.

After the programme held in Saldanha Bay, at least two businesses – a cleaning contractor and a caterer – were already showing a good measure of success.

Ms Allie said the cleaning contractor, headed by Linda Moss, Edna Williams and Rosina Snyders, had already gained a contract at the Military Academy and had been short-listed for a cleaning contract with Saldanha Steel. Paulina Mali's joint venture with Central Caterers in Saldanha Bay had also been given the contract to run a food kiosk – with an expected turnover of R1-million a year – at Saldanha Steel.

The programme held in Montagu attracted women from Worcester, Zoar, Bonnievale and even Atlantis.

After working in a funeral parlour for several years, Hanneline Jansen now runs a thriving funeral business of her own, says Ms Allie.

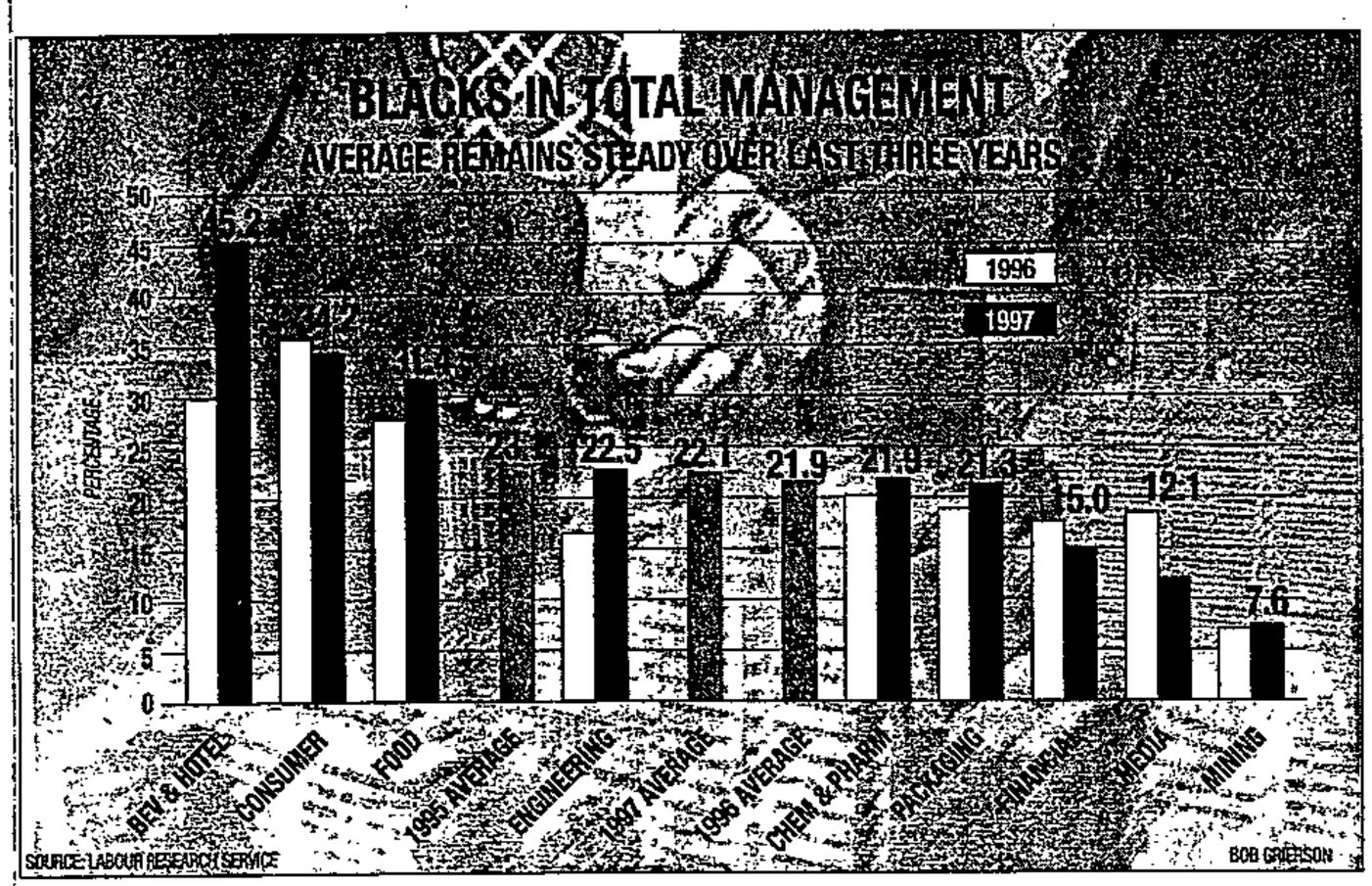
In Zoar, where fresh bread was delivered only every other day, Betty Hess and a group of friends established a bakery with financial help from World Vision. In Bonnievale, Nadia Adams began her own business entrepreneur centre, renting a vacant home in the main street and letting the rooms to other businesses.

Ms Allie said six training programmes would be held this year, beginning in Piketberg at the end of February, followed by Doornbaai, Khayelithsa, Plettenberg Bay, The Strand and Mitchell's Plain.

Each training course could accommodate 25 people, with the candidates drawn from from Absa's branch network and local non-governmental organisations.

CAPE ARGUS

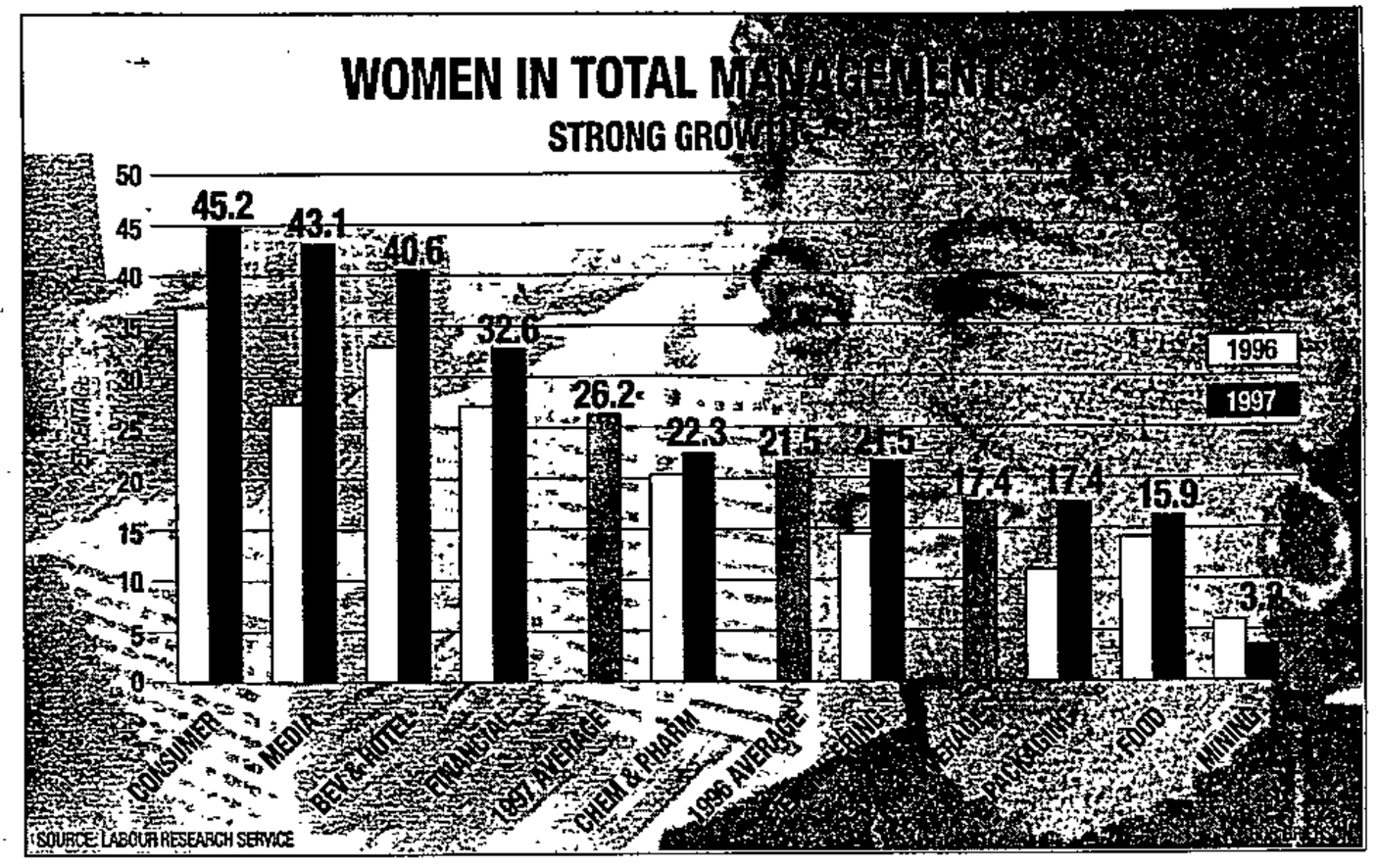
Corporate SA: the slow pace of change





INSIDE STORY

Only one in 10 directors of companies is black, and only one company in three has a woman on the board, a Cape Town-based company has found, writes Business Editor **ALIDE DASNOIS**



Firms drag their feet in putting women and blacks in top posts

ART 6/2/98 (BSA)

Corporate South Africa is still keeping boardroom doors closed to blacks and women, a new survey shows.

The number of black managers and directors hardly increased at all last year; the number of black junior managers actually dropped; and although the number of woman managers did grow, only one in three companies has a woman on the board.

The alarming figures emerge from research by the authoritative Labour Research Service (LRS) in Cape Town. About 50 companies, employing more than half a million people, responded to the LRS survey.

The researchers found that the number of black managers as a percentage of all managers had hardly increased at all during the year, inching upwards from 21,9% to 22,1%.

Only one in 10 directors of companies were black, the survey found.

More disquieting, as Parliament prepares to debate the Employment Equity Bill, is the drop in the number of black junior managers from about 34% to 27% of the total, suggesting that the pool from which future senior managers and directors can be drawn is being allowed to dry up.

The Employment Equity Bill will force companies employing more than 50 people to mirror in their workforce, at all levels, the colour and gender distribution of the population – or at least to show progress in moving towards that goal.

Junior staff numbers and numbers of senior executives alike must reflect the population.

"A reduction in black junior managers could severely impact on the number of black senior managers in the future. Hopefully, this is not a case of companies growing complacent on affirmative action," said the LRS researchers.

Blacks had the best chances of making it to management level in the beverage and hotel sector, where more than 45% of managers were black, the survey showed.

Their chances were worst in the mining sector, where fewer than 8% of managers were black.

On the whole, women moved a bit faster up the bottom rungs of the management ladder, but they hardly ever reached the top: the survey found that the number of women managers as a percentage of total management jumped from under 22% in 1996 to more than 26% in 1997, but at senior management level a plateau was reached at 10,5%.

And boardrooms are still shut to women, who take up only 18 of the 590 seats on the boards of the companies studied. "Women directors are definitely the exception rather than the rule," said the LRS.

Biggest employers of black managers were SA Breweries, where 7 024 managers out of 15 876 were black; sugar group Tongaat Hulett, leisure company Servgro and retail chains Woolworths (722 black managers out of 1 8[illegible] Edgars 898 out of 4 193).

Topping the list, though, for the proportion of black managers employed, was Cape Town clothing company Rex Trueform, where more than 86% of managers (and all junior managers) were black.

Rex Trueform also topped the charts for the number of woman managers (more than 90%).

L A Stores got more good marks for spending on social projects, coming third out of the 50 companies and setting aside just under 15% of pre-tax profits for social spending.

Rex Trueform, on the other hand, had no social expenditure programme at all.

Although SA Breweries, for instance, set aside a huge R69-million for social projects, this amounted to only 2% of profits.

Slight boost for training

Slowly, South African companies are realising the importance of spending money on training.

The Labour Research Service survey shows a slight improvement in the percentage of payroll spent on training, from 2,5% in 1996 to 3,3% in 1997.

But, the LRS points out, this is still a long way from the benchmark set by the Congress of SA Trade Unions, which is 4% of payroll, and even further from international standards of between 5% and 7%.

Only three out of 10 companies in the survey spent more than 4% of the wage bill on training, although this was an improvement on last year, when only 17% spent this much.

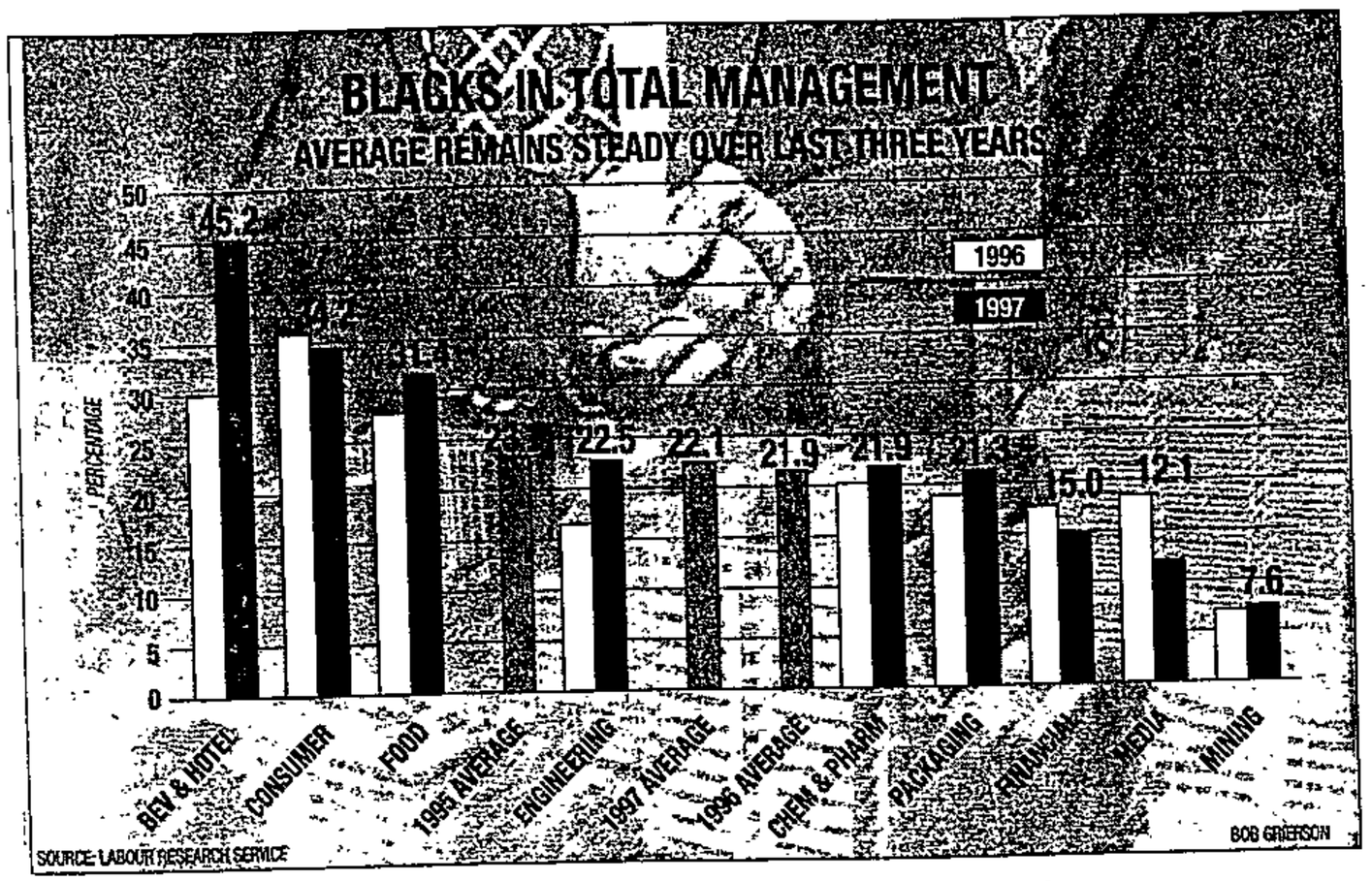
Training, said the LRS, should not be seen only as a cost but as a contributor to a company's growth.

Top five companies with respect to training spending were chemical group Polifin, finance house Gensec, consumer group Cashbuild, L A Stores, and life assurer Momentum.

"All five companies are star performers on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange," said the LRS.

"Their shareholders would hardly fault the directors for their relatively high training expenditure."

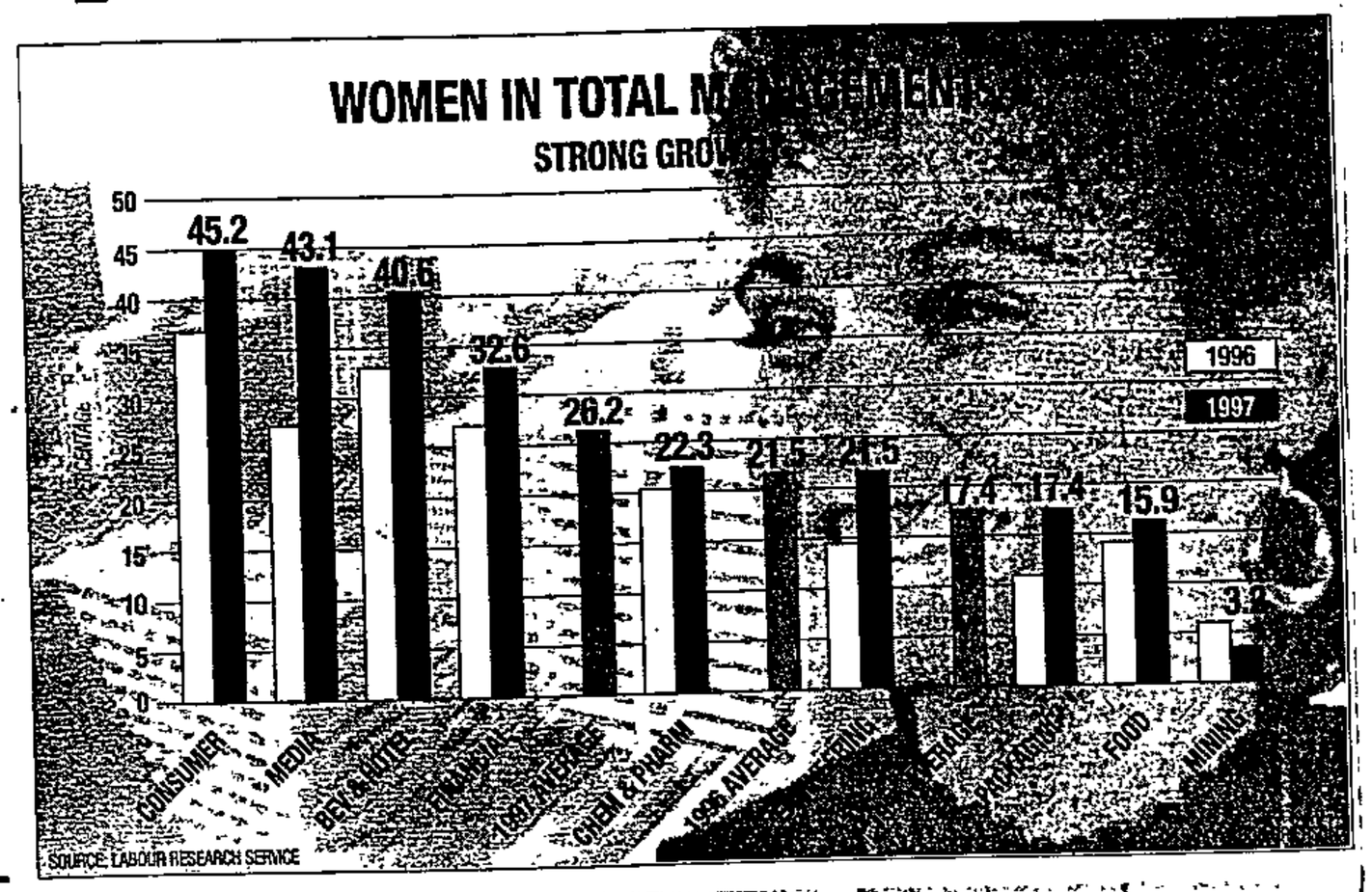
Corporate SA: the slow pace of change





INSIDE STORY

Only one in 10 directors of companies is black, and only one company in three has a woman on the board, a Cape Town-based company has found, writes Business Editor **ALIDE DASNOIS**



Firms drag their feet in putting women and blacks in top posts

ANT 6/12/98 (335A)

Corporate South Africa is still keeping boardroom doors closed to blacks and women, a new survey shows.

The number of black managers and directors hardly increased at all last year; the number of black junior managers actually dropped; and although the number of woman managers did grow, only one in three companies has a woman on the board.

The alarming figures emerge from research by the authoritative Labour Research Service (LRS) in Cape Town. About 50 companies, employing more than half a million people, responded to the LRS survey.

The researchers found that the number of black managers as a percentage of all managers had hardly increased at all during the year, inching upwards from 21,9% to 22,1%.

Only one in 10 directors of companies were black, the survey found.

More disquieting, as Parliament prepares to debate the Employment Equity Bill, is the drop in the number of black junior managers from about 34% to 27% of the total, suggesting that the pool from which future senior managers and directors can be drawn is being allowed to dry up.

The Employment Equity Bill will force companies employing more than 50 people to mirror in their workforce, at all levels, the colour and gender distribution of the population – or at least to show progress in moving towards that goal.

Junior staff numbers and numbers of senior executives alike must reflect the population.

"A reduction in black junior managers could severely impact on the number of black senior managers in the future. Hopefully, this is not a case of companies growing complacent on affirmative action," said the LRS researchers.

Blacks had the best chances of making it to management level in the beverage and hotel sector, where more than 45% of managers were black, the survey showed.

Their chances were worst in the mining sector, where fewer than 8% of managers were black.

On the whole, women moved a bit faster up the bottom rungs of the management ladder, but they hardly ever reached the top: the survey found that the number of women managers as a percentage of total management jumped from under 22% in 1996 to more than 26% in 1997, but at senior management level a plateau was reached at 10,5%.

And boardrooms are still shut to women, who take up only 18 of the 590 seats on the boards of the companies studied. "Women directors are definitely the exception rather than the rule," said the LRS.

Biggest employers of black managers were SA Breweries, where 7 024 managers out of 15 876 were black; sugar group Tongaat Hulett, leisure company Servgro and retail chains Woolworths (722 black managers out of 1 8[illegible] Edcon 898 out of 4 193).

Topping the list, though, for the proportion of black managers employed, was Cape Town clothing company Rex Trueform, where more than 86% of managers (and all junior managers) were black.

Rex Trueform also topped the charts for the number of woman managers (more than 90%).

L A Stores got more good marks for spending on social projects, coming third out of the 50 companies and setting aside just under 15% of pre-tax profits for social spending.

Rex Trueform, on the other hand, had no social expenditure programme at all.

Although SA Breweries, for instance, set aside a huge R69-million for social projects, this amounted to only 2% of profits.

Slight boost for training

Slowly, South African companies are realising the importance of spending money on training.

The Labour Research Service survey shows a slight improvement in the percentage of payroll spent on training, from 2,5% in 1996 to 3,3% in 1997.

But, the LRS points out, this is still a long way from the benchmark set by the Congress of SA Trade Unions, which is 4% of payroll, and even further from international standards of between 5% and 7%.

Only three out of 10 companies in the survey spent more than 4% of the wage bill on training, although this was an improvement on last year, when only 17% spent this much.

Training, said the LRS, should not be seen only as a cost but as a contributor to a company's growth.

Top five companies with respect to training spending were chemical group Polifin, finance house Gensec, consumer group Cashbuild, L A Stores, and life assurer Momentum.

"All five companies are star performers on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange," said the LRS.

"Their shareholders would hardly fault the directors for their relatively high training expenditure."

Study highlights women's plight

(375A) BD 17/2/98

Reneé Grawitzky

MORE than 120 countries worldwide make legal provision for paid maternity leave and health benefits, though for vast numbers of women maternity protection is still barely assured, a recent International Labour Organisation study on maternity protection in the work place has found.

Where provision exists, the legislation stipulates paid leave ranging from 28 weeks in the Czech Republic to 45 days in the United Arab Emirates.

Countries such as the US, Australia, New Zealand and Lesotho have no statutory provisions for paid maternity leave.

In Denmark, Norway and Sweden the law provides for either parent to take leave associated with a birth, ranging from 18 weeks in Norway and Denmark to 14 weeks in Sweden, though a portion of the leave period is reserved for the mother.

The International Labour Organisation's maternity protection convention calls for a minimum of 12 weeks' leave but recommends 14 weeks. The report says 119 countries meet its standards of 12 weeks, with 62 countries providing more than 14 weeks. About 31 countries provide 12 weeks or less.

In recent years, studies have revealed a rapid increase in labour market participation by women, rising from from 54% in 1950 to 66% in 1990. It is likely to rise to 70% by 2010.

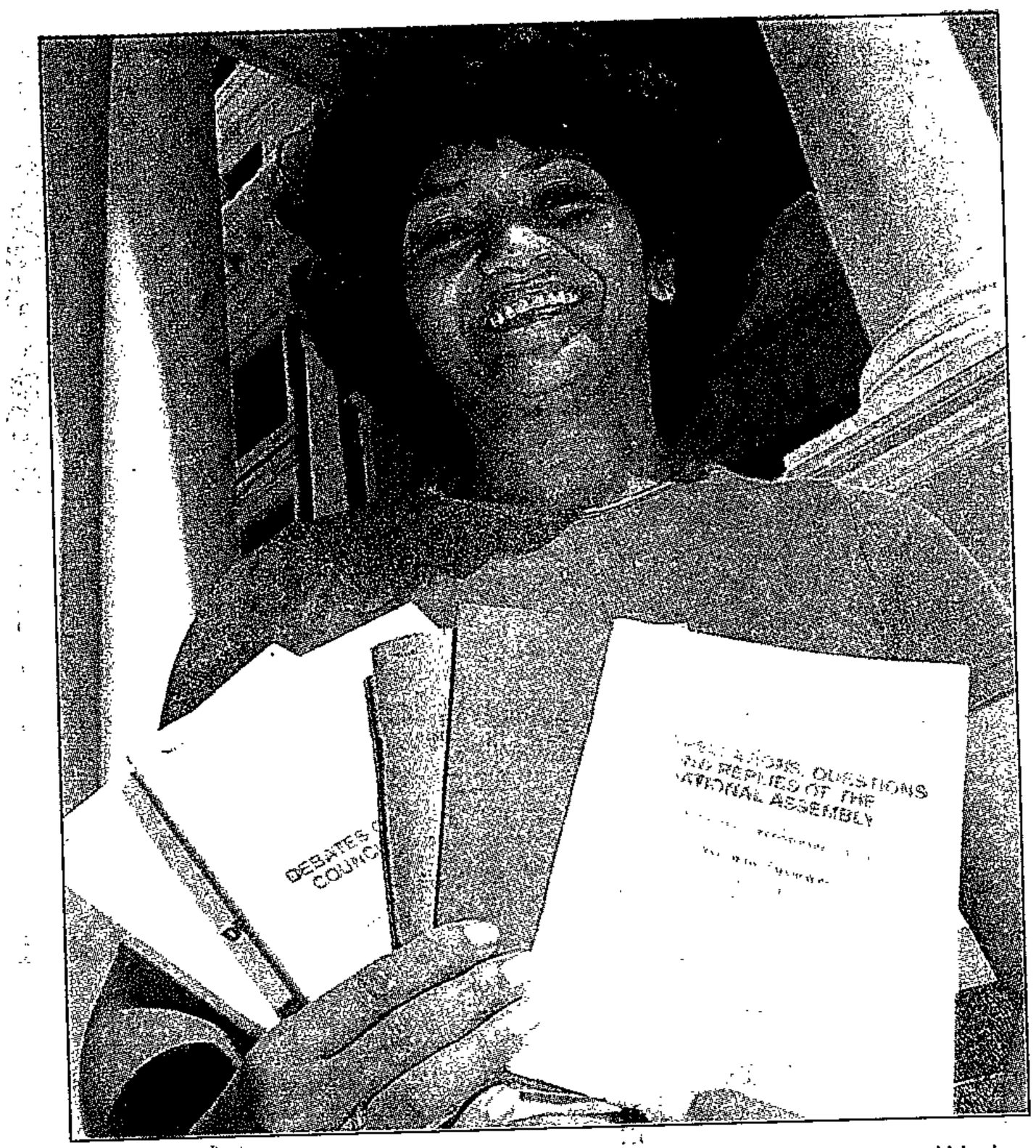
The report says also that women provide the main source of income in 30% of households. It finds that 59% of women in Europe and 55% of women in the US supply half or more of their families' household income. One out of every four women in Europe provides the total household income, the report says.

The implications of such a change, it says, is the rise in the number of women working throughout their child-bearing years, "a fact which makes adequate maternity protection even more imperative".

Governments and social partners would have to consider adequate maternity protection as well as ensure the removal of discrimination in employment on the basis of actual or potential maternity.

The report says some countries require a negative pregnancy test, a gynaecological examination or a medical certificate attesting to sterilisation as a condition of employment. And once hired, women faced losing their jobs should they become pregnant. In the UK, more than one in eight inquiries received by the equal opportunities commission related to dismissal following pregnancy.

"In all parts of the world, working women who become pregnant are faced with the threat of job loss, suspended earnings and increased health risks due to inadequate safeguards for their employment and rights which derive therefrom," the report says.



STRIKING A BLOW: Beryl Kerr has struck an emphatic blow for both women and black business by winning a parliamentary printing contract. ***PICTURE: ALAN TAYLOR***

'Black business doesn't take women seriously'

(365A) CT 23/2/98

THOUGH a firm advocate of black business empowerment, entrepreneur Ms Beryl Kerr has made some sharp observations on the manner in which black business is conducted in the Western Cape.

"I need to say as a black woman that my black brothers didn't take me seriously. We have to work harder and are expected to be stronger to make it in a man's world.

"Printing is a male-dominated arena with very few women who run the kind of operation I do. You are made to feel inferior."

Businesswomen do not have to suppress their femininity or feel that they have to be "one of the guys" to be good, says Kerr.

"You just need to be competent, believe in yourself and be assertive. Don't be discouraged by failures along the way."

Kerr says there's an unnecessary degree of suspicion and prejudice among black businessmen towards their women counterparts.

"The suspicion may have crept in as a result of the circumstances we grew up in and the separation we experienced. But black businessmen have to realise that we are not there to take over their roles or take their jobs; we're there to develop along with them."

She notes that as a black business person, "you either become flavour of the month or you are sidelined because you are not considered big enough, or are not being seen at the right functions".

She says that in her line of work, where opportunities need to be sought constantly to develop the business, she has little time for socialising. "I'm looking for business every single day because I have people working for me and I have a responsibility towards them."

Opportunities had to be actively sought: "If I look at the Hansard contract, then, yes, it was awarded to us because we're a black company, but also because we stood up to scrutiny. In the end they satisfied themselves that this was a competent business able to deliver the goods."

Black business has to abandon the idea that "we are entitled to anything because we are black or because we are in black business.

"We owe it to ourselves to get up and do something to achieve our goals - and for that, hard work is required."

TOMORROW: The computer industry is one of many small businesses that will be adversely affected if updated labour legislation is applied in its present form.

Women still suffer inequality at work

Sowetan 25/2/98 (355A)

By Abdul Milazi

WHILE equality between men and women in the workplace has been proclaimed everywhere in the world, it has not been fully realised anywhere, an International Labour Organisation study has found.

The study, released in Geneva on Monday, finds that while women's employment rates have risen in many parts of the world, the quality of their employment remains far below that of men.

Employment statistics show that compared to men, women still get unequal pay for work of equal value and have less promotion prospects. They are also more likely to experience unemployment and poverty.

These inequities are so widely recognised that more than 150 countries have signed international agreements to take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the workplace.

In the past 50 years the principle of equality between men and women has been firmly anchored in the constitutions and national legislation of countries around the world.

Its embodiment in law has compelled a profound rethinking of the status of women, their role in society and their contribution to the economy.

The ILO reports says women need to have their work remunerated at rates calculated without discrimination based on sex to establish the material basis for equality.

The adoption by the ILO of the Equal Remuneration Convention in 1951 established the principle of non-discrimination to ensure equal pay for work of equal value.

Non-discrimination

The principle of non-discrimination was taken a step further with the adoption of the Discrimination Convention and its accompanying Recommendation No 111.

However women continue to face discrimination in the workplace, especially when pregnant, despite the adoption of a Declaration on Equality of Opportunity and Treatment for Women Workers by ILO member states in 1975.

Maternity protection has been marked by progress in law, an evolution in workplace practice and rising social expectations regarding the rights of working women, yet the gains registered have so far failed to resolve the fundamental problems faced by women.

According to the ILO report among the most remarkable changes to have occurred in the past 50 years has been the rapid rise in labour market participation by women.

Women's economic activity rates climbed from 54 percent in 1950 to 66 percent in 1990, and is projected to reach 70 percent in the year 2010.

In an analysis by the ILO of national legislation and practices they found more than 120 countries around the world provided paid maternity leave and health benefits by law. This included most industrialised nations except Australia, New Zealand and the United Sates.

The survey also found that in all parts of the world women who became pregnant faced a job loss, suspended earnings and increased health risks because of inadequate safeguards at the workplace.

According to the survey women provided the main source of income in some 30 percent of all households worldwide. In India 60 million people live in households maintained by women.

More women own businesses

Sowetan 4/3/98

A STUDY reveals that a significant number of women business owners in the United States took the risk of starting a business because they felt unchallenged in their work.

Women coming from the corporate world are particularly frustrated, with many saying their employers didn't take them seriously or value them, according to the study released in February. (35SA)

Nearly 60 percent of women who had come from corporations said nothing would induce them to return, including more money or flexibility.

The research casts light on reasons for the explosive growth in the country's eight million women-owned businesses, which now account for one third of US firms.

Women-owned businesses are being created at twice the rate of all businesses.

"Frustration with work environment has pushed a significant number of women into entrepreneurship," said Sheila Wellington, president of Catalyst, one of the groups involved in the study.

As might be expected, nearly half of women business owners started their companies because they had a winning business idea or they wanted to turn their skills into a business.

–*Sapa-AP.*

CONFERENCE BACKS YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

Boost for businesswomen

(355A) ET 6/3/98

TO HELP young women make their way in business, older women took part in a conference last week to share their experience. Senior Writer **YAZEED FAKIER** reports.

NATIONAL Women's Day may well be several months away (August 9), but already, in the words of that catchy Aretha Franklin/Annie Lennox feminist tune, the "sisters are doing it for themselves".

For several days last week, under the nurturing wing of their older mentors in government and business, a group of 100 young women from across the country scrummed down to talk business.

The intensive pow wow, held at the plush President Hotel in Bantry Bay, was given an authoritative stamp of approval with addresses by leading women in government, including Deputy Speaker of Parliament Ms Baleka Mbete-Kgositsile and Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry Ms Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

Dr Mamphela Ramphele, the UCT vice-chancellor, and Ms Patricia McFadden, the noted Zimbabwean feminist, as well as a woman official from the World Bank and representatives of high-profile international women's organisations from as far as Zambia, Sweden, Germany and Singapore were also in attendance.

The keynote address was delivered by Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, whose wife Zanele also contributed.

Discussion ranged from the changing nature of leadership, skills training and economics in transition, to the empowerment of women in the corporate world and the implications of globalisation for the development of women.

Though rather wordily titled "Young Women: Entrepreneurs for Change — Leadership for the New Millennium", the conference proved to be a successful joint initiative of the International Women's Leadership Forum and the Johannesburg-based Women's Development Foundation (WDF) and Youth Development Trust (YDT).

Delegates described the venture as an "amazing initiative" that drew together women who operated at a high level, such as Free State premier Dr Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri, with those just starting out and including cultural workers, rural women and the physically challenged.

Women in the corporate sector swopped notes and experiences with entrepreneurs in parastatals and in the policy-making environment both inside and outside government. They spoke about how best to place young women at the centre stage of self-employment, entrepreneurship, strengthening positions in the corporate sector and policy-making.

'We need a network of support, to enter disciplines we have never exploited before.'

The conference culminated, over a sumptuous meal, in the launch of the Young Women's Academy, which will eventually serve as a base-cum-head office where aspirant women entrepreneurs will be able to access information about issues that obstruct African women, in particular, trying to enter the mainstream economy — how to establish a business, acquire funding and deal with collateral issues.

Panelist Ms Gail Smith, co-ordinator of the Institute for Gender Studies at Unisa, who was charged with the topic of gender as an issue for leadership, discussed the need for feminist activism in South Africa and constant vigilance among women's groups.

She said that although there was "very aggressive representation of women in Parliament", women's rights would be eroded unless they kept up that vigilance.

But, she said, "we should not get bogged down with numbers when we talk about women's representation in public office or in Parliament.

"The presence of women is important, having the numbers of women in those positions is important, but it's also important that we don't over-emphasise the role of individual women, because this is not about individual women.

In order to be leaders, women had to be tough and "willing to stick your neck out".

"Women get criticised much more harshly. Our private lives get dragged out for discussion when it has nothing to do with the issue at hand — and women always get judged on how good they are as mothers, as wives, so a lot of the criticism levelled at us is not necessarily that we can't do our job, but that we are judged to be 'bad women'," Smith added.

Furthermore, women had no ready access to information and it would be unrealistic to think that men would readily be prepared to provide it.

"Men don't prioritise women on the agenda," said Smith. "They will speak about 'gender' — and this is a nice apolitical way of dealing with issues."

Noting that 1998 had been declared the Year of Science and Technology, Smith said women needed to ensure they had access to this kind of training and information all the way through their school careers.

She said it was often too late by the time young girls reached matric for them to make use of the funding available for further training in the field because they had already been barred from the necessary training to qualify for this assistance.

For delegate Ms Mahlengi Bhengu, chairperson of the National Youth Commission, an important aspect of the conference was that it asserted the need for the women "who are making it, have made it and are up there" to extend a hand to those "on the way up" and to help with their development.

"Not everyone will be absorbed by the formal labour market," she pointed out. "We need to find other pragmatic alternatives that, as part of the job-creation programme and as part of economic participation and economic growth, will ensure that the spirit of entrepreneurship permeates the community of women.

"I think the conference has really endorsed that."

For women already in the corporate sector, the Young Women's Academy could assist not only in the acquisition of additional skills, but also in the handling of the demanding challenges of the private sector.

"This is what women really need right now because of the added responsibilities that they have. They are not just employed, most of them are mothers, they manage homes," Bhengu said.



GRAPPLING WITH CHANGE

Another key achievement was the establishment of a mentoring network for future generations of women.

Said Bhengu: "We don't want to create a society where the skills base is found only in older women. We find that as younger women grow up, there is a gap, that young women don't attain skills."

In her closing address, conference organiser Ms Tsipane Nkwe of the YDT said that women had to pull together if they were to achieve economic empowerment.

She was heartened by the enthusiastic support she had received from older women, and commented: "Sometimes you get older women who want to stay in positions and are threatened by younger women, but here they accepted the challenge quite well and have opened doors for us. That power is important, it's necessary.

"We need a network of support, we need to enter disciplines that have never been exploited by women before — marine, trade, aviation, financial skills, commercial lawyers."

Then, almost breathless at the realisation of her achievement and the presence of the star guests who had made it such a success, she added emotionally: "This has been the culmination of a dream.

"I still haven't woken up ... I still have not woken up."

A follow-up conference is to be held shortly to translate the recommendations of the conference into a mission statement of aims and objectives and a determination of where the academy is to be based.

● The New Women's Movement will hold its public launch at the St Francis Hall, Langa, tomorrow from 10am to 8pm to celebrate International Women's Day. There will be a variety of events, speakers, music and food — and childcare facilities will be available.



NETWORKING: Mahlengi Bhengu (left), chairperson of the National Youth Commission, and Gail Smith, co-ordinator of the Institute for Gender Studies at Unisa.

PICTURES: YAZEED FAKIER

Conciliatory note for men

YAZEED FAKIER

FOR those men who may feel a little uneasy — threatened, even — about all this talk and action in pursuit of women's empowerment, a conciliatory note has been sounded by Ms Barbara Watson, executive director of the Women's Development Foundation, one of the organising committees of the conference.

She said that it was all well and good for the South African Constitution "to have provided a space within which women are able to manoeuvre but there must be capable women there, able to take the process forward towards gender mainstreaming".

She added that "part of the process is not to exclude the men, but to work alongside each other, because part of gender mainstreaming must of necessity include gender sensitising if you really want it not to be a threat to the young men.

"We recognise they (men) are in equal need of support — they have been through the same process of not having leadership training and that sort of thing."

It was hoped that once the academy was established, and programmes such as assertiveness-training were run, for instance, it would not be restricted to young women only, but that some of the activities would be extended to the young men as part of that process of gender sensitisation.

'Gender equality is a universal right for all'

CP: 8/3/98 (355A)

By TSEPISO MATELA

THE HIGH-PROFILE Southern African Development Community (SADC) conference on prevention of violence against women in Durban is ending today.

The conference, which started on Thursday, is an initiative of the Department of Justice to introduce a regional conference on the matter of violence against women.

Before his address at the SADC conference, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki received a standing ovation from the hundred or more dignitaries from around Southern Africa for his role as campaigner for equal rights for the disabled and women in South Africa.

In his speech, Mbeki said gender equality was a universal right for which all people should struggle. Societies could only take back their dignity as human beings if they joined in the struggle for equal rights.

He said South Africa's participation in the SADC conference demonstrated how all peoples of Southern Africa were engaged in a search for ways to ensure gender equality.

Mbeki said violence against women was a symptom of a more fundamental malady in the fabric of society.

"The struggle for the prevention of violence against women should also be pursued within a wider struggle for the attainment of the political, economic, cultural and social emancipation of women."

He said a gathering of SADC countries on these matters was of utmost importance as the region had just emerged from a terrrible past of suspicion, conflict, destabilisation and apartheid which was central in perpetuating this terrible past.

"The apartheid regime thrived on military aggression, on stoking civil wars and on the dislocation of the economies of this region. We also recognise that the South African economy acted as a sub-imperialist force in the region, pulling every resource towards its centre while impoverishing the periphery and widening the development gap between the South African economy and the rest of the region.

"The women of Southern Africa remained in the impoverished rural periphery while their husbands, brothers and sons were pulled to the centre where they were condemned to the digging and drilling of the shiny evasive stones deep down in the bowels of Johannesburg and Kimberley," he said.

Mbeki said the region therefore needed to make a special effort to integrate the women of the Southern African region into the overall regional agenda for the purposes of reconstruction and development. He added that the SADC conference on the prevention of violence against women was part of an effort to transform the subcontinent.

Mbeki said the success of reconstruction and development in the region would be measured by the advance made towards ensuring a non-sexist SADC region.

He added that a deliberate, systematic programme of activity, designed to bring women into the power equation in society and the campaign of political and cultural education of society on gender issues, was needed.

"One of the most important starting points in addressing the power equation relates to political institutions.

"In South Africa, one of the first things we did at the point of attaining political democracy was to stand in favour of women in terms of representation in political and constitutional structures of governance at the national, provincial and local levels.

"Today women constitute roughly a third of the members of the national assembly and just over a third of the number of ministers and deputy ministers.

"Before the 1994 democratic elections, South Africa was ranked 149 in the world in terms of women empowerment and representation in structures of governance.

"Today we are among the top 10 countries," Mbeki said.

Hours before the start of the conference, Women'sNet was launched in Durban.

Women'sNet is the country's internet training, support and information programme designed by and for women.

Women'sNet is a project of SANGONeT and the commission on gender equality (CGE), which aims to get more women using such information in meaningful ways.

Women'sNet has put together an online information center on violence against women, the only one of its kind in Southern Africa.

CONFERENCE 'A GREAT CONFIDENCE BOOSTER'

Finding empowerment after years of struggle

CT 16/3/98 (355A)

A COURAGEOUS YOUNG housewife stood up to be heard at a week-long conference for women entrepreneurs and is still reeling from the experience. **YAZEED FAKIER** reports.

"I FEEL connected to the world. I now feel that I can make a contribution to others. I have experienced so many firsts today — a first in a hotel, a first on Robben Island, a first at the Castle, a first at meeting so many wonderful women.

"I want to befriend these women, not to get anything out of them, but to learn from them and take the experience back to the women in my community."

This is what home executive (read housewife) Ms Dawn Boonzaaier told her fellow delegates at the end of a recent week-long conference for young women entrepreneurs.

Now, two weeks later, she is still reeling from her empowering experience at the conference, which was attended by a range of delegates representing a cross-section of careers.

It took a lot of courage for this unassuming, down-to-earth mother-of-two to stand up and be heard among the power-dressed and self-assured young women who gathered to launch the ground-breaking Young Women's Academy.

The talkative and friendly Boonzaaler grew up on the platteland and when her family moved to Cape Town from Uitondale, she found that, unlike Uitondale, life in the big city could be intimidating.

"The children at school are always funny to you if you come from the platteland," she says in an interview at her Belhar home, still in the process of being completed.

"They used to laugh at me. I didn't know why until I saw they were wearing short socks and they were laughing at my bobby socks."

'It was as if Mandela had made it possible for me to stand at that place on Robben Island'

She says she was afraid of speaking English at first "because it was like talking Zulu. It was very difficult for me, but I'm getting better now because I am not so afraid anymore".

As a self-employed seamstress struggling to make a success in the arts and crafts field, she was invited to attend the conference by the local Centre for Opportunity Development (COD), which guided her efforts over the years.

Sponsored by major companies countrywide, the conference was a tremendous confidence booster, says Boonzaaler, and she wants to share that experience with other women who find themselves in a similar situation to her own.

She explained that after qualifying for a self-help scheme, she and her welder husband, Henry, determined to create their own opportunities in life, have for the past 10 years ploughed every penny into gradually building their home, a frustrating process that is still continuing.

To supplement the family income, Boonzaaler started trying out various ways of earning money, from making decorative clocks to producing a range of crafts — but it proved too expensive, with little return.

She thinks that, with the guidance of the COD, she may be on the right track now that she is producing linenware. Time will tell.

In the wake of the conference, however, she jokes that she is still having difficulty distinguishing between fantasy and reality.

"You know, I'm still not awake," she laughs. "I'm still dreaming about that (conference).

"For the first night I couldn't sleep in the hotel. The rooms were so big. I felt I was in a different situation; everything was different to what I was used to. You could eat whatever you want and whatever you didn't want, you just left alone."

Her visit to Robben Island — where a one-day session of the conference was held — was an emotional experience for her and her fellow delegates, she says.

They spent 40 minutes being ferried each way (before returning at 3pm).

"I was glad because it was my first time and I always wanted to go there — but I didn't know I was going to have such deep feelings when I got there.

"When you know something about the politics of Robben Island, you will experience something about the atmosphere there that you won't find any other place.

"We saw the cell that Mandela was in and all that other stuff. We didn't go into the cell, but I was right in front of the door. I felt like Mandela has suffered for us; it was as if he was the one who made it possible for me to stand at that place at that time, otherwise I would never have been able to have that opportunity."

She said she and her fellow delegates had a mixture of both "sad and happy" feelings — sad because "he was the one who suffered and happy because he could get right what he strived for".

"There was one time when somebody was laughing and another person in the group told the person it's not the place to be laughing."

'I never knew that people like me, on grassroot level, could also take part in such things.'

During the conference session, she was unable to let go of the overwhelming meaning of the visit or its significance to her.

"I kept thinking that this was the place Mandela spent his life in jail. I couldn't get it out of my mind. I couldn't even concentrate on the discussions and the workshops and I had to get all the information afterwards."

Cape Flats mothers and their husbands — whose resources are usually all devoured by the daily demands of running a home — seldom have money left over for luxuries like expensive gifts.

Boonzaaler's prized mementoes from the island are a postcard and a R1,20 sheet of wrapping paper, packed in a brown paper bag bearing the words "Robben Island".

"Those are my souvenirs, especially the bag with the words on it."

She says she would like to visit the island again because she was so immersed in the experience that she couldn't enjoy the sight-seeing aspect of it.

During one of the conference sessions, she was asked to say something about herself, but was at a loss for words because "the people spoke so fluently and I was so scared I was going to say something wrong.

"Then I said that I am Dawn Boonzaaler and I'm from Belhar and I'm here because of the Centre for Opportunity Development. I said I would like to become one of the fellows (of the International Women's Leadership Forum, one of the organisers of the event) able to give all the people like me a chance to also attend such conferences.

"I want them to meet people and hear about how they can do things for themselves.

"I never knew that people like me, on grassroot level, could also take part in such things. Those people (at the conference) were a very big inspiration and very supportive. They didn't make you feel that, no, you don't belong here."

She says women generally always "stand back" and don't get recognition for their efforts "but we must come out from behind those doors and just go and make our opportunities work for us".

After what she's learnt at the conference, what does she feel women in her community most needed to do to realise their potential?

"They need to connect with each other more," she says.

"The main thing for people here is to inter-mingle," but she adds pointedly: "I don't say they must go and sit in each other's houses and gossip, but neighbours must have an interest in each other, make contact with each other ..." To network?

She pounces: "Networking! I think that is a BIG word — we must network. That was also one of the things that we learnt from that conference.

"You had to make an effort to get somebody's business card and exchange your one to connect with each other so you can keep in touch."

She shows me her collection of business cards, carefully filed away in a folder.

"Now I feel like I'm in touch with the whole world because of the people I've met ... and I can tell them what we are doing now and they can give me some information about what they are doing ..."

She says that when the conference ended and she returned to Belhar, she talked about her experience "non-stop for three days" to everybody she came into contact with.

Her husband had the misfortune of having to hear some story details repeated more than once.

She has a humbling answer to the question of what sticks in her mind most about the experience.

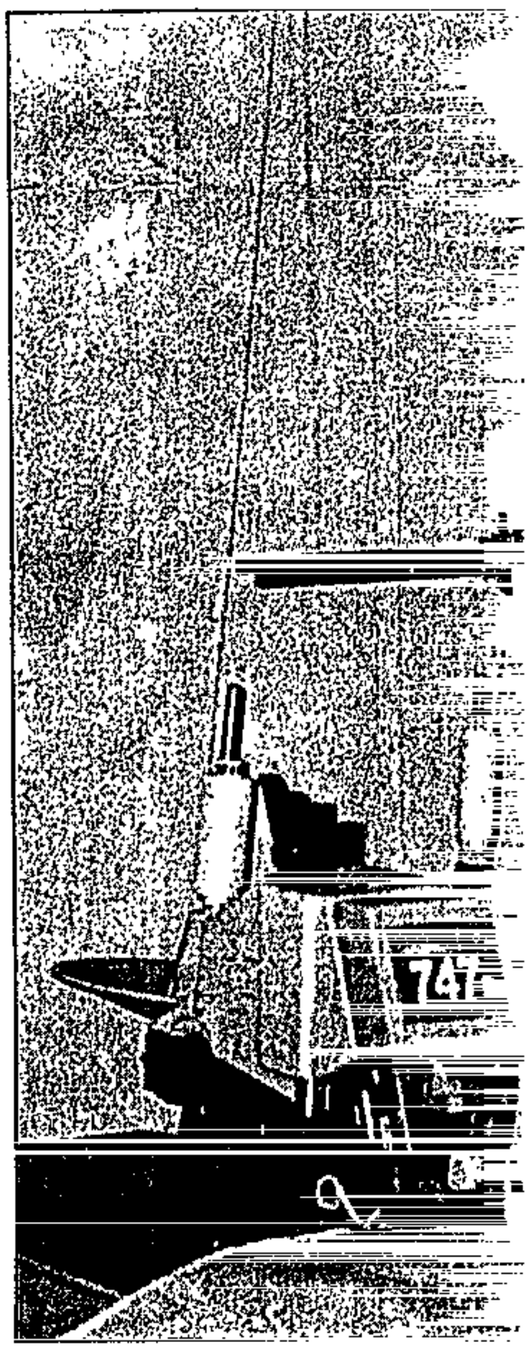
"People musn't be ashamed of themselves because of where they live. I felt like that in the conference at first because I come from a rural area.

"But you must realise that you are also important; everybody's important — whether you are at grassroots level or whether you are right at the top.

"I was made to feel important there because everybody operated at the same level; if you have teatime everybody had teatime; if there's a discussion and you want to say something, you can stand up and say what you want to — whether it's wrong or not. "They will still take note of it."

A final word? "We, as women, if we learn something, we must share our knowledge so that we can do things better.

"And another thing is that a lot of the women I spoke to afterwards in the community, when they asked me questions, I told them the same thing — you can only benefit if you work hard. Hard work is the most important thing."



BACK TO EARTH: Dawn Boonzaaler back in country at a young women's conference.

nt

)

-aid that I am Dawn
and I'm from Belhar
because of the Centre
...y Development. I
like to become one of
of the International
...ership Forum, one
... of the event) able
...e people like me a
... attend such confer-

...hem to meet people
...t how they can do
...selves.
new that people like
...ional level, could also
...h things. Those peo-
...ference) were a very
... and very support-
...'t make you feel that,
belong here."
- women generally
always "stand back"
and don't get recog-
nition for their
efforts "but we must
come out from
behind those doors
and just go and
make our opportuni-
ties work for us".

After what she's learnt at the conference; what does she in her community to do to realise their

...d to connect with
...," she says.
... thing for people
...-mingle," but she
... "I don't say they
sit in each other's
..., but neighbours
an interest in each
contact with each
...twork?
...es: "Networking! I
BIG word — we must
... was also one of the
we learnt from that

to make an effort to
...'s business card and
... one to connect
... so you can keep in

...me her collection of
..., carefully filed away

... like I'm in touch
...e world because of
ve met ... and I can tell
... are doing now and
... me some informa-
... they are doing ..."
that when the confer-



BACK TO EARTH: Dawn Boonzaaier back at home after her exhilarating experience rubbing shoulders with women entrepreneurs from all over the country at a young women's conference. *PICTURE: YAZEED FAKIER.*

ence ended and she returned to Belhar, she talked about her experience "non-stop for three days" to everybody she came into contact with.

Her husband had the misfortune of having to hear some story details repeated more than once.

She has a humbling answer to the question of what sticks in her mind most about the experience.

"People musn't be ashamed of themselves because of where they live. I felt like that in the conference at first because I come from a rural area.

"But you must realise that you are also important; everybody's important — whether you are at grassroots level or whether you are right at the top.

"I was made to feel important there because everybody operated at the same level; if you have teatime everybody had teatime; if there's a discussion and you want to say something, you can stand up and say what you want to — whether it's wrong or not. "They will still take note of it."

A final word? "We, as women, if we learn something, we must share our knowledge so that we can do things better.

"And another thing is that a lot of the women I spoke to afterwards in the community, when they asked me questions, I told them the same thing — you can only benefit if you work hard. Hard work is the most important thing."

Women's rights 'being trampled in our classrooms'

YAZEED FAKIER

THE recent report of the education ministry's Gender Equity Task Team provides "horrifying evidence" that the disempowerment of women is taking hold in schools, where sexual harassment of women and girls goes largely unchallenged, ANC MP Ms Naledi Pandor has said.

Addressing a women's forum at the Peninsula Technikon in Bellville, she said the current curriculum and classroom practice also served to disempower, and there was a clear need for a focused programme of education on gender equity.

There was also a need for a well-developed programme directed at teachers and school managers and aimed at changing current practices and mindsets.

Everyday experiences of South African women showed that equality was not yet a reality and that women still did the bulk of domestic work, earned the lowest salaries and wages and were the least trained.

"In many instances their status is diminished by the law and legal procedures in South Africa," Pandor said.

"The fact is that the Constitution says we are equal and thus the government and women throughout (the country) need to begin to devise appropriate responses to the inequality that characterises the lives of women."

Pandor said the 1995 development report of the World Bank had urged governments throughout the world to recognise that gender equality was much more than social justice — it was good economics.

The well-being of women and their social and economic development had to be accelerated because inequality also gave rise to low productivity and negatively affected families by eroding their access to health, education, social welfare and employment.

The limited access of women to positions of influence in all South African institutions also had to be addressed.

In both the public and private sectors there were few women at the level of chief executive officer. Higher education institutions had also been shown to be particularly discriminatory towards women Pandor said.

"These are institutions that assert merit as the driving force, yet the patterns of unemployment and student access continue to reinforce notions of inequality," she said.

Often, when women tried to raise issues that directly affected them, they were ridiculed and made to feel that they were "fussing unnecessarily".

What these responses failed to recognise was that the continued exclusion and marginalisation of women was a serious constraint to the further advancement of South Africa.

The challenge facing the country was not complex, Pandor said. "It requires our institutions and the government to take effective steps toward ensuring that the constitutional provisions relating to equality of all citizens are reflected in actual practice."

Gender progress hampered

By Simon Zwane

Red tape and negative attitudes have hampered the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) in its first year.

The commission said the bureaucracy in the civil service, "such as the fact that it took almost eight months to complete tender processes for new offices", was one of several stumbling blocks in its annual report which was given to President Nelson Mandela in Pretoria today.

"Negative attitudes also limited the potential of institutions like the CGE to operate as efficiently as they otherwise could have," the report said.

"The treatment from some quarters in government – for example the constant passing of the buck with regard to the CGE's 1997/98 budget – sometimes prompts the question: is government really committed to equality?"

Commission chairperson Thenjiwe Mtintso said the report, to be launched publicly at the opening of the commission's offices in Johannesburg on Friday, told "a happy and sad tale" but affirmed the need for an independent commission focusing on gender equality.

"It exposes the vast possibilities, challenges and dangers that face South Africa on its path to democracy," she said.

However, commissioners were disappointed that the constraints they had to face denied the commission a better chance to do more.

(355A) Star 25/3/98

Male-ruled SA still far from true gender equality — Mandela

Stephané Bothma (355A BD 26/2/98

PRETORIA — SA was still a male-dominated society with government structures not reflecting the country's gender composition, President Nelson Mandela said yesterday.

Receiving the gender equality commission's first annual report at the Union Buildings, Mandela said it was estimated that 52% of SA's population was female and although government had some women in prominent positions, it was still lagging behind other parts of the world.

"I almost daily have to remind people, even African National Congress leaders, of gender equality," he said.

In its report, the commission called for a clear signal from government about its future.

It said that it was "impossible to plan our work effectively as long as a sword of Damocles continues to hang over the commission".

The commission, which received a provisional 1998/99 budget of R10,24m, expressed concern over its financial capacity.

One of the key recommendations in the report was that the budgets of independent bodies be appropriated directly by Parliament and that the commission be allocated an adequate budget.

During 1997/98 the commission was allocated a budget of R2,059m — "a sum insufficient to pay the salaries of the 11 fulltime and part-time commissioners, let alone hire staff, establish offices or run programmes".

This was later increased by R2,36m, bringing the total budget to R4,419m, which was "about half of what the commission estimated it required for the year".

The report called on government to clarify the composition, terms of reference and timeframes of the task team set up to review the operations of independent commissions.

It concluded that despite the limited financial and human resources, "and often in a hostile external environment", the commission had managed to establish itself and to launch a focused programme of action in key areas.

The commission called for the relationship with government to be clearly defined, saying that commissioners "should not be treated as an unwanted liability".

The report said the commission achieved many highlights during the year in the field of developing a simple framework as well as creation of training materials to broaden understanding of gender equality.

It also achieved success in the field of public education, law and justice matters, safety and security, and economic and political empowerment.

SA still lags behind on gender equality

(355A)

SOUTH AFRICA was largely failing to put the principle of gender equality into practice, President Nelson Mandela said yesterday. CT 26/3/98

"It is a male dominated society," he told reporters in Pretoria after receiving the annual report of the Commission on Gender Equality.

"That conservatism of man is there."

Government structures did not reflect the fact that women comprised an estimated 52% of the country's population, Mandela said.

South Africa was in this regard lagging far behind Asia, a continent frequently criticised for suppressing women.

"In rhetoric we have accepted the principle of the equality of genders, but when it comes to practice, we are far behind," Mandela said.

"Almost daily you have to remind even the leaders of the ANC that the question of gender is very important."

Commission chairperson ms Thenjiwe Mtintso said South Africa had achieved much, but still had a long way to go.

While the Constitution opened up many opportunities for gender equality, it also posed certain obstacles. Traditional authorities, which were entrenched in the constitution, were largely patriarchal, she said.

Religious, cultural, traditional and customary rights were also infringing on women's rights in many cases, Mtintso said. Customary law, for example, allowed polygamy.

"Of course you can't simply legislate against these things," she said. "The challenge is how to change some of these cultures and some practices which are supposedly our culture."

Mandela said the commission was a source of pride. — Sapa

Gender equality body seeks cash

Mandela gets first report

(355A)

ARG 27/3/98

LINDSAY BARNES
STAFF REPORTER

The Commission on Gender Equality has had to seek funding overseas, in spite of having been established by the constitution.

The Government's lack of financial commitment meant the body could not be set up until early this year, almost a year after it was announced, according to the commission's first annual report released today.

The report was presented to President Mandela on Wednesday. It recommends that the commission be allocated an adequate budget, that Parliament appropriate its budget directly and uncertainties about its future be removed.

In its first year, the commission was allocated R4,4-million, half the amount it needed.

The commission is one of six bodies set-up in terms of the constitution for the promotion of democracy. It aims to promote respect for gender equality and foster its protection, development and attainment.

The commission was initially granted R2,1-million, which did not cover the salaries of its 11 commissioners orthe costs of setting up offices, hiring staff and running programmes.

After extensive lobbying, a further R2,4-million was allocated in January.

Outgoing chairwoman Thenjiwe Mtintso said the report was presented with a sense of sadness "that we were denied a better chance to do more".

Phumelele Ntombela-Nzimande, the acting chairwoman, said the commission was committed to ensuring that all South Africans tasted the fruits of freedom, especially women in rural and farming areas and informal settlements. They deserved special focus because of the socio-economic, cultural and other obstacles in their path.

She said: "We shall continue to highlight and try to advocate the need for change in the gender inequalities perpetuated by the policies, laws, religions, cultures, traditions and institutions in our country."

Ms Mtintso said: "I am convinced that the commission, in partnership with all South Africans, will move in leaps and bounds towards a South Africa free of any vestige of gender discrimination and all other forms of oppression."

Businesswomen will be helped to access technology

(365A) BD 31/12/98

Shareen Singh

GOVERNMENT-funded bodies involved in science and technology will be asked to assist women in small businesses gain access to technology.

Deputy Trade and Industry Minister Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka said yesterday she would host a workshop in Johannesburg today on setting up a unit called Technology for Women in Business, to be based at the Council for Scientific Industrial Research.

"We realised that there was a need to have an entry point for women to get access to and learn to use technology to make their businesses more efficient."

Women would be able to ask the unit for assistance in setting up and updating technological infrastructure for their businesses.

The unit would then approach institutions, such as university research facilities or other structures involved in technology in the area where the business was located, to ask for assistance.

Employers also liable for staff who sexually harass

CT (PR) 17/4/98 (355A)

FRANK NXUMALO
LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — Employers would be held legally responsible for employees convicted of sexual harassment in the workplace "irrespective of whether or not they had knowledge of the relevant conduct", Weiner-Campanella, the labour consultants, said yesterday.

This was in accordance with the Employment Equity Bill, which will soon become law.

Subsection 56(1) states: "If it is proved that an employee, while at work, contravened a provision of this act, or engaged in any conduct that, if engaged in by that employee's employer, would constitute a contravention of a provision of this act, both the employee and the employer must be taken to have contravened the provision."

Weiner-Campanella said the best, if not the only, way for employers to protect themselves from being held accountable for the actions of their employees was to have a "clear ... procedure to deal with sexual harassment at work that is known to employees.

"Such a policy and procedure should, at the very least, contain a definition or description of sexual harassment, and make it clear that sexual harassment is unacceptable and is misconduct which could lead to dismissal."

The green paper that preceded the bill defined sexual harassment as "a form of conduct based on sex which is unwanted by the person to whom it is directed or who experiences the negative consequences of that conduct".

The consultants said sexual harassment disputes had to be referred to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration for conciliation, and then to the Labour Court for adjudication.

The bill empowered the court to make "any appropriate order", including the payment of compensatory and punitive damages.



Campaigning for quotas for women

Groups want legislation to ensure more female representation in 1999, writes Colleen Lowe-Morna

(35(5A)

Should there be legislated quotas for women in the 1999 elections? The very thought sends shivers down the spines of even the most progressive politicians. Ironically, the same politicians are supportive of race, and even gender quotas for the workplace.

Among those campaigning for gender quotas are the Commission on Gender Equality, the Cape Town-based Gender Advocacy Group and other gender activists who began the campaign for legislated quotas in the consultations leading up to the local government white paper.

These groups argued that in order to ensure a one-third representation of women in the next local government elections:

■ Political parties should be obliged to put forward at least 50% of women for seats contested on the proportional representation or list system; and that the lists be drawn up so that the first candidate on the list, and every second candidate thereafter, is a woman.

■ The current local government electoral system in which 40% of local government seats are contested on the list, and 60% on the ward or constituency system be reversed, as there is a far greater chance of ensuring participation by women on the list than in the ward system.

Despite initial indications by Minister of Constitutional Affairs Valli Moosa that this recommendation would go through, the white paper recommends that the current 40-60 balance between lists and ward seats be maintained.

It encourages – without obliging – political parties to ensure that half their candidates on the list system are women.

The fact that about one-quarter of members of Parliament are women is largely a result of the African National Congress (ANC) adopting a quota of one-third for women in the 1994 elections, which were held solely on the basis of the list system.

The 1999 elections, for which legislation is yet to be tabled, may well be based on a mixed system.

The likely reduction in the representation of women if a mixed system is adopted has already been illustrated in the case of the 1995 local government elections, which were based on a mixed system.

Women scored highly in seats contested on the basis of the list system, and poorly in the ward system, giving an overall total of 18% women councillors in local government.

Legislated quotas for women in national, provincial and local elections, coupled with electoral systems that encourage participation by women, would ensure that the advances made in the first democratic elections are at the very least maintained, if not advanced.

T Star 27/4/98

Those who argue against quotas for women in politics do so on the grounds that this will lead to tokenism.

This argument always rears its head whenever any type of affirmative action is concerned.

But, while progressive politicians fob off such arguments when it comes to race and gender quotas in the workplace, they use them to argue against quotas for women in politics.

Ironically, entering politics probably poses more challenges for women than entering the workplace. Politics is a male stronghold; it is a "dirty game"; and it is not regarded as a "seemly" thing for women to be involved in.

Democracy has guaranteed a fair racial representation in our new Parliament.

But, in the very chamber where our new constitution was adopted, it has not yet reflected the fact that 52% of South Africa's people are women.

Globally, it is now acknowledged that if women are to make any difference in decision-making structures, they need to constitute a "critical mass" of at least one-third of such positions.

A number of countries – such as India, Uganda, and Sweden, Denmark and Norway – have adopted quotas to ensure that this happens.

The local government white paper has come and gone.

But legislation for local, national and provincial elections will soon be passed by Parliament. Parliament must surely understand better than all of us that democracy by men, for men, cannot be democracy by the people, for the people.

■ *Colleen Lowe Morna is chief executive officer of the Commission on Gender Equality.*

'Rigid wages are stifling growth'

(355A)

Nicola Jenvey

DURBAN — Wage and price rigidities, exacerbated by the Employment Equity Bill, were directly impeding the growth, employment and redistribution (Gear) programme, KwaZulu-Natal premier Ben Ngubane said last week. BD 4/5/98

He told delegates to the SA Institute of Management forum that economic theory — ranging from Keynes to Friedman, neoclassical to post-Keynesian — showed that policies that mixed private sector-led growth with labour principles raised hiring and firing costs and were not successful.

In orthodox Keynesian theory, rigid wages limited investment-led economic growth, and necessitated government intervention to create employment. Neoclassical theory preached that without flexible labour markets, the economy could not restore equilibrium.

Ngubane said that in the light of growing SA unemployment he feared that new laws protecting workers would be another stumbling block for investors and limit job creation.

"As legislation increases labour market rigidities, investors will shy away, growth will not materialise and the unemployed army will fill ever outwards," he said.

Ngubane said provincial departments had to develop market-orientated understanding of the economy. Efficiency within a tight budget called for a budgetary process with focused long-term goals. Staffing decisions had to focus on competitiveness and productivity.

Nedlac agrees on code to eliminate sexual harassment

BD 6/5/98

(Sec 186) (Sec 35(5)A)

Reneé Grawitzky

THE National Economic, Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) agreed this week on a code of good practice aimed at eliminating sexual harassment in the workplace.

The code, yet to be ratified by the Nedlac executive council, will help the commission for conciliation, mediation and arbitration fulfil its obligation to prevent harassment in the workplace in terms of the Labour Relations Act.

The adoption of the code follows numerous sexual harassment cases being referred to the commission.

In recent arbitration revolving around claims of alleged sexual harassment over an 18-month period and which led to the employee's eventual resignation, the arbitrator awarded an employee the equivalent of nine months' salary as compensation.

The employee, a former personal secretary for Southern Life's Rustenburg branch manager, argued she had been subjected to acts which constituted sexual harassment. This included the manager giving her a pink G-string. The arbitrator found that unsolicited gifts such as underwear could have sexual connotations and hence constitute an act of sexual harassment.

The manager argued that wearing black underwear in an obvious manner was inappropriate and he instead gave the employee pink underwear which would improve the company's image.

The arbitrators' ruling is in line with a code of good practice.

The code is intended to guide employers and employees in dealing with claims of sexual harassment, but perpetrators and victims could include job applicants, suppliers, contractors and others dealing with a business.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual attention becomes harassment if the recipient has made it clear that the behaviour is offensive and the perpetrator knows it is unacceptable.

The definition of sexual harassment includes unwelcome physical, verbal or nonverbal conduct.

Unwelcome physical conduct can include a strip search, while verbal forms include innuendo and sexual jokes

The display of sexually explicit pictures or objects can be nonverbal conduct while harassment can encompass sexual favouritism. This can occur where a person in a position of authority rewards those who respond to his or her sexual advances while other employees are denied promotions.

Fired 'ugly' women want apology with their payout

ARG 8/5/98 (355A)

ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

Five women who were turned away from promised jobs by a Chinese company because they were said to be "too ugly" are to receive full compensation.

Millicent Pholosi, Charity Ramokgopane, Melter Seretloe, Maureen Malesela and Onicah Selebalo will today each be paid the R1 500 they were promised for six days' work as receptionists at Huawei Technology's stall at the Africa Telecom '98 Expo at Nasrec.

Huawei Technology is a Chinese communications company.

The payout follows widespread media coverage of the women's story and yesterday's condemnation of the snub by the Commission on Gender Equality.

The five women were supposed to take up their jobs – for which they had signed contracts – on Monday, but Ms Malesela and Ms Selebalo were fired on Sunday when they went for training.

Ms Pholosi, Ms Ramokgopane and Ms Seretloe were dismissed when they reported to work on Monday.

All the women were told by travel agent Patty Chiang, who had hired them on instructions from Huawei, that they had been rejected because representatives of the Chinese company thought they were "too ugly".

But Huawei spokesman Qian Min claimed the women had been turned away because they did not have higher education.

She said Ms Chiang had hired the women without confirming it with Huawei.

Ms Min could not be contacted yesterday, but Ms Chiang's lawyer said the travel agent had been commissioned to hire the five women, which she had done.

The women's attorney, Hendrik de Korte, said they had copies of the confirmation and invoice sent by Huawei. He said Ms Min, not Ms Chiang, had been responsible for firing the women.

Mr De Korte said Ms Chiang would pay the women's full salaries – as instructed over the phone by Ms Min yesterday.

But he would await a written instruction to pay out the money, as Ms Chiang was not liable for compensating the women.

Sifiso Ngema of the Labour Department, which had initiated the talks with Ms Chiang and Ms Min, said yesterday he was happy at the resolution of the problem.

The department had been negotiating with Huawei and Ms Chiang since the women reported the matter to him on Monday.

Although some of the women seemed happy at the prospect of being paid, they were adopting a wait-and-see attitude.

"I don't really know what to think. We have to wait and see what happens. But we are happy because they are paying us. We expect them to apologise to us too," Ms Malesela said.

Little mercy will be shown to those found guilty of crossing the line

Nedlac has recently adopted the code of practice drawn up to handle sexual harassment in the workplace. Dhaya Pillay looks at the issue

IN 1989 the industrial court heard its first — and one of the few reported — complaints of sexual harassment. Recently, such complaints have been made with ever-increasing frequency. An awareness of individual rights and a sense of self-worth and dignity have encouraged the reporting of sexual offences.

On the other hand there are those who need to unlearn old, bad habits, to undo a socialisation which excused or accepted sexual harassment as "macho". Adjudicators have shown little sympathy for harassers. In most reported cases, their dismissals have been upheld. Those caught unawares have seen their careers and existences catapulted into chaos and despair for a single indiscretion.

The public needs to be alerted that, like dishonesty, sexual harassment is a dismissible offence. The code of Good Practice on the Handling of Sexual Harassment Cases, recently adopted by the National Economic Development and Labour Council, is a useful tool for education. It captures what adjudicators have developed in recent years.

This article tries to explain what sexual harassment is and what the consequences might be of being found guilty of this in the workplace.

In 1989, the industrial court accepted that sexual harassment meant unwanted sexual advances in the employment sphere. The code defines sexual harassment to be "unwanted conduct of a sexual nature". This definition suggests that the test is subjective. In other words the conduct must be "unwanted" by the recipient. A harasser is therefore unlikely to escape by pleading that the recipient was overly sensitive.

Another definition of sexual harassment is "the unwanted imposition of sexual requirements in the context of a relationship of unequal power". By definition, the word harassment implies an uneven power relationship.

The definition used when conducting a survey in 1990 of employees of the US government was "the deliberate or repeated unsolicited verbal comments, gestures or physical contact of a sexual nature that is considered to be unwelcome by the recipient". The code is wider. It does not require the conduct to be "deliberate" or "intentional", nor does the conduct have to be repeated. The code includes as an example of sexual harassment the putting up of offensive posters, which is not covered by the survey definition.

Is there a distinction between bad taste and flirting and sexual harassment? There is. Jokes, remarks or conduct which are in bad taste or flirtatious do not necessarily create an intolerable environment. When they do, such as when conduct is persistent and becomes unwelcome, it would amount to sexual harassment. The culture of the workplace should be considered when demarcating the boundaries of acceptable conduct. Bad taste and flirtation may be a breach of a workplace rule warranting a penalty short of dismissal.

The code draws a distinction between sexual attention and harassment. Sexual attention can become harassment if it is persistent, offensive or unacceptable to the recipient.

The facts of the 1989 industrial court case were that a senior executive had on many occasions touched and caressed female subordinates in a sexual way, fondled their breasts, slapped their buttocks. Among the victims was a 19-year-old who blew the whistle on him. The others followed suit. In his defence the executive bragged that when he did not touch them, they seemed to complain. He described his conduct as being no more than "mildly flirtatious" or "Mediterranean".

Complaints of sexual harassment will usually surface in one of two ways: the harasser is dismissed and challenges his dismissal or the recipient resigns on the basis that employment has become intolerable.

Either way, the opposite party is usually the employer. This is so because the employer has an obligation to provide a safe working environment. An employee who resigns from an environment which is not safe is said to be constructively dismissed. In the case of the dismissed harasser, the employer has to justify the dismissal by proving the harassment and also that fair procedure was followed before the dismissal.

Sexual harassment usually takes one of two forms. The first is the quid pro quo variety which takes place when the harasser offers or promises a reward, benefit, better conditions of employment or a promotion in exchanges for sexual favours.

The second is the hostile environment type. The harasser's conduct creates an intolerable situation sometimes leading to the constructive dismissal of the recipient. Both types may coexist.

The industrial court recognised the two forms of harassment in the 1989 case. It also accepted that:

- ☐ Sexual harassment violated the right to integrity of the body and personality which were protected criminally and civilly;
- ☐ The responsibility for providing a safe working environment free of sexual harassment rested with the employer;
- ☐ Sexual harassment amounted to misconduct;
- ☐ The misconduct was of such seriousness as to warrant the dismissal of the harasser; and
- ☐ Sexual harassment was not confined to members of the opposite sex, nor was it only limited to harassment by men of women only.

The code endorses this approach.

In December last year the labour appeal court found guilty of sexual harassment a supervisor who, under the influence of alcohol, hugged and tried to kiss a subordinate and made advances to her over a period of about four hours. The presiding judge said it was a violation of the constitutional right to human dignity, although the court heard that not every act of sexual harassment would lead to dismissal.

Conspiracy between the complainant and the employer is often raised as a defence. Such a defence is often hard to sustain. In the 1995 case in the industrial court the harasser submitted that the three women complainants had conspired with a number of managers to get rid of him. The allegation was unfounded as the matter surfaced only when one of the complainants was questioned about a deterioration in her work performance.

As with most sexual offences, proof is a problem. It is usually the recipient's word against that of the harasser and vice versa. Recent rulings of the high court that "the cautionary rule shall not undermine the unequivocal commitment to gender equality" are helpful. In so saying, acting judge Dennis Davis shunned "the traditional stereotypes that the complainant had a dubious sexual past and had some mischievous feminine reason" for reporting on a man who never did anything to her.

Corroboration is usually sought by looking at surrounding circumstances. Gifts, cards and letters have been the downfall of many men. In an attempt to justify giving his secretary a pink, as opposed to a black G-string, an employer submitted that he had no sexual intentions in doing so. He merely wanted to improve the company's image.

A warning would probably be appropriate sanction for conduct which is in bad taste or flirtatious. Once the conduct enters the realm of sexual harassment, it infringes constitutional and human rights. Dismissal is the most likely sanction. Counselling is another option.

However, in most cases the tendency is to deny the wrong to the bitter end. It is doubtful that counselling would assist a person who has not acknowledged his or her wrong.

Compensation for constructive dismissal is limited by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) to a maximum of 12 months' pay. If the dispute is framed as a case of discrimination, it must be adjudicated in the labour court. In that case a maximum of 24 months compensation would be payable.

The victims of sexual harassment are not only the recipients but often the harasser's children. In an instant their lives may change from being children of an employed to an unemployed parent. No parent should expose their children to that risk.

☐ Pillay is a senior CCMA commissioner and arbitrator with Independent Mediation Services of SA.

POLICE ACTION 'SHOCKING'

Sex harassment case may be far from over

CT 3/7/198 (3554)

A FORMER policeman found guilty in an internal inquiry of sexual harassment, but who did not face criminal charges, may be in for a new fight, reports **CLAUDIA CAVANAGH.**

CAROL van den Heever, 26, thought the R500 fine and demotion her boss Mario Laubscher received after an internal police inquiry found him guilty of sexual harassment was far too lenient but was "horrified" to hear that Attorney-General Frank Kahn had withdrawn criminal charges.

Laubscher also walked off with a golden handshake of R1,6 million earlier this year.

Van den Heever claims that Laubscher, as her commanding officer at Woodstock police station, harassed her for six years until she was a nervous wreck, lost her hair and developed an eating disorder.

"This particular incident highlights how victims of sexual harassment can fall through the cracks because the system can't deal with the issue in a just manner," said Vivien Taylor of the Gender Commission. "We find it very disturbing that a case like this can be decided outside court in the way it has with no recourse being given to the victim."

Taylor said if Van den Heever wants the Gender Commission to take up her case, they would.

"We will hold discussions with the Independent Complaints Directorate (which has already objected to Kahn's move), contact the attorney-general's office and our legal department will look at what recourse the victim has."

The Gender Commission is an independent body formed in terms of the Constitution. It has the power to subpoena officials and members of the public, to litigate when necessary and recommend changes to law and policy.

Kahn's office say charges were withdrawn against Laubscher on "humanitarian grounds".

It claims he is suffering from ill health and acute depression; was convicted and sentenced at a departmental hearing; suffered as a result of the publicity given to the case, and was dismissed as station commander.

"But what about the victim's pain and suffering?" asked Taylor.

"By withdrawing charges on humanitarian grounds the attorney-general simply reinforces the power of people at the top to undermine the person at the bottom — who in this case happens to be a woman."

Taylor said Van den Heever was brave to have spoken out now "after being subjected to alleged abuse for years".

"It paves the way for other women in similar situations," she said.

It highlights how victims can fall through the cracks.

In an interview with the *Cape Times* this week, Van den Heever detailed the events that finally led to charges being laid.

It all started seven years ago when the 19-year-old joined the force. Since then, she alleges, Laubscher sexually harassed her.

"I wouldn't even allow my husband near me. I was impossible to live with," she said.

But why was the situation allowed to continue for so long?

"I thought I'd have no chance here if I reported him," she said.

A colleague, she claims, filed a similar complaint against Laubscher in 1992 and the matter had been quickly swept under the carpet.

But not before all the women who had given statements were called in and threatened with losing their jobs, she alleged.

When she pushed for an internal inquiry, it was declined until after she'd filed criminal charges against the man, Van den Heever says.

These claims were refuted by the police.

"An investigation into the matter was initiated as soon as it came to the attention of police management," Captain Mark Romburgh said yesterday.

"A further indication of the seriousness with which the case was viewed is that a transfer was arranged for the victim, on her request, the following day."

Regarding the 1992 case, Romburgh says a senior officer was instructed to investigate.

"He obtained a statement from the complainant in which she alleged that three other employees had also been harassed. When they were interviewed and statements obtained, they denied being harassed or any knowledge of the incident."

The woman who claimed she'd been harassed then said she no longer wanted to proceed with the matter and the investigation was concluded.

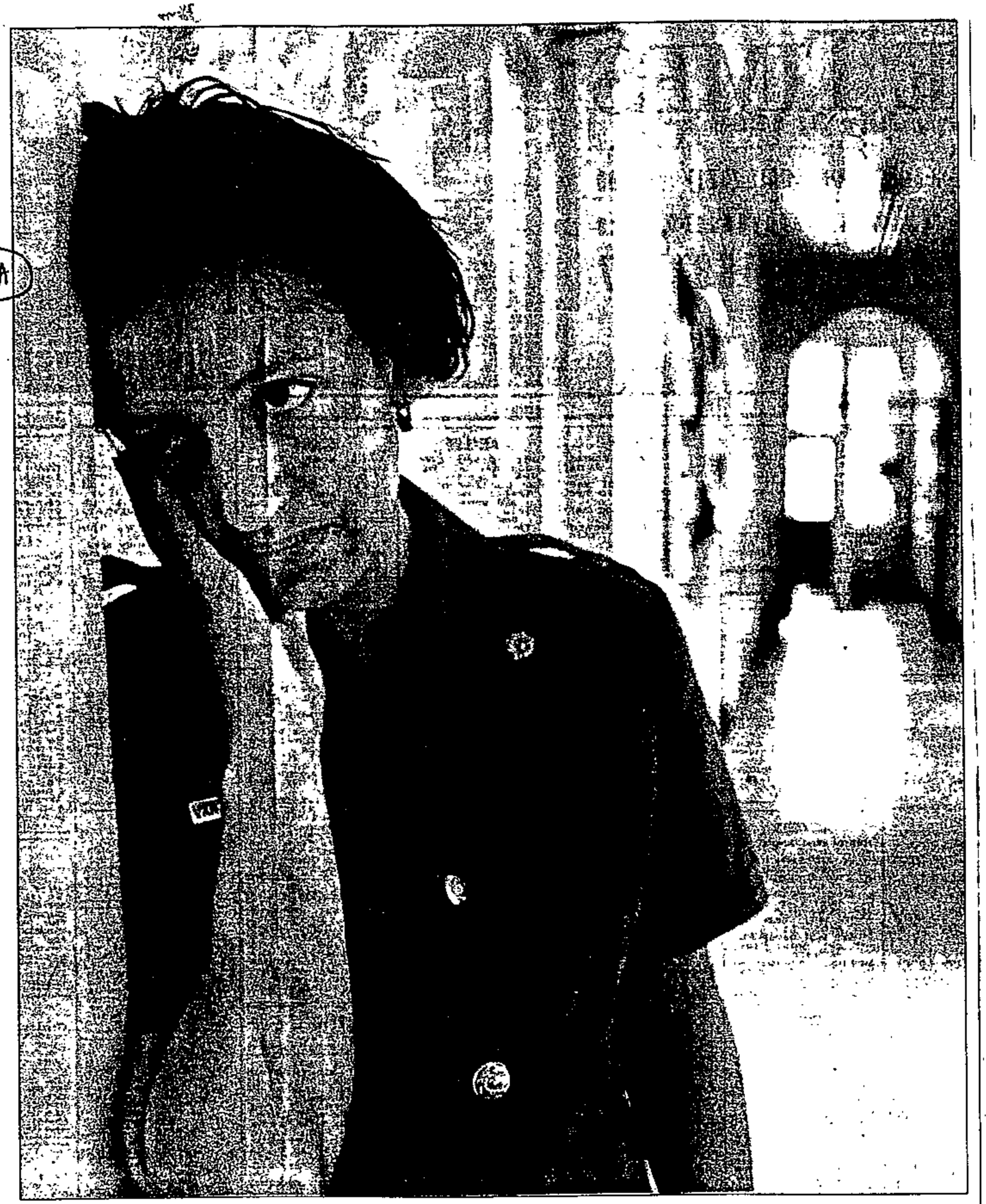
"No evidence can be found that any undue pressure was brought to bear on this complainant or the other three employees."

Romburgh says new disciplinary regulations in the police force define sexual harassment as a "misconduct".

"An indication of just how seriously this subject is considered by senior management is the fact that the national commissioner issued an instruction that all quid pro quo sexual harassment must be considered as serious in terms of the disciplinary proceedings," he said.

But, he pointed out, the maximum fine that can be imposed at a department trial is R500.

Also objecting to Kahn's withdrawal of charges are the Independent Complaints Directorate, the Training Service and Healing Centre for Women and Nicro.



'JUSTICE WAS NOT SERVED': Carol van den Heever speaks about her "horror" on hearing that Attorney-General Frank Kahn had withdrawn charges against the man she claims harassed her. *PICTURE: GARTH STEAD*

M+G 10-16/7/98

3534

Constable to sue sex cop

Stuart Hess

Minister of Justice Dullah Omar has asked for a report into Western Cape Attorney General, Frank Khan's decision not to prosecute a former police superintendent accused of sexually harassing a colleague for six years.

Khan twice declined to prosecute Mario Laubscher, on the grounds that he was suffering from depression.

Carol van der Heever (27) alleges Laubscher, former station commander at Woodstock police station in Cape Town, tried to pull down her pants, told her he had wet dreams about her and said he would have sex with her before his retirement.

"He told me he had been trying to get me into bed for six years and ... that as this was his last year, he would get it done. He often tried to touch my legs under the table and he rubbed his hand on my behind. He told me that he had had a wet dream about me ... but before he could come his wife woke up." She will now file for damages in a civil case.

Laubscher received a R1,6-million golden handshake after Khan dropped the charges two weeks ago.

"It feels as if he is laughing at me. I find it strange that he [Khan] has feelings for the defendant. That man [Laubscher] is fucking sick," she said.

At an internal disciplinary hearing last year Laubscher was demoted and fined R500. The police watchdog, the Independent Complaints Directorate (ICD), is dismayed at Khan's decision not to prosecute. It asked Khan to review the case again.

"We weren't convinced that he applied his mind to this matter as his mandate requires," said the ICD's regional director, Riaz Saloojee.

The Western Cape police's provincial equity manager, Jenny du Plooy, was not surprised by the decision. "It is an indication of the male dominated culture which still exists in the service. The psychological state of the perpetrator is taken more seriously than that of the victim."

Van der Heever's case has also been taken up by the gender commission. Its representative, Vivien Taylor, said they were concerned about the internal processes of the police and justice system. "We were very worried about the limited recourse she [Van der Heever] had regarding this matter. Her human rights were completely ignored," said Taylor.

The legal representative for Rape Crisis, Bronwyn Pithey, said Khan should not be overly criticised as he was committed to prosecuting sex crimes. Laubscher and Khan were not available for comment.

Sergeant fights sexual harassment

355A

11/7/98

(~~57A~~) ARG

TWEET GAINSBOROUGH-WARING

Two policemen and one policewoman looked on and laughed as their station commander tried to pull down a woman sergeant's slacks.

"I felt so dirty," Carol van den Heever, 26, told Saturday Argus this weekend.

Humiliated in front of her colleagues, Sergeant Van den Heever lodged a complaint of sexual harassment against her superior, Woodstock police station commissioner Mario Laubscher. He was later dismissed.

The policewoman alleges Commissioner Laubscher repeatedly harassed her in his office over several years.

In one incident, Commissioner Laubscher allegedly tried to pull down the sergeant's slacks while she was standing at the office photocopy machine.

The Government's Gender Commission has agreed to champion Sergeant Van den Heever's cause and will meet the attorney-general's office with a view to the possible prosecution of Commissioner Laubscher.

Earlier this year, the attorney-general declined to prosecute the police commander on "humanitarian grounds" after a police departmental hearing found him guilty of sexual harassment.

The "humanitarian grounds" included evidence that he had been suffering from depression, had suffered as a result of the publicity given to the case and that he had already been dismissed as station commander. Commissioner Laubscher had, in fact, received a R1,6-million retirement package after the incidents.

Sergeant Van den Heever said she had been extremely embarrassed and humiliated by Commissioner's Laubscher's actions at the photocopy machine.

"I managed to keep my slacks from falling down, but he was trying to embarrass me," she said.

Police spokeswoman Superintendent Nina Kirsten said she was not aware of this particular incident, but that all the information had been handed to the police's internal investigating unit.

Sergeant Van den Heever said Commissioner Laubscher had sexually harassed her and other policewomen at the Woodstock police station for six years.

She said she had exhausted all her resources to seek justice. She had also approached the Independent Complaints Directorate, which had taken the case as far as it could but did not have the power to take the case to court.

Viviene Taylor, of the Gender Commission, said the commission was taking up the case to set a precedent in order to protect women from sexual harassment in the workplace.

"It is the first case (of sexual harassment in the workplace) to be taken up by the Gender Commission and highlights how, in many instances, women are subjected to power imbalances in the workplace," she said.

The Gender Commission is an independent body formed in terms of the Constitution. It is able to subpoena officials and members of the public.

It may also litigate and recommend changes to legislation and policy.

Ms Taylor said it was particularly ironic that the harassment had occurred in the police service, which was supposed to promote justice and protect women from abuse.

She said a major area of concern was that the emotional suffering of the victim had been totally ignored.

"Also of major concern to the Gender Commission is what is happening in the justice system," Ms Taylor said.

She said Sergeant Van den Heever had been brave in going public with her complaints. That would give others in a similar position the confidence to speak out.

"The Gender Commission hopes this case will have an impact on senior management across the board and improve working conditions for women," Ms Taylor said.

She said the commission would meet Western Cape Attorney-General Frank Kahn, the Independent Complaints Directorate and Sergeant Van den Heever.

Riaz Saloojee, regional director of the Independent Complaints Directorate, said the directorate felt the case should have gone to court.

"We are very happy the Gender Commission has taken this case and is prepared to give (the prevention of) sexual harassment the prominence it deserves," he said.



HURT: Sergeant Van den Heever

harassment

...ne glass ceiling built at business schools

ST(BT) 12/7/98

(355A)

Women are not enrolling for MBA courses in the numbers expected. VICTORIA GRIFFITH examines why



NO HEAD FOR FIGURES . . . gender inequality is perpetuated in MBA programmes

AFTER decades of progress in women's rights, one would expect the number of women getting business degrees to be surging rapidly towards parity with men.

That is not the case. While women make up over 40% of total enrolment in medical and law schools in the US, just 29% of those attending elite MBA programmes are female, according to women's rights watchdog Catalyst. Even more disturbing, female enrolment has stagnated; there has been no upward movement for almost a decade.

Take a look at what women study at business school, and the gap looks even wider. While marketing and human relations courses are filled with feminine faces, management and finance courses continue to be dominated by men. "Women are concentrating on fields that would tend to place them in staff, not leadership, positions once they get out," says Mary Mattis of Catalyst. "Inequality in MBA programmes is perpetuating inequality in the work place."

Catalyst has launched the first major study of the issue, in conjunction with the University of Michigan. While the research will probably not be completed until next year, the study is already sparking dialogue on the issue. Some of the hypotheses about the low attendance of women include:

☐ Lack of pay-back for the degree. "A lot of women look at the sacrifices my generation made, and decide it hasn't been worthwhile," says Daphne Atkinson, assistant dean for admissions at Cornell University's business school. "There aren't a lot of women CEOs, or women on the boards of major companies. Women fear they will pay a lot of money for an MBA, work long hours, only to get held up by the glass ceiling."

☐ A perceived macho attitude on Wall Street, one of the premier careers for MBAs, puts women off finance studies in particular. "The male culture on Wall Street is just considered too unbearable," says Barbara Shannon, a Wharton MBA candidate.

☐ Work/family concerns. The timing of business school often runs right up against women's desire to have a family. Elite MBA programmes usually require a few years' experience as a prerequisite to entry.

"One of my friends asked the financial service firm she'll be working at after graduation how many women take maternity leave in their first three years," says Shannon. "The answer was 'none'. That means if she wants to do that she'll be a trailblazer — a pretty uncomfortable position to be in."

☐ Worries about the cost of an MBA. With an MBA costing about $70 000 for tuition and living expenses, many women fear they won't be able to afford it. "Women are definitely more concerned with the price than men, and we're not sure why," says Bob Alig, head of admissions for Wharton.

Because women often want to work in less lucrative fields after graduation, the problem is exacerbated.

Sue Emmott, an MBA candidate at Cambridge University's business school, wanted a management degree to boost her skills at dealing with refugees and displaced people, for instance. Had she not received a scholarship, it might have been difficult for her to finance the education.

☐ A male-orientated culture in the classroom. "Women complain of stereotyping in MBA programmes that affects their ability to learn," says Arthur Centonze, dean of the Lubin School of Management at Pace University. Because there are so few females, they tend to be divided up among teams. Too often, they say, they find themselves alone in a group of men and expected to provide the "feminine" point of view.

☐ A lack of role models within the school. Most MBA programmes have few women faculty members. "Having a lot of female professors around makes a huge difference to women students' self-confidence," says Anisha Sanghavi, a student at the Lubin School.

MBA programmes cannot address all these drawbacks alone. The percentage of women at business schools may change substantially only after a change in attitude in corporate America. Yet observers say the schools must take some responsibility. "We are not doing as good a job as we should in addressing women's concerns," said Alig.

Probably the most important step is making sure there are enough women faculty members to act as role models. Discussion groups, lectures and conferences dealing with women's issues is also considered key. "We don't just want to listen to women who've risen to the top. We also want to hear about women who've run into difficulties and why."

Help with finances is essential. A number of schools — particularly in Europe — have scholarships specifically for women.

MBA programmes may also want to take a look at the way their classrooms are structured. "A lot of women find business courses too hard-nosed," says Centonze of the Lubin School, whose enrolment is about 40% female, far higher than the norm. "Some schools expect students to take a position and defend it, even if they don't believe in it. Women have a hard time during that. We use more collaboration, less confrontational methods." — *Financial Times.*

Government set to lay down new laws for women

Bills aims to right some of SA's long-standing wrongs

CAROL PATON

A PACKAGE of Bills aimed at increasing the power of women in their relationships with men is scheduled to be debated in Parliament in the next two sessions.

The package includes:

- The Domestic Violence Bill, which was tabled this week;
- The Maintenance Bill; and
- The Recognition of Customary Marriages Bill, still in draft form.

The Minister of Justice, Dullah Omar, has also requested the SA Law Commission, which drafts legislation, to investigate changes to the law concerning rape. It has been asked to look into broadening the definition of rape and abolishing rules of evidence which have, in the past, made conviction difficult.

Under common law, rape is defined as sexual intercourse between a man and a woman without the woman's consent. A source in the commission described the "requirement of penetration" as being "a problem".

If changed, the definition of rape could include other sexual acts and sex between men without consent.

Omar has also asked the commission to look into the "cautionary rule" — a rule of evidence which, when applied in the case of rape, meant that a person could not be convicted on the basis of the evidence of the complainant alone. It was thrown out by the Appeal Court in March.

The Recognition of Customary Marriages Bill, which, for the first time, will recognise customary unions as civil marriages, will have a revolutionary impact on the lives of rural women. Women in customary unions are considered minors by the law and may not enter into contractual agreements or own property.

The Bill declares the wife in a customary marriage to be "in all respects a status equal to that of her husband". All such marriages entered into once the Bill is passed will be in community of property, which will give couples joint ownership of all their property and equal power to manage their joint finances.

While polygamy is recognised and condoned — each of a man's multiple marriages will be recognised as a civil marriage — it is made more difficult for a man to take additional wives.

In an effort to protect the property rights of an existing wife, a husband who wishes to enter into a further customary marriage with another woman will have to apply to the court to bring about a division of property among his spouses and to approve a contract which will regulate their property relationship.

A source involved in compiling the Bill said the property provisions were a creative way of dealing with the thorny question of polygamy without abolishing it. The Bill, drawn up for discussion, has not yet been approved by the commission or presented to the Cabinet.

The Domestic Violence Bill is another important piece of legislation that will boost the rights of women. While the Family Violence Act was concerned only with abuse between spouses, the Bill will offer protection to victims who are in any sort of domestic relationship with an abuser.

One of the most important advances in the Bill is that it places police at the scene of domestic violence under the obligation to inform a victim of her rights to gain protection. Such protection can be obtained through a protection order from the courts free of charge.

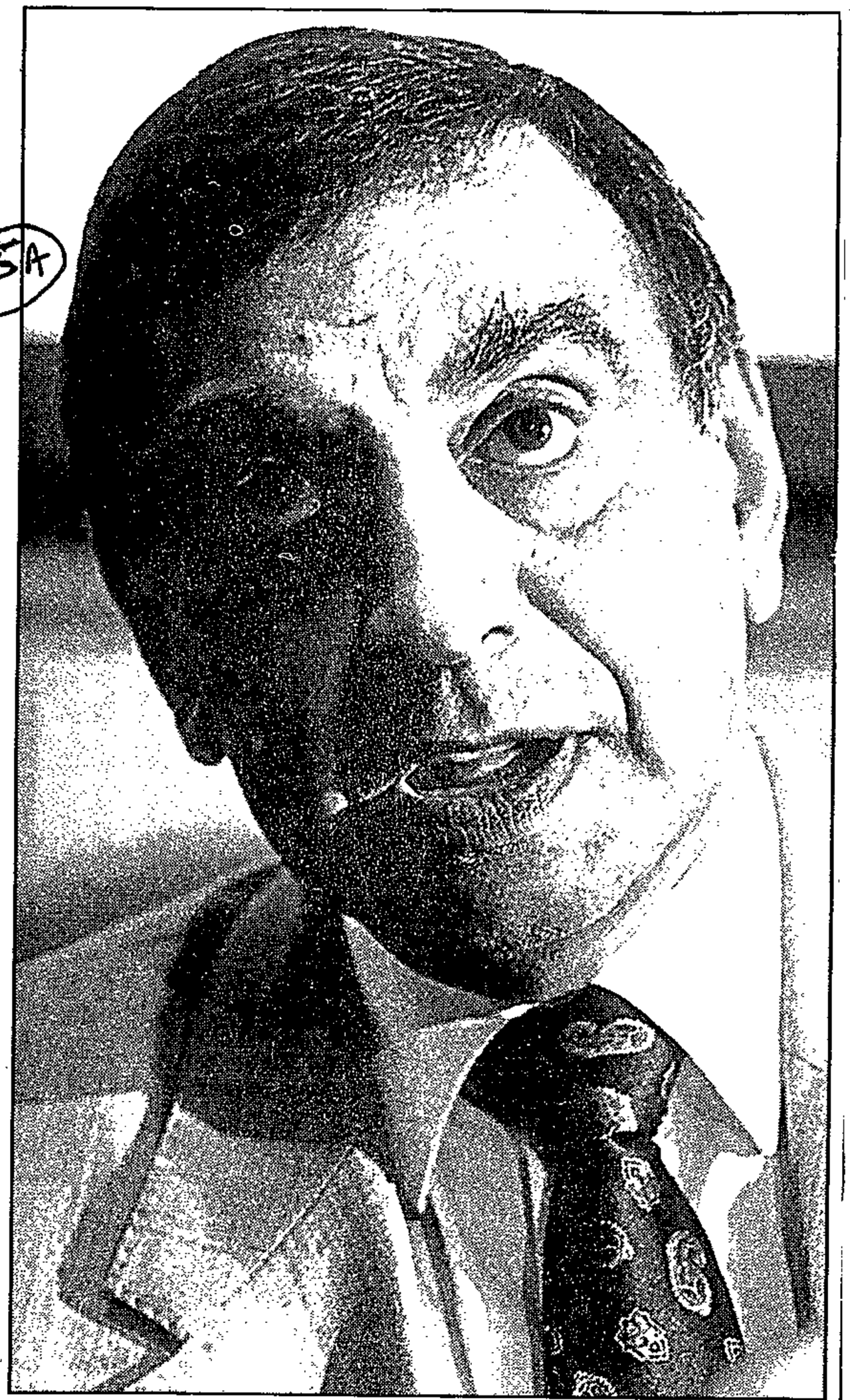
As in the previous Act, police or peace officers can arrest anyone they have reason to believe has committed an act of domestic violence.

They are also legally bound to arrest an abuser who has breached a protection order, who may be released only if ordered by a court.

Lisa Vetten, of the Centre for the Study of Violence, said the Bill's real challenge lay in ensuring that it was properly implemented as police officers were often not trained to deal properly with family violence.

The Bill will penalise law-enforcement officers who fail to carry out their duties with a fine or a prison sentence of up to three months.

The Maintenance Bill, tabled earlier this year, will make it easier for women to extract maintenance from unco-operative fathers. Among the provisions is the extension of a maintenance court's power to grant orders in the absence of a person under an obligation to pay maintenance.



LADIES' MAN: Justice Minister Dullah Omar, who has asked the SA Law Commission to look into changes to the law concerning rape

Women set to win more power

Latest bills lift years-old weight of oppression

(355A) (~~355A~~) (~~21~~ 11) ARG 1/8/98

LINDA DANIELS

Sisters are doing it for themselves – with the help of a new package of proposed legislation that gives women more legal muscle in their relationships with men.

The Maintenance Bill, the Recognition of Customary Marriages Bill, the Domestic Violence Bill which was tabled last week, and a new code on sexual harassment in the workplace are all aimed at eradicating the country's long-standing oppression of women.

The Domestic Violence Bill protects any victim in a "domestic relationship".

This means that married women and single women in a relationship will be protected.

Paul Setsetse, spokesman for Justice Minister Dullah Omar, said: "This is a giant step and I'm sure it will be welcomed by many women's groups and other concerned parties."

Also covered by the bill is the victim's right to seek protection from an abusive partner by going to any member of civil society, such as a social worker or policeman, who will then seek protection from the court on behalf of the victim

The bill will also force police to play a more active role in preventing domestic violence. In terms of the new bill, police who are at the scene of domestic violence are obliged to inform victims of their rights to protection.

Police who do not comply with the regulations can face a prison sentence of up to three months, or pay a fine.

The Maintenance Bill, tabled earlier this year, will do away with the legal formalities that impede the process of maintenance payments.

'The new bills are a positive move for women, but are overdue'

One provision in the new bill allows the maintenance courts to grant orders against absent fathers to pay maintenance.

The Recognition of Customary Marriages Bill, which is still in its draft form, will for the first time recognise customary unions as civil marriages.

Present legislation governing customary unions regard women in these partnerships as minors.

As a result, they cannot own property in a customary union.

If the bill is passed by Parliament, a woman in this type of union will be equal to her partner and have the same rights.

The new code on sexual harassment will introduce important changes to working women.

No longer will women have to grapple with the fear that they could lose their jobs if they report harassment, or that their complaints about offensive behaviour will be fobbed off as an over-reaction to "acceptable social behaviour".

The new code presents guidelines to determine the parameters of sexual harassment.

According to the code, sexual harassment is unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature.

An employee becomes a victim of sexual harassment when she makes it clear to the perpetrator that his behaviour is offensive, or if the perpetrator knows that his behaviour has sexual intentions.

The bills, which are the result of written submissions from the police, magistrates, individuals and non-governmental organisations, have been introduced against the backdrop of a dramatic increase in violent crimes against women.

According to the Human Sciences Research Council, 1 572 cases of rape and attempted rape were reported between January and March this year in the Western Cape alone.

Throughout the country, 12 716 cases were reported.

Nthabiseng Mogale, director of People Opposing Woman Abuse (Powa), said: "The new bills are a positive move for women, although they are long overdue.

"Coming from a organisation such as ours, where we deal with victims every day, the implementation of these bills is paramount.

"Government must see that these bills are implemented otherwise they serve no purpose for women."

Prejudice in the corridors of power

ST(CM) 2/8/98

(355A) (355A)

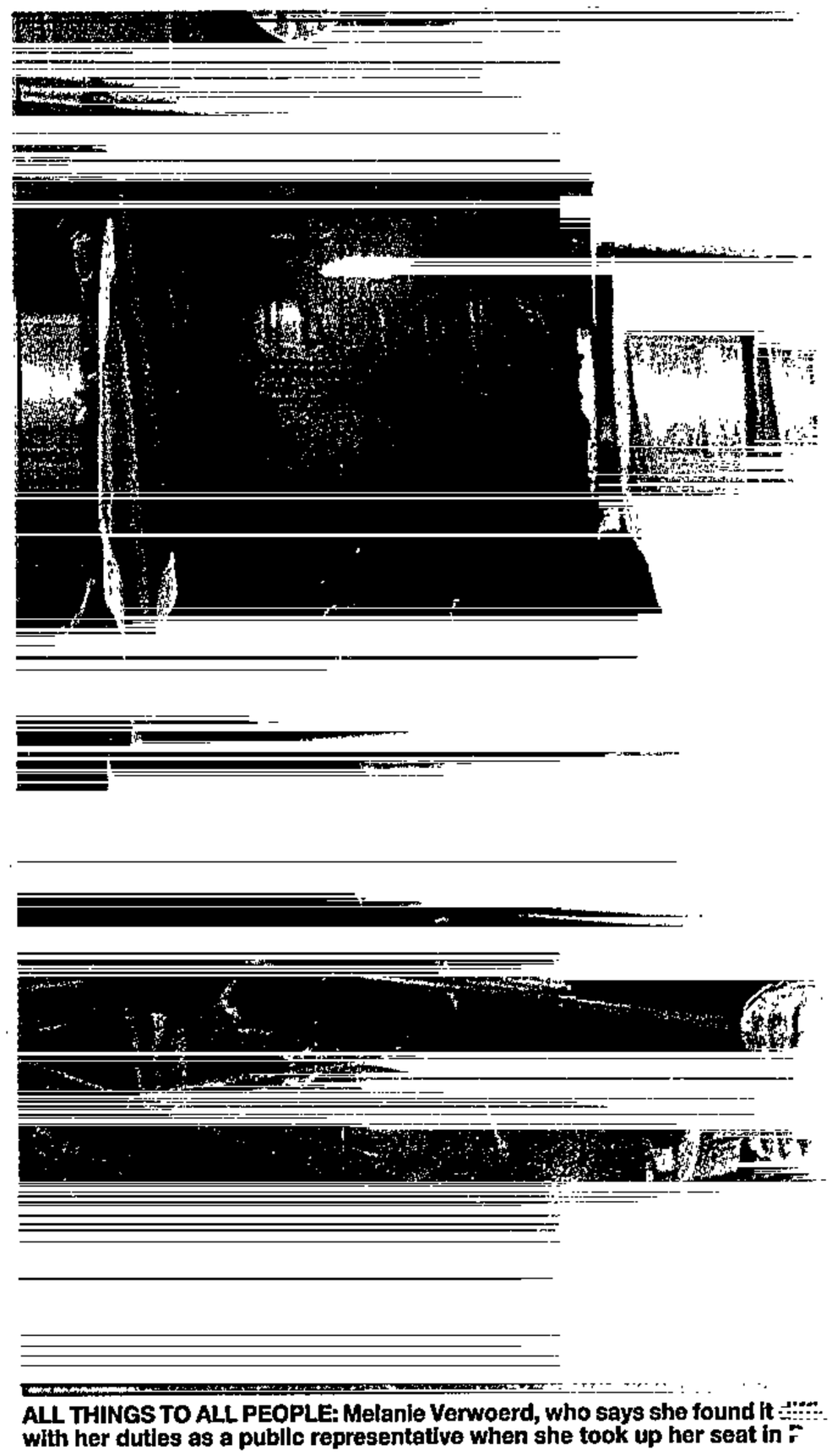
A woman's work is still not done in Parliament, writes CAROL PATON



BALEKA MBETE KGOSITSILE



FRENE GINWALA



ALL THINGS TO ALL PEOPLE: Melanie Verwoerd, who says she found it [illegible] with her duties as a public representative when she took up her seat in [illegible]

WHEN she first arrived in Parliament, Pregs Govender spent a good deal of time looking for a women's toilet.

After climbing up and down stairs and wandering along corridors, Govender posted a sign on the door of one of two men's toilets near her office and wrote "women".

It was the beginning of a battle to change Parliament and the attitudes of its members, to take seriously the 100 or so women who arrived with the ANC's quota rule that 30 percent of its representatives elected in 1994 would be women.

The quota rule introduced into Parliament a trend that was way ahead of SA society, where women, especially black women, are at the bottom of the occupational ladder and where it is taken for granted that they alone are responsible for domestic work and childcare.

Breaking down these patterns and enlarging the pool of talent from which its leaders are drawn were the main reasons for the ANC's quota system.

But, battling against such attitudes and the conflict between work and home, many of the ANC's women MPs are paying a high personal price to make their mark in Parliament.

The first and most obvious problem women have faced is sexism from male MPs.

Baleka Mbete-Kgositsile, Parliament's deputy Speaker, who made her mark as an ANC leader both in exile and in the constitutional negotiations that followed the ANC's return to South Africa, found herself on the receiving end on entering Parliament.

"In the beginning I was on the land committee. When it came to choosing the chairman, my name was raised and so was Phatekile Holomisa's.

"The six women on the committee voted for me and the seven men voted for him," says Mbete-Kgositsile.

There is a tendency among members, both male and female, not to look at women when it comes to choosing chair positions, she says — proving the need for a women's quota.

"Quotas will be relevant until we get to a point where women have become integral to our way of thinking — but I'm quite sure that will take a century," she adds cynically.

Frene Ginwala, the parliamentary Speaker, agrees. "When a woman raises her hand what she is about to say is taken as trivial — or people say: 'Look, she's going to raise women's issues,' " says Ginwala, a veteran women's rights campaigner.

Ginwala and Mbete-Kgositsile are two of the most powerful women in Parliament. A third is Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, the head of the joint standing committee on intelligence.

The intelligence committee does not elect its own chairman. Because of the sensitive nature of its business, the incumbent is appointed by the President.

Mapisa-Nqakula's appointment in September 1996 was met with raised eyebrows from a number of her colleagues.

During her first year in Parliament, because she was pregnant, she says she did not make much of an impact.

"People were saying: 'What is this?' To many of them I was a relatively unknown person."

But over the past two years, she has asserted her own unique style of leadership over the multi-party committee.

"I've proved what I could do and I have asserted myself. But in our committee, because of the kinds of issues we discuss, it is essential to establish some kind of rapport among the members. I have enjoyed doing that, and as members we have a very co-operative relationship."

Apart from battling sexism in their workplace, women MPs, like working women the world over, must also wrestle with the conflict between work and home.

MPs are expected to work hard, each day wading through a mountain of paper to keep abreast of committee work and debates and doing party and constituency work.

Added to this is the Westminster tradition followed in South Africa of Parliament as a man's institution, where debates were scheduled for the afternoon, after the stock exchange and banks had closed for the day, and ran on into the evening or sometimes late into the night.

So how do women cope, and what do their children say?

Mbete-Kgositsile has five children, most of whom are now grown up.

Her youngest, Neo, is 12 — a 12-year-old, she says, "who has had to grow up very fast".

She gets home between 7.30pm and 9pm, attends meetings most weekends and often travels away from home.

"Now and again, my boy asks me: 'Do you have to go to this meeting?' Then I realise that here is a human being with emotional needs. It is difficult for me and also for them," she says.

She recently promised Neo she would spend two weekends a month with him — an agreement which, he has had to point out, has not been honoured.

But it is her third child, Duma, with a history of emotional problems, who has borne the brunt of her busy life, she says.

"He has really suffered because of my programmes. Since 1995 he was unable to go back to school because emotionally he just wasn't coping.

"He is back at school now, but he is really struggling."

Melanie Verwoerd is a far more junior MP but, as a young wife and mother, she experienced great difficulties combining these roles with her duties as a public representative.

Verwoerd, the youngest MP, was only 26 when she took up her seat, with two young children, aged one and four.

"It was very hard. My four-year-old would get up at 5am and start crying until I left the house. I didn't expect that it would be that hard or that the hours would be so long. There are also the expectations of the people you represent, who can phone you at 5.30am and tell you that their roof is leaking."

However, Verwoerd reached a point when she realised that she had gone a bit too far in trying to meet the expectations that had been placed on her.

"I realised that women could do this thing, but the painful part was when the children looked surprised whenever I came into the house or burst into tears when the phone rang," she says.

Now she leads a more rational life, having moved closer to Parliament to save time, and she is a lot stricter about working after hours.

Every MP who is a wife or a mother is privately engaged in her own balancing act.

Collectively women have also challenged the status quo, recently succeeding, for instance, in changing the rules of Parliament to ensure that no debate goes beyond 6pm.

They have done other pioneering work which will ensure that when the ANC tots up its achievements in 1999, the situation of ordinary SA women will have changed tangibly.

Govender, who kicked off the battle to change Parliament with the toilet incident, is leading the charge.

She is [illegible] formation [illegible] called the [illegible] tus of [illegible] committee, [illegible] er to [illegible] interrogate [illegible] grammes and to [illegible]

So far [illegible] effect of [illegible] grammes [illegible] mulated [illegible] gramme [illegible] facing [illegible] acceptance [illegible] called the [illegible]

As a [illegible] Budget, [illegible]



LE: Melanie Verwoerd, who says she found it difficult to combine her roles as a young wife and mother representative when she took up her seat in Parliament at the age of 26 Pictures: TERRY SHEAN

far
ing
eri-
bin-
MP,
up
ing
the
it
the
ere
the
can
tell
."
ied
hat
in
ons

ing after hours.

Every MP who is a wife or a mother is privately engaged in her own balancing act.

Collectively women have also challenged the status quo, recently succeeding, for instance, in changing the rules of Parliament to ensure that no debate goes beyond 6pm.

They have done other pioneering work which will ensure that when the ANC tots up its achievements in 1999, the situation of ordinary SA women will have changed tangibly.

Govender, who kicked off the battle to change Parliament with the toilet incident, is leading the charge.

She is the force behind the formation of a new committee called the quality of life and status of women joint standing committee, which has the power to call ministers and interrogate them on programmes concerning women and to hold public hearings.

So far the committee has commissioned research on the effect of government programmes on women, it has formulated a legislative programme to address problems facing women and it has won acceptance for an initiative called the Women's Budget.

As a result of the Women's Budget, each ministry is now required to provide a gender analysis of its budget.

Govender wants this extended to all legislation, which, she says, should carry an attached memorandum on its anticipated effects.

Another initiative, this time from Ginwala, is the establishment of a Women's Empowerment Unit, geared towards training women MPs, particularly those from rural and disadvantaged backgrounds.

"Women come into this institution out of a society where they are subordinate. They come into this institution handicapped. This poses tremendous difficulties, and we need to give them the support to manage," says Ginwala.

Support should include help in managing their personal lives, she adds.

It is in their personal lives that women have paid the highest price.

While it is impossible to make an official tally, one woman said there had been as many as 30 divorces in the ANC's first year in office. Among those there have been three custody battles, about which the women involved will not speak, where former husbands have demanded custody on the basis that their ex-wives have no time for the children because of the hours they work.

Mapisa-Nqakula, whose husband, Charles, is an SA Communist Party official based in Johannesburg, is one of many women living alone in Cape Town, away from their families. When she was appointed chairman of her committee her new baby was only 10 months old.

"At that point I had a discussion with my husband and the rest of the family. They all voted against me and said the baby must come to Johannesburg because of my time constraints.

"I was torn apart. This was going to be my Cape Town baby. It shattered me — but I realised that in Johannesburg there would be better stability."

The strong presence of women in Parliament has influenced the sexual politics of the institution in other ways.

Sexual harassment does occur, particularly affecting women who are lower in status. However, a case has never been officially reported to the ANC's Chief Whip — often the reason being that "the power relation was just too way off".

Men have also had some difficulty in coming to terms with their newly powerful female counterparts.

Says Mapisa-Nqakula: "Men are not very fond of a woman who comes across strongly. They even shy away.

"When you discuss it with them they frankly say that some of us are too strong to have remained in marriages. They even ask me: 'How does your husband cope with you?' "

But she and Charles are still together — a tribute, she says, to the great support he has given her.

Other women, too, pay tribute to their partners. Verwoerd, for instance, describes her husband, Wilhelm, as being "as liberated as a man can be". But as every working woman knows, that's not fully liberated.

Mapisa-Nqakula has a name for that kind of behaviour from Charles: "There are times when he feels the need to assert his manhood — I pick it up and I think, now he's being a man."

Prejudice in the corridors of power

ST(CM) 2/8/98

(335A) (335FF)

A woman's work is still not done in Parliament, writes CAROL PATON





BALEKA MBETE KGOSITSILE



FRENE GINWALA

ALL THINGS TO ALL PEOPLE: Melanie Verwoerd, who ... with her duties as a public representative when she took

WHEN she first arrived in Parliament, Pregs Govender spent a good deal of time looking for a women's toilet.

After climbing up and down stairs and wandering along corridors, Govender posted a sign on the door of one of two men's toilets near her office and wrote "women".

It was the beginning of a battle to change Parliament and the attitudes of its members, to take seriously the 100 or so women who arrived with the ANC's quota rule that 30 percent of its representatives elected in 1994 would be women.

The quota rule introduced into Parliament a trend that was way ahead of SA society, where women, especially black women, are at the bottom of the occupational ladder and where it is taken for granted that they alone are responsible for domestic work and childcare.

Breaking down these patterns and enlarging the pool of talent from which its leaders are drawn were the main reasons for the ANC's quota system.

But, battling against such attitudes and the conflict between work and home, many of the ANC's women MPs are paying a high personal price to make their mark in Parliament.

The first and most obvious problem women have faced is sexism from male MPs.

Baleka Mbete-Kgositsile, Parliament's deputy Speaker, who made her mark as an ANC leader both in exile and in the constitutional negotiations that followed the ANC's return to South Africa, found herself on the receiving end on entering Parliament.

"In the beginning I was on the land committee. When it came to choosing the chairman, my name was raised and so was Phatekile Holomisa's.

"The six women on the committee voted for me and the seven men voted for him," says Mbete-Kgositsile.

There is a tendency among members, both male and female, not to look at women when it comes to choosing chair positions, she says — proving the need for a women's quota.

"Quotas will be relevant until we get to a point where women have become integral to our way of thinking — but I'm quite sure that will take a century," she adds cynically.

Frene Ginwala, the parliamentary Speaker, agrees. "When a woman raises her hand what she is about to say is taken as trivial — or people say: 'Look, she's going to raise women's issues,' " says Ginwala, a veteran women's rights campaigner.

Ginwala and Mbete-Kgositsile are two of the most powerful women in Parliament. A third is Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, the head of the joint standing committee on intelligence.

The intelligence committee does not elect its own chairman. Because of the sensitive nature of its business, the incumbent is appointed by the President.

Mapisa-Nqakula's appointment in September 1996 was met with raised eyebrows from a number of her colleagues.

During her first year in Parliament, because she was pregnant, she says she did not make much of an impact.

"People were saying: 'What is this?' To many of them I was a relatively unknown person."

But over the past two years, she has asserted her own unique style of leadership over the multi-party committee.

"I've proved what I could do and I have asserted myself. But in our committee, because of the kinds of issues we discuss, it is essential to establish some kind of rapport among the members. I have enjoyed doing that, and as members we have a very co-operative relationship."

Apart from battling sexism in their workplace, women MPs, like working women the world over, must also wrestle with the conflict between work and home.

MPs are expected to work hard, each day wading through a mountain of paper to keep abreast of committee work and debates and doing party and constituency work.

Added to this is the Westminster tradition followed in South Africa of Parliament as a man's institution, where debates were scheduled for the afternoon, after the stock exchange and banks had closed for the day, and ran on into the evening or sometimes late into the night.

So how do women cope, and what do their children say?

Mbete-Kgositsile has five children, most of whom are now grown up.

Her youngest, Neo, is 12 — a 12-year-old, she says, "who has had to grow up very fast".

She gets home between 7.30pm and 9pm, attends meetings most weekends and often travels away from home.

"Now and again, my boy asks me: 'Do you have to go to this meeting?' Then I realise that here is a human being with emotional needs. It is difficult for me and also for them," she says.

She recently promised Neo she would spend two weekends a month with him — an agreement which, he has had to point out, has not been honoured.

But it is her third child, Duma, with a history of emotional problems, who has borne the brunt of her busy life, she says.

"He has really suffered because of my programmes. Since 1995 he was unable to go back to school because emotionally he just wasn't coping.

"He is back at school now, but he is really struggling."

Melanie Verwoerd is a far more junior MP but, as a young wife and mother, she experienced great difficulties combining these roles with her duties as a public representative.

Verwoerd, the youngest MP, was only 26 when she took up her seat, with two young children, aged one and four.

"It was very hard. My four-year-old would get up at 5am and start crying until I left the house. I didn't expect that it would be that hard or that the hours would be so long. There are also the expectations of the people you represent, who can phone you at 5.30am and tell you that their roof is leaking."

However, Verwoerd reached a point when she realised that she had gone a bit too far in trying to meet the expectations that had been placed on her.

"I realised that women could do this thing, but the painful part was when the children looked surprised whenever I came into the house or burst into tears when the phone rang," she says.

Now she leads a more rational life, having moved closer to Parliament to save time, and she is a lot stricter about working after hours.

Every MP who is a wife mother is privately her own balancing act.

Collectively women ... challenged the status ... cently succeeding, for ... in changing the rules of ... ment to ensure that no ... goes beyond 6pm.

They have done ... neering work which will ... that when the ANC tots ... achievements in 1999, ... situation of ordinary SA ... will have changed ...

Govender, who kicked ... battle to change Par... with the toilet incident, ... ing the charge.



PEOPLE: Melanie Verwoerd, who says she found it difficult to combine her roles as a young wife and mother [illegible] representative when she took up her seat in Parliament at the age of 26 Pictures: TERRY SHEAN

give them the support to manage," says Ginwala.

Support should include help in managing their personal lives, she adds.

It is in their personal lives that women have paid the highest price.

While it is impossible to make an official tally, one woman said there had been as many as 30 divorces in the ANC's first year in office. Among those there have been three custody battles, about which the women involved will not speak, where former husbands have demanded custody on the basis that their ex-wives have no time for the children because of the hours they work.

Mapisa-Nqakula, whose husband, Charles, is an SA Communist Party official based in Johannesburg, is one of many women living alone in Cape Town, away from their families. When she was appointed chairman of her committee her new baby was only 10 months old.

"At that point I had a discussion with my husband and the rest of the family. They all voted against me and said the baby must come to Johannesburg because of my time constraints.

"I was torn apart. This was going to be my Cape Town baby. It shattered me — but I realised that in Johannesburg there would be better stability."

The strong presence of women in Parliament has influenced the sexual politics of the institution in other ways.

Sexual harassment does occur, particularly affecting women who are lower in status. However, a case has never been officially reported to the ANC's Chief Whip — often the reason being that "the power relation was just too way off".

Men have also had some difficulty in coming to terms with their newly powerful female counterparts.

Says Mapisa-Nqakula: "Men are not very fond of a woman who comes across strongly. They even shy away.

"When you discuss it with them they frankly say that some of us are too strong to have remained in marriages. They even ask me: 'How does your husband cope with you?' "

But she and Charles are still together — a tribute, she says, to the great support he has given her.

Other women, too, pay tribute to their partners. Verwoerd, for instance, describes her husband, Wilhelm, as being "as liberated as a man can be". But as every working woman knows, that's not fully liberated.

Mapisa-Nqakula has a name for that kind of behaviour from Charles: "There are times when he feels the need to assert his manhood — I pick it up and I think, now he's being a man."

is a far
a young
experi-
combin-
duties
ive.
MP,
took up
young
four.
My four-
at 5am
I left the
that it
that the
g. There
s of the
who can
and tell
ing."
reached
ised that
far in
tations
on her.
could
painful
children
never I
or burst
phone

re ratio-
closer to
, and
work-

ing after hours.

Every MP who is a wife or a mother is privately engaged in her own balancing act.

Collectively women have also challenged the status quo, recently succeeding, for instance, in changing the rules of Parliament to ensure that no debate goes beyond 6pm.

They have done other pioneering work which will ensure that when the ANC tots up its achievements in 1999, the situation of ordinary SA women will have changed tangibly.

Govender, who kicked off the battle to change Parliament with the toilet incident, is leading the charge.

She is the force behind the formation of a new committee called the quality of life and status of women joint standing committee, which has the power to call ministers and interrogate them on programmes concerning women and to hold public hearings.

So far the committee has commissioned research on the effect of government programmes on women, it has formulated a legislative programme to address problems facing women and it has won acceptance for an initiative called the Women's Budget.

As a result of the Women's Budget, each ministry is now required to provide a gender analysis of its budget.

Govender wants this extended to all legislation, which, she says, should carry an attached memorandum on its anticipated effects.

Another initiative, this time from Ginwala, is the establishment of a Women's Empowerment Unit, geared towards training women MPs, particularly those from rural and disadvantaged backgrounds.

"Women come into this institution out of a society where they are subordinate. They come into this institution handicapped. This poses tremendous difficulties, and we need to

lity
to th
ental
h has
gisla
iona
ent B
l se
e E
s is
it
as
com
int

not that hu

KZN women on the receiving end

(255A) Sowetan 5/8/98

By Saint P Molakeng

KWAZULU-NATAL women have suffered gross gender inequalities in unemployment, education, political representation and sexual violence.

These are the findings of research carried out by the KwaZulu-Natal Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) in November last year.

Workshops were conducted to assess how far initiatives undertaken by the Government and Non-Government Organisations contributed to gender equality and the stumbling blocks encountered.

The province has a population of 8,8 million people, with women outnumbering men by 55 percent to 45.

Although females are in the majority, they account for 47,1 percent of the unemployed. Unemployed males account for 29,2 percent in the rural areas.

There is a 12,3 percent difference between employed men and employed women.

Gender-biased

According to the report, employment-unemployment ratios were attributable to gender-biased education received over the years.

Eighteen percent of females are illiterate compared to 12 percent of males. Seven percent and nine percent, respectively, have obtained some post-matriculation education.

KwaZulu-Natal the second highest incidence of rape cases at 4 116 in 1996, with Gauteng having the highest at 6 183.

HIV infections in KwaZulu-Natal ranked the highest of all nine provinces.

These horrifying occurrences correlated with massacres of at least 12 000 people in conflicts between the African National Congress and the Inkatha Freedom Party, since 1982.

CGE acting chairwoman, Ms Phumelele Ntombela-Nzimande explained that the commission would have to identify and redress programme, policy and legislative gaps that accounted for gender inequality.

The CGE report will be released in Newcastle on August 10 at an event to commemorate National Women's Day.

● Ntombela-Nzimande will be interviewed in the *Sowetan Woman* tomorrow.

REMEMBER THE WOMEN WHO PAVED THE WAY

You strike the women, you strike a rock

CT 6/8/98 (355A)

IT IS NATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY on Sunday. South African women are celebrating the steps taken to entrench and enshrine women's rights. **PRISCILLA SINGH** reports.

"STRIJDOM, you have struck the women, you have struck a rock," the chant echoed.

For many women who participated in the 1956 march to Pretoria to denounce the carrying of passes, this memory will be etched in their minds as we celebrate National Women's Day.

But today, women are rejoicing in their triumphs and successes, celebrating life and freedom, and working together in harmony and peace towards a better life.

Women have played an important role in the liberation struggle as members of the liberation movements and allied organisations, as trade unionists and in other capacities.

They carried out militant campaigns against the hated pass laws. They participated in the underground and armed struggle when campaigns became indispensable.

Many women suffered restriction, imprisonment, torture and even brutal assassination by the racist apartheid regime.

Recognising their role, the African National Congress formed the Women's League in 1943. The Federation of South African Women (FSAW), a multi-racial body, was established on April 17, 1954 — with the ANC Women's League as its largest component — to organise a united struggle against apartheid.

Today, about 26% of all MPs in government are women, voting and deciding on bills and policies which affect the lives of all South Africans..

On Sunday, names like Lillian Ngoyi, Annie Silinga, Fatima Meer, Amina Cachalia, Helen Joseph, Josie Palmer, Winnie Madikezela-Mandela, Albertina Sisulu, Molly Blackburn and Thandi Modise will be remembered, and women throughout the country will feel the spirit of sisterhood they felt during the march to Pretoria.

Ruthless repression by the regime prevented FSAW and the Women's League from functioning after 1960.

But women found ways to continue their resistance through new legal organisations or the underground structures. In the external mission, the women's section of the ANC played an active role.

The ANC Women's League was relaunched in Durban, after the unbanning of the ANC, on August 9, 1990, the anniversary of the great march of women to the Union Buildings in Pretoria in 1956.

The United Nations subsequently declared August 9 to be the International Day of Solidarity with the Women of South Africa and Namibia.

On the recommendation of Parliament, the then-government declared August 9 to be National Women's Day and tabled it as a public holiday.

However, it is important to note the significant history of women's struggles that laid the basis for what exists today.

South African women have been acting to bring about change from as far back as 1913 (in the early anti-pass campaigns).

In 1954 the first women's charter in South Africa was developed by women from the Congress of Democrats (COD), the Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Congress and the ANC Women's League.

Clauses of this charter were sent to Kliptown for inclusion in the Freedom Charter.

These same women organised the historic march of 20 000 to the Union Buildings on August 9, 1956.

The '80s saw the development of strong regional women's organisations, such as the United Women's Congress (UWCO), Natal Organisation of Women (NOW), Port Elizabeth Women's Organisation (PEWO) and the Federation of Transvaal Women (Fedtraw), as well as women's formations in the trade unions.

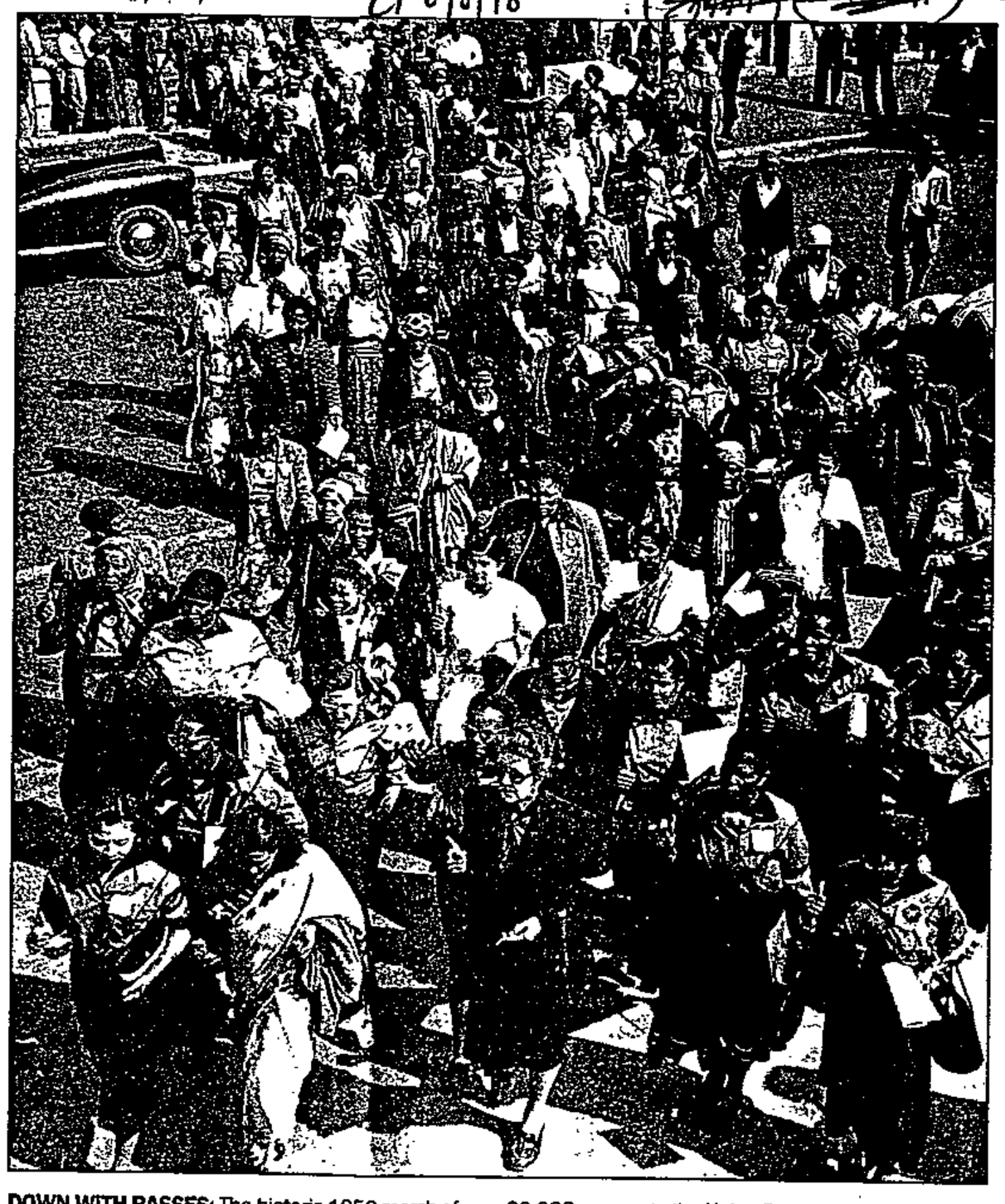
It is these women who represented the non-government organisations (NGOs) of South Africa in Nairobi in 1985.

It was also difficult in mid-1994 to report on the current position of women because of the transitional state.

There have been some changes since the April 1994 elections, and even before, but everything is still very much in a state of flux.

So far your government has:

- Declared August 9 a national public holiday.
- Approved the Women's Budget.
- Established an office on the status of women.
- Adopted a National Crime Prevention Strategy.
- Passed the Disability Bill.
- Established a Commission on Gender Equality.
- Introduced progressive and gender-sensitive legislation.
- Introduced the quota system in major sectors.
- Established the parliamentary committee on the improvement of life and the status of women.



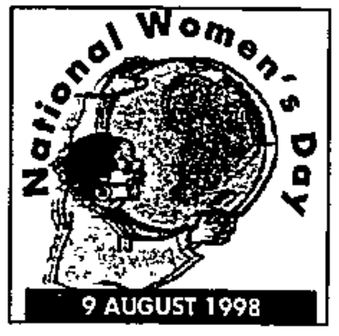
DOWN WITH PASSES: The historic 1956 march of over 20 000 women to the Union Buildings to denounce the institution of passes. FILE PICTURE

The petition that Strijdom received

"THE Demand of the Women of South Africa for the Withdrawal of Passes for Women and the Repeal of the Pass Laws"— petition presented to the prime minister, J G Strijdom, Pretoria. August 9, 1956.

WE, the women of South Africa, have come here today. We represent and we speak on behalf of hundreds of thousands of women who could not be with us. But all over the country, at this moment, women are watching and thinking of us. Their hearts are with us.

We are women of every race, we come from the cities and towns, from the reserves and the villages. We come as women united in our purpose to save the African women from the degradation of passes.



For hundreds of years the African people have suffered under the most bitter law of all — the pass law which has brought untold suffering to every African family.

Raids, arrests, loss of pay, long hours at the pass office, weeks in cells awaiting trial, forced farm labour — this is what the pass laws have brought to African men. Punishment and misery — not for a crime, but for the lack of a pass.

We African women know too well the effect of this law upon our homes, our children. We, who are not African women, know how our sisters suffer.

Your Government proclaims aloud at home and abroad that the pass laws have been abolished, but we women know this is not true, for our husbands, our brothers, our sons are still being arrested, thousands every day, under these very pass laws. It is only the name t has changed. The "reference bo and the pass are one.

In March 1952, your Ministe Native Affairs denied in Parliam that a law would be introduc which would force African wom to carry passes. But in 1956 y Government is attempting to fc passes upon the African wom and we are here today to prot against this insult to all wom For to us an insult to Afric women is an insult to all women

We want to tell you what t pass would me to an Afric woman, and want you to kn that whether y call it a referen book, an ident book or by a other disgusti name, to us it i PASS. And means just this:

- That hom will be broken up.
- That children will be l uncared for, helpless, and moth will be torn from their babies.
- That women and young gi will be exposed to humiliation a degradation at the hands policemen.
- That women will lose th right to move freely from one pla to another.

In the name of women of Sou Africa, we say to you, each one us, African, European, India Coloured, that we are opposed the pass system. We, voters an voteless, call upon your Gover ment not to issue passes to Afric women. We shall not rest until Al pass laws and all forms of permi restricting our freedom have bee abolished. We shall not rest un we have won for our children the fundamental rights of freedon justice and security.

Much work remains, coalition warns

CT 6/8/98 (355A) 335A

PRISCILLA SINGH

AS we observe the 42nd anniversary of the march by South African women on the Union Buildings in conference in May last year, was mandated to focus on three key issues:

- "Women and the Economy" — the Women's Budget with

participation of women in the local, provincial and national legislature.

- "Women and Legislature" — legislation

She said programmes must be implemented that will enable women to become "players" in the economic game.

THINK LASER PRINTERS

REMEMBER THE WOMEN WHO PAVED THE WAY

You strike the women, you strike a rock

CT 6/8/98 (355A)

IT IS NATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY on Sunday. South African women are celebrating the steps taken to entrench and enshrine women's rights. **PRISCILLA SINGH** reports.

"STRIJDOM, you have struck the women, you have struck a rock," the chant echoed.

For many women who participated in the 1956 march to Pretoria to denounce the carrying of passes, this memory will be etched in their minds as we celebrate National Women's Day.

But today, women are rejoicing in their triumphs and successes, celebrating life and freedom, and working together in harmony and peace towards a better life.

Women have played an important role in the liberation struggle as members of the liberation movements and allied organisations, as trade unionists and in other capacities.

They carried out militant campaigns against the hated pass laws. They participated in the underground and armed struggle when campaigns became indispensable.

Many women suffered restriction, imprisonment, torture and even brutal assassination by the racist apartheid regime.

Recognising their role, the African National Congress formed the Women's League in 1943. The Federation of South African Women (FSAW), a multi-racial body, was established on April 17, 1954 — with the ANC Women's League as its largest component — to organise a united struggle against apartheid.

Today, about 26% of all MPs in government are women, voting and deciding on bills and policies which affect the lives of all South Africans..

On Sunday, names like Lillian Ngoyi, Annie Silinga, Fatima Meer, Amina Cachalia, Helen Joseph, Josie Palmer, Winnie Madikezela-Mandela, Albertina Sisulu, Molly Blackburn and Thandi Modise will be remembered, and women throughout the country will feel the spirit of sisterhood they felt during the march to Pretoria.

Ruthless repression by the regime prevented FSAW and the Women's League from functioning after 1960.

But women found ways to continue their resistance through new legal organisations or the underground structures. In the external mission, the women's section of the ANC played an active role.

The ANC Women's League was relaunched in Durban, after the unbanning of the ANC, on August 9, 1990, the anniversary of the great march of women to the Union Buildings in Pretoria in 1956.

The United Nations subsequently declared August 9 to be the International Day of Solidarity with the Women of South Africa and Namibia.

On the recommendation of Parliament, the then-government declared August 9 to be National Women's Day and tabled it as a public holiday.

However, it is important to note the significant history of women's struggles that laid the basis for what exists today.

South African women have been acting to bring about change from as far back as 1913 (in the early anti-pass campaigns).

In 1954 the first women's charter in South Africa was developed by women from the Congress of Democrats (COD), the Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Congress and the ANC Women's League.

Clauses of this charter were sent to Kliptown for inclusion in the Freedom Charter.

These same women organised the historic march of 20 000 to the Union Buildings on August 9, 1956.

The '80s saw the development of strong regional women's organisations, such as the United Women's Congress (UWCO), Natal Organisation of Women (NOW), Port Elizabeth Women's Organisation (PEWO) and the Federation of Transvaal Women (Fedtraw), as well as women's formations in the trade unions.

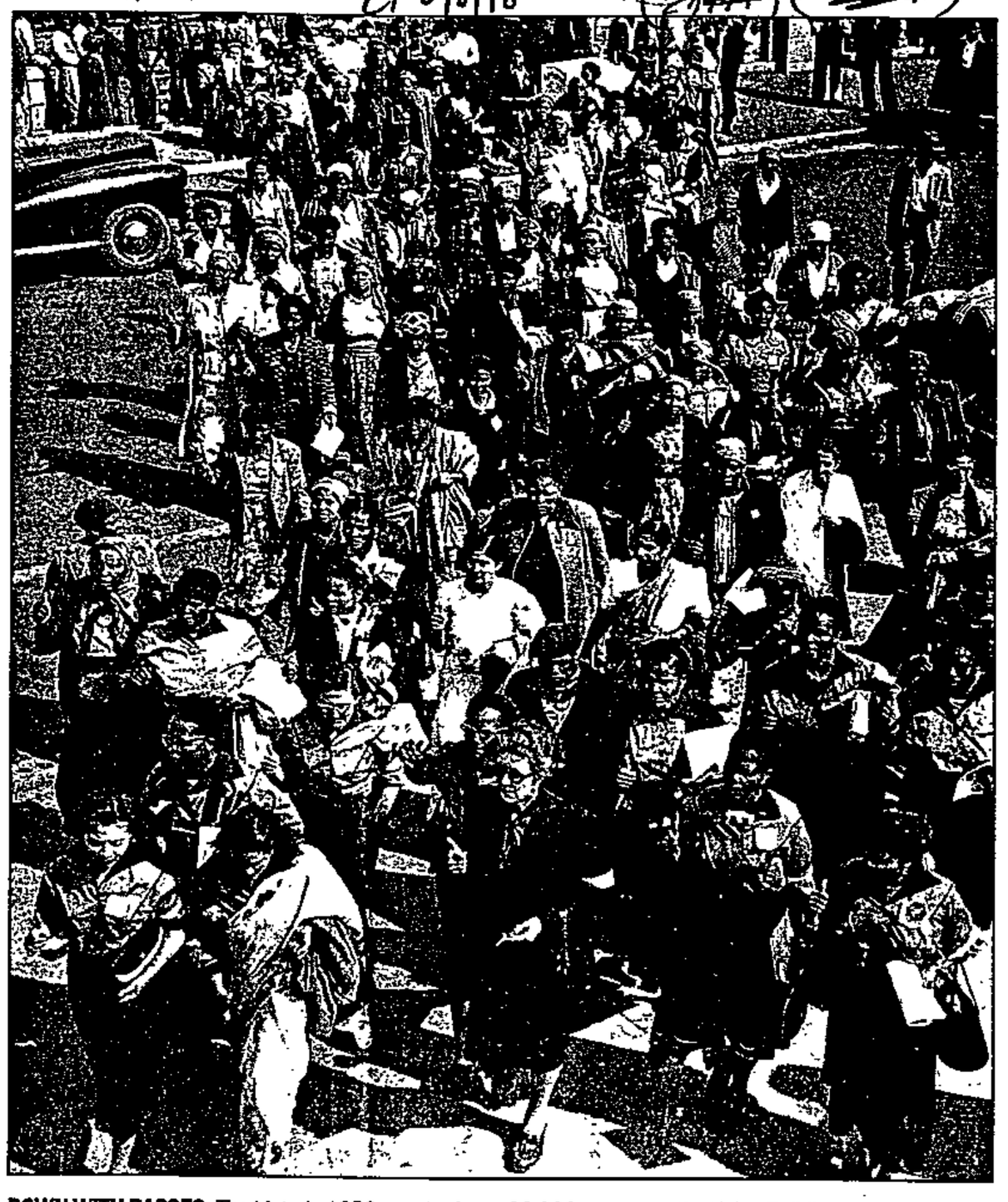
It is these women who represented the non-government organisations (NGOs) of South Africa in Nairobi in 1985.

It was also difficult in mid-1994 to report on the current position of women because of the transitional state.

There have been some changes since the April 1994 elections, and even before, but everything is still very much in a state of flux.

So far your government has:

- Declared August 9 a national public holiday.
- Approved the Women's Budget.
- Established an office on the status of women.
- Adopted a National Crime Prevention Strategy.
- Passed the Disability Bill.
- Established a Commission on Gender Equality.
- Introduced progressive and gender-sensitive legislation.
- Introduced the quota system in major sectors.
- Established the parliamentary committee on the improvement of life and the status of women.



DOWN WITH PASSES: The historic 1956 march of over 20 000 women to the Union Buildings to denounce the institution of passes. *FILE PICTURE*

The petition that Strijdom received

"THE Demand of the Women of South Africa for the Withdrawal of Passes for Women and the Repeal of the Pass Laws"— petition presented to the prime minister, J G Strijdom, Pretoria. August 9, 1956.

WE, the women of South Africa, have come here today. We represent and we speak on behalf of hundreds of thousands of women who could not be with us. But all over the country, at this moment, women are watching and thinking of us. Their hearts are with us.



We are women of every race, we come from the cities and towns, from the reserves and the villages. We come as women united in our purpose to save the African women from the degradation of passes.

For hundreds of years the African people have suffered under the most bitter law of all — the pass law which has brought untold suffering to every African family.

Raids, arrests, loss of pay, long hours at the pass office, weeks in cells awaiting trial, forced farm labour — this is what the pass laws have brought to African men. Punishment and misery — not for a crime, but for the lack of a pass.

We African women know too well the effect of this law upon our homes, our children. We, who are not African women, know how our sisters suffer.

Your Government proclaims aloud at home and abroad that the pass laws have been abolished, but we women know this is not true, for our husbands, our brothers, our sons are still being arrested, thousands every day, under these very pass laws. It is only the name that has changed. The "reference book" and the pass are one.

In March 1952, your Minister of Native Affairs denied in Parliament that a law would be introduced which would force African women to carry passes. But in 1956 your Government is attempting to force passes upon the African women, and we are here today to protest against this insult to all women. For to us an insult to African women is an insult to all women.

We want to tell you what the pass would mean to an African woman, and we want you to know that whether you call it a reference book, an identity book or by any other disgusting name, to us it is a PASS. And it means just this:

- That homes will be broken up.
- That children will be left uncared for, helpless, and mothers will be torn from their babies.
- That women and young girls will be exposed to humiliation and degradation at the hands of policemen.
- That women will lose their right to move freely from one place to another.

In the name of women of South Africa, we say to you, each one of us, African, European, Indian, Coloured, that we are opposed to the pass system. We, voters and voteless, call upon your Government not to issue passes to African women. We shall not rest until ALL pass laws and all forms of permits restricting our freedom have been abolished. We shall not rest until we have won for our children their fundamental rights of freedom, justice and security.

Much work remains, coalition warns

CT 6/8/98

(355A) 335A

PRISCILLA SINGH

AS we observe the 42nd anniversary of the march by South African women on the Union Buildings in Pretoria, we must recognise the challenges ahead of us and realise that much work still remains, says Mohau Pheko, chief executive officer of the Women's National Coalition (WNC).

The WNC embraces women from across the political, economic, social, racial, cultural and religious spectrum and is united in the belief that progress and democracy will be limited "if women are excluded from the democratic process as in our present patriarchal society".

It has accepted a mandate to focus on the economy and women. This initiative incorporates lobbying around the Women's Budget, economic literacy education and creating an environment for women to influence trade negotiations and to fully participate in trade.

The WNC at its consultative conference in May last year, was mandated to focus on three key issues:

● "Women and the Economy" — the Women's Budget will become the focus around which to lobby, analyse and collaborate with researchers for alternative economic policies. Trade agreements signed by the government such as the Lomé Convention and that with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) must present an opportunity for the participation of women. The public must be educated to raise awareness and inform women about the economy.

● "Women and Governance" — women experience governance problems in their everyday lives, depending on how power and authority are exercised in determining policy. Governance raises the question of whether women are considered full citizens in control of resources and decision-making. Public education will focus on increasing the role of women in decision-making, as well as leadership training, advocacy and the participation of women in the local, provincial and national legislature.

● "Women and Legislature" — legislation is one of the key areas where women need to participate in formulating new laws. The role of the WNC is to review all proposed legislation and make oral and written submissions, commission research on the impact of various legislation on women, and offer seminars, debates on key issues and suggest legislation.

"The challenge that we face is to put in practice, to manifest the ideas of political and economic equality that are enshrined in our constitution. Our development as a nation will be limited if the effective equality of women is not actualised.

"Women of South Africa can no longer reside in the political and economic margins of this nation. South Africa will not and cannot advance when over half of its population remains economically and politically disadvantaged," Pheko said.

She said programmes must be implemented that will enable women to become "players" in the economic game.

"Women are engaged in what is known as the informal sector or in the micro-enterprise sector — but we are not a part of the national team. We are not engaged in macro-enterprises, trading at the national and international level — in other words, if there are significant monies to be acquired; the voice of half the nation is deafening in its silence."

At a recent week-long seminar on women and trade convened by the coalition, women expressed grave concern that business and the government were failing to promote the economic integration of women. This is coupled with the failure, or less than enthusiastic encouragement, of women to participate in the formulation of economic policies.

Also, it was stated that meaningful steps must be taken to involve women in the negotiation of trade agreements.



WOMEN AT WORK: During her visit to Cape Town last year, the Duchess of Kent visited the Philani Nutrition Centre in Khayelitsha and was impressed with the silk-screen projects women were working on.
FILE PICTURE

Project forms a screen against poverty

PRISCILLA SINGH

THE silks-screening project at Philani Nutrition Centre in Khayelitsha, said to be the first of its kind, helps unemployed women from Crossroads and surrounds to earn a living to feed their children, and at the same time enhance their business skills.

Project co-ordinator Sarah Polonsky said the women had to be unemployed with children under the age of five. The project forms part of the flagship programme sparked off by Welfare Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi.

The assault on poverty has never been more serious and pro-active since the first such programme was launched in Vergelegen, Northern Province, two years ago.

The greatest challenge facing the government is the extent to which it can reduce poverty, which is linked to high unemployment, hunger, malnutrition and lack of access to basic services.

The Department of Welfare and Population Development estimates that at least 10-million families are living below the poverty line. Statistics revealed that 67% of female-headed households were poor and most of these were in rural areas, while 75,2% of children under six were likely to be exposed to conditions of poverty.

The aim of the flagship programme is to facilitate educational and employment opportunities for unemployed women and their children to break the cycle of poverty. So far, flagship programmes have been launched in all the provinces.

"Providing impoverished women with an opportunity to develop skills and become economically active, ensures self-reliance and breaks the cycle of poverty," said Fraser-Moleketi.

Much work remains, coalition warns

CT 6/8/98

335A

PRISCILLA SINGH

AS we observe the 42nd anniversary of the march by South African women on the Union Buildings in Pretoria, we must recognise the challenges ahead of us and realise that much work still remains, says Mohau Pheko, chief executive officer of the Women's National Coalition (WNC).

The WNC embraces women from across the political, economic, social, racial, cultural and religious spectrum and is united in the belief that progress and democracy will be limited "if women are excluded from the democratic process as in our present patriarchal society".

It has accepted a mandate to focus on the economy and women. This initiative incorporates lobbying around the Women's Budget, economic literacy education and creating an environment for women to influence trade negotiations and to fully participate in trade.

The WNC at its consultative conference in May last year, was mandated to focus on three key issues:

● "Women and the Economy" — the Women's Budget will become the focus around which to lobby, analyse and collaborate with researchers for alternative economic policies. Trade agreements signed by the government such as the Lomé Convention and that with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) must present an opportunity for the participation of women. The public must be educated to raise awareness and inform women about the economy.

● "Women and Governance" — women experience governance problems in their everyday lives, depending on how power and authority are exercised in determining policy. Governance raises the question of whether women are considered full citizens in control of resources and decision-making. Public education will focus on increasing the role of women in decision-making, as well as leadership training, advocacy and the participation of women in the local, provincial and national legislature.

● "Women and Legislature" — legislation is one of the key areas where women need to participate in formulating new laws. The role of the WNC is to review all proposed legislation and make oral and written submissions, commission research on the impact of various legislation on women, and offer seminars, debates on key issues and suggest legislation.

"The challenge that we face is to put in practice, to manifest the ideas of political and economic equality that are enshrined in our constitution. Our development as a nation will be limited if the effective equality of women is not actualised.

"Women of South Africa can no longer reside in the political and economic margins of this nation. South Africa will not and cannot advance when over half of its population remains economically and politically disadvantaged," Pheko said.

She said programmes must be implemented that will enable women to become "players" in the economic game.

"Women are engaged in what is known as the informal sector or in the micro-enterprise sector — but we are not a part of the national team. We are not engaged in macro-enterprises, trading at the national and international level — in other words, if there are significant monies to be acquired; the voice of half the nation is deafening in its silence."

At a recent week-long seminar on women and trade convened by the coalition, women expressed grave concern that business and the government were failing to promote the economic integration of women. This is coupled with the failure, or less than enthusiastic encouragement, of women to participate in the formulation of economic policies.

Also, it was stated that meaningful steps must be taken to involve women in the negotiation of trade agreements.



WOMEN AT WORK: During her visit to Cape Town last year, the Duchess of Kent visited the Philani Nutrition Centre in Khayelitsha and was impressed with the silk-screen projects women were working on. *FILE PICTURE*

Project forms a screen against poverty

PRISCILLA SINGH

THE silks-screening project at Philani Nutrition Centre in Khayelitsha, said to be the first of its kind, helps unemployed women from Crossroads and surrounds to earn a living to feed their children, and at the same time enhance their business skills.

Project co-ordinator Sarah Polonsky said the women had to be unemployed with children under the age of five. The project forms part of the flagship programme sparked off by Welfare Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi.

The assault on poverty has never been more serious and pro-active since the first such programme was launched in Vergelegen, Northern Province, two years ago.

The greatest challenge facing the government is the extent to which it can reduce poverty, which is linked to high unemployment, hunger, malnutrition and lack of access to basic services.

The Department of Welfare and Population Development estimates that at least 10-million families are living below the poverty line. Statistics revealed that 67% of female-headed households were poor and most of these were in rural areas, while 75,2% of children under six were likely to be exposed to conditions of poverty.

The aim of the flagship programme is to facilitate educational and employment opportunities for unemployed women and their children to break the cycle of poverty. So far, flagship programmes have been launched in all the provinces.

"Providing impoverished women with an opportunity to develop skills and become economically active, ensures self-reliance and breaks the cycle of poverty," said Fraser-Moleketi.

The proof of the pudding

Fumane Diseko *hit the streets to find out if sisters have felt the changes of the past four years*

Sam Canham (30), unemployed, from Durban

"If a woman has been divorced, she should not pay taxes because they are the bread winners in the family and, at the end of the day, they have nothing and they can't feed their kids. I also don't think that they should have brought that [abortion] in. It gives anybody the right to just sleep around and make babies. They should actually only allow it for women who have been raped and people who have been abused."

Anonymous (24), unemployed, from Sharpville

"Prostitution must be legalised and it must be from a protective angle. It must be taxed and if it is legalised, they can control the disease aspect as well. And they must make places where prostitutes can have check-ups, pap smears and condoms and learn self-defence."

Anonymous (25), hair dresser, from Yeoville

"I think abortion is a good thing because of rape and lack of jobs. Those who evade maintenance must be arrested because the mother struggles to support the child."

Faith Zwane (24), engineer in training

"I haven't been paying much attention but I think I agree with the law that legalises abortion. I am for individuality ... I disagree with a man having control of the woman's affairs, so I am for women's independence."

Tholang Tseka (24), computer technician, from Yeoville

"I think they [the new laws] are great as long as they can be put into practice. The reason is that in the workforce, as a woman, you are still treated differently to the males, especially in my field. In information technology males are preferred to females, but women are quite capable of doing the same work."



Nokuthula Mazibuko (25), radio news producer, from Kensington

"The more you get powerful women in high positions, the more reactionary society becomes. There is this backlash; you have had crimes against women increasing, especially against girl children."



Dudu Mlambo (38), receptionist, from Yeoville

"I feel that everybody is being recognised. Everybody can voice their opinions. I've never had a problem in my gender, only with my race. The only thing I am happy about is that people can talk freely."

Tshegofatso Dube (31), secretary at Naledi

"Women can now inherit property after the death of their husbands. They don't become property of the husband's family. In terms of polygamous marriage, the junior wives' children also have the right to inherit from the estate of the husband."

Virgy Ramokgopa (24), student, from Moletsane

"I saw that they altered everything because now women in a marriage can own property on their own and they don't need to have their husband's curatorship to enter into litigation. Women can own their properties. They are not regarded as minors anymore."

Boitumelo Modise (27), student, from Daveyton

"The powers that we have been given are not enough; they have to add more, especially for domestic workers. It must also involve men, and child care must also involve men because the children belong to both men and women. In Parliament there must be a woman president; it's always men."

Clare Cerutl (32), communist, from Bellevue East

"The maintenance laws shift the burden completely to individuals instead of the state helping out. The law on maintenance aims at chasing around a few miserable individuals who are not people with pots of money in general."



The rocky road to real equality

MtG 7-13/8/98

Bridget Hilton-Barber *looks at South Africa's achievements in women empowerment* (356A)

Have women in Parliament done more than add a dose of colour and culture change to the staid Parliament of old? Has life changed for the average South African woman?

If laws and government policies were the sole barometer of improvements, yes. Equality is guaranteed in the Constitution and groundbreaking legislation has granted women the right to free education and basic health care and equal employment opportunities.

But by no means does National Women's Day call for the unrestrained popping of champagne corks. Progressive policies do not automatically guarantee progressive practices, and along with the difficulties of translating promises into action, unemployment, domestic violence, rape and archaic attitudes continue to loom like menacing roadblocks on the road to equality.

The government's commitment to improving the lives of women may be genuine, but those changes ultimately depend on delivery. "While there have been significant changes," says Barbara Klugman, director of the Women's Health Project, which has helped shape government policies, "like the shifting of focus to primary health care and the right to free and safe abortions, there needs to be a level of realism."

Measuring improvements, she says, like increased access to clinics, for example, must take into account the fact that the entire health system has had to change from top to bottom.

A major and positive implication of this restructuring is that the health services have become a "one-stop shop". Where women would previously have had to go to one clinic for contraception and another for medical check-ups, say, these services are now accessible in one place.

The Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act has been another achievement says Klugman. Between February and December 1997, 26 406 safe abortions were carried out — and while there have been complaints about the attitudes of medical staff, and problems like women seeking abortions too late, these are now less a matter of structure than of education and training.

The country's population policy also marks a further achievement for women: shifting the focus away from control to development and education. One of the biggest challenges in this area, says Klugman, is how to combat teenage pregnancy — 47% of black South African women have their first child before the age of 20.

The biggest problem in health terms, says Klugman, remains the government's lack of leadership in dealing with Aids. Black women are the most vulnerable to HIV transmission, and there should be a massive public-awareness drive to educate people.

The welfare front has also seen important changes for women in the past four years, but delivery and administrative difficulties are no strangers to the area. "There have been major improvements in thinking and in policy and approach," says University of Natal researcher Francie Lund, "but the distribution of resources remains a problem."

The government, she says, seems to be more conscious of the vulnerability of women and children. The maintenance Bill aims to do away with certain legal formalities which slowed the process of payment.

State maintenance grants now reach three million women as opposed to 300 000, but financial constraints remain, and controversy, like the lowering of the ages of children eligible for maintenance. It's hard to protect the poor and disadvantaged in a recession, says Lund.

Debbie Budlender, of the Community Agency for Social Change, says: "The face of the government has changed. Women make up 27% of our parliamentarians as opposed to 3% before."

One of the areas in which South Africa is regarded as something of a gender pioneer, says Budlender, is that of the women's budget — a collaborative effort between NGOs and Parliament to quantify equality by looking at the allocation of resources to women within the entire budgetary process.

While the employment equity Bill and affirmative action policies within business and industry have seen increased numbers of women climbing the ladders of success, adult education remains a problem, says Budlender. Twenty per cent of African women have never been to school and only 1% of the entire education budget is set aside for adult education.

For rural women, initiatives like the government's water programme, and the extension of services like electricity and telephones, have a potentially great impact on cutting labour time and raising standards of living.

Worthy of celebration are a series of new draft laws. The domestic violence Bill tabled two weeks ago, for instance, protects any victim in a "domestic relationship". This means that not only married women have recourse to action as in previous laws, but that women "dating" their partners are now also protected.

The draft recognition of customary marriages Bill will recognise customary unions as civil marriages. A code on sexual harassment also presents guidelines on what constitutes harassment and what can be done about it.

But while laws and policies have changed, power relations have not. Rape is still an enormous problem. A woman is raped every 36 seconds. Last year this translated into almost 50 000 rapes, which police say must be multiplied 20 times to get closer to the real figure.

While life may have improved in various ways for the average South African woman over the past four years, genuine equality still has to cross the chasm of fear and violence. That will be the litmus test of the next four years.

WOMEN IN RURAL AREAS ARE DOING IT FOR THEMSELVES

Although government is increasing its efforts to help previously disadvantaged communities through its Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), greater input is needed from the private sector as for many people the help is often too little and too late.

One company that has helped make a difference is the South African Breweries Beer Division through its Women In Rural Areas (WIRA) programme, an empowerment project for rural women that it has run in partnership with the regional Gender Commissions and the Centre For Cognitive Development (CCD).

At a function in Sandton today (August 6), to celebrate National Women's Day, the 900 women who have benefited from 18 WIRA projects were honoured and their achievements extolled when awards were presented to the top performing projects.

Since WIRA's inception in 1996, SAB has invested R4-million a year into the various projects – the gender commissions nominate one village per province to participate – and at today's function, the company's acting corporate affairs director, Richard Chance, said SAB was committed to ensuring that after care services were provided over the next three years. These will include more business management training, personal empowerment and an extension of the existing projects. "Our aim is to ensure we create vibrant one-stop centres in each village," he said.

He noted that WIRA had attracted support from other groups and companies, notably the Postal Services, Eskom, Rotary clubs and government departments, in particular the Department of Agriculture which had seconded extension officers to assist the women in their business enterprises.

These enterprises range from chicken farming to mohair jersey and blanket manufacture, a bakery and crop production. The 1998 WIRA projects encompass jam and fruit juice manufacture (Lenyenye in the Northern Province; sweets and popcorn production (Buka in Mpumalanga); vegetable and fruit farming (Tarlton in Gauteng); breadmaking (Bityi in the Eastern Cape); the production of overalls for farm labourers (Rawsonville in the Western Cape); and poultry farming (Longlands and Noupoort in the Northern Cape, Botshabelo in the Free State.

"We are delighted that our women have proved they can do it for themselves. For example, a poultry project in Mahlabathini in KwaZulu-Natal which started in 1997 today makes an average profit of R35 000 a month, and the project team expects this amount to increase substantially as they expand their business and gain more confidence.

"Of all the people who were reduced to second-class citizens because of apartheid, none suffered more than our women who, in rural areas, were virtually consigned to the scrapheap, WIRA has offered them not only hope, but dignity and a chance for them to regain their rightful place in society." Mr Chance said.

The proof of the pudding

Fumane Diseko *hit the streets to find out if sisters have felt the changes of the past four years*

Sam Canham (30), unemployed, from Durban

"If a woman has been divorced, she should not pay taxes because they are the bread winners in the family and, at the end of the day, they have nothing and they can't feed their kids. I also don't think that they should have brought that [abortion] in. It gives anybody the right to just sleep around and make babies. They should actually only allow it for women who have been raped and people who have been abused."

Anonymous (24), unemployed, from Sharpville

"Prostitution must be legalised and it must be from a protective angle. It must be taxed and if it is legalised, they can control the disease aspect as well. And they must make places where prostitutes can have check-ups, pap smears and condoms and learn self-defence."

Anonymous (25), hair dresser, from Yeoville

"I think abortion is a good thing because of rape and lack of jobs. Those who evade maintenance must be arrested because the mother struggles to support the child."

Faith Zwane (24), engineer in training

"I haven't been paying much attention but I think I agree with the law that legalises abortion. I am for individuality ... I disagree with a man having control of the woman's affairs, so I am for women's independence."

Tholang Tseka (24), computer technician, from Yeoville



"I think they [the new laws] are great as long as they can be put into practice. The reason is that in the workforce, as a woman, you are still treated differently to the males, especially in my field. In information technology males are preferred to females, but women are quite capable of doing the same work."

Nokuthula Mazibuko (25), radio news producer, from Kensington



"The more you get powerful women in high positions, the more reactionary society becomes. There is this backlash; you have had crimes against women increasing, especially against girl children."

Dudu Mlambo (38), receptionist, from Yeoville

"I feel that everybody is being recognised. Everybody can voice their opinions. I've never had a problem in my gender, only with my race. The only thing I am happy about is that people can talk freely."

Tshegofatso Dube (31), secretary at Naledi

"Women can now inherit property after the death of their husbands. They don't become property of the husband's family. In terms of polygamous marriage, the junior wives' children also have the right to inherit from the estate of the husband."

Virgy Ramokgopa (24), student, from Moletsane

"I saw that they altered everything because now women in a marriage can own property on their own and they don't need to have their husband's curatorship to enter into litigation. Women can own their properties. They are not regarded as minors anymore."

Boitumelo Modise (27), student, from Daveyton

"The powers that we have been given are not enough; they have to add more, especially for domestic workers. It must also involve men, and child care must also involve men because the children belong to both men and women. In Parliament there must be a woman president; it's always men."

Clare Ceruti (32), communist, from Bellevue East



"The maintenance laws shift the burden completely to individuals instead of the state helping out. The law on maintenance aims at chasing around a few miserable individuals who are not people with pots of money in general."

The rocky road to real equality

MTG 7-13/8/98

Bridget Hilton-Barber *looks at South Africa's achievements in women empowerment* (356A)

Have women in Parliament done more than add a dose of colour and culture change to the staid Parliament of old? Has life changed for the average South African woman?

If laws and government policies were the sole barometer of improvements, yes. Equality is guaranteed in the Constitution and groundbreaking legislation has granted women the right to free education and basic health care and equal employment opportunities.

But by no means does National Women's Day call for the unrestrained popping of champagne corks. Progressive policies do not automatically guarantee progressive practices, and along with the difficulties of translating promises into action, unemployment, domestic violence, rape and archaic attitudes continue to loom like menacing roadblocks on the road to equality.

The government's commitment to improving the lives of women may be genuine, but those changes ultimately depend on delivery. "While there have been significant changes," says Barbara Klugman, director of the Women's Health Project, which has helped shape government policies, "like the shifting of focus to primary health care and the right to free and safe abortions, there needs to be a level of realism."

Measuring improvements, she says, like increased access to clinics, for example, must take into account the fact that the entire health system has had to change from top to bottom.

A major and positive implication of this restructuring is that the health services have become a "one-stop shop". Where women would previously have had to go to one clinic for contraception and another for medical check-ups, say, these services are now accessible in one place.

The Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act has been another achievement says Klugman. Between February and December 1997, 26 406 safe abortions were carried out — and while there have been complaints about the attitudes of medical staff, and problems like women seeking abortions too late, these are now less a matter of structure than of education and training.

The country's population policy also marks a further achievement for women: shifting the focus away from control to development and education. One of the biggest challenges in this area, says Klugman, is how to combat teenage pregnancy — 47% of black South African women have their first child before the age of 20.

The biggest problem in health terms, says Klugman, remains the government's lack of leadership in dealing with Aids. Black women are the most vulnerable to HIV transmission, and there should be a massive public-awareness drive to educate people.

The welfare front has also seen important changes for women in the past four years, but delivery and administrative difficulties are no strangers to the area. "There have been major improvements in thinking and in policy and approach," says University of Natal researcher Francie Lund, "but the distribution of resources remains a problem."

The government, she says, seems to be more conscious of the vulnerability of women and children. The maintenance Bill aims to do away with certain legal formalities which slowed the process of payment.

State maintenance grants now reach three million women as opposed to 300 000, but financial constraints remain, and controversy, like the lowering of the ages of children eligible for maintenance. It's hard to protect the poor and disadvantaged in a recession, says Lund.

Debbie Budlender, of the Community Agency for Social Change, says: "The face of the government has changed. Women make up 27% of our parliamentarians as opposed to 3% before."

One of the areas in which South Africa is regarded as something of a gender pioneer, says Budlender, is that of the women's budget — a collaborative effort between NGOs and Parliament to quantify equality by looking at the allocation of resources to women within the entire budgetary process.

While the employment equity Bill and affirmative action policies within business and industry have seen increased numbers of women climbing the ladders of success, adult education remains a problem, says Budlender. Twenty per cent of African women have never been to school and only 1% of the entire education budget is set aside for adult education.

For rural women, initiatives like the government's water programme, and the extension of services like electricity and telephones, have a potentially great impact on cutting labour time and raising standards of living.

Worthy of celebration are a series of new draft laws. The domestic violence Bill tabled two weeks ago, for instance, protects any victim in a "domestic relationship". This means that not only married women have recourse to action as in previous laws, but that women "dating" their partners are now also protected.

The draft recognition of customary marriages Bill will recognise customary unions as civil marriages. A code on sexual harassment also presents guidelines on what constitutes harassment and what can be done about it.

But while laws and policies have changed, power relations have not. Rape is still an enormous problem. A woman is raped every 36 seconds. Last year this translated into almost 50 000 rapes, which police say must be multiplied 20 times to get closer to the real figure.

While life may have improved in various ways for the average South African woman over the past four years, genuine equality still has to cross the chasm of fear and violence. That will be the litmus test of the next four years.

WOMEN IN RURAL AREAS ARE DOING IT FOR THEMSELVES

Although government is increasing its efforts to help previously disadvantaged communities through its Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), greater input is needed from the private sector as for many people the help is often too little and too late.

One company that has helped make a difference is the South African Breweries Beer Division through its Women In Rural Areas (WIRA) programme, an empowerment project for rural women that it has run in partnership with the regional Gender Commissions and the Centre For Cognitive Development (CCD).

At a function in Sandton today (August 6), to celebrate National Women's Day, the 900 women who have benefited from 18 WIRA projects were honoured and their achievements extolled when awards were presented to the top performing projects.

Since WIRA's inception in 1996, SAB has invested R4-million a year into the various projects – the gender commissions nominate one village per province to participate – and at today's function, the company's acting corporate affairs director, Richard Chance, said SAB was committed to ensuring that after care services were provided over the next three years. These will include more business management training, personal empowerment and an extension of the existing projects. "Our aim is to ensure we create vibrant one-stop centres in each village," he said.

He noted that WIRA had attracted support from other groups and companies, notably the Postal Services, Eskom, Rotary clubs and government departments, in particular the Department of Agriculture which had seconded extension officers to assist the women in their business enterprises.

These enterprises range from 'chicken farming to mohair jersey and blanket manufacture, a bakery and crop production. The 1998 WIRA projects encompass jam and fruit juice manufacture (Lenyenye in the Northern Province; sweets and popcorn production (Buka in Mpumalanga); vegetable and fruit farming (Tarlton in Gauteng); breadmaking (Bityi in the Eastern Cape); the production of overalls for farm labourers (Rawsonville in the Western Cape); and poultry farming (Longlands and Noupoort in the Northern Cape, Botshabelo in the Free State.

"We are delighted that our women have proved they can do it for themselves. For example, a poultry project in Mahlabathini in KwaZulu-Natal which started in 1997 today makes an average profit of R35 000 a month, and the project team expects this amount to increase substantially as they expand their business and gain more confidence.

"Of all the people who were reduced to second-class citizens because of apartheid, none suffered more than our women who, in rural areas, were virtually consigned to the scrapheap, WIRA has offered them not only hope, but dignity and a chance for them to regain their rightful place in society," Mr Chance said.



Nafcoc Womens' Forum president Pam Magulwais proud of what the body has achieved. Picture: ROBERT BOTHA

Women's report on Nafcoc agenda

355A BD 7/8/98

Nomavenda Mathiane

THE National African Federated Chamber of Commerce (Nafcoc) will hold its annual conference in September and one of the main items on the agenda is expected to be the first report from the chamber's women's forum.

The report will be presented by forum president Pamela Mgulwa and will detail its achievements since it was set up last year to empower black businesswomen.

Mgulwa, a successful Johannesburg businesswoman elected by an overwhelming majority last year as the forum's first president, said she had worked hard to break the ceiling in a male organisation". She challenged black women to become proactive, saying that although there were many problems facing the forum, it was up to women to turn the challenges into opportunities.

Some of the biggest challenges facing the forum were the lack of funds and skills.

Mgulwa said: "First you have to fight Nafcoc to understand that they should take the women issues seriously, then fight the women to make them stand up and work."

The forum is the first body set up within Nafcoc to deal specifically with women's issues since the chamber's establishment more than 30 years ago.

Asked why Nafcoc had agreed to the establishment of the forum, Mgulwa said: "There are many influences that made Nafcoc agree to the formation of the forum. Our presence in the organisation and the fact that government demands organisations and institutions to implement affirmative action and to be gender sensitive.

"Those of us who pushed for the forum did so because we realised that women were not in the policy-making structures of the organisation. We demanded that the women's voice be heard."

Mgulwa said the forum was active in all the provinces, except the North West and the Northern Province. Provincial governments were assisting the forum in some of its projects.

Mgulwa said it would be a while before the forum became a powerful voice within Nafcoc.

"We do not even have an office. I have to conduct most of the forum's work from my business," she said.

She said in some provinces there was hostility towards the forum from some male Nafcoc members who thought the forum was a platform for women to fight men. However, Mgulwa said the forum was also an attempt to broaden the organisation's membership and to empower women members.

The forum was not only intended to work for its members but to empower them so that they could help other women in society.

Mgulwa said she did not plan to stay as president of the body for very long as she had her business interests to attend to.

Mgulwa said she would like to see a person with a vision and a mission succeed her and build on what she had achieved.

(11)

Long way to gender equality

By Zarina Maharaj

THE 1990s in South Africa are destined to be stamped with two major achievements. One is the birth of a constitutional state and multi-party democracy based on one person-one, vote.

The other is the constitutional commitment to eliminating discrimination, particularly the racial and gender discrimination which lie at the heart of our underdevelopment, poverty and the gross inequalities that continue to haunt us.

The racial and gender "equality" guaranteed in our Bill of Rights is the equality of access across the races and across the sexes to all of society's resources including, for example, income, education, land, health care, credit and decision-making power in all fields of human endeavour.

It is the inequality of access to such resources that defines the power relations in society: white domination of blacks on the one hand, and male domination of females on the other.

"Empowerment" in the context of the Bill of Rights is thus about creating the conditions to bring about equality of access to resources between the different groups in our society, mainly between blacks and whites and between men and women.

August 9 marks the fifth celebration of Women's Day since South Africa's first democratic government took power. It is therefore appropriate to ask how far we have travelled along the path to gender equality.

Gender equality

The best answer to this question would have been available if targets for gender equality in respect of each of society's resources could have been set in 1994.

Targets like: "Such-and-such a percentage of women and such-and-such a percentage of men have access to the resource of healthcare. We aim to narrow this gender gap by raising the percentage of women who have access to this resource to x percent by 1998."

Then we would have been able to check whether our targets have been met and so measure our achievements, thereby developing a mechanism to monitor our policies, laws, structures and means for effectiveness of delivery.

But such targets presuppose data about access to each resource. The apartheid regime was notorious for its lack of data, particularly about the differing conditions of women and men. So it was impossible to set such targets in 1994.

Fortunately, however, the Central Statistical Service (CSS), among others, is filling apartheid's data vacuum. Yesterday, for example, they released their booklet on gender statistics.

The Government needs these figures to execute its planning functions, including target setting and monitoring, to convert the promise of gender equality into practice.

These statistics in themselves represent a milestone on the path to gender equality.

Earlier milestones include Government's ratification in 1995 of international treaties on gender equality such as the Beijing Platform of Action and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

Other landmarks are the setting up of machinery to promote gender equality like the Office on the Status of Women, the Parliamentary Committee on the Quality of Life and Status of Women, the Commission on Gender Equality and gender desks within national and provincial departments.

Then there is the new budgetary process, the Medium Term Expenditure Framework, which can be used to women's advantage better than the previous one.

And a myriad of laws and policies have been or are about to be enacted to empower women to gain equal access to society's resources.

Legalising abortion, for example, recognises that unless women have control over their reproductive lives, they cannot be expected to take equal advantage with men of opportunities outside the home.

The Employment Equity and Skills Development Bills as they apply to women are designed to help them into the formal economy from which they have been largely excluded.

Similarly, the 1994 affirmative action policy with respect to African National Congress female parliamentarians has led to the current 29 percent of women in Parliament, 18 percent women ministers and 60 percent women deputy ministers.

Such figures have contributed significantly to South Africa's good rating of 18 (out of 94 countries) on the United Nations 1997 Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) scale.

The GEM measures gender inequality in key areas of economic and political participation and decision-making: the lower the rating, the higher the gender equality in these key areas.

The UN's Gender Development Index (GDI) measures the achievement of a country's female population in those basic capabilities that are required to contribute to their society's development: life expectancy, educational attainment and an income that is adequate for a reasonable standard of living.

When the achievement in these capabilities is measured for the population as a whole, the measure is called the Human Development Index (HDI).

The difference between the HDI and the GDI amounts to a measure of gender inequality in such basic capabilities. In 1996, South Africa's HDI ranking was 78 and its GDI ranking 74 out of 137 countries, a difference of 4.

Alleviating poverty

In 1997, our HDI ranking was 76 and our GDI ranking 71 out of 146 countries, a difference of five, representing a larger gender inequality than in 1996.

This is hardly surprising given the "feminisation of poverty", with women's incomes dropping more rapidly than men's, a phenomenon different from but related to the fact that the overwhelming majority of the poor in this country are women.

This has led to the acknowledgement, in mind if not in heart, that poverty alleviation and job creation need a special focus on women, given the incontrovertible evidence that women's incomes go further towards household survival and human capital investment than men's.

Such acceptance that women are a country's "engine out of poverty" is another milestone towards gender equality.

But enormous challenges lie ahead. One is to reinstate custom and indigenous law within the framework of the Bill of Rights.

Another is to quantify the vital contribution to the economy made by the informal sector and to regulate it in a way that recognises this contribution.

Another is to curb violent crime against women.

Another is to get more women working in local government, at the interface of grassroots needs and policy prescriptions.

There are many more.

Women cannot meet such challenges alone. We need our men alongside us to help us bring about change.

As Danny Glover, recently appointed ambassador to the UN Development Programme's poverty eradication programme, put it: "We make our lives by what we give."

(The writer is a feminist writer and newspaper columnist.)



Women lag behind

(355A) (Sowetan 7/8/98

New findings reveal the inferior status of women in a way not done before – they quantify the differences. **Sharon Chetty** looks at the figures

A NEW report released yesterday confirms the inferior status of women in South African society. Compiled by the Central Statistical Service (CSS), the report, titled *Men and Women in South Africa*, quantifies the enormous gender disparities in several areas, including employment, access to education and living conditions.

It also sketches the divide according to race, showing that African women in rural areas are the worst off.

Although the findings are neither new nor reveal anything surprising, the study is important because it quantifies the disparities, says the report's author, Debbie Budlender.

The CSS's annual October household survey in 1995, which surveyed a sample 30 000 households across the country, was the basis of the report.

Budlender says that the findings are important because the survey is a first and because they are derived from a large sample.

And although it merely confirms what is already known, Budlender says that now that figures are available, the plight of women is apparent. "Quite often women are disregarded when pointing out such disparities ... but now that there are figures, they cannot be ignored."

Such statistics are also vital for Government, which has committed itself to gender equality, she says.

The survey will be done annually to measure changes. In the public service, for example, rapid changes are expected since the Government has tried to implement racial and gender quotas.

In all provinces, except Gauteng, women are in the majority. Households in rural areas, and especially those headed by women, are generally poorer than those in urban areas headed by men.

Marry young

Women marry at a younger age than men, and a large proportion of women have children out of wedlock. Many children also do not live with their parents.

In October 1995 12 percent of children under the age of seven were not living with either of their parents and more than four in 10 (42 percent) of that age group were living only with their mother, compared to a mere one percent living only with their father.

About 13 percent of African children were also most likely to be living with neither parent, compared to nine percent of coloured and four percent of white and Indian children.

More than half the households in this country (51 percent), with the majority headed by African women, do not have water or electricity in their homes. The task of fetching water and wood fell to women.



A new report confirms that African women in rural areas are the worst off in South Africa.

Overall, nearly two thirds (63 percent) of men aged 15 years and above are classified as economically active, while less than half (46 percent) of women are.

While a large number of women may define themselves as housewives, especially in the rural areas, they are likely to be involved in subsistence industries, but the extent of this is not known.

Most white men (69 percent) and Indian men (68 percent) are employed, compared to 43 percent and 24 percent of African men and women respectively, and 59 percent of coloured men.

Although there has been improvement in the public service, women are still at lower levels than men.

By December 1996, just under half (49 percent) of the 1,2 million public servants were women and about a third (32 percent) were African women.

But at management level they were just over one in 10. White men still held 58 percent of management positions and 40 percent of senior management positions.

Women made up most of the skilled and highly skilled categories, into which teachers and nurses fall. African women accounted for 29 percent of those in the skilled category and 34 percent of those in the skilled production category.

While African men (39 percent) and women (36 percent) made up the bulk of trade union membership, among Indians more women (32 percent) were members of trade unions than men (29 percent).

Women generally, and in particular African and coloured women, earn far less than their male counterparts.

The biggest income gaps are among white men and women. White women's earnings averaged 60 percent of those of white men, while African women's earnings averaged 89 percent of those of African men.

While among all race groups women can expect to live six to seven years longer than men, coloured people have the lowest life expectancy: 65 years for women and 59 years for men.

As expected the racial disparities are related to differences in wealth, living conditions and access to health and social services.

A large number of African women have given birth outside of a hospital, clinic or formal health facility.

As is well known, they have the least access to healthcare and medical aid.

Although more women than men use contraceptives, they may not necessarily be practising safe sex as African women have the highest rate of HIV-Aids.

Although there is a quota for female representation among the African National Congress allowing women to make up more than a quarter of the National Assembly, among the other parties there are still far more men than women in Parliament.

Crime against women

Crime against women has increased – over the past few years the number of reported rapes has grown faster than the population growth.

Between 1994 and 1996 the number of reported rapes per 100 000 of the population increased from 105,3 to 119,5.

In some areas, like the judiciary, the legacy of "pale and male" still holds strong. By June last year, of 186 judges, 156 were white men and 10 were women.

In the highest court in the land, the Constitutional Court, the 11 judges are made up of six white men, one white woman, three black men and one black woman.

In most areas of South African society, the gender gaps are greater than the racial gaps.



Women lag behind

(355A) Sowetan 7/8/98

New findings reveal the inferior status of women in a way not done before – they quantify the differences. **Sharon Chetty** looks at the figures

A NEW report released yesterday confirms the inferior status of women in South African society. Compiled by the Central Statistical Service (CSS), the report, titled *Men and Women in South Africa*, quantifies the enormous gender disparities in several areas, including employment, access to education and living conditions.

It also sketches the divide according to race, showing that African women in rural areas are the worst off.

Although the findings are neither new nor reveal anything surprising, the study is important because it quantifies the disparities, says the report's author, Debbie Budlender.

The CSS's annual October household survey in 1995, which surveyed a sample 30 000 households across the country, was the basis of the report.

Budlender says that the findings are important because the survey is a first and because they are derived from a large sample.

And although it merely confirms what is already known, Budlender says that now that figures are available, the plight of women is apparent. "Quite often women are disregarded when pointing out such disparities ... but now that there are figures, they cannot be ignored."

Such statistics are also vital for Government, which has committed itself to gender equality, she says.

The survey will be done annually to measure changes. In the public service, for example, rapid changes are expected since the Government has tried to implement racial and gender quotas.

In all provinces, except Gauteng, women are in the majority. Households in rural areas, and especially those headed by women, are generally poorer than those in urban areas headed by men.

Marry young

Women marry at a younger age than men, and a large proportion of women have children out of wedlock. Many children also do not live with their parents.

In October 1995 12 percent of children under the age of seven were not living with either of their parents and more than four in 10 (42 percent) of that age group were living only with their mother, compared to a mere one percent living only with their father.

About 13 percent of African children were also most likely to be living with neither parent, compared to nine percent of coloured and four percent of white and Indian children.

More than half the households in this country (51 percent), with the majority headed by African women, do not have water or electricity in their homes. The task of fetching water and wood fell to women.



A new report confirms that African women in rural areas are the worst off in South Africa.

Overall, nearly two thirds (63 percent) of men aged 15 years and above are classified as economically active, while less than half (46 percent) of women are.

While a large number of women may define themselves as housewives, especially in the rural areas, they are likely to be involved in subsistence industries, but the extent of this is not known.

Most white men (69 percent) and Indian men (68 percent) are employed, compared to 43 percent and 24 percent of African men and women respectively, and 59 percent of coloured men.

Although there has been improvement in the public service, women are still at lower levels than men.

By December 1996, just under half (49 percent) of the 1,2 million public servants were women and about a third (32 percent) were African women.

But at management level they were just over one in 10. White men still held 58 percent of management positions and 40 percent of senior management positions.

Women made up most of the skilled and highly skilled categories, into which teachers and nurses fall. African women accounted for 29 percent of those in the skilled category and 34 percent of those in the skilled production category.

While African men (39 percent) and women (36 percent) made up the bulk of trade union membership, among Indians more women (32 percent) were members of trade unions than men (29 percent).

Women generally, and in particular African and coloured women, earn far less than their male counterparts.

The biggest income gaps are among white men and women. White women's earnings averaged 60 percent of those of white men, while African women's earnings averaged 89 percent of those of African men.

While among all race groups women can expect to live six to seven years longer than men, coloured people have the lowest life expectancy: 65 years for women and 59 years for men.

As expected the racial disparities are related to differences in wealth, living conditions and access to health and social services.

A large number of African women have given birth outside of a hospital, clinic or formal health facility.

As is well known, they have the least access to healthcare and medical aid.

Although more women than men use contraceptives, they may not necessarily be practising safe sex as African women have the highest rate of HIV-Aids.

Although there is a quota for female representation among the African National Congress allowing women to make up more than a quarter of the National Assembly, among the other parties there are still far more men than women in Parliament.

Crime against women

Crime against women has increased – over the past few years the number of reported rapes has grown faster than the population growth.

Between 1994 and 1996 the number of reported rapes per 100 000 of the population increased from 105,3 to 119,5.

In some areas, like the judiciary, the legacy of "pale and male" still holds strong. By June last year, of 186 judges, 156 were white men and 10 were women.

In the highest court in the land, the Constitutional Court, the 11 judges are made up of six white men, one white woman, three black men and one black woman.

In most areas of South African society, the gender gaps are greater than the racial gaps.



Flashback ... an African National Congress freedom concert after its victory in the 1994 elections. The birth of a multiparty democracy and the constitutional commitment to eliminating racial and gender discrimination is two of South Africa's major achievements of the '90s.

Long way to gender equality

(335A) (335A) Sowetan 7/8/98

By Zarina Maharaj

THE 1990s in South Africa are destined to be stamped with two major achievements. One is the birth of a constitutional state and multi-party democracy based on one person-one, vote.

The other is the constitutional commitment to eliminating discrimination, particularly the racial and gender discrimination which lie at the heart of our underdevelopment, poverty and the gross inequalities that continue to haunt us.

The racial and gender "equality" guaranteed in our Bill of Rights is the equality of access across the races and across the sexes to all of society's resources including, for example, income, education, land, health care, credit and decision-making power in all fields of human endeavour.

It is the inequality of access to such resources that defines the power relations in society: white domination of blacks on the one hand, and male domination of females on the other.

"Empowerment" in the context of the Bill of Rights is thus about creating the conditions to bring about equality of access to resources between the different groups in our society, mainly between blacks and whites and between men and women.

August 9 marks the fifth celebration of Women's Day since South Africa's first democratic government took power. It is therefore appropriate to ask how far we have travelled along the path to gender equality.

Gender equality

The best answer to this question would have been available if targets for gender equality in respect of each of society's resources could have been set in 1994.

Targets like: "Such-and-such a percentage of women and such-and-such a percentage of men have access to the resource of healthcare. We aim to narrow this gender gap by raising the percentage of women who have access to this resource to x percent by 1998."

Then we would have been able to check whether our targets have been met and so measure our achievements, thereby developing a mechanism to monitor our policies, laws, structures and means for effectiveness of delivery.

But such targets presuppose data about access to each resource. The apartheid regime was notorious for its lack of data, particularly about the differing conditions of women and men. So it was impossible to set such targets in 1994.

Fortunately, however, the Central Statistical Service (CSS), among others, is filling apartheid's data vacuum. Yesterday, for example, they released their booklet on gender statistics.

The Government needs these figures to execute its planning functions, including target setting and monitoring, to convert the promise of gender equality into practice.

These statistics in themselves represent a milestone on the path to gender equality.

Earlier milestones include Government's ratification in 1995 of international treaties on gender equality such as the Beijing Platform of Action and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

Other landmarks are the setting up of machinery to promote gender equality like the Office on the Status of Women, the Parliamentary Committee on the Quality of Life and Status of Women, the Commission on Gender Equality and gender desks within national and provincial departments.

Then there is the new budgetary process, the Medium Term Expenditure Framework, which can be used to women's advantage better than the previous one.

And a myriad of laws and policies have been or are about to be enacted to empower women to gain equal access to society's resources.

Legalising abortion, for example, recognises that unless women have control over their reproductive lives, they cannot be expected to take equal advantage with men of opportunities outside the home.

The Employment Equity and Skills Development Bills as they apply to women are designed to help them into the formal economy from which they have been largely excluded.

Similarly, the 1994 affirmative action policy with respect to African National Congress female parliamentarians has led to the current 29 percent of women in Parliament, 18 percent women ministers and 60 percent women deputy ministers.

Such figures have contributed significantly to South Africa's good rating of 18 (out of 94 countries) on the United Nations 1997 Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) scale.

The GEM measures gender inequality in key areas of economic and political participation and decision-making: the lower the rating, the higher the gender equality in these key areas.

The UN's Gender Development Index (GDI) measures the achievement of a country's female population in those basic capabilities that are required to contribute to their society's development: life expectancy, educational attainment and an income that is adequate for a reasonable standard of living.

When the achievement in these capabilities is measured for the population as a whole, the measure is called the Human Development Index (HDI).

The difference between the HDI and the GDI amounts to a measure of gender inequality in such basic capabilities. In 1996, South Africa's HDI ranking was 78 and its GDI ranking 74 out of 137 countries, a difference of 4.

Alleviating poverty

In 1997, our HDI ranking was 76 and our GDI ranking 71 out of 146 countries, a difference of five, representing a larger gender inequality than in 1996.

This is hardly surprising given the "feminisation of poverty", with women's incomes dropping more rapidly than men's, a phenomenon different from but related to the fact that the overwhelming majority of the poor in this country are women.

This has led to the acknowledgement, in mind if not in heart, that poverty alleviation and job creation need a special focus on women, given the incontrovertible evidence that women's incomes go further towards household survival and human capital investment than men's.

Such acceptance that women are a country's "engine out of poverty" is another milestone towards gender equality.

But enormous challenges lie ahead. One is to reinstate custom and indigenous law within the framework of the Bill of Rights.

Another is to quantify the vital contribution to the economy made by the informal sector and to regulate it in a way that recognises this contribution.

Another is to curb violent crime against women.

Another is to get more women working in local government, at the interface of grassroots needs and policy prescriptions.

There are many more.

Women cannot meet such challenges alone. We need our men alongside us to help us bring about change.

As Danny Glover, recently appointed ambassador to the UN Development Programme's poverty eradication programme, put it: "We make our lives by what we give."

(The writer is a feminist writer and newspaper columnist.)

Bid to shrink wage gap angers business chiefs

ARG 14/8/98 (~~128~~) (35A)

Organised business has reacted with dismay to changes to controversial affirmative action legislation contained in the Employment Equity Bill, which aims to address wage differentials.

Parliament's labour committee yesterday approved the changes to the bill after weeks of wrangling between Government, business and trade unions.

Said Frans Barker, Business South Africa (BSA) negotiator: "This changes the whole focus of the bill. We are very concerned.

"The focus is moving away from transforming the workplace in a constructive way to wage bargaining."

The bill compels companies employing more than 50 people to plan in consultation with employees and representative trade unions to move towards a workforce that reflects national and regional population demographics.

The legislation focuses on redressing discrimination against blacks, women and the disabled, but stops short of prescribing specific quotas.

Godfrey Oliphant, labour committee chairman, said he was relieved the committee had finally approved the bill.

The amendments approved yesterday will force employers to submit a statement on wages and benefits in each occupational category.

Mr Barker said employers could not support the amendments.

BSA would call an urgent meeting to address the issue before the amended bill went before parliament for approval next Thursday, he said.

"Our labour market flexibility has been reducing while in other countries it has been increasing. Many manufacturing companies are crossing the border and exporting jobs. We want to export products, not jobs." – Reuters

Nailed for being women

The latest census reveals the full extent of the inequality between the sexes and the races

(395A) ST 25/10/98

South African women have always felt that they are discriminated against. Now, as CAROL PATON reports, there is startling statistical evidence to back up this claim

SOUTH African women live longer, are more robust as babies and have fewer mental disabilities than men. However, they have worse jobs, even though their education levels are often equal to men — an indication they are worse off simply because they are women.

These are some of the findings of the census released this week, which, for the first time since 1970, performed an accurate count of the population, declaring that there are 40,6 million people in South Africa.

Of these, 52 percent are women, meaning that there are 1,5 million more women than men.

Gauteng is the only province where men outnumber women — evidence of continued migration by rural men.

Mark Orkin, head of Statistics South Africa, which undertook the census, believes the ratio of women to men vindicates the census's accuracy. Although demographers have for years assumed the ratio of men to women to be lower — at 51:49 — the 1970 count came up with the same result before being adjusted to fit a demographic model.

But, apart from the numbers, what is at stake, Orkin points out, is that "the male foetus is more fragile than the female".

While there are almost equal numbers of boy and girl babies in the 0-4 age group, fewer boys survive till adulthood. Women also tend to live longer, with more women than men in every five-year age group, with this proportion increasing rapidly after the age of 60. By the age of 85, they outnumber men by two to one.

And surprisingly, while men and women suffer almost equally from physical disabilities, nearly 60 percent of people with mental disabilities are men.

However, apart from their more robust health, women are worse off than men.

Nowhere is this clearer than in what they earn, says Orkin. Among the employed, the average annual income of a man is R30 000 — but that of a woman is only R20 000.

The inequalities are worse when looked at in terms of race. Among Africans, the average income for women is R12 000, compared with R16 000 for men.

While average wages provide a useful indicator of differences between the sexes and between the race groups, they mask the extent of poverty and inequality revealed by the census.

More than two-thirds of the employed earn below the average, which is pulled up by the high earnings of mainly white professionals. A quarter of those employed — and close to half of all African women — earn less than R500 a month.

The main reason for this, says Orkin, is the large number of women in unskilled jobs.

But, he adds, men continue to dominate the upper occupational categories despite the fact that women, particularly in an urban context, have caught up with them in the educational stakes.

There are four occupational categories described in the census: elementary; artisan/operator; clerk/sales; and managerial/professional.

While African women dominate the elementary category, African men outnumber them by far in the artisan/operator and clerk/sales categories.

However, there are almost equal numbers of men and women with secondary education, matric and higher education.

"Women are surviving in the upper educational levels and yet the occupational structure in the middle still seems to discriminate against them. In other words, women are getting nailed for being women," says Orkin.

Among whites, however, men and women seem to have equal chances. Almost half of employed white women and men are professionals or managers, even though more men than women have higher education.

But more women than men work in clerical or sales categories — a reflection of the large number of women working in shops.

The rising educational levels among women can be assumed to be a more recent development, Orkin says.

The census found that large numbers of people have no education at all — most of them women living in rural areas. The worst example is in Northern Province, where half a million women have had no education.

"Where people have had no schooling we can assume that is the legacy of apartheid. The more rural the province, the worse the problem of no schooling among women. But while women used to have a bad deal, the numbers suggest that now boys and girls are going to school equally," says Orkin.

But many of apartheid's old patterns remain in place.

One of the most dramatic findings of the census is of migration patterns. Northern Province, the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal all have large proportions of women, while Gauteng, the Northern Cape and the Free State have disproportionately more men — a sign that it is still mostly men who migrate to the cities and mines.

While 63 percent of African males under the age of 20 live in rural areas, by the age of 30 only 40 percent still do. After the age of 55, the number of men in rural areas increases rapidly, with as many as 68 percent being back home again at the age of 70.

For women, this pattern is a lot less exaggerated. While women begin leaving rural areas from the age of 20, many do not migrate at all. While 63 percent of African women are born in rural areas, this percentage does not drop below 47 percent even at the height of their working age.

Less migration and discrimination against African women in the middle occupations has also made an impact on the unemployment rate. African women are by far the worst affected — more than half are unemployed while the national average is about 30 percent.



Uphill battle from a till to a gavel

CARMEL RICKARD

ONE example of how women — particularly black women — have to work much harder than their male counterparts is Judge Thokozile Matilda Matsipa (left), who has just been appointed to the High Court.

She began her career as a cashier and counter hand. She moved on to journalism and worked for some years on The World and Post, while she studied social work and then law.

She worked as a copywriter and editor of Queen magazine before finally, at the age of 44, achieving her ambition of becoming an advocate. Just seven years later she has been nominated to the Bench.

Black women find it hard to break into the clubby legal network which is the source of an advocate's income, so Judge Matsipa had to find other ways to make a living and feed her family.

She began to make herself available for a wide range of quasi-judicial positions, knowing it would give her experience and exposure — as well as income.

She sat as a commissioner in the Small Claims Court and as an assessor in criminal courts, as well as in the Labour Appeal Court and the Land Claims Court.

Her many roles include head of the disciplinary committee of the estate agents' board, and chair of the air service licensing council and the Transnet bargaining council. She also teaches trial advocacy to law students, candidate attorneys and others.

Matsipa, who also works with community organisations, has even found time to learn nine of the 11 official languages.

She recently spent a term as an acting judge in Johannesburg — and so impressed her colleagues that five of the judges nominated her for an appointment to the Bench.

Picture: JOE SEFALE

A step forward for women

(355A CT 30/10/98

ANDRE KOOPMAN

SOUTH AFRICAN women made perpetual minors by apartheid legislation will become legal adults in terms of the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act being considered by the National Assembly's justice committee.

The vast majority of SA women — mainly rural women — are married under customary law and consequently had no legal rights or contractual powers in terms of apartheid legislation.

A key player in the passage of the bill Lindi Ngwane (ANC) said yesterday that it would, for the first time, give women married under customary law equal status to men. "It gives them the capacity to contract, litigate and acquire assets, which they never enjoyed before.

The bill states: "The wife in a customary marriage has in all respects a status equal to that of her husband."

Ngwane said the bill was also noteworthy in that it improves the position of children in these marriages and places customary marriages on an equal footing with civil marriages.

It recognises that all children are equal whether they are the children of a customary or civil marriage.

In terms of the new law women who marry according to custom will immediately acquire community of property rights, unless excluded by contract.

"What is also exciting is that women married according to custom can change their marriage to a civil one by a simple procedure provided for in the bill," Ngwane said.

The law lays the foundation for a uniform code of marriage law that will be applicable to all South Africans and provides a structure compatible with the future recognition of religious and other forms of marriage.

Women's groups have welcomed the fact that the new bill is retroactive, which is significant because it recognises all valid customary marriages entered into in the past. It provides for the registration of customary marriages.

It discourages polygamous marriages since it bolsters rights of women in such unions and encourages an equitable distribution of resources. A man may not marry another woman before the resources of the first marriage are equitably distributed.

Mohseen Moosa (ANC), acting as joint chairperson of the committee with chairperson Johnny de Lange (ANC), pointed out that the law does not protect the rights of women whose husbands have entered into both customary and civil marriages.

After much debate De Lange said that with the new bill the foundation for an equitable marriage system was being established. The committee could not in one fell swoop eliminate all the inequities of the apartheid past.

Ngwane said the bill does, however, prohibit a man married to a woman under customary law from marrying another woman under civil law. She said that this ensures that a customary marriage does not become subservient to a civil marriage, which has been the position.

FOCUS

Laws serve women's rights

BD 13/11/98 (3556A)

Bills reflect a change of attitude towards the status of women, writes **Bennie Bunsee**

THREE new bills affecting the status of women became law last week. The Domestic Violence Bill, the Maintenance Bill and the Recognition of Customary Marriages Bill will dramatically alter and ameliorate the status of women. They will set the seal on a transformed judicial attitude towards women's position in society.

They fulfil our constitutional prescripts to meet gender equality and freedom from violence. They also meet the requirements of Justice Vision 2000, a strategy document for transforming the administration of justice, that the special needs of vulnerable groups like women and children be taken into account in changing the judiciary.

The Domestic Violence Bill improves on the limited effectiveness of the Prevention of Family Violence Act, 1993.

The new bill recognises that domestic violence is a serious crime against society and an obstacle to gender equality. It broadens its application to "partners in marriage" to include any "domestic relationship" affecting victim and abuser.

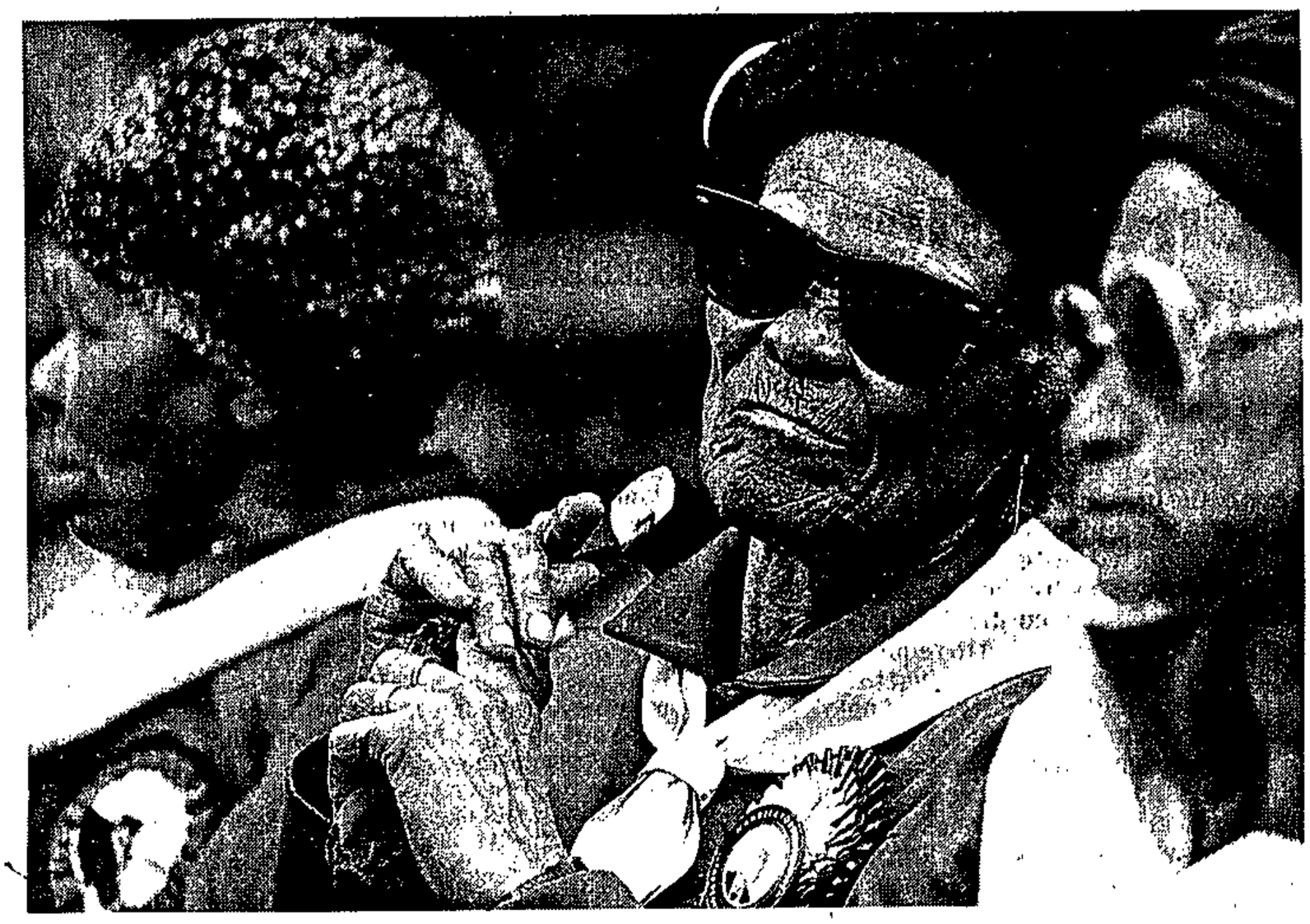
Where the old act more or less limited "family violence" to physical violence, the new bill includes sexual abuse, emotional, psychological and verbal abuse, economic abuse, harassment, stalking, damage to property, entering a complainant's residence without consent where the parties do not share the same residence or any other abusive behaviour towards a complainant that may cause harm to the safety, health or well being of the complainant. These categories of abuse are more fully explained in the bill.

Police will now be obliged to inform a victim immediately of his or her rights. The SA Police Service national commissioner must issue national guidelines; the failure to comply with them by a police officer will mean disciplinary action being taken. The officer can also make arrangements for the complainant to find suitable shelter or obtain medical treatment when called to address a domestic violence incident.

An edge is given to the lesser charge of common assault under which domestic violence usually falls, in that a police officer can without a warrant make an arrest if violence has been used. This means that the victim will not be left at the mercy of the perpetrator.

The bill recognises the need for the immediate separation of the victim from the abuser. An application of restraint from the abuser in the form of an interim protection order can be made on behalf of the victim by any other interested party with their consent. This can be the prelude for a protracted protection order.

While a protection order is in operation the bill makes provisions for the abuser to meet certain obligations relating to rent or mortgage payments and to order the payment of emergency monetary relief.



The three new laws which were passed last week will dramatically ameliorate the status of women.

"Children should not become the contact point through which the respondent can regain control over the victim." Thus such contact might be refused or be structured.

Both the national director of prosecution and the national commissioner of the SAPS must submit their policies and instructions as required by the bill within six months of its publication.

The second bill, the Maintenance Bill, is a prelude to a larger review undertaken by the SA Law Commission. Its interim measures are meant to correct glaring deficiencies in maintenance payments which affect the interests of women and children who are often dependent upon it. Therefore, the bill is administrative in content but aims to be more effective in the recovery of payments.

Among its major provisions is the appointment of maintenance investigators to locate whereabouts of recalcitrant "respondents" who try to avoid payments. Multilevel investigations will be carried out to ascertain the financial position of respondents that will enable the courts to make appropriate maintenance orders.

Payments can now be made directly through an employer obviating many difficulties of collection. It will also ease the problem of collection for applicants.

Maintenance courts will be able to make orders in the absence of a respondent. This was not possible in the past, and many respondents avoided or delayed payments by simply staying away from court. If a subpoena has been deliberately ignored the court can make an order.

It also enables a civil proceeding whereby a maintenance order does not have to be dependent on the outcome of a criminal proceeding before it can be issued.

Justice Minister Dullah Omar told the National Assembly last week: "A maintenance order will be the final order of the court for the payment of a specific amount to another person, and should be executable as such without requiring the person in whose favour the order was made to initiate further proceedings."

The third bill, the Recognition of Customary Marriages Bill, gives formal recognition to customary marriages which were denied during the apartheid past.

In introducing the bill, Omar said: "A sore point for millions of South Africans was the rejection of various forms of marriage because they did not resemble European notions of how a family should be constituted.

SA's common law resolutely denied recognition to Islamic, Hindu, and other religious marriages, and customary marriages. This was based on the intolerance of European judges for kinship systems that did not fit within a Western mind-set. Such discrimination flew in the face ... of justice and fair treatment."

At the same time the bill creates a unified marriage statute with a minimum marriage age, registration, equal capacity of the spouses, property ownership and divorce. In particular it annuls the notorious section of the Black Administration Act, 1929, which relegated African women married by customary rights to perpetual minority status. The Age of Majority Act replaces this.

Clause 7 of the bill makes community of property the automatic system of customary marriages, which harmonises it with common law. The right to equal inheritance is instituted. While the bill recognises the reality of polygamy it is "unequivocal in its mission to transform the position of women in customary marriages", Omar said.

□ *Bunsee is Justice Minister Dullah Omar's spokesman.*

FOCUS

Laws serve women's rights

BD 13/11/98 (3668A)

Bills reflect a change of attitude towards the status of women, writes **Bennie Bunsee**



The three new laws which were passed last week will dramatically ameliorate the status of women.

THREE new bills affecting the status of women became law last week. The Domestic Violence Bill, the Maintenance Bill and the Recognition of Customary Marriages Bill will dramatically alter and ameliorate the status of women. They will set the seal on a transformed judicial attitude towards women's position in society.

They fulfil our constitutional prescripts to meet gender equality and freedom from violence. They also meet the requirements of Justice Vision 2000, a strategy document for transforming the administration of justice, that the special needs of vulnerable groups like women and children be taken into account in changing the judiciary.

The Domestic Violence Bill improves on the limited effectiveness of the Prevention of Family Violence Act, 1993.

The new bill recognises that domestic violence is a serious crime against society and an obstacle to gender equality. It broadens its application to "partners in marriage" to include any "domestic relationship" affecting victim and abuser.

Where the old act more or less limited "family violence" to physical violence, the new bill includes sexual abuse, emotional, psychological and verbal abuse, economic abuse, harassment, stalking, damage to property, entering a complainant's residence without consent where the parties do not share the same residence or any other abusive behaviour towards a complainant that may cause harm to the safety, health or well being of the complainant. These categories of abuse are more fully explained in the bill.

Police will now be obliged to inform a victim immediately of his or her rights. The SA Police Service national commissioner must issue national guidelines; the failure to comply with them by a police officer will mean disciplinary action being taken. The officer can also make arrangements for the complainant to find suitable shelter or obtain medical treatment when called to address a domestic violence incident.

An edge is given to the lesser charge of common assault under which domestic violence usually falls, in that a police officer can without a warrant make an arrest if violence has been used. This means that the victim will not be left at the mercy of the perpetrator.

The bill recognises the need for the immediate separation of the victim from the abuser. An application of restraint from the abuser in the form of an interim protection order can be made on behalf of the victim by any other interested party with their consent. This can be the prelude for a protracted protection order.

While a protection order is in operation the bill makes provisions for the abuser to meet certain obligations relating to rent or mortgage payments and to order the payment of emergency monetary relief.

"Children should not become the contact point through which the respondent can regain control over the victim." Thus such contact might be refused or be structured.

Both the national director of prosecution and the national commissioner of the SAPS must submit their policies and instructions as required by the bill within six months of its publication.

The second bill, the Maintenance Bill, is a prelude to a larger review undertaken by the SA Law Commission. Its interim measures are meant to correct glaring deficiencies in maintenance payments which affect the interests of women and children who are often dependent upon it. Therefore, the bill is administrative in content but aims to be more effective in the recovery of payments.

Among its major provisions is the appointment of maintenance investigators to locate whereabouts of recalcitrant "respondents" who try to avoid payments. Multilevel investigations will be carried out to ascertain the financial position of respondents that will enable the courts to make appropriate maintenance orders.

Payments can now be made directly through an employer obviating many difficulties of collection. It will also ease the problem of collection for applicants.

Maintenance courts will be able to make orders in the absence of a respondent. This was not possible in the past, and many respondents avoided or delayed payments by simply staying away from court. If a subpoena has been deliberately ignored the court can make an order.

It also enables a civil proceeding whereby a maintenance order does not have to be dependent on the outcome of a criminal proceeding before it can be issued.

Justice Minister Dullah Omar told the National Assembly last week: "A maintenance order will be the final order of the court for the payment of a specific amount to another person, and should be executable as such without requiring the person in whose favour the order was made to initiate further proceedings."

The third bill, the Recognition of Customary Marriages Bill, gives formal recognition to customary marriages which were denied during the apartheid past.

In introducing the bill, Omar said: "A sore point for millions of South Africans was the rejection of various forms of marriage because they did not resemble European notions of how a family should be constituted.

SA's common law resolutely denied recognition to Islamic, Hindu, and other religious marriages, and customary marriages. This was based on the intolerance of European judges for kinship systems that did not fit within a Western mind-set. Such discrimination flew in the face ... of justice and fair treatment."

At the same time the bill creates a unified marriage statute with a minimum marriage age, registration, equal capacity of the spouses, property ownership and divorce. In particular it annuls the notorious section of the Black Administration Act, 1929, which relegated African women married by customary rights to perpetual minority status. The Age of Majority Act replaces this.

Clause 7 of the bill makes community of property the automatic system of customary marriages, which harmonises it with common law. The right to equal inheritance is instituted. While the bill recognises the reality of polygamy it is "unequivocal in its mission to transform the position of women in customary marriages", Omar said.

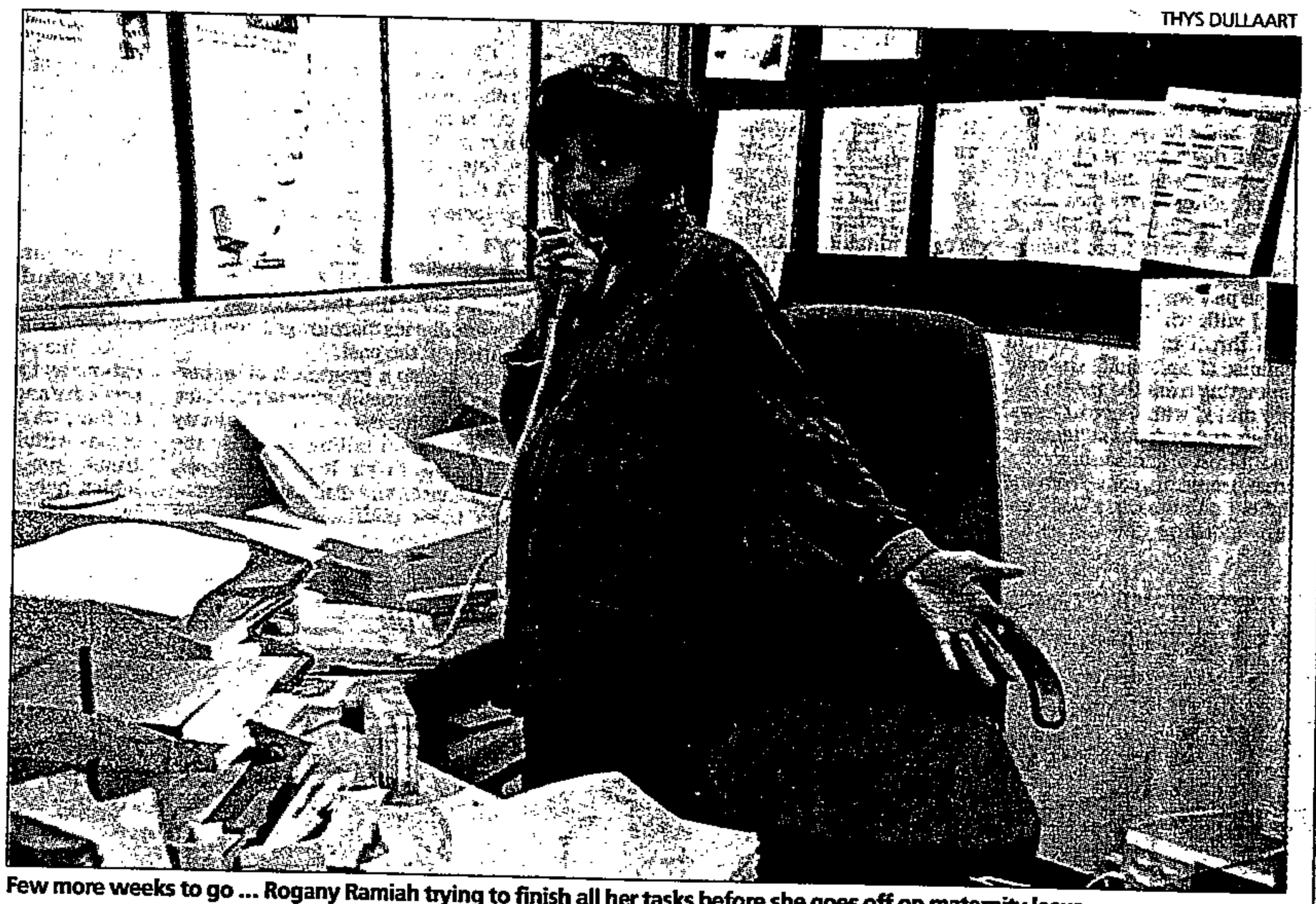
□ *Bunsee is Justice Minister Dullah Omar's spokesman.*

Battle of the bulge

(355A) Star 23/11/98

The working environment is not always sufficiently empathetic to pregnant working women, putting them and their unborn babies at unnecessary risk. Glenda Daniels reports

THYS DULLAART



Few more weeks to go ... Rogany Ramiah trying to finish all her tasks before she goes off on maternity leave.

Pregnant women in the workplace often look apologetic for their bulging bellies. In fact, many try to hide their pregnancies from their employers. And at times women get so stressed by work they lose their babies or have premature ones.

So should we all abandon the laptops and forget the conferences in favour of putting up our feet to knit away? Or do we need a total rethink of pregnancy in the workplace?

You are most likely to give birth prematurely, if you are stressed at work and put in longer than a 40-hour week, recent research shows. The risk of premature births is as high as 40%, according to a study conducted in Britain.

South Africa's new legislation in terms of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, is progressive but the reality is that many women do not know their rights, and employers often try to get away with making the minimum of allowances.

Employers still ask women whether and when they are planning to have children during job interviews.

This is discriminatory and according to new legislation employers should not be doing this, says Marion Stevens of the Women's Health Project.

In the corporate sector, falling pregnant is generally viewed as a barrier to success, says Stevens.

Employers, she feels, are generally not overjoyed when women get pregnant because it means that they will be away from work. Women often lose out on promotions once they declare their pregnancy, so they often tend to hide it.

According to the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, a pregnant woman has the option of requesting an alternative job should her present one be dangerous to either her health or that of her unborn child. For example, if your job requires lifting of heavy objects or if you are surrounded by harmful chemicals, you can now ask your employer to give you an alternate position.

Some of the hazards in the workplace can include exposure to noise, vibration, electric and electromagnetic fields, radiation and radioactive substances.

Ergonomic hazards include heavy and physical work, static work posture, frequent bending and twisting, lifting heavy objects, repeutive work, awkward postures, no rest, standing/sitting for long periods.

Tiredness, associated with pregnancy, may affect the woman's ability to work overtime and to perform evening work.

The employer can consider granting resting periods.

Employers should make attempts to limit the exposure of pregnant and breastfeeding women to extreme heat.

Excessive physical or mental pressure may cause stress and give rise to anxiety and raised blood pressure.

Exposure of the pregnant woman to tobacco smoke can cause growth retardation and more early childhood diseases research shows.

In other countries

- In Venezuela it is unlawful for an employer to submit a woman to pregnancy tests.
- In Japan, night work is not prohibited, but if a pregnant or breastfeeding woman so requests, she will not be required to work at night.
- In some countries women are entitled to nursing breaks per day. In Poland women are entitled to two hours for an eight-hour day and one hour if they work for six hours. In Turkey two 45- minute breaks are to be taken.
- In Luxembourg, the two 45-minute breaks may only be combined if the lunch break is shorter than one hour or if the mother can't nurse her child in the vicinity of the workplace.

Workers' rights and the legalities

South African Commercial and Allied Workers Union (Saccawu) was one of the first unions to secure progressive paternal rights.

As early as 1985, they ensured job security for pregnant workers. Ten years later, it is now part of legislation that women cannot lose their jobs due to pregnancy.

Patricia Appolis, Saccawu national gender co-ordinator and parental rights negotiator, says that on average, women get six-months paid maternity leave and fathers get between five and six days paternity leave.

According to the Basic Conditions of Employment Act:

- An employee is entitled to at least four consecutive months' maternity leave. This is unpaid unless you contribute to the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF).
- A pregnant woman may begin maternity leave from four weeks before the expected date of birth.
- No employee may work for six weeks after birth unless a doctor certifies that it is okay to do so.
- If an employee has a miscarriage or still birth in the third trimester, she is entitled to maternity leave for six weeks afterwards.

Lucy does it her way



Her choice ... Lucy Abrahams.

If you are your own boss, you can create a relatively stress-free pregnancy.

Take director-general of welfare, Lucy Abrahams, for instance. She felt that because she was her own boss it meant that she "wrote her own script".

"I was fortunate in that I decided what happened in the workplace," says Abrahams, who worked until the day she gave birth.

Abrahams had taken leave from her job as commissioner, but continued working, training public managers at Wits Business School.

"I felt that mentally and physically I was fit by the time of the birth and came out of hospital the same day of the birth," she says.

When she went back to work, she even took her baby into the office and breastfed her.

Some ways to reduce stress when you are pregnant and working:

- Try not to travel during rush hours, and if possible negotiate flexitime.
- If you have a care department at the office, see if you can get a special chair or foot rest.
- Perhaps you could negotiate to work from home some days.
- Make sure it is understood that you cannot stand for long periods at a time, nor lift heavy objects.
- Get domestic help at home to enable you to cope and rest.
- Find time for some light leg, ankle and shoulder exercises.
- If you can afford it, ask your employer for shorter working hours.

Women still tripped up by workplace obstacles

ST(BT) 13/12/98

A survey shows that SA's working women are looking for more than money, writes JANETTE BENNETT

(355A)



Picture: TONY STONE WORLDWIDE

BOARDROOM TALK ... women are playing an increasingly important role in the workplace

PROMOTION prospects and a balanced personal and working life are far more important to South African working women than how much they earn.

Of course salary is important, says University of SA (Unisa) business management professor Barney Erasmus, but women will look for more. They base their job choices on a host of other factors which determine how attractive an organisation is to them.

Erasmus and Unisa applied accounting professor Elmarie Sadler are the people behind a significant survey of issues affecting working women in South Africa. Their sample included 617 chartered accountants, 512 human resources professionals, 218 nurses and 512 mostly businesswomen and professionals.

For Sadler, the survey's pertinent message is that working women are here to stay, and managements have to realise that women are factors in organisations. But they still face obstacles to career advancement in mostly male-oriented workplaces.

The survey results were presented at the Economics, Business Management and Human Resources Management conference in Cape Town recently, and at a meeting of the Business and Economic Society International in Rome in July.

The researchers found that what women want most is promotion (79%), professional support (76%), and a balanced professional and public life (71%). Also important are job satisfaction (57%) and power and status (52%). Better pay was noted as a top career expectation for only 29% of the surveyed women.

Lack of recognition and respect and experience-limiting restrictions on the type of work given are identified as the major barriers to career advancement. Perhaps surprisingly, this is closely followed by a lack of mentor support from women, which Sadler and Erasmus say "highlights the responsibility of women managers in organisations to act as role models".

Some barriers are directly related to women trying to juggle the demands of their careers and their families. Lack of flexibility of working hours and little allowance made for family commitments are seen as significant obstacles to getting ahead, as are low salaries which cannot support childcare payments. Other barriers include a male culture in organisations and gender bias by supervisors.

Their findings are backed up by the Work-in-Life survey, conducted in March, which researched attitudes of Business Times readers.

This survey found that 37% of women will change jobs for more job satisfaction, 33% for better career prospects, 30% for a better financial package and 30% to expand their skills. It also found 68% will downgrade to a less senior or financially rewarding position if they want to acquire new skills, 64% for a better quality of life, and 58% because they have children to look after.

Women, the professors emphasise, have particular abilities which can be very valuable to an organisation. However, it is up to management to determine to what extent those abilities are utilised.

Apart from sexism issues, it would be foolish to stand in the way of women's advancement at work, considering South Africa's skills shortage. By 1995, women made up 44% of SA's working population, compared to just 23% in 1960.

There are other reasons too. "Management in organisations that treat women as individuals and create equal opportunities for them are likely to attract and keep good and loyal women," the professors say, referring to research which shows that higher-level women have lower turnover rates than men at comparable levels.

Drawing on other research and their own, they point out that women are more people-centred, intuitive, holistic in their thinking, interested in aesthetics and focused on mediating to resolve differences. They are also more family and individual-oriented, and emotionally expressive.

Men, meanwhile, are more object-centred, rational, analytical in their thinking, interested in technology, competitive and aggressive, and peer and group-oriented.

Even the brains of men and women differ. Women's brains function in a more integrated manner, more easily using both sides of their brains. Men are better at spatial, mathematical and structured thinking; women are better in the communicative and emotive areas. Men are more comfortable with logical problem-solving, and women generally consider people and feelings.

There are also similarities. Both men and women use the same defensive reasoning processes when they deal with issues that could be embarrassing or threatening.

Employers, Erasmus and Sadler say, could acknowledge "the special leadership styles women possess — such as transformational leadership, charisma and networking. They could ensure organisational transformation, giving the status of managers to women who earn it and also giving women managers the freedom to manage."

WOMEN WORKERS

1999

Rights for all, except women – study

(355A)

By Cathy Powers

Although the constitution heralded a new era of equality for all South Africans, women are still denied their constitutional rights through indirect discrimination.

This is the finding of an audit by the Gender Research Project of the Centre for Applied Legal Studies for the Commission on Gender Equality.

Liesl Gerntholtz, the commission's legal head, said much progress had been made in removing discriminatory laws, but indirect discrimination still existed.

"It's about women's place in society, the social value placed on pregnancy and motherhood, and the social value placed on women's contribution to the economy (in the unpaid work they do at home)," Gerntholtz said.

This perception of the status of women had wider implications in the workplace and even in the political sphere, she said.

The study acknowledged that legal thinking had moved towards guaranteeing women and men equal rights and responsibilities within marriage over the past 15 years – but inequalities remained.

There was recognition that family law needed to be modernised to include non-married couples and extended families.

The report said there were often subtle forms of discrimination because of outdated stereotypes, although overt forms of discrimination, such as women in the workplace having equal qualifications to those of their male counterparts receiving less for similar jobs, even though the new legislation prevented this.

Star 4/2/99

Stereotyping bars women from top jobs in legal profession

Men dominate in advocates', attorneys' ranks

By Cathy Powers

Women are vastly under-represented in the legal profession, making up only 19% of South Africa's practising attorneys and only 12% of the country's advocates. The dearth of women impacts on the functioning of the law within our society and how the law treats and views women, say experts.

The figures, quoted by the attorneys' journal *De Rebus*, come from a soon-to-be published study by the University of Cape Town's law, race and gender unit.

According to the study, women make up 34% of the legal practitioners in England, and 34% in New Zealand. There are more women at entry level in this country but this drops off at higher levels.

"(The scenario) is quite perturbing if we hope to restructure the judicial administrative system to reflect gender and race – keeping in mind that they are majority issues," said Lawyers for Human Rights director Vinodh Jaichand.

"When women went to parliament South Africa believed it was very progressive. We patted ourselves on the back but very few took stock of existing society especially in relation to women as decision-makers, managers and attorneys, advocates and judges.

"We need good role models to break the stereotypical thinking," she says.

Vice-chairperson of the Johannesburg Bar Council, Roland Sutherland, admitted that women had to overcome obstacles.

"It's a fact that when two equally qualified people come to the bar, it is taken for granted that the young man will be serious about building a practice."

They have to play by male rules

But this was not the assumption about the woman. "She would have to demonstrate that she is to be taken seriously," he said. "These are built-in cultural prejudices that are ebbing."

It is these assumptions that Lisa Vetten, of the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation's sexual harassment education programme, takes issue with. The male-dominated environment meant that one set of norms and standards prevailed, making it hard to challenge sexist assumptions, she said.

"There is not enough critical mass to challenge the taken-for-granted assumptions, such as: women who are raped ask for it."

Racial and gender representivity was also about putting more emphasis on matters that pertinently affected certain sectors, said Nona Goso, chairperson of the Cape Bar. A stronger female presence on the Bench, for example, would lead to stronger signals being sent out to society in largely female-specific cases, such as rape.

"It's a double-edged sword," said Advocate Liesl Gerntholtz of the Commission for Gender Equality. "We don't want to suggest that only women can cross-examine rape survivors but we do want gender concerns to be infused in all aspects of society and the law.

"Women's under-representivity is about lack of access to child care; about women bearing the burden of child birth.

"Traditionally women lawyers who want to get into the big league have to play by male rules."

Gender bias in law

Sowetan 16/3/99

Although SA has a celebrated Constitution, a new study reveals that the country's women still struggle with inequality and discrimination, writes **Liesl Gerntholtz.**

(355A)



Laws that discriminate against working women are under review in South Africa.

THE first comprehensive research to identify inequality and discrimination against women that exists in the law was launched yesterday, a week after International Women's Day.

This research – an Audit of Legislation that Discriminates on the Basis of Sex and Gender – aims to identify laws that discriminate on the basis of sex and gender and to highlight areas for law reform.

The audit, prepared by the Gender Research Project of the Centre for Applied Legal Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand, was launched by the Commission on Gender Equality.

It found that legislative discrimination still exists and occurs both directly and indirectly. However, according to Dr Cathi Albertyn, head of the Gender Research Project and a part-time gender commissioner, "South Africa has made progress in the elimination of direct discrimination in the law".

Some areas of concern relate to the customary laws of succession and inheritance, the exclusion of domestic workers from the benefits of the Unemployment Insurance Fund and Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act and the lack of legal protection for women, and gay couples in cohabiting relationships.

But with the introduction of the Recognition of Customary Law Marriages Act in 1998, some of the most profound forms of direct discrimination against women have finally been removed from the statute books.

Despite this progress, the audit indicates that "most of the inequality and discrimination experienced by women lies not in the letter of the law but in its impact".

This hidden or systemic discrimination, which occurs when an apparently neutral law has a disproportionate effect on women or where laws are implemented in a discriminatory manner, continues to impact on the women's lives.

It is also clear that often inequality and discrimination lie in the existence of gender-biased or gender-neutral polices and programmes.

The audit highlights the discrimination faced by working women. The traditional marginalisation of women in the workplace has led to wage discrimination, sexual harassment and a lack of opportunities for promotion and training.

Pay equity continues to be a serious problem, despite the prohibition of discrimination under the Labour Relations Act and the Wage Act.

The audit has also identified a more persistent inequality relating to pay equity, which is the manner in which "different types of jobs are valued and rewarded (which) are based upon gendered assumptions about his and her jobs. Thus, professions and occupations traditionally filled by women are undervalued and badly paid". It remains to be seen whether the Employment Equity Act will alleviate these problems.

Of specific concern to the commission is the issue of women's access to justice. The commission receives numerous complaints from women who cannot afford the services of lawyers and who are consequently unrepresented in court.

The Legal Aid Board favours the provision of legal aid in criminal cases, in which men predominate, while it does not provide funds at all in cases related to maintenance and domestic violence.

Women are therefore not able to "freely obtain the legal assistance needed to protect themselves ... and do lose out on the division and distribution of the marital property on divorce".

Finally the audit has found inequalities and discrimination within the political process. South Africa signed the Convention on the Political Rights of Women in 1993 but has yet to ratify it.

Although South Africa presently has one of the highest proportion of female representatives in the world in Parliament, this is not the case at provincial and local levels.

Research on the representation of women has indicated that much depends on the type of electoral system chosen. Despite submissions to the Ministry for Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development by the commission and other non-governmental organisations that a system of proportional representation would effectively address the participation of women, the recently released White Paper did not introduce a legislated quota, but rather left it to the discretion of political parties.

The commission will again attempt to intervene in the legislative process when the national system is changed after the 1999 elections.

The findings of the audit show that, in the words of President Mandela, "the long walk is not over". Despite some significant legislative victories for women last year – including the Customary Marriages Act, the new Domestic Violence Act and the amendments to the Maintenance Act – many women, particularly those who live on the periphery of society, have yet to taste the fruits of our new democracy.

The commission urges the swift passing and implementation of the anti-discrimination or equality legislation presently being drafted by the Equality Legislation Drafting Project of the Human Rights Commission and the Department of Justice.

The commission will continue to monitor the implementation of all legislation to ensure the improvement of the lives of South African women.

(The writer Liesl Gerntholtz is the head of the legal department of the Commission on Gender Equality and an advocate of the High Court of South Africa.)

Law to help exploited workers

Sowetan 24/3/99

By Malcolm Ray

LABOUR Minister Membathisi Mdladlana's announcement last week of plans to legislate minimum wages in the domestic and agricultural sectors and to compel employers to negotiate retrenchments in labour-shedding sectors, such as mining and manufacturing, could have far-reaching implications for labour market reforms.

His concern about the atrocious plight of domestic and farm workers and burgeoning job losses in the mining and manufacturing industries goes beyond amendments to the law.

Conceptually, it is an indictment on the philosophy of "regulated flexibility" – the cornerstone of both the new Labour Relations Act (LRA) and Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA).

Politically, it threatens to resurrect the difficult debate between organised labour and business on a strategy to remove apartheid-induced distortions in the labour market.

In 1996 the Labour Market Commission argued: "Structural, apartheid-based inequalities in access to education, training and jobs ... (meant) the whole apartheid edifice would have to be structurally overhauled if the economy is to realise its growth and job-creation potential."

However, the challenge of finding a fitting legal mechanism was onerous and complex. While there was sufficient consensus between labour, business and government on a vision, the legislative design of a reformed labour market regime was hotly contested.

At issue was the search for consensus on a coherent legislative framework that would not prejudice one social partner to the benefit of another in the transition to "socially desirable" economic growth objectives.

Argument by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) emphasised racial disparities between employed and unemployed workers and marked wage differentials in the distribution of wealth.

Cosatu strongly favoured an "instrumentalist" solution based on state regulation of wages and employment conditions through a statutory national minimum wage.

Business stressed that the statutory enforcement of minimum wages would impose "rigidities" on wages and raise production costs.



A 1995 World Bank study found that 73 percent of the 1,3 million farmworkers in South Africa earn less than R590 a month... 20 000 more are trapped in "paternalistic relations" with farmowners and earn no pay at all.

PIC: PICTURENET

In its submission to the Commission, the South African Chamber of Business (Sacob) lamented the "desultory effect" of labour market rigidities on declining employment levels.

It insisted that labour market distortions were more likely to be reinforced in favour of a shrinking "elite" of employed workers.

On balance, commonsense ultimately prevailed. Cosatu conceded that its hopes for a minimum floor to shield the most vulnerable workers could not be fulfilled overnight by legislative edict. The struggle for employment and decent wages, the federation declared, would be "gradual and incremental".

Thus the debate was ostensibly resolved through the adoption of a rather patchy legal framework which now attempts to balance "flexibility" with regulation in the determination of wages and employment conditions.

The results were gratifying at first. Crudely, the law envisaged the setting of minimum wages through the machinery of collective bargaining councils at both industry and sectoral levels.

In terms of the LRA, strong union organisation and free collective bargaining are a necessary counterbalance for workers in a market economy where employers wield far greater economic and social power.

Bargaining power rather than the state is encouraged as a lever to secure minimum wages within sectors and industries.

The commission concluded that the enactment of minimum wages "could not be used as a substitute for collective bargaining".

The enactment of the BCEA last year complemented the deregulatory thrust of the LRA by encouraging collective bargaining rather than legislating a compulsory minimum wage.

However, recent experience conclusively shows that the issue is not as straightforward as market orthodoxy has assumed.

Three flaws in the law are increasingly evident. First, both the LRA and BCEA leave the determination of minimum wages in sectors and industries to unequally matched market forces, encouraging labour and employers to wage power struggles.

For all the vaunted power of organised labour, the over-supply of (unemployed) workers has invariably bred wage repression.

Second, the law ignores the growing army of "vulnerable" workers who are difficult to organise and therefore lack bargaining power. Wages and conditions in non-unionised sectors take the form of individual contracts, often determined unilaterally by employers.

The dispersion of domestic and farm workers is such that social cohesion – a precondition for collective bargaining – is absent.

This partly explains the persistent pattern of very low wages in these sectors. A 1995 World Bank country study found that 73 percent of the 1,3 million agricultural workers earn less than R590 a month.

Twenty thousand farmworkers are trapped in "paternalistic relations" with farmowners and earn no pay at all.

Close to one million domestic workers, overwhelmingly black women, earn between R290 and R350 a month. They work long hours and rarely receive overtime pay.

These are the most "exploited" workers Mdladlana has vowed to protect. Third, the law invokes a "voluntarist" principle which automatically jettisons the state from the enforcement of job creation and retrenchment agreements.

So, for example, employers could easily get away with flouting the moratorium on retrenchments at last year's job summit. Although there are no accurate figures, thousands of workers surprisingly lost their jobs in the gold mining and motor manufacturing sectors soon after the job summit.

The danger looms that power imbalances rooted in apartheid and an ailing market economy will continue to determine the parlous rate of wages and retrenchments in vulnerable sectors.

Worse still, if one considers the trend towards casualisation in mining, manufacturing and potential employment-creating industries like the service sector, the problem looks set to grow.

On the other hand, minimum wage regulation has potentially ambiguous implications. It is certainly not a structural panacea and might even prove counter-productive as far as employment in vulnerable sectors is concerned.

In the absence of a legislative answer, what is the way forward?

It would hardly seem prudent for Mdladlana to push willy-nilly for minimum wage regulation with the attendant risk of massive retrenchments.

After all, it is perfectly reasonable to argue that labour's first priority is to defend existing employment levels.

Neither is a minimum wage a solution to poverty in South Africa. Statistics show that the majority of workers are concentrated at the lowest end of the socio-economic spectrum: they are the informal sector and unemployed workers.

Both categories do not fall within the ambit of the law and therefore do not stand to benefit from a statutory minimum wage.

The reality, notwithstanding possible amendments to the law, is that well-organised workers will inevitably be the main beneficiaries of statutory minimum wages in a prevailing macro-economic context.

An innovative medium term instrument in the attack on poverty wages and unemployment might lie in Cosatu's support for a "social wage".

At its sixth national congress, the federation resolved to campaign for a wage policy that broadens the social regulatory net.

The long-awaited National Accord for Employment and Growth has the scope to act as a catalyst for a social wage. It requires the political will of Government to enforce its implementation.

This by no means implies support for a "welfarist" solution. Nor is it a vindication of the deregulatory approach of current labour legislation.

On the contrary, it is a simple recognition that neither regulation nor deregulation can solve the problem.

In the long term, the struggle for an industrial policy strategically aligned with a sound labour-friendly macro-economic framework is the only structural guarantee for a reformed labour market.

Gender body bares its teeth at the state

BD 12/4/99 (355A)

Pearl Sebolao

THE Commission on Gender Equality urged government to respect its independence at the weekend, saying it should be accountable directly to Parliament and not to government departments

The commission sent a clear message that it would act, and would even resort to legal mechanisms if it felt its independence was being threatened.

There was "enabling legislation which gives us real teeth and we reserve the right to use those teeth", commission chairman Joyce Seroke said at the organisation's launch of its annual report at the weekend.

The requirement that the commission's accounting officers must report to heads of departments through which their budgets were allocated undermined their independence, Seroke said.

The commission wants specific committees to be designated by the speaker of the house to which the commission staff will be accountable.

Seroke criticised government for paying lip service to gender equality and underfunding gender structures. She also accused government of not speedily dealing with matters concerning the commission.

"It took a full year for the chair and two commissioners to be replaced. That may appear to be an oversight. It is not," Seroke said. "It speaks volumes of the way in which we talk the talk of gender equality without walking the walk."

The commission said it will be issuing annual report cards on the government's performance in bringing about gender equality.

In the run up to the June 2 elections, the commission will also monitor the political parties' positions on gender equality, compile a gender audit of the poll and examine trends in voter registration statistics.

This year will also see the commission focusing its attention on the private sector and lobbying for increased budgets for structures to help implement new gender-related legislation.

Seroke said the underlying theme of the report was that there was much to be done in putting gender equality into practice. "The long walk is not yet over," she said.

Hard climb to equality

(355A)

The Commission on Gender Equality has made great progress during its short existence – but a fair deal for women is still a long way off. **Joyce Seroke** and **Phumelele Ntombela-Nzimande** explain why.

WHEN you are climbing a mountain, it is worth stopping to take a breath – to draw inspiration from the panorama around you before tackling that final, seemingly impossible, pinnacle.

As the Commission on Gender Equality embarks on its third year of existence, there is much to be proud of. A mere five years ago gender equality barely featured on our national agenda.

Today we have a Constitution, laws and structures committed to the achievement of equality between men and women. Each day another step is being taken to advance this objective.

Last year the Customary Marriages, Domestic Violence and Maintenance Acts all took us one step closer to eradicating some of the more glaring forms of gender discrimination.

The CGE, after being housed in temporary offices for the first year of its existence with only four administrative staff, was finally able to move to proper offices in February 1998.

The commission now has 31 staff members and 11 out of 12 commissioners, as well as regional offices in Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Province.

We are engaged in a far-reaching programme of action targeted at the most disadvantaged women in our society, and aimed at ensuring that every South African takes on his and her responsibility for ensuring that gender equality becomes a reality.

Looking back on the year we have come some way. As part of the Gender Policy and Institutional Framework, the CGE commissioned the first major gender opinion survey.

The study is a first step towards the development of a gender framework for understanding gender inequalities in South Africa.

The CGE also coordinated the first "Women's Week" – a series of hundreds of marches, seminars and events in the week leading up to August 9 1998.

In addition, the commission conducted information and evaluation workshops in all nine provinces. Education workshops are in progress in all the districts of South Africa.

We also hosted the first National Conference on Witchcraft Violence and are in the process of conducting a pilot project in Northern Province towards the eradication of the violence that is associated with accusations of witchcraft.

In partnership with non-governmental organisations, and with the support of the Department of Health, the CGE successfully opposed the challenge to the Choice of Termination of Pregnancy Act in the High Court.

We also successfully challenged the right of Radio Islam to disallow the voices of women on the air, processed and resolved numerous complaints, launched a major initiative on women farmworkers, compiled an inventory of legislation that violates the right to gender equality and made several submissions to the South African Law Commission and Parliament.

Research has played a crucial role in CGE legal interventions. We initiated research into areas like equal pay for equal work and work of equal value, sexual harassment and sexual rights. A handbook on *Women and Work* will be finalised by mid-year.

The CGE was involved, in partnership with the South African Non-Governmental Organisation and the Human Rights Commission, in the Poverty Hearings.

As a follow-up, the CGE is working on a systematic campaign to unblock bureaucratic hurdles to accessing social security and administrative justice.

In doing this we will highlight how women, particularly in the rural areas, are affected. A groundbreaking research project on Gender and the Private Sector was launched in January 1998.

At the invitation of the Mpumalanga premier, the CGE is undertaking a gender audit of the Maputo Corridor project with a view to making recommendations on the integration of gender considerations into this and other spatial development initiatives.

The commission is working in partnership with Women's Net, the Parliamentary Women's Group, academic institutions and NGOs in a campaign to ensure the increased representation and effectiveness of women in the 1999 elections.

In partnership with the Office on the Status of Women and Women's National Coalition, the commission has been active in the Gender Advisory Committee of the Southern African Development Community.

It has hosted a gender study visit from Zambia and hosted women parliamentarians from Tanzania in March.



CGE chairwoman Joyce Seroke.

The CGE formed part of the delegation that presented South Africa's first report on the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women to the United Nations in June 1998.

CGE commissioners and staff have undertaken study visits to the United Kingdom and Australia, and taken part in the celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the Economic Commission on Africa which focused on the empowerment of women in Ethiopia in May 1998.

Despite our work so far, there are still times when that final peak looks daunting. Three months away from our second democratic elections, gender equality still does not roll easily from the tongues of our politicians.

Only one political party has committed itself to a quota for increasing the representation of women. Gender inequality is not seen as central to poverty – and conversely its reversal to the achievement of economic progress.

Bank robberies are still accorded far more attention than the increasing incidence of rape and violence against women. All our diverse cultures, customs, religions, media, drama and popular theatre relegate women to second place in our society.

Is it a coincidence that when the commissioners of other Chapter Nine institutions resign, every stop is pulled out to find a replacement, yet when the CGE chairwoman resigned it took a full year for her to be replaced?

We think not. The truth is, while we are talking the talk of gender equality, we are still not walking the walk. Let us take heart from where we have come. Let us brace ourselves for the climb that lies ahead.

(Seroke is chairwoman and Ntombela-Nzimande deputy chairwoman of the Commission on Gender Equality.)

Raw deal for women

Corporate South Africa has not embraced the need for gender equality in the workplace. Some employers don't see the need, says **Itumeleng Masege**

THIRTY-EIGHT percent of women in the workforce are located in elementary jobs compared with 21 percent of men. In 1997 there were almost twice as many men (nine percent) as women (five percent) at managerial level.

Relatively small proportions of employed women were artisans-craft workers (six percent) or did machine-assembly work (two percent), compared with much larger proportions of men (18 and 13 percent, respectively).

These figures are preliminary findings of research commissioned by the Commission on Gender Equality into gender issues in the private sector, which indicate that gender is a low priority for South Africa's business community.

The private sector has an important contribution to make towards the achievement of gender equality. While new employment opportunities have been created for women as a result of globalisation of the economy, there have been trends that have exacerbated inequalities between men and women.

In the mainstreaming of gender issues, some of the Government commitments require the private sector to observe national labour, environment, consumer and health and safety laws, particularly those that affect women; adopt policies and establish mechanisms to grant contracts on a non-discriminatory basis; and recruit women for leadership, decision-making and management, as well as provide training programmes on an equal basis with men.

Gender mainstreaming

During the past decade, various other developments in gender mainstreaming have taken place. These include the development of policies and programmes by public institutions, commitments by Government as well as legislation.

Government efforts have included workshops and conferences at local, provincial and national levels; the development of gender policies and the review of existing legislation.

Non-governmental organisations have made their input by, among other strategies, developing gender and development training programmes and carrying out gender studies.

To a large extent, all these activities lacked the private sector's participation.

Late last year, the CGE commissioned research into gender issues in the private sector.

The study addressed internal procedures, gender-specific policies and mainstreaming activities in recruitment, selection, promotion and transfer, granting of contracts, conditions of service as well as training and development.

The research also looked at sexual harassment as well as health and safety policies.

The CGE wanted to determine the extent of awareness among private sector institutions in relation to constitutional and legal requirements and commitments made to promote gender equality.



Thirty-eight percent of women in South Africa's workforce have only elementary jobs. PIC: PICTURENET

This information will allow the CGE to make recommendations on key areas and specific actions to be undertaken for promoting the transformation of gender relations in the private sector.

The sample consisted of a cross-section of listed and other companies in manufacturing, retail, business, wholesale, mining, construction and engineering industries.

Initial results indicated that a gender policy either does not exist or is integrated with other company policies.

Thirty-six percent of the companies interviewed implement gender policies as a separate policy, while 47 percent indicated that they do not have such a policy.

Of these, there was a significant number that maintained that they were not interested in the issue and were more concerned with business. This sentiment reflects a lack of understanding, indifference and utter disregard of the notion of gender as opposed to sex.

This lack of understanding is manifested in the resistance towards the formulation and implementation of a gender policy within the corporate environment.

There is a glimmer of hope though - 13 percent of the companies indicated that gender policies were in the process of formulation. This initiative is comforting, although these policies still need to be examined to ensure that constitutional provisions and statutory requirements are complied with.

Generally, a gender policy seeks to address the systemic inequalities between men and women in society as well as prioritising the specific empowerment of women as a way of achieving gender equality.

It is premised on the fact that gender inequality is all about power relations, and that any policy, plan or practice that seeks to achieve gender equality must equalise those relations.

The purpose of a gender policy is to bring a gender perspective into all aspects of planning, policy and implementation and transformation. A gender policy should assist in eradicating sexist or gender discriminatory policies in the workplace.

This policy also will provide a framework for the implementation of positive measures to advance women in order to achieve fair play between men and women.

It attempts to address sexual harassment and affirmative action, among others things.

Gender crime

It appears that corporate South Africa does not recognise gender crime when it calls for stricter measures of addressing crime, yet fails to protect men and women in the workplace.

Forty-one percent of respondent companies do not have a policy specifically dealing with sexual harassment. Of these 19 percent indicated that sexual harassment policies were not important for their operations.

These findings clearly show that the road towards achieving gender equality and consequently true democracy is still long and bumpy.

The CGE is preparing for a convention where the findings of this landmark study will be discussed in detail with relevant stakeholders.

With this information, the CGE will be in a position to make recommendations necessary for addressing gender imbalances in this sector.

The CGE aims to achieve gender equality in the workplace and it will leave no stone unturned in ensuring that the fruits of the democratic order are enjoyed by all, in all sectors of society.

(The author is assistant director of the Commission on Gender Equality's policy and research department.)

Cosatu says labour laws empower women

ET(BR)20/4/99(166) (355A)

RONNIE MORRIS

Cape Town – Labour laws and related legislation have brought equality to all workers, particularly the vulnerable, Connie September, a Cosatu deputy president, said yesterday.

The majority of the vulnerable were women employed as domestic or casual workers, September said.

Speaking on labour market reform in the Cape Town City Hall, she said the equality and improvement of the status of women in South Africa derived from the fact that the first pillar was the constitution.

It was important that all workers were now covered by the Labour Relations Act, which gave women the right to join trade unions. It was a powerful tool to ensure equality in pay and pension rights.

Apart from the Labour Relations Act, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act also provided equal rights for all workers, including the vulnerable, who could now enjoy maternity leave and have their working hours regulated.

She repeated the trade union federation's call for workers to give a day's wage in order to train women in the labour market, eradicate unemployment and fight crime.



FATHER FIGURE *President Nelson Mandela (right) was greeted with praise songs by Cosatu women yesterday. He said the ANC was geared to fight crime and corruption* PHOTO ANDREW BROWN

Demands grow for a gender integrated national budget

Star 3/5/99 (355A)

By Cathy Powers

Macro-economic development was "gender blind" and if left unreviewed, the national budget could continue to underpin an already patriarchal society to the detriment of women.

Speaking at the University of South Africa's Institute for Gender Studies last week field researcher for the women's budget, Nthabiseng Seperepere, said women very often did not benefit from budget votes that were designed to benefit all.

The women's budget was a pilot project started in 1996. A joint venture between NGOs, Idasa, the Community Agency for Social Enquiry, and the parliamentary Committee on the Quality of Life and Status of Women, the women's budget is an examination of the gendered impacts of the national budget.

The initiative is not calling for a separate budget, but for an integrated one with an analysis of who benefits least, Seperepere said. To review the budget's impact on women was critical as was ensuring a budget that is aligned with the Government's non-sexist vision.

Put simply: "Money is power, if you have money you call the shots. Women have minimal say," Seperepere said.

Men formed the majority of those formally employed, while women doing household work were not remunerated.

Often, women worked longer hours in the home than the male breadwinner's nine to five job. Men, usually the breadwinners, also spent their income in an ego-directed way, she said. "He would prefer to buy a hi-fi or a car rather than groceries."

In big business, things were much the same, Seperepere said.

Much of the big corporations' spending is directed to sports sponsorships such as golf, rugby and cricket. So-called social upliftment programmes were largely window-dressing for their annual reports with no sustained commitment. She gave the example of a company building a creche with no thought to training the staff or auxiliary activities. "The investment is isolated."

Government's focus on minimising government expenditure and public debts, had filtered down to cutbacks in various ministry's budgets. The worst hit was health and welfare, she said.

Even more problematic was that less was spent on capital projects that could make a difference to women's lives.

Although Seperepere conceded that government had made a fair effort in addressing gender issues, she concluded that the women's budget had not taken strong enough hold in government departments.

Women need to be involved in business plans and participate in the budget vote, she said.

Survey highlights inequality

DDT/15/99 (3775A)

Any government that ignores women is bound to shoot itself in the foot

Pearl Sebolao

IT IS time that government and political parties pay attention to women's issues because women are instrumental in elevating those who are elected, a survey conducted in the run-up to the elections has recommended.

The survey, which was commissioned by the Commission on Gender Equality, has rejected the perception that women are politically illiterate or inactive.

Women, who account for 54,5% of registered voters compared with men at 45,5%, are able to link the issues that concern them and know they have to vote for a party which represents their interests.

The study focused on women in rural areas, with 173 people interviewed in KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, Northern Province and the Western Cape.

"Any government which continues to ignore these needs is bound to shoot itself in the foot," said the survey.

The manifestos of different political parties largely ignored issues of gender equality, except when making reference to the need to address violent crimes against women and children, commission chairman Joyce Seroke said yesterday.

Another issue highlighted by the survey was the insufficient representation of women in government.

Only four out of 25 ministers in government are women. Only 31% of parliamentarians are women. There is only one woman premier at provincial level.

"The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) notes with seriousness your contention that while the 1994-1999 constitutional dispensation has improved the participation of women in certain strategic areas of governance, men remain the key decision-makers, while women are largely marginalised," IEC chairman Brigalia Bam said. This presented a challenge to civil society, she said.

The survey also found that employment, housing and education were the major areas where women felt service delivery was lacking.

Although most women felt registration processes were satisfactory (58%), indications were that there was a need to improve access to registration points.

The distances travelled to reach registration points and electrification of stations were singled out as needing improvement as they had an impact on women's safety.

"With the high rate of violence against women in SA, the IEC has an obligation to ensure the security of rural women is addressed, as this has a direct impact on their equal participation in electoral processes," the report said.

ST(BDT) 16/11/94

Women still on a road to nowhere

(3944A)

A survey shows that little empowerment is happening in the private sector, writes CELEAN JACOBSON

THE private sector is letting women down badly. Despite new legislation, SA business has done little or nothing to change the poor status of women in their organisations.

Preliminary results of a Commission for Gender Equality study into the private sector show that less than one in four jobs in the private sector are held by women against almost two-thirds in the public sector.

And black empowerment companies have done very little to improve the position of women in the workplace. The study found firmly entrenched racist and cultural stereotypes — such as "black women cannot be depended upon as they are always having babies", and "men are heads of households and therefore should be in higher positions".

Of the companies interviewed, 47% did not have a gender policy and 41% did not have a sexual harassment policy. Only 72% complied with the Labour Relations Act in terms of maternity leave.

The study follows the introduction last year of legislation which commits the private sector to introducing gender-sensitive practices and policies.

"The private sector has an important role to play in achieving gender equality. However, not much was known about how women were being treated in the sector," said Mihloti Mathye, head of policy and research for the commission. "We were shocked by some of the results."

Of the 300 companies approached, only 103 were prepared to take part in the study. The sample came mainly from JSE-listed companies in the manufacturing, retail and wholesale, business and professional sectors, as well as mining and construction. The study covered about 600 000 employees of whom 23% were women, 29% in the retail and wholesale sector, 27% in manufacturing, 19% in business and 15% in mining.

The study showed that of non-executive directors, 85% where white men, 9% white women, 3% African men and 2% African women. Only 25% of all the women surveyed and 3% of African women were in senior management, compared with 85% of men.

At apprentice and clerical level the number of women did increase (42%), against 58% of men. At entry levels, 28% of employees were African women, 49% were African men and 2% white men and women.

Nerishni Shunmugam of Prodigy Business Services, which conducted the study for the commission, said 10% of the companies sampled had a black empowerment shareholding, ranging from 2.5% up to 30%. However, she said there was no significant difference in the treatment of women in black empowerment companies. "They are not leaders in the pursuit of equality for women. They have a surprising number of black executives but this is used as a selling tool. There is little actual empowerment being done. It is even seen as fashionable for black managers to have white secretaries," she said.

Shunmugam said 25% of the companies surveyed did not have an affirmative action programme. Although African men were well-represented at the top two senior executive levels, there were few at middle to junior levels. "This suggests there has been much headhunting. It also raises questions of tokenism," she said.

The response to questions on sexual harassment issues was poor. In the past two years, 71% of the companies reported less than five cases of sexual harassment, 5% reported six to 10 cases and only 1% indicated that more than 10 cases had been reported. Of the 41% of companies which said they did not have a sexual harassment policy, 24% said they did not feel obliged to introduce one because staff had not asked for one and 19% indicated it was "unimportant".

Mathye said the criteria for promotion was extremely subjective and most women were at the mercy of male supervisors for a chance at advancement. Of the sample, 47% of companies linked promotion to performance, 42% to experience, 40% to ability and 18% to fulfilling job descriptions.

Companies spent an average of R1 095 on training per employee a year. This ranged from the R2 100 in the mining and construction industries to R600 in the retail and wholesale sector.

However, Shunmugam said not enough was being spent on training women employees relative to the number of women employed. "Women outnumber men in the population, so in 30 years' time the skills pool will be dominated by women but they are not being developed now."

Shunmugam said the results showed general disrespect for women. "It is a reflection not only of the private sector but of the society we live in as a whole. Companies see gender issues as something that cost money but does not generate income. Even when women are MDs, their women employees do not enjoy a better deal."

P.T.O. For Average % Composition

ST(BT) 16/11/99 (355N)

AVERAGE PERCENTAGE COMPOSITION OF STAFF

	AVERAGE		WHITE		AFRICAN		COLOURED		INDIAN	
	MALE	*FEMALE*	*MALE*	*FEMALE*	*MALE*	*FEMALE*	*MALE*	*FEMALE*	*MALE*	*FEMALE*
Non-executive directors	87	13	85	9	3	2	0.5	0	0.5	0
Executive directors	88	12	74	9	13	3	1	0	1	0
Senior executive management	83	17	58	10	16	6	4	0.5	5	0.5
Senior management	75	25	71	20	2	3	1	1	1	1
Middle senior management	76	24	67	17	4	5	2	1	3	1
Junior middle management	72	28	44	15	17	7	11	3	7	3
Assistant management, senior supervisor and junior professional	68	32	39	19	13	8	9	3	7	2
Supervisory, artisan and technician, senior operative and senior admin/clerical/secretarial and graduate entry level	61	40	30	21	5	4	6	8	18	7
Apprentice and trainee technician, operative, admin/clerical/secretarial	58	42	33	16	11	5	8	12	6	9
Entry level/labourer	66	34	2	2	49	28	8	3	7	1



Graphic: FIONA KRISCH Sources: COMMISSION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

AVERAGE PERCENTAGE COMPOSITION OF STAFF

	AVERAGE		WHITE		AFRICAN		COLOURED		INDIAN	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
Non-executive directors	87	13	85	9	3	2	0.5	0	0.5	0
Executive directors	88	12	74	9	13	3	1	0	1	0
Senior executive management	83	17	58	10	16	6	4	0.5	5	0.5
Senior management	75	25	71	20	2	3	1	1	1	1
Middle-senior management	76	24	67	17	4	5	2	1	3	1
Junior-middle management	72	28	44	15	17	7	11	3	7	3
Assistant management, senior supervisor and junior professional	68	32	39	19	13	8	9	3	7	2
Supervisory, artisan and technician, senior operative and senior admin/clerical/secretarial and graduate entry level	61	40	30	21	5	4	6	8	18	7
Apprentice and trainee technician, operative, admin/clerical/secretarial	58	42	33	16	11	5	8	12	6	9
Entry level/labourer	66	34	2	2	49	28	8	3	7	1

Graphic: FIONA KRISCHKE; Source: COMMISSION FOR GENDER EQUALITY



ST(BDT) 16/11/99

Women still on a road to nowhere

(SAHA)

A survey shows that little empowerment is happening in the private sector, writes CELEAN JACOBSON

THE private sector is letting women down badly. Despite new legislation, SA business has done little or nothing to change the poor status of women in their organisations.

Preliminary results of a Commission for Gender Equality study into the private sector show that less than one in four jobs in the private sector are held by women against almost two-thirds in the public sector.

And black empowerment companies have done very little to improve the position of women in the workplace. The study found firmly entrenched racist and cultural stereotypes — such as "black women cannot be depended upon as they are always having babies", and "men are heads of households and therefore should be in higher positions".

Of the companies interviewed, 47% did not have a gender policy and 41% did not have a sexual harassment policy. Only 72% complied with the Labour Relations Act in terms of maternity leave.

The study follows the introduction last year of legislation which commits the private sector to introducing gender-sensitive practices and policies.

"The private sector has an important role to play in achieving gender equality. However, not much was known about how women were being treated in the sector," said Mihloti Mathye, head of policy and research for the commission. "We were shocked by some of the results."

Of the 300 companies approached, only 103 were prepared to take part in the study. The sample came mainly from JSE-listed companies in the manufacturing, retail and wholesale, business and professional sectors, as well as mining and construction. The study covered about 600 000 employees of whom 23% were women, 29% in the retail and wholesale sector, 27% in manufacturing, 19% in business and 15% in mining.

The study showed that of non-executive directors, 85% where white men, 9% white women, 3% African men and 2% African women. Only 25% of all the women surveyed and 3% of African women were in senior management, compared with 85% of men.

At apprentice and clerical level the number of women did increase (42%), against 58% of men. At entry levels, 28% of employees were African women, 49% were African men and 2% white men and women.

Nerishni Shunmugam of Prodigy Business Services, which conducted the study for the commission, said 10% of the companies sampled had a black empowerment shareholding, ranging from 2.5% up to 30%. However, she said there was no significant difference in the treatment of women in black empowerment companies. "They are not leaders in the pursuit of equality for women. They have a surprising number of black executives but this is used as a selling tool. There is little actual empowerment being done. It is even seen as fashionable for black managers to have white secretaries," she said.

Shunmugam said 25% of the companies surveyed did not have an affirmative action programme. Although African men were well-represented at the top two senior executive levels, there were few at middle to junior levels. "This suggests there has been much head-hunting. It also raises questions of tokenism," she said.

The response to questions on sexual harassment issues was poor. In the past two years, 71% of the companies reported less than five cases of sexual harassment, 5% reported six to 10 cases and only 1% indicated that more than 10 cases had been reported. Of the 41% of companies which said they did not have a sexual harassment policy, 24% said they did not feel obliged to introduce one because staff had not asked for one and 19% indicated it was "unimportant".

Mathye said the criteria for promotion was extremely subjective and most women were at the mercy of male supervisors for a chance at advancement. Of the sample, 47% of companies linked promotion to performance, 42% to experience, 40% to ability and 18% to fulfilling job descriptions.

Companies spent an average of R1 095 on training per employee a year. This ranged from the R2 100 in the mining and construction industries to R600 in the retail and wholesale sector.

However, Shunmugam said not enough was being spent on training women employees relative to the number of women employed. "Women outnumber men in the population, so in 30 years' time the skills pool will be dominated by women but they are not being developed now."

Shunmugam said the results showed general disrespect for women. "It is a reflection not only of the private sector but of the society we live in as a whole. Companies see gender issues as something that cost money but does not generate income. Even when women are MDs, their women employees do not enjoy a better deal."

issues in the workplace

Research shows bosses are dismissive of gender

(355A) ARG 29|5|99

PETA KROST

While affirmative action is the buzz word in multinational businesses in South Africa, the issue of gender is not on most of their agendas. In fact, 200 out of 300 top companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange refused to participate in a Commission on Gender Equality in the private sector recently.

Researcher Nerishni Shunmugam said: "Most of these company leaders saw gender as something unrelated to business and had no impact on how businesses operated."

Her company, Prodigy, was contracted to do the study.

"It seemed they saw it as charity and worrying about women, rather than discussing sound progressive business practices."

Many companies that agreed to participate were "very sticky, suspicious of us and gave us a cold reception," said Ms Shunmugam.

Most of them had never heard of the gender commission.

"Many people we dealt with, who were top management personnel, associated gender issues with women not wearing bras and ultra-feminist things, not general issues pertaining to men and women in the workplace," said Ms Shunmugam.

"Many had a warped perception of the gender commission as lesbians and athletic, male-like women."

Companies appeared threatened at being part of this research and felt "they were being targeted".

One company director told her the CGE "must realise that they can't go around stopping women taking part in beauty pageants" because it was clearly a stepping stone into a successful television presenter's career.

"What he did not see was the fact that employing women because they were beautiful was not being gender sensitive."

In refusing to participate, some company heads just said "no", others said they were "restructuring" and some admitted they were anxious about the interview and how it would be used.

Ms Shunmugam found a strong perception that women were not in top management positions because they were "not competitive".

A number of companies said physical strength was a criterion on which promotion was decided. Only 55% of the companies investigated had a sexual harassment policy and of those, 8% of the top managerial interviewees were unable to give even an overview of the policy. Forty-six percent of those who had a policy said that entailed only a disciplinary hearing.

Companies that did not have sexual harassment policies said they felt their non-discriminatory policy was enough – either the staff had not asked for such a policy or it was simply unimportant.

"This is extremely worrying because these companies are seen as the pillars of society, so what happens in them is so indicative of what is happening in society," said Ms Shunmugam. "As the people we interviewed were top management, it is hugely indicative of the attitude of the hierarchy when 23% of those questioned had no idea how many sexual harassment cases had been reported in their company."

When asked what affected people addressing sexual harassment in the workplace, 22% said women were afraid to speak out, 14% said resistance by male employees was the reason and 12% said victimisation, while another 12% said their partners would not support them.

Key challenges lie ahead for women

MHG 30/4-6/5/99 (356A)

Ian Clayton

Women in South Africa have won "a victory" in terms of the laws passed by Parliament since 1994, but key legislative changes are still required, says Pregs Govender, chair of the parliamentary joint standing committee on the improvement of the quality of life and status of women.

The priorities she identifies are "a reflection of the political will of the first democratically elected Parliament and government to use power to address the issues that disempowered women under apartheid, ranging from access to land and water to domestic violence".

The key legislative changes still needed are in relation to equality legislation, sexual offences, the customary law of succession, extending the Unemployment Insurance Act to cover domestic workers on maternity, recognition of religious marriages, access to legal aid and finalisation of the regulations to the domestic violence, maintenance and customary law Acts.

Govender, writing in the parliamentary committee's second annual report, says these legislative changes will be focused on by the committee after the elections, though its researcher will be working on the necessary background in these areas during the parliamentary recess.

However, while there is broad agreement that at the legislative and constitutional levels South Africa has made enormous advances, the major challenges ahead centre on the issues of information, implementation and changing mindsets and attitudes. "Women need to know that they now have these rights, how to access them and what to do if they are denied any of these rights."



Pregs Govender: 'Women need to know they have these rights and how to access them." PHOTO: HENNER FRANKENFELD

Govender says most women in South Africa, married under customary law, were reduced to minors under apartheid: they could not own property, enter into contracts or legally represent themselves. Her committee had, therefore, prioritised changes to customary law on marriage and succession.

In relation to the domestic violence Act, the portfolio committee on justice had passed a resolution requiring the Department of Justice to table a document in Parliament within six months of the passing of the law, detailing the steps taken with a view to implementation of the legislation.

It also required the department to investigate "the desirability of creating an offence of domestic violence, including other offences that arise out of domestic violence such as stalking, harassment and certain forms of intimidation". The report of this investigation has to be tabled in Parliament within six months of the commencement of the legislation.

Govender points out that the Legal Aid Board traditionally provided funding mostly to criminal cases and only in limited civil cases. "This has affected women's access to justice. Within the civil allocations, legal aid has not been available for, among others, maintenance matters and the obtainment of domestic violence interdicts."

The Legal Aid Board is being transformed and a draft Legal Aid Guide is being developed setting out which people qualified for legal aid, she says. "These reforms must ensure that women receive adequate access to justice."

The Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) is also being restructured. At present, women receive 45% of their previous salary for a period of 24 weeks as maternity benefits under the UIF Act.

Govender's committee identified the need for proposals to increase maternity benefits under the Act and called for input from women's organisations. "The exclusion of domestic workers from maternity benefits needs to be addressed and creative solutions found."

Govender also discloses that Deputy Minister in the Deputy President's Office Essop Pahad and Dr Ellen Kornegay of the Office of the Status of Women told her committee that a draft national gender document has been completed and is undergoing internal review. This document will be released as a Green Paper for consultation and input.

The departments of justice and water are two departments with gender policies and there are gender desks in all provinces, except KwaZulu-Natal. The Office of the Status of Women has a budget of R2,5-million, including donor funding of R1,5-million from the Danish government.

Govender says the challenge which faces her committee is how to manage a broad brief with very limited resources, but it has been effective in prioritising which changes to laws, policies and budgets are most strategic to improving women's lives.

Resources are critical to implementing the "excellent constitutional, legislative and policy commitments of the first democratic government. The committee has thus focused a great deal of energy in working with and monitoring the finance ministry to ensure a gender perspective through necessary data, analytical tools and capacity being developed with the ministry and in all of the government's work."

Govender concludes by saying she hopes the annual report will be used by the new Parliament and the next committee to reflect on some lessons learnt over the past five years and to take forward the government's commitment to improving the lives of the poorest women in South Africa.

An appendix to the report documents that 51% of the 1,4-million public servants in South Africa are women, but they only account for 25% of the highly skilled supervision group, 14% of management and 12% of senior management.

Landmark ruling backs mothers-to-be

RONALD MORRIS

THE protection of the rights of pregnant women in the workplace was given teeth by a landmark Labour Court judgment on Friday when Woolworths was ordered to pay a woman R200 000 after it refused to offer her permanent employment because she was pregnant.

The court found that Beverley Whitehead was unfairly discriminated against as an applicant in a R300 000-a-year human resources job and had been a victim of unfair discrimination.

When Whitehead was interviewed for the job on December 17, 1997, she was satisfied that all that was required was for the interviewer to make a final decision.

A message left on her telephone two days later, which stated that Woolworths "wanted to finalise the paperwork", according to her confirmed that a contract of employment had been concluded.

However, Woolworths withdrew the offer four days later and offered her a fixed- term contract for five months. The reason for the withdrawal was because of her pregnancy.

Whitehead contended that this was a breach of contract which constituted an unfair labour practice in terms of the Labour Relations Act.

However, Judge Basheer Waglay rejected this contention and found that Whitehead, whose employment would only have started on January 12 last year, could not in the circumstances claim to be dismissed as she failed to qualify as an employee as provided for in the Act.

On her alternative claim that she had been discriminated against because of her pregnancy, the court investigated whether the discrimination she complained of was unfair and based on arbitrary grounds.

Woolworths said there was no differential treatment accorded specifically and only against Whitehead as the reason for the discrimination was because the job required "uninterrupted continuity", which was rationally and commercially supportable.

"We live in a constitutional state ... as such there is a duty to give effect to the Bill of Rights"

Judge Waglay said he found no objectively justifiable reason why the requirement for uninterrupted job continuity for 12 months was a necessary requirement for the post.

"Imagine that the incumbent who has satisfied the respondent that he is able to remain in its employ for the uninterrupted period of 12 months, renders exceptional service for a period of six months and is then involved in an accident or, is taken unexpectedly ill and is unable to perform his duties for a period of 12 months.

"What happens in that case? Does the respondent dismiss him? Does the respondent continue to employ the incumbent after he has recuperated? Do either of these options not make nonsense of the requirement of uninterrupted job continuity?"

Judge Waglay said if the need for uninterrupted job continuity was of such importance, he had no doubt that some impediment would have been placed upon the incumbent from being free to sell his labour wherever he pleases.

"That there was no impediment gave credence to the belief that the discrimination based on the condition of uninterrupted job continuity was nothing other than discrimination that was unfair and based on an arbitrary ground.

"We live in a constitutional state with a Bill of Rights and as such there is a duty upon this court to give effect to the rights enshrined in the Bill of Rights.

"Against this background the fairness or unfairness of the discrimination cannot be measured against the profitability or efficiency of a business enterprise."

● See Business Report

CT 31/5/99

(345A) (345B)

Court orders Woolworths to pay woman R200 000

(375A)

CT(GR) 31/5/99

RONNIE MORRIS

Cape Town – In a landmark judgment, the Labour Court in Cape Town last week ordered Woolworths, the blue-chip retailer, to pay a woman compensation of R200 000 for refusing to hire her because she was pregnant.

Acting Justice Bashier Waglay found that Beverley Whitehead, a highly qualified human resources manager, was unfairly discriminated against as an applicant for employment.

Labour lawyers, who spoke on condition of anonymity, hailed the ruling as consistent with the constitution and said it confirmed the protection for women as provided for in the Labour Relations Act.

"The court has found you cannot deal with pregnant women the way you want to and get away with it," one said.

Evidence was that after Whitehead was interviewed for the job, a message was left on her telephone service on December 19 1997 that the company "wanted to finalise the paper work".

Four days later the offer for permanent employment was withdrawn because of her pregnancy and she was offered a fixed-term contract for five months.

Whitehead contended the withdrawal of the offer constituted a breach of contract that constituted an unfair dismissal in terms of the act. The court dismissed this contention and instead considered her alternative claim that she was a victim of unfair labour practice on the grounds she was discriminated against because of her pregnancy.

Woolworths argued the position of human resources generalist carried a distinct need for uninterrupted continuity of employment for at least 12 months.

But the judge found no objectively justifiable reason why uninterrupted job continuity for 12 months was a necessary requirement for the job.

HE Barnes

Equity law is statutory change management

Implementation of act carries all the ingredients for conflict, writes **Dhaya Pillay**

THE antidiscrimination provisions of the Employment Equity Act become effective on Women's Day, August 9. The affirmative action and remaining provisions of the act come into operation from about December this year on a date yet to be announced.

Like anything new, unknown or untested, the Employment Equity Act generates a mixture of apprehension and anticipation. However, its affirmative action provisions are nothing more and nothing less than a change management programme in statutory format. The legislation provides the framework. The employer and employees complete the details. If one takes this view then a familiar path begins to emerge for the way forward.

A prerequisite for change management is an acknowledgement that change is necessary. In this instance that decision has already been made in the legislation, although support for the decision will facilitate implementation.

All that remains is for employers to decide the extent of the change and how and when it will be implemented.

The act directs the employer to consult (176) with the workforce. That means initiating and maintaining a meaningful dialogue with all the employees or their representatives. Effective communication and regular exchange of information are the pillars of successful change management.

The employer is also required to conduct an analysis of the workplace. This entails analysing the employment policies, practices and procedures and the working environment to identify barriers that operate against designated groups — blacks, women and the disabled. It also calls for a profile of the workforce in every occupational category and level to determine the degree of underrepresentation from the designated groups.

The direction to employers to prepare an equity plan is in effect a request for a change management strategy over five years — with tactical adjustments being made annually to ensure that the objectives are being met.

Lastly, the requirement to publish the report and submit it to the labour department (365A) holds the employer accountable for equity in the workplace.

Relative to the planning phase consultation with the workforce about the profile of the workplace should be easier. In many instances a printout of the employee database could be decisive. In the absence of agreement a fact-finding process could decide those aspects that are not clear or are in dispute.

Consultation about other components of the analysis and about preparing an equity plan is likely to be more controversial for several reasons.

The act is being implemented during a technological revolution in which the demand is for skilled and knowledgeable workers. The majority of SA workers whom the legislation seeks to give redress are low-skilled manual labourers. Tension about who gets trained or promoted, retrenched or transferred will have to be managed against the difficult backdrop of growing joblessness, deepening poverty and great expectations.

Ideological differences about what constitutes discrimination, affirmative action and equality may surface. The process is likely to challenge the parties' core values, their sense of humanity, approach to work and the need to be profitable.

The "bottom line" will be a persistent consideration in the equation. The struggle for resources is a predictable source of conflict. At the formative stage, whether the interaction with the workforce should be elaborate and therefore more costly, or conservative and therefore cheap, may be an area for disagreement. When implementing the equity plan budgeting for training, the creation of posts, retrenchment packages or narrowing wage differentials could be controversial.

The implementation of the act has the ingredients for a cauldron of conflict. It will be helpful if the parties are imbued with or acquire a common sense of justice, fair play and, above all, an honest desire to make it work. A joint problem-solving approach will be more appropriate than recourse to collective bargaining.

However, whether the employer can successfully facilitate the change management through problem-solving exercises is doubtful. If there is a high level of trust it may work.

While trade unions may enjoy good relations with the human resources and industrial relations staff they may be reluctant to trust them as facilitators when fundamental issues are at stake.

Every effort should be made to implement the act correctly the first time round. To do so later may be more difficult and costly.

The concept of equity in employment may be new. The process of managing change in the workplace should not be.

Pillay is an attorney with Yunus Mahomed & Associates and a senior commissioner with the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

BD 20/7/99

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Minority women hit concrete ceiling in US

ET(DR)16/7/99 (356A) #7

REED ABELSON



Despite the efforts of companies to diversify their top management, many minority women say there are few cracks in the "concrete ceiling", the social barriers preventing them from reaching the apex of Corporate America.

They are lagging behind both white women and minority men in the kind of jobs they hold and the pay they receive, according to US government statistics.

A recent survey, the largest of its kind, of minority women managers and professionals found many viewed their company's diversity programmes as largely ineffective and said opportunities had not improved over the past five years.

While companies had sought to employ and promote more women and minorities, many had neglected the specific issues concerning minority women, said Sheila Wellington, the president of Catalyst, the New York non-profit group that conducted the three-year study.

Catalyst surveyed 1 735 black, Asian-American and Hispanic women at 30 large US companies and conducted dozens of focus groups and interviews.

Bureau of Labor statistics, although they do not specifically address Asian-American women, indicate that minority women managers and professionals earn less than their white and male counterparts.

Black and Hispanic women have seen the gap widen over the past five years. In 1998 Hispanic women earned about 60 percent of a white male manager's salary, down from nearly 70 percent in 1993.

Paul Allaire, the chairman of Xerox and a Catalyst board member, said the company made modifications when it realised that programmes focusing on women and minorities were not tackling the needs of minority women.

The study's most dramatic findings centre on the usefulness of diversity programmes. While three-quarters of the 500 largest US companies had some sort of policy or programme in place to encourage diversity, according to Catalyst, they were not viewed as an effective force of change.

Slightly more than half of the minority women surveyed thought the diversity programmes failed to address subtle racism or sexism in the workplace, compared with a third who said diversity programmes at their company created a supportive environment. Only 26 percent thought career development was an important aspect of diversity programmes.

The study and the experiences of some of the companies make clear that minority women do not necessarily benefit from general initiatives to foster diversity.

At Motorola, for example, the push to advance women in the early 1990s did little to help minority women.

"We were moving women, but we were basically moving white women," said Roberta Gutman, the vice-president and director for global diversity at Motorola, one of the three executives invited by Catalyst to talk about the findings at a news conference this week. By 1995, only two or three of the 25 women vice-presidents were from minorities.

Only after Motorola began to focus on the issue of making sure minority women were promoted and included in its executive ranks did the company make progress: it now had 11 vice-presidents who were minority women out of its 54 women vice-presidents, Gutman said.

Catalyst also found striking differences between white women and minority women in their perceptions of progress made. In similar surveys, 60 percent of white women thought there had been improvements in their opportunities over the past five years, while only 47 percent of minority women agreed.

According to Catalyst, many minority women were hindered from advancing by the lack of a mentor or the chance to network informally with colleagues. Even joining in a game of golf could be challenging, and one woman said she had not been given an opportunity to play golf with the men in 20 years.

The message for companies, Wellington said, was that managers must step in to help minority women navigate organisational politics and plan their careers. "Managers of women of colour must receive training and support from managers and corporate leaders so they can be both mentor and manager."

The other concern voiced by minority women was that their companies paid little more than lip service to the issue. Less than 20 percent said their managers were held accountable or rewarded for their efforts to advance minority women.

The study highlighted significant differences between different minority groups. "Most corporate programmes approach women of colour as a monolithic group," Wellington said. While the majority of African-American women surveyed felt as if they were stereotyped, Asian-American women were least likely among minority women to be supervisors.

"This is a national issue. The monochromatic, monolithic company will not survive," she said. "It will not be ready for the future." – New York Times

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Gold and the 1% loan conundrum

Gender equality has long way to go

(355A) Sowetan 23/7/99

By Joyce Seroke

A MERE decade ago, South Africa was in the grips of a crisis of such magnitude that even the best of optimists predicted a bloodbath and calamity.

We saved ourselves from that horror through a process of negotiations that stunned the world and at times even surprised ourselves.

We can now truly say that apartheid, one of the great scourges of this century, is behind us; that we are living in its aftermath; and that we are in the phase of reconstruction and development.

We have also discovered, perhaps belatedly, the role that women played in fighting for our liberation, and the central role of gender equality in this reconstruction phase.

Prior to the constitutional negotiations, women from all over South Africa drew up the Women's Charter demanding that gender equality be explicitly recognised and spelt out in our new Constitution.

Every delegation to the negotiations in Kempton Park was obliged to have at least one woman representative.

We are proud that our Constitution has some of the most far-reaching provisions of any in the world for gender equality, including provision for a Commission on Gender Equality (CGE).

In the recent elections, nearly 30 percent of those elected to Parliament were women. Twenty-four percent of our Cabinet ministers and more than half of our deputy ministers are women.

This is the good news. There is also a dark side though.

Prior to the setting up of the CGE, I worked for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In the course of that work, it became apparent that the voices of women were not being heard; that their real stories were not being told.

Women were being cast as secondary victims of apartheid – as the mothers, the wives, the sisters and the aunts of the primary victims who were almost all men.

We decided to convene special women-only hearings. It was only at these hearings that the gruesome stories of sexual torture and violence began to surface.

The legacy of gender violence lives on not just in our tortured memories, but in the day-to-day reality of relentless violent rape and other forms of violence against women.

South Africa has the highest reported rate of rape in the world, and yet we know that only about one in 20 rape cases are reported. Just within the last fortnight, a 14-year-old girl, Valencia Farmer, was gang-raped in the Cape Flats and stabbed 42 times.

A Brazilian journalist was also gang-raped in a shopping area in Johannesburg after she ventured out for dinner.

Gender activists are calling for a national state of emergency against gender-based violence. While the notion of any state of emergency conjures even more bitter memories, the very fact that this call is being made underscores the depth of anger amongst us.



GRAPHIC: JOHN TSATSI

And we are part of a continent in which conflict and gender-based violence are endemic.

It is estimated that in Rwanda, 800 000 people were massacred in 100 days in 1994. The genocide in Rwanda and so-called ethnic cleansing in Yugoslavia first awakened international awareness to sexual violence as a crime of war.

According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, 500 000 women are thought to have been raped during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

A Human Rights Watch report estimates that between 2 000 and 5 000 children have been conceived through rape. These children and their mothers are stigmatised.

Furthermore HIV and Aids are an integral part of the impact of rape: since the genocide in Rwanda, there has been a tremendous increase in HIV infection.

We sit with the same reality here in South Africa, which has one of the fastest-growing incidences of Aids in the world, with the majority of new cases among young women.

This conference will focus on post-war reconstruction. The UN makes a useful distinction between making the peace; keeping the peace; and supporting the peace.

At present women are either absent from, or seen as passive victims in, all these processes.

By and large, men create the wars, and then shuttle around negotiating fragile peace agreements. Women constitute less than one percent of UN peacekeeping missions.

Yet women and children constitute 80 percent of those forced to abandon their homes as a result of war. And it is invariably women who are called upon to pick up the pieces.

I recently met Angela King, special adviser of the UN secretary-general on gender issues in New York. Prior to her current post, King led the UN observer mission to South Africa.

She informed me about a study that the UN is about to launch on "Gender perspectives in multi-dimensional peacekeeping operations". We discussed the possibility of South Africa and Namibia being among the case studies for this ground-breaking research.

Slowly but surely we are waking up to the logic that women have a central role to play not just in rebuilding communities shattered by war, but in preventing conflict, negotiating peace and keeping peace.

(The author is chairwoman of the Commission on Gender Equality. This is an edited version of her address at a conference in Johannesburg on Tuesday on post-war reconstruction)

Traders put th heat on banke

ARLT 8/7/95 (30)

MAUREEN MARUD
Business Staff

BANKS are under pressure from the authorities to facilitate loans to small businesses following a stormy meeting in Bellville this week.

Bankers ran the gauntlet of pent-up wrath that spilled over in accusations of arrogance and indifference from delegates to a two-day workshop at the University of the Western Cape.

Tony Ruiters, deputy director-general of provincial Economic Affairs, said workshops would be arranged with individual banks "to unblock the obstacles" to obtaining loans.

The Western Cape government and the Small Business Directorate in the Department of Trade and Industry would work together to persuade the banks to change policy on collateral and security for loans to small businesses.

His department would also act on a recommendation from the workshop at UWC to ask banks to train branch staff in dealing with small business, particularly black small business, Mr Ruiters said.

"Both Absa and the Standard Bank have already given me a commitment to do so."

A panel of bankers at the workshop felt the heat early in their presentations on how to access loans. Angry comments from the floor told especially Absa, First National Bank and Standard Bank representatives that their institutions did not attempt to serve informal and micro businesses, whatever their claims.

Delegates were outspoken in their criticism of loan criteria that included collateral, a business plan, cash flow projections, income statements and a sound credit record.

They complained that their lack of collateral was due to historical denials of their rights to own homes or to take advantage of study and job opportunities.

At times the Great Hall at the University of the Western Cape was in an uproar with emotional outbursts and supportive applause from the informal sector who scoffed at small business initiatives being introduced or already in place.

"The formal financial institutions don't seem to understand the needs of a person trying to survive and develop into an emerging business. What are they doing for that sector?" asked a delegate.

A Standard Bank representative replied that his bank realised there was a gap in the market place.

"We are looking at re-drafting the terms and conditions required for lending to the micro sector. We ask you to be patient."

The First National representative said micro funding was a very difficul bank realised it "get smarter" at sector.

The Absa repr his bank was in establishing a n informal and prises.

At one point MEC Economi pealed to delega ber that the ban addressing were makers for their

Dr Kamy Che uty head of the Economic Affai to finance was tional issue, bec . . . especially women sectors" nied it through n own.

"It is impor banking and fu tions and the p know exactly h feelings run."

■ More report

(355A) CP 1/8/99

Still many obstacles for women in the workplace

By BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT

THE Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) has expressed concern over the low percentage of female employees and lack of gender policies in most companies.

According to a report released recently by the CGE, most companies preferred employing men to women because of racism, lack of gender policy, lack of trust in women, cultural views and resistance by male employees.

The survey found that in most cases, there are twice as many male managers as women managers and three times as many male artisans.

It said there are six times as many male machine or assembly workers as there are women in these categories.

Half of the companies interviewed indicated that they had no gender policy, while 24 percent subscribed to cultural stereotypes such as "men are heads of households therefore they should be in higher positions."

Other companies interviewed indicated that they were not interested in the issue while some said they were only interested in employing people who could do the work.

The survey showed that only 20 percent of the total workforce in the retail and wholesale industrial sector were female employees while 27 percent represented female workers in the manufacturing industry.

Other industries, such as business and professional services and mining, construction and engineering services, employed only 19 and 15 percent of females respectively.

"The range for the percentage component of female employees extended between two and 88 percent with 17 companies, comprising only 16 percent of the sample, having more than 50 percent female employees," the report said.

"Possible reasons underlying this are the poor skills pool factors, inadequate qualifications or experience, social and economic factors. Company recruitment and selection practices and organisational leadership mind-sets warrant examination," the CGE report said.

The CGE survey also found that the percentage of companies with gender policy stood at 40 percent and those currently formulating gender policy were 27.

Those without gender policy stood at 47 percent.

The survey revealed that retail and wholesale industries were in the forefront of formulating gender policy while the mining, construction and engineering services were not formulating any gender policies at all.

"There seemed to be a myriad of reasons for integration. Among these were common objectives between these different policies. Gender policy cannot be successful if implemented in a vacuum," said the report.

Among some of the internal problems experienced during the implementation of the gender policy are cultural views of the roles of men and women, existing skills of female employees, and their perceived inadequacy for technical jobs and for promotion into management.

The present organisational work environment was also cited as not being conducive to recruiting or promoting women into certain jobs.

The Commission on Gender Equality report also discovered that some of the companies experienced external problems in implementation of gender policy.

One such reason, the report said, was marital commitment and lack of spousal support – dual commitment at work and at home inhibits women from working overtime and studying further.

"Women are unable to occupy positions requiring night travel and economic down-scaling due to the downswing in economy impacts negatively on the number of people recruited."

Another interesting find was that two percent of companies indicated that customers and clients disapproved of dealing with female managers.

Women's place in economy boosted

BONTLE HEADBUSH

Johannesburg – The department of trade and industry needed to ensure that women became part of the mainstream of economic development within the next five years, Alec Erwin, the minister of trade and industry, said yesterday.

"The question of women in the economy is a fundamental one because they constitute the majority of the population and, if the majority aren't given the scope to contribute fully to the economy, then the economy can't develop to its full potential," he said.

Women constituted 54 percent of the total South African population but were mostly in manual and unskilled jobs. The department had to try to ensure they received training to acquire skills that would improve their standard of living.

The department had set up a gender unit to ensure that the issue of gender in the economy was continually addressed, and there had also been a move by parliament to make sure that the national Budget supported the development of women, Erwin said.

The department, through Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, its former deputy minister, had launched initiatives to empower women.

These included the Technology for Women in Business programme, which aimed to enhance the accessibility of science and technology to women in small, micro and medium-sized enterprises, and a conference organised by the department on the effect of the Southern African Development Community free trade agreement on women.

Metro council to come down hard on sex pests

CT 5/8/99 (355A)

THE Cape Metropolitan Council has embarked on a campaign to educate its staff about sexual harassment.

Under the council's new anti-harassment policy, terms of endearment and the pursing of lips in a mock kiss are now forbidden, as are uninvited displays of physical affection. Disciplinary action will be taken against offenders.

Council heads of department have been asked to release staff to attend lectures on the new policy.

The lectures began at venues throughout the Cape metropolitan area last Friday and are scheduled to continue until tomorrow.

The council's exco chairperson Kent Morkel said the policy would protect victims of sexual harassment. "We have taken a lead on this issue and offenders can be sure they will be punished for unacceptable behaviour of a sexual nature." — Sapa

Fertile ground for SA's women farmers

By Paul Letsoalo

WOMEN across South Africa and the world will always play a critical role in feeding a rapidly increasing population and in many ways they contribute to the challenge of establishing food security.

Women can also play an important role in the eradication of hunger and starvation, malnutrition and poverty in Africa and thus be part of the African renaissance.

This is the view of Agriculture Minister Thoko Didiza at the1999 female farmer of the year award ceremony held in Midrand last week.

The competition was aimed at raising the visibility of female farmers in the country.

Jean Davidson, the first black woman in South Africa to produce cut roses for the local and international market, scooped the individual winner award.

She started farming near Krugersdorp in 1996 on three hectares and later extended the land to five hectares. About six million rose stems are produced each year.

Adding value

Sixty percent of the flowers are sold in Europe, and the remainder directly to local florists and agents.

"To produce a quality niche crop one must have at one's disposal high technology and proper facilities such as those applied by Davidson. She shares experiences with international rose producers and is now faring profitably with this high-value crop," Didiza said.

"The competition has shown that women compete with men in the scope and success of their farming ventures and add value to the surrounding area," she said.

The Minister encouraged all women who show an interest in agricultural sectors.

"You are much more than farmers and have not only excelled in compeling successfully in what used to be seen as a male domain, but also in being active in your communities," she said.



Women can play an important role in the eradication of hunger and starvation, malnutrition and poverty in Africa.

She said although women have been neglected for many years regarding extension services, technology transfer and access to finance, more than seventy percent of workers in the agricultural sector are now women.

"While there have been many changes in agricultural and marketing policies and in the way the sector is financed in the past few years, there is still room for improvement in how women can access the opportunities now presented to them.

"We believe we can empower women in agriculture by recognising their contributions and by officially rewarding them for their efforts to reconstruct and develop our country," Didiza said. She pledged that the Department of Agriculture would investigate and address whatever institutional constraints remain as obstacles to "our woman farmers".

"But more than that, I am striving for a change in the perception that many people still have of the involvement of women in the sector.

"It is essential to enhance women's participation in development to achieve social justice, reduce poverty and stimulate economic growth.

"I don't know if you have noticed, but I as Minister and the directors general within the Department are women. This alone should help change the perception of agriculture as being a male domain," she said.

Didiza said the Department is committed to improve the environment in which farmers operate and will give attention to providing access to land for commercial production, to financial services, information, markets and to equal opportunities.

Proactive participants

"Women have a responsibility to be proactive. We can no longer afford to be spectators, but should become active participants. We should begin with the end in mind and prioritise our needs.If we want to be successful we have to take risks," she said.

Didiza appealed to women in all spheres of life to think about the future. "If you elect leaders within your farmers organisations, elect those who will take you into the new millennium," said the Minister.

Prizes worth about R330 000 were awarded to the winners and runners-up in individual and group categories, as rewards for their contribution to the development of the country.

The runner-up to Davidson was Sophie Mathebula from Northern Province, and Reikemetse Food in the North West province won the group category, with Tholulwazi Women's Club in second place.

R6m for gender monitor

(365A)
MG 3-9|9|99

Barry Streek

A high-powered gender unit, with an annual budget of R6-million, has been established in the Department of Communications to promote gender equity both in the department and the parastatals it is responsible for, such as the Post Office, Telkom and Satra.

The approach has been mainstream gender planning, the head of the department's gender desk, Mathapelo Lengoesane, told MPs this week.

And this is just the beginning, she added. The aim of her unit is the development of guiding principles to achieve good standards of a gender equitable department, assist in providing gender training programmes and monitor production of gender desegregated data for the department.

It also reviews all policies, projects and programmes for their gender implications, monitors the department in terms of South Africa's international agreements and develops gender sensitive indicators.

A gender task team has been established nationally, a gender committee representative of every unit in the department appointed and gender committees have been started in all portfolio organisations.

The unit has already initiated a gender audit in all the portfolio organisations to determine what they had done on gender programming since 1994 and to assess the capacity and potential of portfolio organisations in undertaking approaches to engendering policies and programmes.

Lengoesane said the key areas are corporate governance profiles, institutional framework mandates, policies, procurement, corporate social responsibility programmes, funding and capacity to carry out gender work.

She hopes this will result in the status of women being changed, action being taken to promote a gender mainstreaming strategies and people in authority becoming more aware of what institutionalising gender involves.

It is clear that with the forceful Lengoesane in charge of the gender unit and a R6-million budget, the department means business when it comes to gender issues. The Post Office and Telkom should take note.

Eskom backs bid to advance women

(355A) BD 14/9/99

Robyn Chalmers

ESKOM has launched an international training programme aimed at advancing black women in the engineering profession, with a number of candidates already having been identified.

Eskom chairman Reuel Khoza said yesterday the utility had devised a holistic programme through its engagement with Morgan Alliance University and its joint venture partner, the University of Warwick.

Eskom has contributed R5m to the initiative, called the CEOs' programme, which will see selected candidates undertaking 18 months of full-time study.

"This programme is a way to help break down racial and social preconceptions which hinder women from advancing in careers in technical fields. It is geared to produce female role models with leadership, social and communication skills along with technical competence in engineering."

Racial and gender inequalities in the workplace could be overcome only if mainstream business threw its financial weight behind this cause.

Public Enterprises Minister Jeff Radebe highlighted the need for companies to obtain employment equity not only in their levels of staff, but in the professions underlying their core businesses. Initiatives such as Eskom's could fill the shortage in the marketplace of technical and management skills.

(176)

ESKOM HUMAN RESOURCE INITIATIVES

- R5m CEO programme to promote women in technical fields
- Technology enhancement project, backing government's call for more science and technology training
- Leadership development programme involving 300 middle managers
- Integrated learning programme to create interactive information systems and consolidate information within Eskom
- Worklife Approach programme to help employees cope with change and become more career self-reliant. More than 1000 delegates so far

Graphic: MATTHYS MOSS Source: ESKOM

EMPLOYEE ABUSE

Domestic violence follows women to work

ET (MR) 8/10/99 (3558A)

JENNIFER WILSON

Domestic violence does not stay at home when women go to work. It can follow them, resulting in violence in the workplace.

It can spill over into the workplace when a women is harassed by threatening phone calls, forced to take sick leave because of injuries or becomes less productive from extreme stress.

Women who are abused at home often end up taking a lot of time off work to seek legal advice, medical attention or alternative accommodation.

Research in South Africa is sparse when it comes to detailing exactly how large an impact domestic violence has on the bottom line.

In the US, the spillover of domestic violence into the workplace has become a big issue in the past five years. A 1997 survey found that one in four US women had experienced domestic violence at some point in their lives. Moreover, 37 percent of these women reported that such abuse had harmed their work performance.

Fifty-six percent arrived late for work at least five times a month; 54 percent missed at least three full days of work a month. Abused women also found it difficult to keep a job or move up in their careers.

Not only does domestic violence often become workplace violence, the victims may be especially vulnerable at work. Once a woman leaves an abusive partner, the workplace can become the only place he can locate and harm her.

A National Safe Workplace Institute survey in the US in 1995 found that 94 percent of corporate security directors surveyed ranked domestic violence as a high security problem.

US companies view domestic violence as a bottom-line business issue. For instance Liz Claiborne, the fashion house, runs an ongoing domestic violence awareness campaign.

In 1994 it sponsored a survey of 100 senior executives in Fortune 1000 companies across the US.

Two-thirds of these corporate leaders believed their firms' financial performance would benefit from addressing the issue of domestic violence among their employees. Forty percent were aware of employees and others affected by domestic violence.

There has not been much formal research in South



Africa on how productivity or work attendance are affected by domestic violence. There are no figures for cases reported to the police, for the simple reason that domestic violence is not officially defined as a crime in this country.

However, the Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication says the impact of domestic violence in South Africa is significant.

After the television series Soul City IV featured a woman who was abused by her husband, viewers started calling a 24-hour hotline to ask for help.

"We have reams of anecdotal evidence of the difficulties that women face, including at the workplace, when they try to do something about (violence in their homes)," says Shereen Usdin, the project manager of Soul City IV.

"Looking at some of the figures coming out of relatively small surveys, there can be little doubt this is impacting on our economy."

A booklet compiled by the Soul City Institute pulls together some of these statistics.

For instance, one in two women attending a community health centre in the Western Cape reported having been abused by their partners or husbands.

Forty-three percent of working men interviewed in Cape Town reported abusing their partners. The department of justice estimates that one out of every four South African women is a survivor of domestic violence.

Companies need to get involved in helping to address the problem, says Usdin. "Companies who get involved in addressing domestic violence will save lives, but it is also good business."

Recognising that it is "good business", to address domestic violence, many US companies are implementing policies to help employees. These initiatives include training managers to recognise the signs of domestic violence among their staff and to discuss the workplace policies on the issue.

The US National Workplace Resource Centre recommends that employees provide security personnel with photographs of batterers in case they come to the workplace. It also recommends flexible work schedules to allow employees to attend court proceedings, meet a counsellor, get medical help or relocate to safe accommodation.

In conjunction with the television series, the Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication and the National Network on Violence against Women have been running workshops to popularise the Domestic Violence Act, which comes into effect later this year.

The act provides mechanisms for women, such as access to protection orders against abusers.

"Employers and unions could help with public education on violence against women, including educating the workforce on the new act," says Usdin.

"In the long run, if employers take steps to address the problem of domestic violence, productivity gains will outweigh the costs to the organisation."

□ *Jennifer Wilson is the communications co-ordinator at Nedlac, but she has written this article in her personal capacity*

Gender equity probe slated

Figures on women in top jobs outdated, says W Cape official

ARG 18/10/99 (356A)

A gender audit of four Western Cape government departments, which says most positions of power are still held by white males, has been slated by the province as inaccurate and outdated.

The report, commissioned by the Gender Advocacy Programme, focused on the number of women in managerial positions in provincial government in the areas of local government, domestic violence, social policy and reproductive health.

Information for the audit was based on last year's figures.

But the provincial head of corporate services, Kallie Saayman, claimed the report was "interspersed with false and outdated information".

The Community Agency for Social Enquiry was commissioned by the Gender Advocacy Programme to do the research.

The study was meant to help the programme assess the progress of the provincial government in overcoming discrimination.

LYNNETTE JOHNS

Staff reporter



Women held only 27% (12 out of 45) of the seats in the provincial legislature at the end of 1998. Six of these women were white.

The New National Party had 25 of the 45 seats and only five were allocated to women. Of the 15 African National Congress seats, six were occupied by women.

Neither the Democratic Party nor the African Christian democratic Party had any women in the legislature.

In the provincial administration only 14% (five out of 35) of senior management posts were held by women, the study found.

And 40 of 166 middle management positions were held by women.

The audit reported only 35% of all staff were women.

But the report covered only 1,5% of public service employees.

The Education Department, which employs a large number of female teachers, was left out of the audit.

Mr Saayman questioned why this department was not accounted for in the figures, accusing the researchers of having a "hidden agenda" in their methodology.

He said women made up 62% of staff in the legislature and not 35% as indicated in the findings.

"The allegation that the vast majority of senior managers in the are white males is also untrue."

Mr Saayman said 50% of heads of departments were drawn from "previously disadvantaged groups".

The gender programme's acting director, Shanaaz Mathews ,said the findings indicated the provincial administration would need to fast-track its implementation of employment equity to reflect provincial gender and race demographics.

"Lack of equitable representation can have a negative impact on service delivery and planning."

Ms Mathews said a challenge facing both the legislature and the administration was to redress the stark imbalances within them.

"We believe this can be achieved only once the issue of transforming the provincial government is addressed internally, as policy implementation hinges on the attitudes and perceptions of the people needing to implement it," Ms Mathews said.

But Mr Saayman said the administration had done "everything in its power to enable candidates from disadvantaged communities to progress to management positions".

The administration had a "highly successful provincial executive programme which gave selected candidates streamlined access to management positions".

widely used in medi

short strand of DNA from a drug-resistant strain of tuberculosis.

DNA normally comes in two strands, and these pair up in a specific way. The biochip works when a single strand of the DNA from the tuberculosis strain being tested is laid down. If it matches up right, the test is positive for drug-resistant tuberculosis. Yet researchers need to do many more tests. "It'll take years to get to the market," Drucker said. "Since tuberculosis is becoming a global epidemic, urgent steps must be taken to speed up the process." —Reuters.

e
nt
ich

is a
tiny
niature
ad is a

Male-female income gap 'is narrowing'

ET(BR) 26/10/99 (3TTA) (128)

FRANK NXUMALO

Johannesburg – Male graduates were still earning more than their female counterparts but the income gap between the sexes was gradually narrowing, according to a survey released yesterday by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC).

The HSRC said it had compared the average income package for the period from 1981 to 1997 of graduate men and women in 80 occupations in the public, private and self-employed sectors. Figures for 1981 and 1994 were adjusted to 1997 values using the consumer price index.

Johan Jacobs, the HSRC's economic and social analysis researcher, said that although incomes for men in 1997 were still higher than for women in 90 percent of the occupations, the gap had decreased notably over the 16-year period.

Jacobs said in 70 percent of occupations, the rate of salary increases between 1981 and 1997 had been higher for women than for men.

The income gap between men and women was smaller for graduates with little work experience, compared with those with more experience.

"While a female medical practitioner with less than four years' experience earned about R130 700 a year in 1997, her male counterpart with similar experience earned R134 200. With experience between five and nine years, the male doctor earned R164 000, only R500 more than his female counterpart.

"However, from there on the income gap widened drastically, with the male doctor earning R40 000 (with 10 to 19 years' experience) and R50 000 (20 years' experience) more than the female doctor."

Jacobs said that while the income of most occupations had increased with an increase in experience, the opposite was true for medical practitioners.

Both male and female doctors with more than 20 years' experience were found to earn about R20 000 less than those who had 10 to 19 years' experience in other occupations.

The survey showed that between 1990 and 1997 the adjusted income of self-employed men had dropped steadily to below that of employees in the private sector.

The HSRC said although the income of employees in the public sector had increased steadily since 1990, it was still well below that of graduates in the private sector by 1997.

The income of women in the public and private sectors had increased steadily between 1981 and 1997.

"However, in contrast, the income of self-employed women decreased over this period. There was only a small difference between the income of women in the public and the private sectors, while self-employed women earned notably more.

"Conversely, men in the private sector earned considerably more than those in the public sector," Jacobs said.

Sexism still rife in a man's world

In spite of today's so-called politically correct, enlightened times, the City of London's Square Mile remains a predominantly 'male club'

Jane Hayes will be back behind her desk in the City of London on Monday. At 36, she is the epitome of the successful career woman: ambitious, articulate, attractive. She enjoys a six-figure salary and the respect and admiration of her peers.

Such appreciation, however, is likely to be given discreetly. For in certain quarters of London's Square Mile, Mrs Hayes, now a senior underwriter with Zurich Global Energy, is regarded as trouble, with a capital T.

Her crime? Accusing her former employers of sexism.

She believes she was passed over for a performance-related bonus in 1994 because she took six months off for the birth of her first child.

Four years later, after the company, Charman Underwriting Agencies, based in the Lloyds building, was taken over, her bonus shares turned out to be worth £2-million.

CAREER

This week, Mrs Hayes took her case for sexual discrimination and constructive dismissal to an industrial tribunal – and lost her claim.

Afterwards, Mrs Hayes, a mother of two, said: "I am, of course, disappointed that the tribunal did not find in my favour. I still believe I was the victim of sexual discrimination, and I have no regrets.

"I have consistently made it clear I pursued this as a matter of principle. Professional women should be able to sustain a career and be good mothers.

"I hope the judgment will neither deter other women from taking action if they feel themselves the victims of discrimination, nor be seen by employers as a green light to try to get away with such discrimination if they can."

Her's is the latest in a flood of high-profile lawsuits that has sent shock waves through the Square Mile.

For in spite of these so-called politically correct, enlightened times, the City remains a predominantly male club.

This is the place, of course, where women dealers are known as "honourary big swinging d****", where stories of young female traders being forced into sexual liaisons to earn their bonuses abound, and where headhunters are often asked, unofficially, to supply "blondes" to fill vacancies at some of London's most respected finance houses.

So, are these just isolated examples, or evidence that sexism is endemic at the commercial heart of Britain?

The bare facts do not make pleasura[illegible]

"Sexism manifests itself in general bad behaviour and is widespread. Some of it can be laughed off, and is laughed off, but some of it is serious and offensive, and usually goes unreported."

"To put it bluntly, the macho environment has given rise to a culture where female flesh is a commodity, often to be bought and sold like any other. Witness, for example, the number of strip bars and table dancing clubs that now embroider the City.

Yet, to outsiders, the young men who ply their trade here are the image of respectability.

They dress, after all, in expensive suits, Jermyn Street shirts and colour co-ordinated silk ties and cuff links. Yet, beneath this sophisticated costume there lurk many who put the words "City gent" to shame.

'Women are scared to speak out and damage their careers'

The lexicon is overtly sexual. "A bit of Doris" is an unattractive older woman and cries of "lift up your skirt" (said to somebody who is making money to get them to reveal more of their position) punctuate the air.

One 21-year-old dealer's assistant at a leading City bank says she felt like a "stripper on a stag night" when she visited the floor of the London International Financial Futures Options Exchange (Liffe) before it went online.

"I was told what to expect, but I never imagined it would be so embarrassing. They wolf-whistled and there was all that 'Hello darling' you get from a building site. I felt quite threatened by the whole experience."

Since the eighties, of course, the City has no longer been the domain of the public-school boy, but rather of the "barrow boy".

He answers to nicknames such as "Smudger" and "Basher", has a bruise on his foot from playing football, and prefers pints of lager to champagne.

This locker-room culture is typified by a recent incident at Daiwa Europe, the Japanese investment bank.

One trader summoned to a meeting with his bosses expected a dressing-down for mislaying important documentation. But he was confronted by a smartly dressed woman from the Securities and Futures Authority.

Then the "regulator" began to peel off her blouse and bra. She was a stripper. Some women employees were said to have been less than amused.

Lisa Mayhew, 29, is a City employment lawyer with Charles Russell. She was once invited to give a talk on sexual harassment to a group of brokers.

"They gave me a stool to sit on right in front of them," she said. "It wasn't the most dignified position to be in, particularly if you wanted to cross your legs. They spent the whole time looking at the length of my skirt rather than listening to what I was saying.

"I could feel their eyes on me the whole time. They just didn't take it seriously. There were comments like: 'What do you mean about sexual harassment. It's just having a bit of a laugh, isn't it?'"

On another occasion, she attended a meeting with a client away from her office. Afterwards, when she walked into the reception area, she was greeted by a chorus of wolf-whistling. The firm in question was one of the most respected names in the City.

It is a place, of course, which has always been awash with sexual intrigue and scandal.

The City has recently been buzzing with revelations that a top executive at a finance house had been sacked. Officially, he was underperforming.

Unofficially, he is said to have chased a junior female member of staff around the office and up some stairs after a liquid lunch.

There is also the director caught on a security camera having sex with a colleague on a squash court in the basement of a bank after a party, and the trader who revealed his modesty on his office desk, while viewing pornography on the internet.

"Because employees are having general access to the internet and to the e-mail system, it is becoming a forum for harassment," says Ms Mayhew.

"I was involved in a case recently where a pornographic image of a black woman used to appear on the computer screen of a man in his 40s whenever he was not using his keyboard. But there happened to be a black woman sitting very close to him.

"One day when he was on holiday her terminal broke down and she had to sit at his desk. She just had to face this image all the time. This sort of thing is not uncommon."

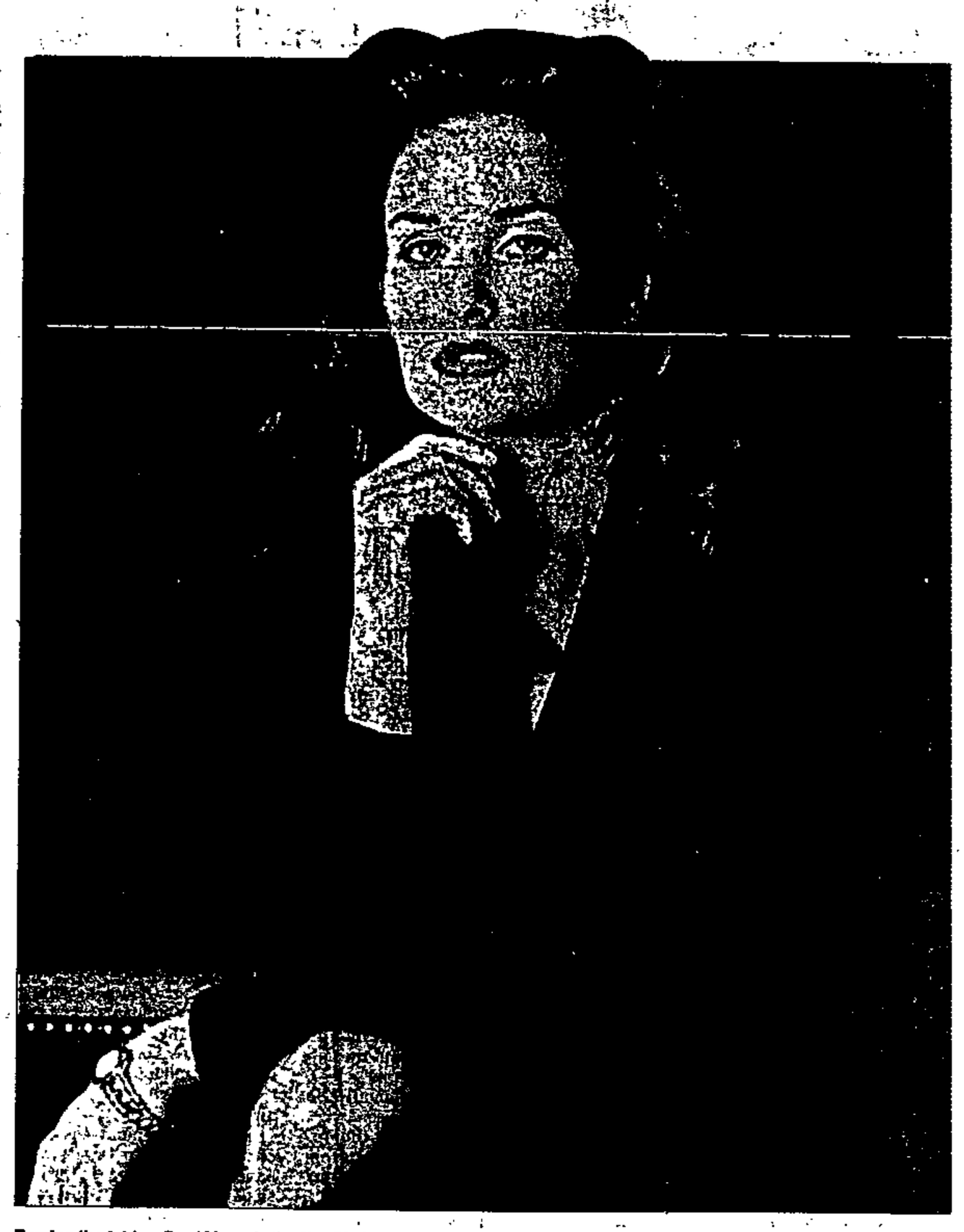
A growing number of organisations is now introducing anti-pornography policies. Some are even using a message system that screens e-mails with offensive words.

Not surprisingly, a thriving sex industry has grown up to cater for City tastes. Lap-dancing clubs have names such as "Traders" and "For Your Eyes Only".

At the Cherokee Club, just across the road from Liffe, manager Chris Unwin admits that most of his gold-card clients are so-called "City gents".

Not that this fact needed confirming. The Cherokee's personal membership details were recently downloaded by a mystery hacker. The list included individuals from such esteemed institutions as SBC Warburg, Dillon Read, Royal Bank of Scotland, Credit Suisse, First Boston, Merrill Lynch, Barclays Capital and Normand City Finance.

"There is nothing seedy about the club," says Mr Unwin. "It's just like



Turning the tables: Demi Moore in the film *Disclosure* which went against type and involved sexual harassment by a woman

The SA WORKPLACE (3TSA) ART 31/10/99

About five cases of sexual harassment are referred to the Council for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration in Cape Town each month, says commissioner Ghalieb Galant.

"It is a fairly pervasive and widespread problem. Although we have not had huge numbers of sexual

had difficulty in getting promoted.

Shanaaz Matthews, director of the Gender Advocacy Programme, said the implementation of gender policies would go a long way to redress the imbalances at corporate and government level.

"A recent study revealed that the top management positions in local government were still dominated by males.

"Unless there is an organisational transformation, the status quo will not change."

She said despite the country's pro-

ing recruitment specialists Ray and Berndtson, said: "Quite often, banking institutions will brief us unofficially that the ideal candidate for a job would be a physically attractive lady. I have also been specifically requested to supply a blonde for one vacancy.

"Such requests, of course, are at odds

more powerful positions, they still lag behind their male counterparts."

Indeed, one 20-something broker sums up the philosophy when she explains how she was initiated into the "Breakfast Club".

"I used to do business with a senior manager at an investment bank. He

sex was available if I wanted it.

"I also knew him by reputation. He was a complete philanderer. On another occasion I had to telephone him late at night. I asked him beforehand whether his wife would mind and he replied: "Oh no, she is very understanding." It was obvious from the way

CARE

bunal – and lost her claim.

Afterwards, Mrs Hayes, a mother of two, said: "I am, of course, disappointed that the tribunal did not find in my favour. I still believe I was the victim of sexual discrimination, and I have no regrets.

"I have consistently made it clear I pursued this as a matter of principle. Professional women should be able to sustain a career and be good mothers.

"I hope the judgment will neither deter other women from taking action if they feel themselves the victims of discrimination, nor be seen by employers as a green light to try to get away with such discrimination if they can."

Her's is the latest in a flood of high-profile lawsuits that has sent shock waves through the Square Mile.

For in spite of these so-called politically correct, enlightened times, the City remains a predominantly male club.

This is the place, of course, where women dealers are known as "honourary big swinging d****", where stories of young female traders being forced into sexual liaisons to earn their bonuses abound, and where head-hunters are often asked, unofficially, to supply "blondes" to fill vacancies at some of London's most respected finance houses.

So, are these just isolated examples, or evidence that sexism is endemic at the commercial heart of Britain?

The bare facts do not make encouraging reading: four out of five female City workers questioned said they were victims of sexual discrimination. Most claimed men of similar rank were paid better, and more than half felt employers were unsympathetic to the demands of mothers with full-time jobs.

Then there is the fact that women at senior management level are outnumbered 10 to one.

But statistics do not tell the whole story. As Helena Dennison, chairman of City Women's Network, explains: "Most women are too scared to speak out because to do so would almost certainly damage their careers.

speak out and damage their careers'

sophisticated costume there lurk many who put the words "City gent" to shame.

The lexicon is overtly sexual. "A bit of Doris" is an unattractive older woman and cries of "lift up your skirt" (said to somebody who is making money to get them to reveal more of their position) punctuate the air.

One 21-year-old dealer's assistant at a leading City bank says she felt like a "stripper on a stag night" when she visited the floor of the London International Financial Futures Options Exchange (Liffe) before it went online.

"I was told what to expect, but I never imagined it would be so embarrassing. They wolf-whistled and there was all that 'Hello darling' you get from

Then the "regulator" began to peel off her blouse and bra. She was a stripper. Some women employees were said to have been less than amused.

Lisa Mayhew, 29, is a City employment lawyer with Charles Russell. She was once invited to give a talk on sexual harassment to a group of brokers.

"They gave me a stool to sit on right in front of them," she said. "It wasn't the most dignified position to be in, particularly if you wanted to cross your legs. They spent the whole time looking at the length of my skirt rather than listening to what I was saying.

"I could feel their eyes on me the whole time. They just didn't take it seriously. There were comments like: 'What do you mean about sexual

(3754) ART 31/10/99

The SA WORKPLACE

About five cases of sexual harassment are referred to the Council for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration in Cape Town each month, says commissioner Ghalieb Galant.

"It is a fairly pervasive and widespread problem. Although we have not had huge numbers of sexual harassment referrals, when these cases do pop up, it is indicative the problem exists," he said.

He said women who were being sexually harassed in the workplace, would not necessarily refer the matter to them.

He said that women were afraid of losing their jobs or feared recrimination if they did.

"We have found there are mostly no support systems to protect women in the workplace.

"Most companies don't have a sexual harassment policy." Women also had difficulty in getting promoted.

Shanaaz Matthews, director of the Gender Advocacy Programme, said the implementation of gender policies would go a long way to redress the imbalances at corporate and government level.

"A recent study revealed that the top management positions in local government were still dominated by males.

"Unless there is an organisational transformation, the status quo will not change."

She said despite the country's progressive constitution, South African society seemed to be steeped in the old notion that it was a rare woman who could hold high rank in any organisation or business.

Charl Adams, human resource manager of the Chamber of Commerce, said government legislation was introduced to "make sure the imbalances are sorted out in some way".

But Ms Matthews, said unless there was a "change of attitude", women would still still be at a disadvantage in the workplace.

e-mail system, it is becoming a forum for harassment," says Ms Mayhew.

"I was involved in a case recently where a pornographic image of a black woman used to appear on the computer screen of a man in his 40s whenever he was not using his keyboard. But there happened to be a black woman sitting very close to him.

"One day when he was on holiday her terminal broke down and she had to sit at his desk. She just had to face this image all the time. This sort of thing is not uncommon."

A growing number of organisations is now introducing anti-pornography policies. Some are even using a message system that screens e-mails with offensive words.

Not surprisingly, a thriving sex industry has grown up to cater for City tastes. Lap-dancing clubs have names such as "Traders" and "For Your Eyes Only".

At the Cherokee Club, just across the road from Liffe, manager Chris Unwin admits that most of his gold-card clients are so-called "City gents".

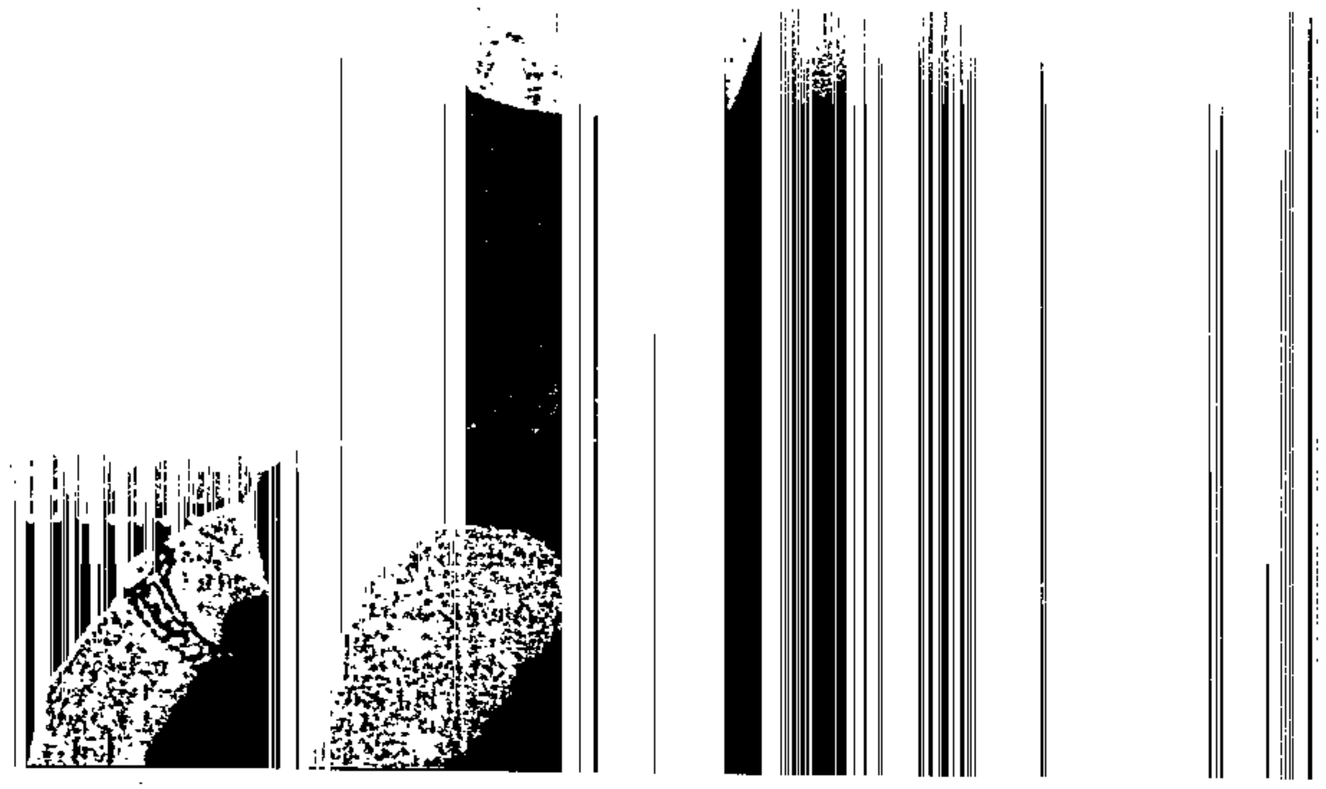
Not that this fact needed confirming. The Cherokee's personal membership details were recently downloaded by a mystery hacker. The list included individuals from such esteemed institutions as SBC Warburg, Dillon Read, Royal Bank of Scotland, Credit Suisse, First Boston, Merrill Lynch, Barclays Capital and Normand City Finance.

"There is nothing seedy about the club," says Mr Unwin. "It's just like being a member of a casino. I think we are very lucky to have clients like this. They're always very well behaved.

"We also have very strict rules. Girls can dance at a table as long as there is a three-foot gap."

City executives, of course, are entitled to spend their money as they please and one could argue that patronising such establishments is just a bit of harmless fun. But critics claim the culture of the strip joint and bordello is also infecting the commercial life of the City and has, in part, led to the recent flood of claims of sexual discrimination.

Guy Trezona, head-hunter with lead-



Turning the tables: Demi Moore in the film *Disclosure* which went against type and involved sexual harassment by a woman

ing recruitment specialists Ray and Berndtson, said: "Quite often, banking institutions will brief us unofficially that the ideal candidate for a job would be a physically attractive lady. I have also been specifically requested to supply a blonde for one vacancy.

"Such requests, of course, are at odds with equal opportunities guidelines, so what I would normally do is provide a client with a selection of male and female candidates."

He added: "I know of one very large brokering firm that will employ only attractive people. Certainly, if you go into their offices, you will not see an unattractive woman, from the cleaner all the way up to just below director level. It's like entering a Playboy clone zone.

"Is the City sexist? In a nutshell the answer is "Yes". The City is still male-dominated and male-run.

While women have begun to take up more powerful positions, they still lag behind their male counterparts."

Indeed, one 20-something broker sums up the philosophy when she explains how she was initiated into the "Breakfast Club".

"I used to do business with a senior manager at an investment bank. He was married and in his early 50s.

"He kept on arranging breakfast meetings first thing in the morning at various top hotels. He always said he had something desperately important to tell me, but he never did.

"I just couldn't work out why he wanted me to go to these hotels. Then I realised that, if you are well-known in the City, there can be considerable kudos in being seeing having breakfast with a young woman.

"Obviously, it implies you slept with them the night before.

"This guy never actually tried anything on, but he made it quite clear that sex was available if I wanted it.

"I also knew him by reputation. He was a complete philanderer. On another occasion I had to telephone him late at night. I asked him beforehand whether his wife would mind and he replied: "Oh no, she is very understanding." It was obvious from the way he said it what he really meant."

So, what does it take for a woman to survive in the City?

According to the latest research, those who achieve most still tend to be childless, or have come to marriage and children at a late age.

They also have to conform. Helen Cleverly, a 27-year-old market and data analyst with Merrill Lynch admits: "You have to become one of the lads.

"Of course, I get hassled by guys, but I don't take any notice. If you spouted feminist stuff back at them, or cried, you would be opening the floodgates.

– Daily Mail, London

'Commission racked by tension'

Reneé Grawitzky

TENSION in the Commission on Gender Equality between commissioners and staff has led to CEO Colleen Lowe-Morna allegedly being told to leave. However, the commission said yesterday Lowe-Morna had not been dismissed but had resigned.

The commission said her resignation was accepted at a special meeting on November 9.

Commission sources said Lowe-Morna was challenging this and had taken legal action, saying she had never formally tendered her resignation. She would not comment on the dispute yesterday.

According to commission sources, there has been tension between some commissioners and staff as certain commissioners have attempted to intervene in the day-to-day operations of the commission.

Commissioners are supposed to give political and strategic direction to the secretariat, but sources said there had been political interference by some commissioners leading to allegations of victimisation of staff.

The extent of commissioner interference was evident after a recent decision by the CEO to institute disciplinary action against a senior member of staff for alleged misconduct, sources said. Commissioners allegedly tried to stop the inquiry.

Before the inquiry the CEO is said to have raised some concerns about the confidentiality of discussions within the executive committee. She said certain information had been leaked to the staff member facing disciplinary action. However, she found this was not the case and apologised to the committee.

At this point the commission's deputy chairman, Pumelele Mtombela-Nzimande, called the CEO a liar and suggested this was a repeated pattern of behaviour, sources said. Lowe-Morna said if this was an issue over which to resign, she would. However, a commission source said she never formally tendered her resignation.

Lowe-Morna was out of the country when the commission took a decision to accept her resignation. On her return at the weekend she said she was no longer prepared to resign and lodged a complaint against Mtombela-Nzimande for calling her a liar.

BD 17/11/99

(355A)