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AGENCY FOR

CHRISTIAN

SOCIAL

AWARENESS

PACSA ANNUAL REPORT

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(inc. Overview 1979-1989)

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Telephone (0331) 420052

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WHAT IS PACSA?

- * PACSA is an ecumenical agency which aims to encourage and facilitate a deeper understanding of the social implications of the Christian faith, through AWARENESS and ACTION.
- * PACSA tries to be of service to the Church through a concern for justice within the Church and society.
- * If you are prepmcd i0 maimâ\200\230 a (16prl con'nniiment to working as a Christian for fundamental and constructive change in our society, you are invited to join the work of PACSA.

PACSA OVERVIEW

1979 - 1989

INTRODUCTION

PACSA commemorates ten years of life and service this year. We thought it would be interesting and informative to prepare an overview of our ten years' work in our society riddled with the apartheid disease but with the potential for transformation and true liberation.

To do this we have looked at our earlier publications for some historic information and we have also asked five people to write down their memories of PACSA and PACSA people and what PACSA has meant to them.

I. History (from PACSA REPORT October 1978 - March 1980)

Preliminary investigations into the establishment of a Christian social agency in the Pietermaritzburg area started in late 1976, with informal talks with concerned Christians here and

from other centres - Dr D Hurley (Archbishop of Durban), Dr W Kistner (Director, Justice and

"Reconciliation Commission, SACC), and Dr M Nash (Ecumenical Education Officer, SACC).

These talks were followed by five formal meetings over a fifteen month period. At the fifth

meeting in May 1978, an inaugurating council was elected to proceed with the establishment of a

Christian social awareness agency in Pietermaritzburg. This council's responsibility was to

prepare a document to present to prospective donors. This meant the preparation of a constitution

and a budget, and the definition of the agency's overall purpose and objectives.

The council was

also given the mandate to appoint an Organising Secretary.

Purpose and objectives

The council met in June 1978 and spent a day discussing and defining the overall purpose and

objectives of the agency. From this a document was prepared and submitted to prospective donor

organisations.

Constitution

This was drafted, discussed and finally accepted by the Inaugurating Council at its meeting on 6

March 1979.

Finance and appointment of Organising Secretary

With the acquisition of funds, due mainly to the valued support and interest of Archbishop Hurley

and Bishop Tutu, the council was able to confirm the offer of the post of Organising Secretary to

Mr Peter Kerchhoff, who accepted the offer and commenced work for PACSA from 1st November 1978.

Inaugural Public Meeting

PACSA's first public meeting was held on 20 February 1979 and included the slide tape

presentation entitled: "How my neighbour lives", and two taped conversations "What does it mean

to me?"

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2. Early Days - few personal memories of October 1978 - March 1979. Joan Kerchhoff

"I remember the summer of 1978. It was a time of change, a time of excitement and commitment,

a time of fear and anxiety. PACSA was about to come into being.

We set up an office (of sorts) in our backyard, next to the garage. We bought an old secondhand

typewriter and a battered ironing cabinet. We sent letters to clergy and to people we thought might

be interested, to tell them about PACSA. We began to prepare for our inaugural meeting, which

was to include a slide tape presentation showing contrasting lifestyles in Pietermaritzburg

The Council, consisting of 7 members, met regularly, and a strong bond of fellowship soon formed. We introduced a rule of life (see below). In spite of our concern about the social and

political situation, and our anxieties, we nevertheless laughed a great deal as we got our little

ironing cabinet off the ground!

The great day of our first public meeting came round. Everything seemed to go wrong (or didn't

just imagine it?), the worst being the breakdown of the slide equipment. People shuffled and

coughed, and I felt myself grow warm with embarrassment. But eventually we got going. After

the meeting we bravely handed out forms asking for comments, and then wished we hadn't as

there were so many criticisms! But we learned from our mistakes - and there were some praises, too.

The March Newsletter proudly announced that PACSA now has an office and a telephone. The

office at 27 Buchanan Street consisted of one very small room, for which we had to buy a door.

(This room was in the old Bantu Presbyterian Church building, which was then occupied by the

Invisible Church). When the building was demolished, our door vanished and was never found.

The next great step was the appointment of an office secretary, part-time, and this was Gay Spiller.

By this time, PACSA had moved to larger premises in Loop Street, which it shared with AFR A (Association for Rural Advancement). Gay took over secretarial work in her pleasant and efficient manner, and PACSA was on its way."

Rule of Life (summarised): We endeavour to meet regularly for fellowship, study, reflection, prayer and an Agape meal; to work for constructive change and justice; to base our commitment on a biblical and theological concern; and to encourage a deeper understanding among ourselves and others of the social implications of our faith.

3. PACSA is Ten years old. Gay Spiller

"Congratulations on your 10th birthday. You can all be proud of what has been accomplished over this short period, however hidden and unsung much of it may be.

Working with PACSA for almost nine years was a very significant period for me - tightly packed

with a vast range of experiences - many enjoyable and many painful. Looking back, I realise that I was privileged to meet so many people dedicated to changing South Africa for the better...

Some of the more memorable experiences during my 9 years in the PACSA office (first at Loop

Street, then Pietermaritz Street and finally Berg Street) were: being part of the lunch brigade which made and delivered meals to the 16 in the so-called Treason Trial

on 1985/6 where we had the opportunity of chatting with people like Thozamile Gweta, Siza Njikelana and others,

while they munched their sandwiches. We also joined them inside the courthouse on one occasion to watch videos of various meetings they had attended. They were all eventually acquitted.

Then there were the raids on PACSA offices where all minutes, files, books etc. were examined

in minute detail and some were taken away for further study; on 12th June 1986, my home was

searched in the same way and I was arrested and detained for two weeks along with many other

people around the country. (That was a very different experience!)

On a daily basis there was much interaction with suffering people from the townships. Steadily

they arrived with incredible stories of what was happening to them, their families and their

friends. We tried to alleviate some of their pain (both physical and mental) in whatever way lay

within our limited power.

There were also times of relaxation and fun when we shared meals, watched videos, attended

Agapes, workshops, lectures, discussions and, on one occasion, went up to Winterton to see Haleys Comet together. A -

It was always the support of like-minded people which helped me to continue to find strength

and courage and, above all, HOPE. They were, and are, people moved by the spirit of love and

compassion.

Long may you continue to flourish."

Gay Spiller and Doreen her mother

at an Agape

4. Some thoughts about PACSA Colin Gardner

It isn't possible for me to write objectively about PACSA. I was in on it from the start - not just from the birth, but from the moments of conception too. I remember particularly a creative conversation at the Kerchhoff's home, then in Ashby Road, at which Margaret Nash from Cape Town was present. It must have been in 1978, about a year after the banning of the Christian Institute, from which - may one now say it? PACSA was to get a good deal of its inspiration. Beyers Naude was a sort of unofficial patron from the first. So was Dennis Hurley. Our thinking was also influenced considerably by the example of Diakonia in Durban. But PACSA was to be a little different from the CI and Diakonia in that - in accordance with the tenets of black consciousness, which all alert people adhered to in the late 1970s - it was the primary duty of whites to work among whites. (That is still largely true of course). So PACSA was at first, though obviously open to all, an almost entirely white body; an agency for the conscientization of white Christians. PACSA was from the first, in human terms, the special creation of Peter and Joan Kerchhoff. They largely were it. PACSA as we know it is inconceivable without them: its atmosphere, its spirituality, its informality, its humour, owe an enormous amount to them both. They have been the chief principle of continuity and of stability, but also of consistent growth and development - within a human scene in which a striking fact has been continual change. Though there has been a team of gentle stalwarts, people have in general come and gone in PACSA; some have moved to other towns; some have found new kinds of interests or focus; a few have become too busy, or sometimes slightly too moderate, to maintain the steady, lively, progressive PACSA pace. Meanwhile others have owed in to fill and overfill the gaps. Why has PACSA become largely the spiritual home of a group of Maritzburg people? It isn't that these people have left their own churches (on the whole they haven't): it is rather that, nowadays, the true lines of division - division of sympathy and within the Christian church run not along traditional denominational boundaries but between those who do and those who do not see the South African socio-political issue as central to Christian concern and action. PACSA - as an agency for Christian social awareness and action - has always stressed that loving one's fellow human beings, and not merely alleviating suffering but analysing the causes of suffering and then acting to create a transformed society, are - especially in South Africa, especially today - what it means to try to be a follower of Jesus. As a body dedicated to religious and socio-political change, PACSA came of age in 1986 when Peter and Gay Spiller were detained (the former for three months, the latter for two weeks). In a society like ours - unhappily - an organisation like PACSA finds itself having to test its effectiveness, perhaps its very authenticity, in this painful way. And recently PACSA and its workers have been the subjects of continual police harassment... If the security police have paid PACSA the backhanded compliment of keeping in touch, PACSA has certainly tried earnestly to keep in touch with the God who is at the centre of all its hopes and work. Under Peter's leadership, but supported by a sincere and varied community, it

has sought God in prayer and in people, in prophecy and in planning.
But in tense problematic South Africa it would be quite wrong to conclude on what might seem
to be a triumphalist note. The mighty question remains for PACSA as insistently as ever:
are we
doing the right things? Are we succeeding? -

5. 10 years of PACSA : a reflection Graham Lindegger

Ten years ago I discovered PACSA through my good friend, Gay Spiller. It was the kind of discovery that was to make an almost irreversible difference to my life. Before discovering PACSA I knew, and reflected with, people who shared a deep concern over the South African political situation. I also knew people with a deep sense of Christian faith. But I often wished for a close community with people with a strong sense of both. PACSA and its community filled exactly this niche. From the time of my discovery of PACSA it was to provide a constant source of support and challenge to my life, a forum for reflection on the SA situation in a Christian context, and a network of social action.

Many experiences stand out over the past 10 years, but 1986 will surely always remain central. I

had only just been elected chairperson, when PACSA was abruptly thrust into one its most serious and important challenges. This was precipitated by the declaration of the 1986 state of

emergency. The horror was overwhelming when I learned, in the early hours of the morning of

12 June, that Peter, Gay and other close friends had been taken into detention. The weeks and

months that followed were a baptism of fire for PACSA and its members and friends. These

experiences of those months were to catapult PACSA into a new orbit. While the times were mostly difficult, there was sometimes a comical edge which enabled us to continue. I remember

one council meeting when we debated whether it was legal to pray for Peter, or whether we would require ministerial permission. Throughout these difficult months I had one overriding

thought: these events serve as continuation of the relevance of PACSA and its work. I often

thought of the experience of the disciples described in the early part of Acts.

Towards the end of last year we had two young German people visiting us whilst touring SA

. We arranged a visit to PACSA, including one of Monika's alternative tours of Pmb. On their

return they were clearly unsettled (if not disturbed) by the experience - so different to their other

tourist experiences. Whilst reflecting on their visit to PACSA, the one person remarked "It is

unrealistic". I thought this was a perfect description of PACSA's work: an attempt to formulate a

new (unrealistic) vision of reality, one based on the ideal of the Kingdom of God.

JOY NOT SORROW

We dream of the time when God's will is

done and the gifts of creation are shared

by all. THE PRISON CELL IS NOT THE

DEATHBED OF OUR DREAMS.

(Spoken by a Filipino held in detention without trial)

Ps 146

1. Praise the Lord!

7. He upholds the cause of the oppressed

and gives food to the hungry. The Lord

sets prisoners free.

8. The Lord gives sight to the blind.

The Lord lifts up those who are bowed

down. The Lord loves the righteous.

6. Some recollections John Aitchison'

The dominant impression I retain of PACSA in the early years was one of it being a kind of rather intellectual and socially aware housechurch. It was small, its entire active membership could be seated around a table, and founder members from the Federal Theological Seminary and the University gave it a somewhat serious and intellectual air. The office was so small that it didn't exercise any great gravitational force on the organisation. 'The years 83 to 86 were ones of great transition in the life of PACSA. It is only in retrospect that one sees how dramatic the transitions were and on this tenth anniversary in 1989 one looks at the PACSA of today and wonders how on earth it grew so fast and big and in such an extraordinary shape. Four factors strike me as crucial in these transitional years: Firstly, PACSA, probably more rapidly than most organisations and working mainly on intuition, moved from being a white orientated organisation (out of respect for the dictum of seventies black consciousness wisdom that whites should work on whites) to a non racial one. Secondly, it became an organisation rather than a little group. The move to larger offices, the opening of the resource centre and the employing of more staff, and the simple growth in membership all added to this process. De facto it happened. I don't think this transition was entirely successful and I think a lot more development is called for here. Thirdly, it succeeded. As is often stated, 'nothing fails like success' and PACSA has reeled under the weight of demands placed on it by communities in need and by information seekers wanting to learn about those communities. PACSA staff and members certainly were taken in by their own propaganda and a more socially aware lot it was hard to ignore. This had the ironic effect of drawing them into direct action and welfare/crisis work that positively debilitated the previous work of conscientizing whites. But PACSA had inner strength in that its core membership knew what it stood for, had been well educated, including biblically educated, in the regular agape meetings, and had intense communal bonds - in many respects PACSA, a parachurch agency, was more like what the church should be than the church itself. Fourthly, PACSA joined the UDF soon after its formation, which would have dramatic consequences on its activities and commitments in 1986 when the state decided to roll back the mass mobilization that the UDF had effected. A big police raid in 1985 presaged the difficulties that were to come. Aggreccialion Peter Kerchhoff From its humble beginnings, and after five moves from one single room to our present offices, PACSA now has a staff of two full time and three part time workers. We have operated on a three year cycle, believing that it is essential to evaluate and reflect on strengths and weaknesses and our overall purpose and objectives. This process has been done three times and as we approach 1990, the forthcoming Congress will, we believe, create new ideas and establish some guidelines for the evaluation to be conducted during 1990. One of our first experiential workshops was on "Fear of change in South Africa" which could well be repeated now given the situation that we find ourselves in today. Another workshop examined "Prejudice" which also is topical today. We have researched and produced a number of factsheets which appear to have made a positive impact on some people. Occasionally some clergy have had to stop their distribution because of one or two complaints. We have yet to be challenged by anyone on the facts as published. . -vgw.w.nl ' ;_ ;v. t . 3 . , _ . - x - Å»-- mu... Å» u.

We have been able to publish a quarterly newsletter containing various items of interest and information for our members and subscribers.

Another area of our outreach was the study group which involved reading and reflecting on various themes. One of these was Liberation Theology. More recently we completed a four session study on "God in South Africa" by Father A Nolan.

The Agape/Fellowship gatherings have played a significant role in PACSA's life over the last ten years: some have been serious and thought provoking, while others have been relaxed and fun-filled. All have been valuable.

All these events and contributions have been possible because of the support and concern of many people. We are indebted to those who made possible the launch of PACSA and its growth over the last 10 years. Two people stand out. The first is Archbishop Dennis Hurley who in fact should be seen as a founder member of PACSA. He was involved right from the beginning when he put us in contact with Catholic sponsoring bodies and provided supporting letters. The other is Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who, while General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches, provided assistance from this Council; put us in touch with funding groups, and gave his valued support to our requests for aid. We also wish to record our appreciation to the following organisations for their valued support.

- Advieskommissie Missionaire Aktiviteiten Entraide et Fraternelle
- Australian Embassy Lutheran Church in America
- Brot fur die Welt Misereor
- Canadian Development and Peace National Council of Churches of Christ (USA)
- Catholic Archdiocese of Durban Oxfam
- Christian Aid South African Council of Churches
- Centrum voor Zending en Diakonaat Trocaire
- Church of the Province of Southern Africa

However it is not only these individuals and organisations we wish to thank, but also the many members, both here in South Africa and elsewhere, who have been with us over the years, and given their time, skills, and enthusiasm to PACSA. We wish to extend to you all our expression of sincere appreciation. ~ Without your interest, concern, contributions and prayerful support we would not be where we are today. To you all - thank you.

Creator God, we give thanks for all opportunities which have come our way to share in your striving for justice and peace here on earth; and for the love which has given us strength and joy at all times. Amen.

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PACSA Visitors

PACSA Workshop
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ANNUAL REPORT
1988 - 1989

1. INTRODUCTION

The past year, like those preceeding it, has not been an easy one for PACSA (or, for that matter,

for all those organisations and individuals striving for a society based on God's justice and

righteousness). However, PACSA was launched with the expectation that it would not be an easy path to follow.

One of the most devastating aspects of the year has been the continuation of the violence and

loss of life in the region, and the apparent failure of the peace initiatives. At this time, church

groups seeking to play a part in establishing the truth, have not been able to convince the

authorities of the need for a commission of inquiry into the whole situation.

Ongoing pressure from the state regarding funding has continued, and although the notorious

us

Promotion of Orderly Internal Politics Bill was withdrawn, now the perhaps more devious

Disclosure of Foreign Funding Act has been approved in Parliament.

A highlight for the organiser this year was the invitation from the Mennonite Central Committee

to participate in their servanthood sabbatical programme in America. Peter and Joan spent

almost seven weeks travelling, mainly in the United States, but also briefly in England.

As our first newsletter showed 10 years ago, our ministry operates in ongoing crisis situations,

and now a decade later a crisis environment still prevails.

Yet we believe that there is HOPE as we look beyond apartheid into the future.

PACSA Newsletter No.1

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2. NEW PREMISES

As a result of AFRA and PACSA's need for more office space, the property adjoining 170 Berg

Street was acquired by a Church Trust and PACSA moved into its new home in December 1988. It is sharing the accommodation with the Pietermaritzburg office (Black Sash) and

OASSSA, Pietermaritzburg branch.

After a few months of some discomfort, when alterations and additions were being carried out,

all three organisations have settled in and the house is functioning well.

3. STAFF

There have been a few changes in our small staff. At the end of 1988 Megan Walker left after a

year with PACSA. Radha Pillay left in April this year to move to Johannesburg to join her husband. To them both we owe much for their support, efforts and ideas; we miss them and wish

them well in their new work. "

Earlier this year, Tony Balcomb joined us as part time programme organiser and he will concentrate mainly on work in and with the churches. Tony brings with him a wealth of experience and theological background and his presence with us has contributed significantly to

our outreach to the churches. Yvonne Spain recently joined us, bringing administrative skills

and experience, and she too has already made an impact.

The other staff members are Monika Wittenberg (resource centre), Nonkululeko Mthlane (office Cleaner), Joan Kerchhoff (communications and part time assistant) and Peter Kerchhoff

(organiser).

Sister Monika Kauwold will join us in May and Joan Kerchhoff will then no longer assist in the

office in the afternoons.

4. THANKS

Simply expressing thanks through words in our annual report seems to be a totally inadequate

method by which to acknowledge our appreciation to so many people - members, friends, supporters - for the wonderful way in which they have held us up in prayer and action. As we

look to the future and "HOPE BEYOND APARTHEID" we pray that many more will be moved to become partners with us in our walk with others to liberation.

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5. CONTACT AND OUTREACH

Initiatives have been taken in two directions so far this year. One is focussing on the church, while the other is looking at PACSA and its role. Two workshops covered this.

5.1 Focus on the church

A closer working relationship with the church is desirable and for this reason links between

PACSA and the churches need to be improved. Eight clergy have been visited as part of an on-

going programme of contact and dialogue with the churches. They were encouraged to re-

examine perceptions within their congregations of the violence within the Pietermaritzburg situation

and how they view the church's response to it. Where appropriate they were also asked to re-

examine the work of PACSA. These interviews with the clergy have not revealed any startling new

insights into the white church's perspective on things but have rather clarified the fears and

concerns common to the middle ground and will serve as useful material for further research as

well as form the basis of an on-going relationship with the specific churches concerned.

The ministers' fraiements have also been attended and have provided opportunities to establish

contact with a wide range of clergy.

Members have also been contacted with a questionnaire probing their role in local churches and

attempting to find out what they perceive the issues are in their churches. This was done so that

any programmes that may be planned for the churches may take into account the perceived needs

of those churches.

During the year we established a churches sub-committee to increase our contact and outreach to

the local churches and efforts are being made to augment this sub-committee with new people

who can help bring about a more organic link with the churches of Pietermaritzburg. For this

reason several clergy have been approached but so far without success.

The sub-committee has been giving attention to an initiative that has been taken by church

leaders in response to the ongoing violence in the Pietermaritzburg region. This initiative led to

a meeting that included a fairly wide range of church leaders as well as representatives of

progressive organizations and a member of Parliament. Discussion was held as to what should

be done about the situation. This meeting was significant in that it indicated the facilitating role

that PACSA could play in the convening of such a wide range of people and organisations.

The sub-committee has decided to send a representative from PACSA to the ICT workshop in

June on liberating the white community.

PACSA was invited by Bishop Khoza Mgojo to participate in the Natal Church leaders'

meetings which are held primarily to see in what ways the church may respond to the ongoing

conflict that is destabilising communities in Natal and KwaZulu and has led to unfolded suffering

and death. (See graph on inside of back cover)

5.2 Contact with Church and local Church organisations

1. Church of the Province of Southern Africa's Justice and Reconciliation Committee

The Organiser, with other members, continues to serve on the Diocese of Natal's Justice and

Reconciliation committee, and through this contact has a link with the clergy of the Diocese. In

this way concerns and issues are raised with them.

displaced families and individuals during the year. .

.5. Institute for Contextual Theolo

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- Practical Theology Programmes

In November 1988 we met the senior staff of the two seminaries and the department of Theological studies to share with them our willingness to offer a service to theology students in the area on practical theology. Discussions were also held with the staff at the Lutheran Theological college in Mapumulo. As a result of these meetings two programmes in August/September are being developed for students from all three colleges and the University.

- House of Studies [or Worker Ministry

At Diakonia's hostel ministry Workshop in 1988, Dr J Cochrane (University of Natal PMB)

proposed that a House of Studies for worker ministry should be established. This idea was taken

up by Diakonia and PACSA, working with Dr J Cochrane and others, and with the support of the

Natal church leaders, a feasibility study has been launched to examine the establishment of an

ecumenical House of Studies for Worker Ministry in Pietermaritzburg.

.7. Theological Seminaries

Megan Walker lectured at the Evangelical Bible Seminary of South Africa in May and a team from PACSA did a presentation there in August. We have two seminary students from St Josephs helping in the PACSA office once a week as part of their practical theology work. We

also have good contact with the staff and students at these two seminaries and also the Federal

Theological Seminary.

We have valuable links with both the Religious Studies and Theological Studies departments at

University.

.8. Transformation Resource Centre

Tony Balcomb and Peter Kerchhoff were among the group of forty people who participated in the non-violent direct action conference set up by this resource centre. Two of the facilitators

were Walter Wink and Richard Deats from the USA.

Working for Justice produced by Transformation is available in our resource centre.

.9. Student Organisations

We have maintained our links with SUCA (Students Union for Christian Action) and YCS (Young Christian Students). We need to re-establish contact with both the Catholic and Anglican Student societies on the local campus.

.10. Schools

The organiser was invited to speak at two schools in Pietermaritzburg during the year. We also

have contact with resource centre teachers in some of the local high schools.

5.3 Links with democratic organisations

.1. Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA)

After sharing offices with AFRA for 3 years we moved into our new offices adjacent to AFRA at

the end of 1988. Through our involvement in the AFRA committee, through our close contact with their fieldworkers, and through their publications we are kept informed of the problems

affecting the rural communities.

.2. Black Sash

We have ongoing contact with the Pietennaritzburg committee, and jointly held a public meeting

at which aspects of the propaganda issue were addressed (June 1988).

.3. Detainees Aid Committee

Members of PACSA serve on this committee which provides valuable information on the position of detainees and restricted persons. There are currently sixty six people from this area who

have been restricted and at least seven people are still in detention.

.4. Five Freedom Forum

A number of PACSA members have become involved in the committee of this group which hopes to reach a wide cross-section of the general public, and present challenges through a number

of interest groups - business, medical, educational, church and political.

.5. Trade Unions

We have endeavored to keep abreast of worker issues through our links with various people involved in the trade union movements. These people have been very helpful in providing information concerning the suffering, both through exploitation and the ongoing violence, of

many families and individuals. The unions have really shown us the importance of democratic

procedures, even under the most oppressive of circumstances.

.6. The United Democratic Front

Although this organisation, along with others, was effectively banned in 1988, their spirit and

message lives on. Many people have been affected by government action but they have not been

intimidated. We salute their courage and continue to call for the withdrawal of their restrictions

orders.

6. RESOURCE CENTRE

Since PACSA's move the Resource Centre has more privacy - it is no longer a public

throughfare or waitingroom where chairs block the access to bookshelves. It is a very pleasant

area with colourful curtains, plants, posters and wall hangings.

The number of users, especially from the townships, has diminished. Some of our books have

been lost or taken during raids on the homes of students and township youth.

Students from the theological colleges and from the University come in for material on contextual theology and current affairs. Many visitors, especially from overseas, call in for

general information, including our factsheets and also reports on the conflict situation in Natal

(Pietennaritzburg in particular).

During the Christmas vacation, Gertrud Wittenberg, a Theology student, did an excellent job in

the Resource Centre in assisting with the day to day work while Monika was convalescing, and

in instituting a new card system for book loans.

The court case, in which PACSA is being charged for allegedly contravening the Publications

Act, has been postponed to mid May. The material confiscated by the police on March 25 1988

may only be returned once the court case has been finalised.

The resource centre sub-committee is providing support and advice on various matters.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

7.1 Newsletters

Newsletters were sent out quarterly in June, October, December and March. The December Newsletter was accompanied by a News and Opinion Sheet on the Trustfeed killings.

7.2 Factsheets

The following factsheets were produced and distributed:

- * Conscientious Objection
- * The Sarmcol Strike
- * Capital Punishment (updated twice)

7.3 Bookmarks

We produced a bookmark in December to mark the 40th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

8. VISITORS

There has been a significant increase in the number of visitors to PACSA during this last year.

One of the most notable perhaps was Cardinal Etchegary and the Pope's representative concerned

with justice issues. However, there were also three important groups: the first was a Presbyterian

group from the United States of America; the second a Catholic delegation from Scotland; the

third consisted of people from various countries around the world, representing Concerned Evangelicals and headed up by Revd Chris Sugden. We have also met with members of the consulates/embassies including the American, Australian, British, Canadian and German governments.

A delegation of European judges/psychologists asked for a meeting to discuss with us the situation regarding detention and imprisonment of juveniles. It appears that they were allowed to

visit many prisons and interviewed a number of juveniles in detention and prison.

A most moving experience was the visit of Mrs Joyce Mokhetsi, who was campaigning on behalf

of the Sharpeville Six. Another informative visit was that by two American Human Rights lawyers from New York/Washington.

Many other visitors. mainly church based from a wide range of countries, called in at the office

to gather information on the work we are doing and to discuss the situation in our country.

9. ACTION

9.1 PACSA Gathering! 20 - 21 May

This event which was held at Redacres retreat centre was designed to help us relax together. The

gathering included the May agape in which we watched the video "Cry of reason".

9.2 SABC Depiction of Pietermaritzburg conflict 22 June

This meeting, a joint project with Black Sash, was addressed by Ruth Tomaseili who presented

an analysis of a SABC Network programme on the violence in Pietermaritzburg.

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9.3 "The Misuse of Religion" Public Meeting and Workshop 5 - 6 August

This event consisted of a public meeting on the Friday evening which focussed on the phenomenon of right-wing Christian groupings. It was addressed by Wolfram Kistner, Jim Cochrane and Neville Richardson. The next day a smaller group met to learn more about this misuse of religion.

9.4 PACSA Workshop 11 - 12 November

This was held at Redacres and looked at PACSA's objectives and then at the methods and structures it uses to fulfil these objectives. Working groups were convened around the various activities of PACSA - e.g. theology, devotional life, relationship within the broader democratic movement and relationship with the churches.

9.5 PACSA Workshop 21 January

This workshop was a follow on from one in November and concentrated more specifically on the various structures of PACSA. This workshop began with an overview of the political situation in the nation and the various ways in which the church was perceived to be playing a role. This formed the backdrop to the more detailed analysis of the structures of PACSA. Questions asked were:

How do PACSA structures work? What is effective about the way PACSA works? What makes PACSA ineffective? What would make PACSA more effective?

In the facilitators' report on this workshop the recommendation was made that a similar one be held specifically for the purpose of concentrating on the church as an area in which the struggle for a more democratic and just order needed to take place. A programme has already been drawn up for this workshop which will take place in August.

9.6 Study group April - May
A series of four studies were arranged around 'God in South Africa'. They focussed on a theological, black, woman's and a lay perspective respectively. These studies were open to the public and were very well attended, albeit mainly by students from Fedsem, Cedara and the University of Natal. Lively debate and discussion took place at most of the studies and some contributions were made. Tapes and notes were made of all the sessions and are available to any interested people.

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9.7 Lamb Conflict Situation

As shown by the histogram (see inside back cover), the number of deaths in this region indicates that the problem is far from over. We have continued, together with the Pietermaritzburg Council of Churches, to assist where possible with some of the refugees - both individuals and families.

The lack of any positive results to date from peace initiatives, and the thwarted attempts by the churches to have a judicial enquiry instituted by the government has made it necessary for PACSA to increase its efforts to keep the churches informed on the situation.

18

July

August

September

October

November

1 989

March

April

The Agape formed part of the PACSA Gathering at Redacres.

A larger than normal agape was held on 16 June when two priests shared

Reflections on the meaning of the day. â\200\230

We had a fairly informal agape where we welcomed the Richardsons back from their time overseas and heard about their trip.

Sister Monika shared with us about the life she leads with the Little Sisters of Jesus and showed slides of some of the places where they live.

Margi Inglis led us in meditating on the theme of light. We then spent time creating visual depictions of light.

Joan and Peter Kerchhoff gave a report back on their sabbatical in the USA and shared their impressions of groups, particularly Mennonites, they had met there.

The Agape formed part of the PACSA Workshop at Redacres. In it we reflected on the theme of the suffering servant and how this relates to our role in the Church.

The topic of the agape was : Women in the Bible. Renate Cochrane gave us some interesting information on the role played by women, past and present, prejudice against women and Jesus's attitude towards women.

The Inglis family turned us all into families from the planet ASPAC, who considered the pros and cons of moving to planet earth.

The most manifest sign of wisdom is
continued cheerfulness - Michael

Montaigne, French essayist (1533-1592).

LOOKING BACK: The funny side.

PACSA has a â\200\230Glum Comerâ\200\231 where we put up cartoons of a religious and political nature. We

use the word â\200\230glumâ\200\231 because we were once described in this way by the interrogators of a young

detainee. They asked him why his parents had contact with those â\200\230glumâ\200\231 PACSA people!

Some â\200\230glumâ\200\231 happenings.

A youth comes to see Mr â\200\230Ketchupâ\200\231.

A letter arrives, addressed to the â\200\230PMB Agency for Christian Societyâ\200\231.

A phone technician gives a call to his office, announcing â\200\230I am with the Christiansâ\200\231 (at a time

when some people think we are supporting communists!)

Hoaxes over the years

Bricks and cement, enough to build a cathedral were to be delivered to the Kerchhoffsâ\200\231 house.

Offloading was prevented and the only people who suffered damages were the firms who had

taken the order. 300 copies of a "One World" magazine were delivered ,

to little PACSA at a cost of R800. They had been ordered, but not by PACSA. The organization

concerned kindly took them back.

On 16th June 1986, while Peter was in detention, Joan received a phonecall from a "police officer" informing her that Peter was admitted to the ICU with a heart attack. One wonders who

likes this type of â\200\230humourâ\200\231.

Letters with PACSA letterhead and Peterâ\200\231s signature were delivered to donors to try and

discredit Peter. It quoted him as agreeing with Albert Schweitzer that Blacks were inferior to

Whites. A lot of work and time and research must have gone into fabricating that letter! More recently phone calls in the dead of night called the Kerchhoffs and Wittenbergs out of their

beds. The caller? A howling wolf!

So what's next?

I think you will find in years to come that many at

your tollown will agree with me â\200\224 we must keep

polltles out of religion.

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DEATHS : 1987 - Mar. 1989
Pietermaritzburg and Natal Midlands
162
May Jul Sep Nov Jan Mar
Source: Centre for Adult Education