

**NUMSA WESTERN CAPE GENDER  
WORKSHOP**

**13-15 NOVEMBER 1998**

**CAPE MANOR HOTEL, SEA POINT**

# **PROGRAMME**

**Friday 13 November 1998**

**Arrival & Booking** **20H00-20H30**

**Opening & Welcome** **20H30-21H00**

**Aims**

**Content & Structure of Workshop**

**Braai** **21H00 –22H00**

**FELICITY & GWEN**

**Saturday 14 November 1998**

**Breakfast** **07H00 – 8H00**

**Communications Skills** **08H30 – 10H00**

**Sarah [TULEC]**

**Minute taking  
Chairing meetings**

**Tea break** **10H00 – 10H30**

Communications Skills continue 10H30 – 13H00

Lunch 13H00 – 14H00

Reports 14H00 – 14H30

Workers College Womens School  
Uganda Trip

**Vanessa, Estelle & Merle**

Commissions 14H00 – 16H00

National Gender Schools

**VANESSA  
MERLE  
SANDRA  
FELICITY**

Regional Gender Program

National Program  
Co-ordination  
Collective Bargaining issues  
Trips

Commission Report back 16H00 – 16H30

**Sunday, 15 November 98**

Commission report Back continue 09H00 – 10H00

Tea 10H00 – 10H30

Summary on the way forward 10H30 – 13H00

Lunch & Departure 13H00 – 14h00

**THE GENDER OFFICE BEARERS  
WISH YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES  
A HAPPY AND SAFE HOLIDAYS**

## **choosing words**

The words you learn first — the words of everyday speech — are the clearest. Jargon, technical words, and abbreviations, are useful only to people who know them. They usually put other people off.

To write clearly, use short words which everybody understands. Where you can, use words that are:

- active — (do, help, talk, start) not academic or legalistic (undertake, facilitate, dialogue, commence)
- concrete (heat, noise) rather than abstract (working conditions)
- honest (cuts, job losses) not evasive (savings, redundancies).

If jargon, or initials, are essential then explain what they mean.

## **being logical**

When you are planning to write something you should think about the logical order for each section. People will find it easier to read if the links between the different parts are clear. For example, don't pick out solutions until you've outlined the problems. And if you do use an example, make sure it supports your case and not someone else's!

## **headings**

Use headings to help people understand what you are writing — even if it's only one or two pages long.

Be brief. One word will often be enough.

## **starting and finishing**

Most people don't read everything they look at. If you've got a strong start which gets their attention, and an ending which makes it clear what has to be done, then you'll have more effect.

## **being sensitive**

Trade unions are committed to working for equality. That means what you write for the union should be sensitive to the needs of all members. Think about how issues or problems will affect different people. If you are not sure, ask them.

You can avoid sexist messages by referring to people by what they do (shop stewards, home help, readers). You can also use neutral words (they, us, them, their) to avoid the "he" used so often in official writing.

You can use this method to avoid racist language. If you do describe a person's ethnic origin then it should be accurate and relevant. Avoid describing other people in ways that shows disrespect, or, worse, could strengthen prejudices.



## Why is Communication Important?

We need to let our members know what is going on in our organisation. It would take a long time to talk to all our members so it is **quicker** to write to them.

Writing helps us to **communicate**.

- It helps members to find out what is going on and who is doing what.
- It helps us to find out about new ideas and what people are thinking.
- It helps members to take part in the activities of our organisation, by telling them what they can do.
- It gives us the information we need to be able to make decisions together.

Often we have a lot of reading to do. We should all read things like

- the constitution
- minutes of meetings
- reports
- statements
- circulars

They give us important information. But most members don't read them because there is too much to read, or it is too difficult, or it looks boring.

If something is so difficult that only a few people can read it, then it is not useful communication.

Good communication must be easy to read for everyone. To make sure that everyone reads an important thing, we need to make sure that it is **READ-ABLE**

It must look **easy** and interesting so that people will want to read it. It must be **easy** and **interesting** so that people **can** read it. There **mustn't** be **too much** to read, so that people **do** read it.

**GOOD COMMUNICATION  
MUST BE**

- INTERESTING**
- SIMPLE**
- NOT TOO MUCH**

## How Can We Make Sure We Have Useful Communication

When we write, we want to make sure that people will **want** to read what we write, and that they will **enjoy** reading it. We must make sure we write for our readers. This means that we must **think** about **what** we are going to write and **who** it is for. Then we must **plan** it.

### **Before writing**

Before we write anything, we must always answer these questions very carefully.

#### **WHO ARE WE WRITING FOR?**

What do they know?  
What will they understand?  
What are they interested in?  
What language must I use?

#### **WHAT DO WE WANT TO TELL THEM?**

What is our message?

#### **WHY DO WE WANT TO TELL THEM THIS?**

Do we want to give INFORMATION?  
Do we want to CHANGE THEIR IDEAS?  
Do we want them to ACT i.e. to DO something?

#### **HOW CAN WE TELL THEM?**

Should we write a letter? A pamphlet? A report? A book?

## Planning

We need to **plan** what we want to write.

1. Write down all the things you want to say.
2. Go through the list and decide what is important and what you can leave out.
3. Arrange your list: decide what should come first and what should come last.
4. Write a first draft. (A draft is something you write in rough form so that you can get an idea of what it will look like.)
5. Ask a few people to read it and give comments and criticism.
6. Write it again.
7. Ask people for more comments.
8. Then rewrite ..... until you are sure it is as good as you can make it!

### PLANNING COMMUNICATION

**WHO ARE WE WRITING FOR?**

**WHAT DO WE WANT TO TELL THEM?**

**WHY DO WE WANT TO TELL THEM  
THIS?**

**HOW DO WE TELL THEM?**

## Writing

### Be BRIEF

- Use SHORT WORDS
- Use SHORT SENTENCES
- Use SHORT PARAGRAPHS
- DON'T REPEAT yourself

### Be DIRECT

- Get straight to THE POINT
- Say WHAT YOU MEAN

### Be SIMPLE

- Use familiar words that everyone will understand
- Use ONE WORD, rather than a sentence.

for example:

Don't Use These Words	Use These Instead
initiate	start
terminate	end
ultimate	last
utilise	use
formulate	make
following	after
prior to	before
furthermore	and

Answer the questions on the next page

### Guidelines for Writing Clearly

## **tone**

### **Is it friendly or unfriendly?**

Unfriendly writing is like being talked at. You feel like you are being given a lecture. It's easy to end up writing in an unfriendly way — many people have been given the idea that that is how you should write.

A friendly tone in your writing will interest and involve your readers. A pompous tone will put people off.

The best way to make sure your writing is friendly is to keep asking yourself "how would I say that in a conversation?". Think about the issue from the reader's point of view. Imagine you are the reader, what would you think?

Look through the examples of good and bad writing. Use a pink highlighter to mark any "friendly" parts and a blue highlighter to mark any "unfriendly" parts. Are there any obvious differences between the examples?

## **active writing**

Imagine sitting in the canteen at lunchtime and someone says to you "It is requested that the salt is passed at a convenient time".

This is an extreme example of passive writing. Like unfriendly writing, it puts people off, as it's quite unlike the way you talk.

An active way of writing is the opposite. An active sentence is usually like this:

Somebody . . . doing something to or with . . . people (or things)

Look through your examples of writing. Find examples of active and passive sentences. Which are easier to read and understand?

## **wasted words**

It's easy to write words or phrases just by habit rather than because they're needed.

Try to avoid:

"at this point in time" — now

"be in a position to" — we can

"in accordance with" — with

"in connection with" — about.

You will find many other examples of words and phrases that just act as "filler" to pad out a document.

## **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

### **WRITING CLEARLY.**

#### **AIM OF ACTIVITY:**

To learn to present information clearly.

#### **TASK:**

Rewrite the paragraph below.

*These large conferences involving international participation are uniquely able to motivate individuals or groups. They also provide personal inter-action that is difficult or impossible to do by telephone or fax. Nomsa Ndabeni, executive director of the sponsoring TNC put it well recently: "Because they are wonderful energising opportunities, they release synergies, they result in developing dialogue and they can legitimately give value added to the processes of development that so many of us are concerned with if they result in programmes of action which can facilitate endeavours towards projects of finance, investment and change".*

#### **GUIDELINES:**

- Use simpler words.
- Avoid long sentences.
- Avoid jargon, or explain it.

## **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

### ***WRITING REPORTS:***

#### **AIM OF ACTIVITY:**

To develop the skills involved in writing concise, clear reports.

#### **TASK:**

Write a report of approximately 500 words (half - one page) on your gender committee's meeting which recommend a quota system for women representatives to your REC and NEC.

#### **GUIDELINES:**

Be concise

Be clear

Use simple words and phrases

Avoid long sentences and paragraphs

Avoid jargon

Use headings, numbers and bullet points when appropriate.

*Salma*

12/01/94 : VERBAL COMMUNICATION

TUIREG Research and Communications Course, 1994

Handout on the Role of the Chairperson

For a position which is vital to the efficient running of Trade Union meetings, the role of Chairperson is too often little understood and its difficulties underrated. The most important objective of a meeting is to get through the agenda and make decisions in a fair and democratic manner. The main role of the Chairperson is to ensure this objective is achieved. In doing so, the Chairperson also has to follow any standing orders which exist.

The following guidelines should be observed by people chairing meetings:

1. Any standing orders for the meeting should be observed.
2. The agreed agenda should be followed, as far as possible.
3. Everyone should have an equal opportunity to contribute to debates.
4. Only one person to speak at a time.
5. Contributions should be 'through the chair'.
6. Each speaker should be allowed to speak without interruption.
7. Any decisions taken should be absolutely clear.
8. The Chairperson must never abuse the position by dominating the meeting, manipulating the agenda or debates, or by bullying people.

What everyone should understand is that it is not the sole responsibility of the Chairperson to ensure the meeting runs properly. Everyone has the responsibility of acting in a responsible manner and to help the Chairperson get through the agenda. Failure to act in this way will not only prevent the meeting from achieving its objectives and make the Chairperson's role almost impossible but also betray the principles on which Trade Unionism is founded.

## **CHAIRING A MEETING**

### **AIM OF ACTIVITY:**

To help participants understand the role of the chairperson, and become more familiar with the terms and rules of meetings.

### **TASKS:**

Discuss the following situations and try to agree on what the Chair should do in each case.

*The following proposal has been formally proposed and seconded at a union meeting: "This union recognises the need for international workers' solidarity and the need for trade unions to co-operate internationally. It is therefore proposed that this union affiliates to the IMF as soon as possible".*

### **GUIDELINES:**

Use your handout on terms used in a meeting.

**Group one:**

*The Chair asks the proposer of the motion to introduce and explain it to the meeting. As the proposer begins to do so, someone in the meeting shouts “point of order”. When asked by the Chair what the point of order is, the member says that none of the members are interested in international solidarity, so the meeting should move on to some other item and stop wasting time.*

What should the Chair do about this point of order?

**Group two:**

*An amendment to the motion is proposed and seconded. The amendment is to replace the second sentence of the motion with a new sentence. The amended motion will then be:*

*"This union recognises the need for international workers' solidarity and the need for trade unions to co-operate internationally. It is therefore proposed that this union finds the money to finance a study visit to Europe by the leadership.*

Is this an acceptable amendment? What ruling should the chair make?

**Group three:**

*During the debate on the motion, many members complain that it is difficult to know how to vote because they know little about the IMF, its structures and activities. One member asks if it would be in order to leave the motion until the next meeting and to ask the IMF for the information in the meantime.*

What should the Chair do about this suggestion?

*Answers*

**Summary Sheet - Activity      The Role of the Chairperson**

1. This is not a correct point of order as nothing is happening which is against the standing orders. The Chairperson should refuse the 'point of order' and ask the proposer to continue speaking. The member raising the 'point of order' can always vote against the motion as a form of protest against the motion being debated.
2. Clearly this 'amendment' completely distorts the intention of the motion as it removes any reference to the affiliation the proposers wish to promote. The Chairperson should rule the amendment as out of order and refuse to accept it for debate.
3. Taking decisions on topics which many people present do not fully understand should be avoided if at all possible. In this case, the Chairperson should ask if the proposer and seconder will agree with the members' request and, if so, then ask for the agreement of the meeting to that course of action. If the majority do not fully understand the issue, they will welcome the suggestion to postpone a decision until more information is received. Decisions on such matters are usually influenced by what people believe are the motives behind the suggestion. If the motives are genuine and constructive, agreement is usually reached.
4. In this case, people are shouting and interrupting the person nominated by the Chairperson to speak. This is not acceptable and the member raising the point of order is correct. The standing orders or rules of all Union meetings include the instruction that only one person should speak at a time and that speaker is given permission to do so by the Chairperson. In other words, is speaking "through the Chair". The Chairperson should accept the point of order, thank the member for raising it, remind the meeting that everyone has the right to speak unhindered and then ask the speaker to continue.
5. A quorum is the minimum or lowest number of people required for a meeting to proceed under the standing orders. There is no one figure for a quorum as different groups have different standing orders. In this case, if the standing orders state that the number of people required for a quorum is ten, the Chairperson will have no option but to close the meeting. Before doing so, an attempt should be made to persuade some of those who left the meeting to return.
6. A casting vote is used by the Chairperson to make a decision on a vote which is tied with an equal number of votes for and against. The Chairperson only has the right to a casting vote if that right is clearly stated in the standing orders.



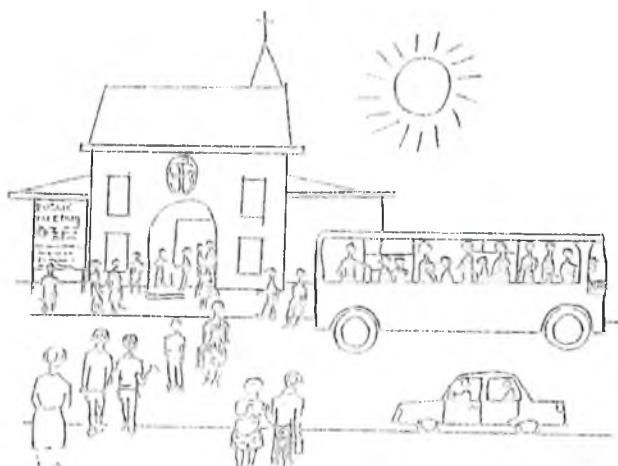
Your group or organisation has decided to have a public meeting. This pamphlet will help you to plan the meeting.

We are assuming that you know WHY you are having the meeting - that you have discussed strategy and you know what you hope to achieve.

Here are some questions you should have asked yourselves:

- 1 What are our overall aims?
- 2 What are our goals in this campaign?
- 3 How can we achieve these goals?
- 4 Is having a public meeting the best way to achieve these goals?
- 5 Who are we trying to reach by having a public meeting - what kind of people?
- 6 What do we want to say to them - what is our message?

Once you've done this strategising, you're left with the practical planning - that's what the rest of this pamphlet is about.



# PREPARATIONS

## DATE AND TIME

The Date and Time of the meeting will depend on how soon you want to have the meeting and on who you want to come to the meeting. Try to leave yourselves at least three weeks in which to plan your meeting. (If there is a lot of urgency you can plan a meeting in much less time.)

Decide on the DAY of the meeting.

Do you want it  
during the week?  
over a weekend?

Decide on the TIME of the meeting

Do you want it  
at lunchtime? (e.g. 1.00 to  
2.00 p.m.)  
after work? (e.g. 5.00 p.m.)  
in the morning? (e.g. 10.00 a.m.)  
at night? (e.g. 8.00 p.m.)

Think about who you want at the meeting and what time of day they can come to meetings.

Decide HOW LONG the meeting should be.

Think about  
THE TIME OF DAY - e.g. a lunch  
time or evening meeting can't be too  
long or people will have to leave.

THE AUDIENCE - how long will the people you are trying to reach be prepared to sit and listen?

## THE VENUE

The Venue should be booked two or three weeks before the meeting otherwise there may not be a hall available at the time you want.

Some places where you can find venues are:

Churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, recreation centres, civic or community centres, schools, universities, colleges.

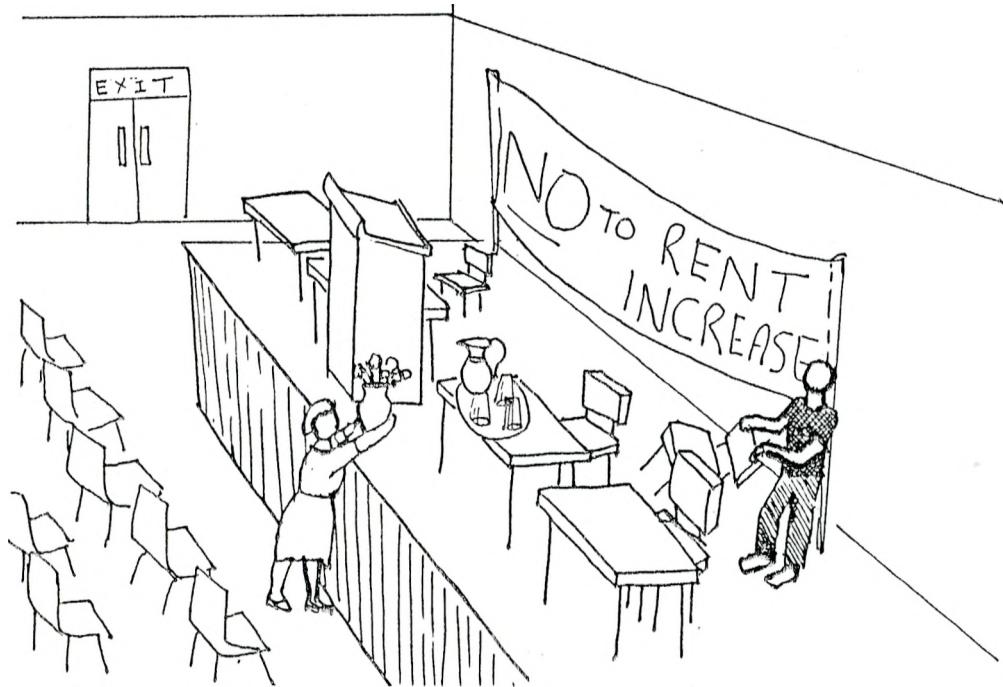
If you are having a weekend meeting, the venue should be near people's homes. A weekday venue could be near people's work. Think about transport and whether people will be able to get to your meeting, and to get home afterwards.

When you book the venue ask these questions

- What will it cost?
- Are we expected to clean up?
- Is there a public address (PA) system (i.e. a microphone and loudspeakers)? Does it cost extra to use it? How much?
- Are there Lecterns, chairs and a table on the stage?
- How many people can sit in the hall?
- Can you put up posters and banners?

Arrange to go to the hall a week before the meeting and check out the PA system and the stage. If necessary you'll have time to hire a PA system, or borrow a lectern or anything else you need.

Try to have water in a jug and glasses for the speakers. When you think about decorating the hall, think about using flowers, as well as banners and posters.



## REFRESHMENTS

It's nice to have refreshments at some point because it allows people to relax and chat a bit. You could have cheese and wine, or tea and biscuits.

Refreshments can be served at different times:

- before the meeting as people are drifting in;
- halfway through the meeting e.g. as a break between speeches and question time (but this may break up the meeting and people might go home and not stay for question time); or
- at the end.

Decide whether you want to charge for refreshments and how much.

## THE SPEAKERS

The speakers and chairperson must be people that your audience will respect and listen to. The number of speakers you have depends on how long the meeting is, and how long you want each speech to be.

You need to decide on the order of speakers and whether you want to have time for things like messages of support, or questions from the floor.

## CHOOSE THE SPEAKERS

Think about

- What are you trying to say to the audience?
- Who will appeal to the audience?
- Should the speakers represent a group or organisation?
- Who speaks clearly and interestingly?
- Who keeps to time limits?

## CHOOSE THE CHAIRPERSON

The chairperson usually represents the organisation or group that is holding the meeting.

The chairperson's job is to:

- welcome the audience and start the meeting;
- introduce the speakers;
- make announcements;
- deal with any problems (e.g. speaker who speaks for too long, hecklers); and
- close the meeting.

## BRIEF YOUR SPEAKERS

Briefing the speakers means telling them exactly what you want them to do. Once you've invited your speakers and confirmed that they will come and talk at your meeting, you must brief them.

The briefing should be done IN WRITING AND BY TALKING to the speakers.

Tell them:

- the theme of the meeting;
- who else is talking and who the chair person is;
- what you are asking each person to talk about;
- exactly how long you are asking each speaker to talk for (e.g. 5 minutes or 20 minutes). (Remember if you have three speakers you can decide to ask one of them to talk for 30 minutes and the other two to talk for 10 minutes); and
- if there will be question time.

If you can, try and get the speakers and the chairperson together for a briefing meeting - if possible a week or two before the meeting. They can discuss their speeches and make sure they talk about different things.

Ask all your speakers to come to the hall at least 15 minutes early. Make sure they have all been introduced to each other.

Offer to arrange to fetch speakers who don't have transport. If you are asking people to come from another place, you should pay for the air ticket.

## BRIEF YOUR CHAIRPERSON

You must work out a detailed agenda for the meeting. You need to brief your chairperson in WRITING AND BY TALKING to him/her.

You must tell the chairperson:

- The order of speakers and what they are talking about;
- How to introduce the speakers - what must be said about each one:
  - e.g. Do you want Dr Boesak to be introduced as;
    - a church minister?
    - the President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches?
    - the Chaplain of the University of the Western Cape?
    - A patron of the UDF?
  - what messages of support (if any) must be read and who will read them;
  - how you want the question time, tea-break, etc., to be arranged.

## ADVERTISING

Public meetings need to be well advertised. You must think of methods of advertising that will attract the kind of audience you want.

Here are some ideas.

## USE MAILING LISTS

Some organisations will let you send notices to everyone on their mailing lists. You can also send a notice of the meeting to everyone on your own mailing list. Plan your mailing to arrive two weeks before the public meeting.

The notice can be in the form of a letter or a pamphlet.

## POSTERS

Put up advertising posters two weeks before the meeting and again three or four days before.

The poster should be easy to read and must state clearly:

- the type of meeting;
- the speakers;
- the date, time and place of the meeting.

## PAMPHLETS

Advertising pamphlets can be used in different ways:

- on car windshields;
- in postboxes or gateposts;
- handed out on street corners, stations, etc.; or
- distributed at churches, synagogues, mosques.

Advertising pamphlets need to have the same information as the posters, but you can add some content to give people a clearer idea of what the meeting is about.

Pamphlets should be distributed in the last week. You could hand them out one week before the meeting and again two or three days before the meeting.

## THE NEWSPAPERS

If you can afford it, put an advertisement in your local newspaper.

If you can't pay, you can still try to get a notice of your meeting placed in the 'community notice' section of your paper. Newspaper adverts or notices should go in three or four days before the meeting.

If you want the newspapers and other media (radio and TV) to cover your public meeting, you must invite them to come to the meeting. Send invitations to South African and foreign journalists at least a week in advance. You also need to give them a name and phone number to phone for more information.

# THE MEETING

## FINAL PREPARATIONS

- Open the hall at least an hour early, set out the chairs and put up your posters and banners. If you intend giving out or selling publications then set up tables near the door.
- Test the public address system. (This is a final test - you must check it out a week or two before the meeting.)
- Set out the chairs and tables, the lectern and water jug for the speakers.
- You should already have arranged for someone to meet the speakers and chairperson a bit early. Go through a final briefing and give each speaker and the chairperson a written agenda.
- Make sure there are places for journalists and photographers. Your publicity secretary/press officer should be available to greet journalists, answer questions and help to set up interviews with the speakers. If possible have printed copies of all the speeches to give to the journalists.
- Brief your ushers or marshalls. Members of your organisation can act as ushers or marshalls. They show people to seats at the front, hand out pamphlets, look out for possible hecklers and note where they sit, answer questions and act in a helpful way.



## THE MEETING

- \* The Chairperson opens the meeting by . welcoming everyone;
  - briefly explaining the purpose of the meeting;
  - introducing all the speakers by name and organisation.
    - e.g. "The speakers tonight will be Mrs Sheena Duncan of the Black Sash, and Mr Murphy Morobe of the UDF."

Before each speech, the chairperson re-introduces the person who will speak and says something about why that person was asked to speak or in some other way explains the context of the speech

e.g. "Our organisation has recently become involved in helping a community threatened with removal. The Black Sash has helped many communities facing this problem and so we have invited Mrs Duncan, president of the Black Sash, to share her knowledge with us."

- \* If there are announcements or messages of support to read, the chairperson can read them (or ask someone else to read them) between or after the speeches. A patron of your organisation could read messages of support.
- \* The chairperson can ask a very long-winded speaker to finish speaking. Some speakers talk for a very long time even if they've been asked to talk for 10 or 15 minutes. The chairperson needs to find a polite way of hurrying them up, or people will get bored and irritated.
- \* The chairperson closes the meeting by thanking the speakers and the audience.

## AFTER THE MEETING

- \* Some people may want to stay behind and ask questions - be friendly and chat to them - they may want to join your organisation.
- \* Clean up the hall, remove the posters and banners and pick up all the rubbish.
- \* Evaluate the meeting:
  - Was it a success?
  - How many people came?
  - Did you achieve your aims?
  - What problems were there?
  - What have you learnt?

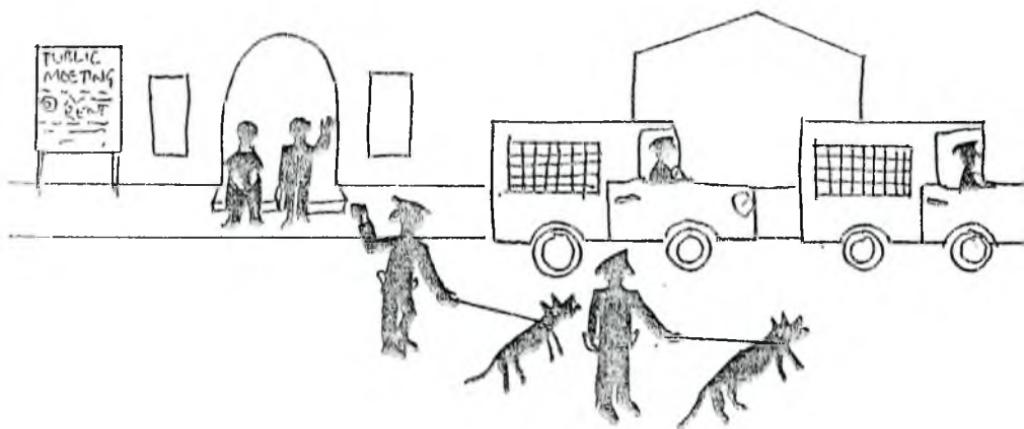
# DEALING WITH PROBLEMS

## HECKLERS

The best way to deal with hecklers is to ignore them. If possible the speaker should deal with the hecklers e.g. by saying something funny. Marshalls can also ask a very noisy or disruptive heckler to be quiet and, if necessary, to leave the hall. But the less you do about hecklers the better, unless they are really disruptive.

## THE POLICE

If the police arrive and threaten to disperse the meeting, ask a few trusted leaders to negotiate with the senior police officer. Lawyers and clergymen are usually prepared to help talk to police officers.



## SUGGESTED TIME SCALE

3 WEEKS OR MORE BEFORE THE MEETING.

- Decide on the time and date.
- Invite the speakers.
- Book the venue.

2 to 3 WEEKS BEFORE THE MEETING.

- Print the advertising poster.
- Print and mail the invitations.

10 to 14 DAYS BEFORE THE MEETING.

- Put up the advertising poster.
- Confirm the speakers and give them a thorough briefing.
- Design and print the advertising pamphlet.

5 to 10 DAYS BEFORE THE MEETING.

- Check hall and if necessary arrange to hire or borrow equipment.
- Check that you have:
  - a public address system;
  - chairs and tables for the stage;
  - a lectern;
  - chairs for the audience;
  - tables for selling refreshments and publications.
- If possible get the speakers and chairperson together to discuss their speeches.
- Put up the advertising poster again.
- Hand out pamphlets.

2 to 5 DAYS BEFORE THE MEETING.

- Hand out pamphlets again
- Put a notice or advertisement in the newspaper
- Produce posters, pamphlets and banners for the meeting.
- Get marshalls together and discuss how they will handle the meeting.
- Get volunteers to sell/give out publications and refreshments.

THE DAY OF THE MEETING

- Fetch the speakers.
- Open the hall, set out the chairs, tables, etc.
- Test the public address system.
- Put up banners and posters.
- Set out publications for distribution or sale.
- Set out refreshment tables.

