

Press Statement

issued by the General Council of the Bar

of South Africa on 24 July 1993

The 48th Annual General Meeting of the General Council of the Bar (GCB) was held in Pretoria on Friday, 23 July 1993.

The GCB welcomes the appointment of the Milne Commission which will address the long outstanding question regarding the attorneys' right of appearance in the Supreme Court. The GCB believes that it is important to resolve this question so that the legal profession can give its attention to the other important challenges which lie ahead in a changing South Africa.

The GCB and its members recognise the urgent need to address historical imbalances in its own ranks and throughout the legal profession. Whilst there have been important changes in the Bar's composition in recent years, there is a need to encourage more people from historically disadvantaged communities to pursue careers as advocates.

To this end and in addition to existing local funds, the GCB is to establish a national bursary fund to assist pupil advocates during their training at Bars throughout South Africa. The national bursary fund is a further recognition of the fact that advocates have public duties to perform in the community.

In the past year advocates have freely given of their time and effort to assist litigants who cannot afford legal services. Nearly 5000 days were spent in court providing *pro Deo* defence in criminal matters in the Supreme Court alone. All accused in criminal matters in the Supreme Court were in this way provided with legal representation. The GCB, however, noted with concern that little progress has been made with the provision of legal representation to accused standing trial in the magistrates' courts.

A large number of advocates sat

as commissioners in the Small Claims Court for long hours without any remuneration, while others participated in the work of the Goldstone Commission. This type of public service too often goes unnoticed.

In that spirit of public service, the GCB offers its and those of its members to assist in addressing the important question of the structure of the courts in a democratic South Africa.

At the end of the meeting the GCB congratulated its outgoing Chairman, Brian Southwood SC from Pretoria who has been appointed as judge from 1 August 1993.

Wim Trengove SC, Chairman of the Johannesburg Bar, has been elected as the new Chairman of the GCB for 1993/1994, with Malcolm Wallis SC, the Chairman of the Natal Bar, as Vice-Chairman. ■

Wie is regtens my pa?

My natuurlike pa natuurlik
Of ma se man
Of ma se tweede man
Of ma se vriend as ma se man
nie my pa is nie
Of ma se vriend wat vir my
onderhoud betaal
Of as ma meer as een vriend
gehad het, die een wat sy as
my pa gekies het
Of my aangename pa, in welke
geval ek dalk ook twee ma's
het
Of sommer maar net die ou op
wie die bewyslas gerus het
en nie 'n goeie advokaat
gehad het nie
Soms kan dit wees dat ek glad
nie 'n pa het as ma nie wou
kla nie

CM van Niekerk
Pretoria-Balie

