

Minutes of SAPC Conference 2007

**MINUTES - SAPC Conference**

8 September 2007

Venue: Theosophical Society in Melville, Jhb.

Chairperson: Luke Martin

Gen Secretary: Enmarie Potgieter

Minutes: Morgause with amendments by delegates

**Luke Martin:** Brief introduction, greetings. "This is a conference of Witches for Witches".

Apologies for Fey Fand of the Celestine Circle, and Gert Viljoen of the PFSA.

Handed over to Donna Vos for Opening Speech.

Opening and Welcome

**Donna Vos:** Told delegates that she had come full circle. A decade ago she had started the whole Pagan Movement with Angela and Mayrek at the Theosophical Society, in the very same room. She told some anecdotes about her personal life and that all the stories about her where true i.e. sleeping with everyone etc – it was said in a spirit of jest, touching on the points that both she and Pan were a couple and both manic depressive, had hoped to start a family this year, but that the Goddess had renewed her contract again and that this new challenge was what the Goddess has in plan for her instead. She mentioned that freedom must be challenged if it is to be called freedom, and the time has come to challenge our right to religious freedom. This is the first time that leaders from all over the country are sitting around the proverbial round table; enemies have come together and put aside their personal issues for the good of a higher cause. She exhorted everyone to leave their issues (weapons) at the door, warning that tempers and emotions would tend to run high during the course of the day but that everybody should remember the goal of the conference. She mentioned that the delegates were not there to elect the president of Pagandom. The clear task was stated on the agenda. She took us along some of the milestones of her career as a Pagan Leader, the struggle for reclaiming the word "Pagan" which is no longer viewed as satanical. She exhorted delegates to formulate the critical points, to come across as an intelligent united front. "Today is for finding common ground, look for the long term solutions as well as the way forward. This is a non-combative, co-operative conference."

Thanks to Damon Leff for amount of legal work regarding the Draft Bill and the 1957 Act. It was mentioned that Mr. Leff had commenced working on the matter since June 2007. Thanked Enmarie for communication with the THO. Thanked Luke Martin for meeting with legislature, for motivating and collating all the documentation and for presenting it to Legislature as well as the meeting with the THO on August 2007. Final thanks were given to the SAPC and SAPRA for opening debates.

Mpumalanga Witchcraft Suppression Bill 2007

**Luke Martin:** (Chairperson): thanked Mr. Leff and SAPRA for tremendous input and for drafting the official objections. Most Groups have used SAPRA's documentation to date. He thanked Enmarie Potgieter for her invaluable communication with the THO and further thanked all participants of the written petition. A brief précis of what has been achieved to date was given by Mr. Martin. On Friday 7 September Mpumalanga Legislature assured Mr. Martin that the Bill is frozen (nothing in writing) until further notice. They will call for 5 Pagan Representatives and for 5 THO Representatives to advised Advocate Bongo and his team as I&AP's to discuss Draft Proposal. Legislature needs to understand our stance. Department request no further media announcements, felt Pagan presence.

**Mr. Adrian Williams** of the Coven of the Silver Sickle asked for verbal reassurance of the above.

**Luke Martin:** Kunene and Advocate Thomas Bongo all assured Luke Martin that the Bill is frozen on Friday 7 September. They wish to understand our stance. They have however requested that we stay out of the media. We have embarrassed them. They stated that the Draft had been handed to us in confidence and that we leaked it to the Press. Mr. Martin assured all present that this had not been the case, but the fact was made public by the MEC, Candice Mashego, in her 2007 Budget Speech. Advocate Bongo and his Team has been tasked by Government to come up with "something" to legislate in order to protect the innocent people being killed under the term "Butsakatsi" They will go ahead. We can participate or we may lodge a formal complaint of infringement of our religious rights at a later stage.

**Damon Leff:** He has the assurance of the Minister to intervene with MP Legislature to not draft the WSB.

Mr. Leff suggested we prevent them from publishing anything. We must be participants in any redraft Bill.

#### GENERAL CONSENSUS REACHED

**Luke Martin:** called for ideas to assist Legislature in their task. He mentioned that Pagans are also averse to the heinous crimes, murders and mutilations which are committed under the guise of Witchcraft:

**Sarah Dudley:** Mentioned that semantics was a stumbling block to all. She works with SiSwati people and as she understood has nothing to do with Witchcraft or the Word Witch as we as Pagans see it. The Bill should not suppress or regulate Witches but rather the Umthakathi.

**Damon Leff:** Umthakathi means witch. Drew line between African and European Witches as well as the parallel in the persecution both have suffered in the past. He would NOT criminalize any group.

**Ian Coven of the Two Moons -** We are missing the point. We are talking about those who are accused and who are innocent. The Act protects.

**Jenny:** Changing the Law does not change the perceptions. Legislation should look at actions.

**Dale Wallace:** Witchcraft is not one thing. There are many words to define practices. Witchcraft was half imposed by missionaries and colonialists. Witchcraft is understood by (Africans) as balance in the community, not all evil. Witchcraft does not always end in persecution and killing. Witchcraft is an important way that Africans speak about their reality. Not necessarily a bad thing. Legislation has failed right through Africa. Courts operate on evidence. Difficult to prove in a court of law. It has fuelled violence. Cannot legislate against metaphysical beliefs, it's destabilizing. Most are politically motivated persecutions.

**Adrian Williams:** Vast majority think of violence when they hear the word Witch. That is the reality. Their perception is their reality. Be realistic ... Witch is a Black thing, emotional, upsetting, loaded term, that's reality.

**Mynie Geldenhuys:** Haven't we been living under the same perception for 200 years and more. We must stop being victims. Their reality is not necessarily ours.

**Ken Burke:** Are we proposing we legalize Witchcraft?

**Luke Martin:** We have the opportunity to lead Government. People are being killed, Govt needs to be seen to do something about these Witch killings. Bearing in mind belief cannot be proven in a court of law.

**Damon Leff:** The Constitution protects, therefore Witchcraft is already legal.

**Ken Burke:** It hasn't been tested yet. What about the 1957 Act? It is still in vigour.

**Damon Leff:** The 1957 Act is unconstitutional as it criminalizes persons based on belief.

**Tanya Davis:** It should be noted to government that we have other laws which govern murder, assault, etc. The Law already does what Bill proposes. Punish the crime not suppress the culture.

**Gustavo Pinto:** The Act does not protect from Witches, protects from accusations. Stop witch finding. Put to Department that accusation of witches should be regulated.

**Damon:** There are already Laws against slander, defamation, harassment, assault and murder.

**Luke Martin:** Spoke to Mr. Rudolph Jansen of Lawyers for Human Rights who said Government will go ahead with a Bill regardless of existing Laws because it is a specific crime. So many people have been harmed that the government has to be seen doing something to stop this specific crime. Too many people being harmed. The best we can do is participate

**David (the Grove) –** Did Jansen indicate protection of practitioners or victims? How should or can we protect those targeted?

**Luke Martin:** Mr. Jansen was unfamiliar with the Bill. I introduced him to it of recent, but he feels the government will go ahead and legislate. According to him they can get away with an anti-constitutional motion because it is such a specific and dangerous problem. It is their duty to find some sort of solution for it.

**Samantha Perry –** Makes job of redrafting easy. Reverse existing Laws. Metaphysical things cannot be regulated.

**Damon Leff:** SAPRA disagrees with Jenkins. Unconstitutional. Existing legislation has done nothing to stop false accusations and murders.

**Luke Martin:** As it stands the Draft will not go through Parliament as per Mr. Jenkins. We must pre-empt this process.

**Gustavo Pinto:** The persecutions and killings have been of blacks not whites. Laws in place to protect, government doesn't give a shit.

**Luke Martin:** Language Sir!

**Jenny:** Law does not protect people from other people's perceptions.

**Adrian Williams:** All laws are like this. This Law is not aimed at us. Constitutional rights (include) the right to life free of violence. As a Witch there's a strong chance of being killed or assaulted. We should have kept quiet. We would have stood a better chance at Constitutional level later on in the game. But we chose to go ahead.

**Sharon:** Enforce the existing legislation which is already in place.

**Dale Wallace:** What is of concern is that the government is mandated to do something. Bigger studies should be done through Africa. What leads to violence? Greater understanding is needed for accusations that leads to violence ... understand the catastrophic failure. There are self-defined umthagathi, what one sees as an evil outcome others see as non evil. It's not the practice of muti, but the political, economical and social issues that lead to violence. We must be prepared to assist MP Legislature. They are willing to allow us to. She has been tracking legislation throughout Africa and the outcomes thereof. Generally, all legislation has failed to prevent violence against alleged Witches.

**Luke Martin:** Are your studies published?

**Dale Wallace:** Yes. I did not explore the commonality with African Witchcraft, doing this now. The THO is unknown amongst most Africans. What happens on the ground? ATC's accuse people of being umthagathi, preachers benefit economically.

**Luke Martin:** Can you assist the department with your studies?

**Dale Wallace:** Yes, willing.

**Gustavo Pinto:** Innocent accused – for the above reasons. Accusations of Witchcraft used as excuse to take what they want.

**Damon Leff:** WSA motivated violence as it confirmed WC. None of the accusations had anything to do with WC.

**Luke Martin:** Process to follow up in Bill has Thohoyandhou Declaration as its mandate.

WHAT IS THE WAY FORWARD?

**David:** Education is far more effective to change perception.

**Luke Martin:** Elucidates Thohoyandhou Declaration and Ralushai Commission:

Declaring the eradication of Witchcraft violence a national priority

Economic empowerment of women

Strengthening the response by the SA Police

Special investigative units

Telephonic help-line for survivors

Strengthening police/community co-operation in ending witchcraft violence

Legislative reform

Abolish 1957 Witchcraft Suppression Act – act3

Legislation dealing with the issue of witchcraft, i.e. separation of those engaged in harmful practices from those falsely accused, so that those who make false accusations can be brought to book

Legislation to control the practice of traditional healing

Victim support

Reintegration of victims of witchcraft violence who have been displaced from home

Public education

Monitoring and evaluation: commission on Gender Equality to take forward the recommendations of the conference

These cases are on-going.

**Ken Burk:** No recourse for assistance to those falsely accused. The law is not accessible to them. Putting together Bill is useful to us. Package that can be taught to people. Rights and Consequences. Bill could be useful if used to teach people about their rights in terms of this practice and how to resolve ...

**Damon Leff:** It was not successful because we were not part of process. They did not have an alternative perspective on the subject. We are aware of the situation. Another Commission of Enquiry is needed. They need Pagan input. Use the Commission for Gender Equality. Get process of dialogue between ourselves and Government. SAPRA already doing it. SAPC is

involved. Every single Group should become involved. We should co-ordinate focus. Find the right people and disseminate information.

**Cindy Pelsler:** Why the Gender Commission? Why not another?

**Luke Martin:** Commission for Gender Equality, mandated by T/Commission to talk to people, focused on violence against women, most often victims of false accusations. Dialogue between us and the Gender Equality Commission - would someone volunteer to co-ordinate?

**Damon Leff:** We can go back to previous Commissions. Get everybody together around a table to discuss things. Start with

South African Human Rights Commission

SA Law Reform Commission

Commission for Gender Equality

Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities (CRL)

Dept. Justice and Constitutional Development

Write to all we can possibly write to

**Enmarie Potgieter:** CRL Commission is aware of issue. Famous for not taking action. We must keep hammering them and continue giving them the support they need.

**David:** Occult and Religious Crimes?

**Dale Wallace:** Failed. Should study closely "South African-Netherlands Research Program on Alternative in Development" Project done by woman in the Netherlands SA and Ghanaians – will forward information to SAPC. Luke Martin will copy all delegates.

Many Law enforcers are believers in the evil of witchcraft. Cannot therefore do their jobs effectively. We have to teach them in their own idiom and speech. The Ralushie and the Thohoyandhou declaration failed in their objectives, but are useful tools. We can learn from that failure.

**Ginney:** What about the media?

**Luke Martin:** Will discuss media later on the agenda. How will we assist Department to draft Bill? What is the way forward?

**Ken Burke:** No point in trying to legislate WC. Cannot legislate beliefs. We need practical means to deal with results of beliefs and those using those beliefs for their own agendas. People need to be set free by practical solutions.

**Tamayashell:** We must focus on human rights issue. Not WC at all. Human Rights are the way forward. We should not be opting for the regulation of belief and religion as none of this can stand in a court of law.

**Spiral:** Reinforce the Laws in place. Do not define parameters of WC.

**Mynie Geldenhuys:** The Government is not educated. We must send a delegation to inform them and clear misconceptions along with the THO.

**Spiral:** we must not define witches or WC

**Gustavo Pinto:** Actions must be judged. Enforce the existing laws to punish the crimes

**Donna Vos:** The Occult Unit is not interested in Satanism. Under the Constitution Satanists are free to practice their religion. They are interested only in the criminally inspired Witchcraft. Or unit does not get involved unless the crime is motivated by the occult.

**Damon:** Concurred with Mynie's suggestion to educate the government and in sending the delegation to assist them. They cannot proceed before an official Commission of Enquiry. If they do SAPRA will sue.

[GENERAL CONSENSUS REACHED](#)

**Rian:** Killing = to murder. Person should be tried for that. One who accuses someone of witchcraft and instigates the murder of someone else is an accessory to murder.

[GENERAL CONSENSUS REACHED](#)

**David:** Used historical precedent. Witch trials in Germany. Failed in Germany. Put history forward to show government that chances are it won't work here either.

[CO-ORDINATION OF OBJECTIONS](#)

Chairperson assured that no group or person will lose their autonomy. They will remain self-regulating.

**Damon:** SAPRA put forward that the group already has a body to co-ordinate objections. The SAPC. Which is based and focused in Mpumalanga. Proposed SAPC as national co-ordinating body.

[GENERAL CONSENSUS REACHED](#)

**Samantha Perry:** What about the 5 Representatives?

**Luke Martin:** Later in the Agenda.

**Spiral:** SAPC and SAPRA there for that.

**Joy:** What if this thing moves to the other provinces? What if it goes regional?

**Gustavo Pinto:** Perhaps we should identify people in the provinces.

**Donna Vos:** Volunteered for Cape Town

**Mynie Vos:** suggested Enmarie for Gauteng as she is linked with many organizations.

**Spiral:** The SAPC and SAPRA are not regional organizations. They are National!

**Gustavo Pinto:** This is about individuals. Let us not focus on the organizations but on individuals.

**Damon Leff:** Volunteered for southern Cape region.

**Donna and Jenny:** Must consider groups as they have more clout on the regional level. What if small little groups or solitaries want to step in?

**Samantha Perry:** Suggested a mailing list. Chat forum. Should be run on a volunteer level with one national co-coordinator. No leaders. Proposed Yahoo mailing address. Will put together netiquette rules for posting.

**Luke Martin:** I am ignorant of these matters.

**Damon Leff:** He knows what they are talking about.

**Luke Martin:** I leave it up to you people to figure out.

**Enmarie Potgieter:** But we do already have the facilities in place on the SAPC site.

**Samantha Perry:** She will take care of it.

**Ken Burke:** We must push globally towards the Commission of Enquiry. If it gets to national level, it would be useful to have volunteers who can deliver documents and petitions personally and effectively. We should look at thing as a national group.

**Luke Martin:** The mailing list will be the forum where objections are noted. Called for consensus.

**GENERAL CONSENSUS REACHED**

**Damon Leff:** The SAPC is such a Forum. It brought us all together. He supports the SAPC as coordinating forum. Suggests we come together on such an emailing list on the SAPC.

**Luke Martin:** Called for consensus.

**GENERAL CONSENSUS REACHED**

**Luke Martin:** The mailing list will facilitate the process. When he receives a letter from anyone he will forward it to all. In this way there will be no opportunity to...

**Donna Vos:** Engage!

**Luke Martin:** Yes, thank you.

**Gustavo Pinto:** It is essential that we don't allow politics and labels to divide us. We need a Pagan Forum.

**Damon Leff:** The SAPC is that Pagan Forum by consensus.

**Jenny:** We do not need to like each other. Challenge and debate is going to happen.

**Donna Vos:** We don't all have a PC.

**Luke Martin:** Exhorted those with a PC to network all those who don't in order to allow them also to participate in the objection process.

**Ken Burke:** People can post their objections. We need a post-box for that.

**Luke Martin:** Point Noted. Will forward details to all delegates

**Gustavo Pinto:** People can sms to email

**Chris van Eck:** You can fax to email also.

**Tanya Davis:** We haven't asked the SAPC if they are ok with it.

**Luke Martin:** Affirmed as Convener of SAPC. He will be a filter. Communication will be sent to everybody through SAPC.

Asked if everybody was happy with that.

**GENERAL CONSENSUS REACHED**

**Ginney:** What if one wants to send a personal email? Can we have a private email address?

**Luke Martin:** Point Noted. Next Item.

**PETITION**

**Luke Martin:** Does anyone know at what the count stands?

**Damon Leff:** 1276 on Wednesday night.

**Joy Lerm:** Her name fell off and she was one of the first to sign on.

**Luke Martin:** Noted. Will investigate. Please sign petition again. Shall we hand petition in now or wait?

**Damon Leff:** We can use the petition to force request for Commission of Enquiry with the motivating letters from all Pagans or save it for later.

**Jenny:** We must capitalize on Petition.

**Ken Burke:** Suggested we wait.

#### GENERAL CONSENSUS REACHED

**Luke Martin:** Do we go along with SAPRA's Draft Bill?

**Damon Leff:** The reason for the Protection Bill is to present Government with an alternative. SAPRA does not approve legislating the issue. Shall we withdraw Protection Bill and just add to Petition?

**Jenny:** Must not be seeing as pulling back.

**Luke Martin:** Keep the motion to work on it in-house in case of MP Legislation. We can flesh it out to suit all parties.

#### GENERAL CONSENSUS REACHED

**Adrian Williams:** objected.

**Luke Martin:** Noted. We must not be seen as officially withdrawing with department. We will use SAPRA's bill as a starting point.

**Damon Leff:** We will make no official withdrawal. We will redraft it. Use it as leverage.

**Jenny:** If we withdraw it, we must replace it with something else. Must not be seen as stepping back.

**Luke Martin:** Do you all agree with that?

#### GENERAL CONSENSUS REACHED

**Luke Martin:** We will put together one that suits us all, based on the work which SAPRA has already put together.

**Damon Leff:** SAPRA does not want to legislate religion or belief.

**Luke Martin:** Guaranteed everybody's autonomy.

**Adrian:** Mentioned that a timeline was needed.

**Damon Leff:** We should use the Commission of Enquiry as a Timeline.

**Martin Kratz:** When we redraft it must also include the perspective of the Traditional Healers as well as Witchcraft as we see it. We must remember them when we draft the Bill.

**Samantha:** What will be the time? More or less.

**Damon Leff:** We will use legal action to force the issue. Sooner rather than later.

**Angela:** We need a "working group" to work on this.

**Mynie Geldenhuys:** Suggested we use Mr. Leff to coordinate our reference as he has already demonstrated his ability in legal matters.

**Andi Fisher:** Isn't there already a lawyer who is a Pagan that can do this?

**Gustavo Pinto:** Let us choose three people. Remember this is about the people, not about organizations.

**Tanya Davis:** Bill will stay at Department. It is open for comment. A new draft will be made and will be disseminated via the FORUM. Why do we need another group? Why not Damon?

**Luke Martin:** Floor opens to the vote for Damon Leff continuing his work with SAPRA on the Draft Bill.

Hands for Damon Leff = 36

**Donna Vos:** Stopped the process and suggested a middle way – the 5 Pagan Representatives.

**Luke Martin:** Apologized to delegates for jumping the gun. Thanked Donna for valid suggestion. Will discuss matter further later in the section designated for the 5 Pagan Representatives.

**Gustavo Pinto:** Reminded everyone that this was not an opportunity to jockey for power.

**Mynie Geldenhuys:** We are looking at the group comments. Nobody is jockeying for power.

#### BREAK

#### ALLIANCE COMMUNICATION

– Already dealt with. By General Consensus the SAPC was appointed as the Pagans Forum.

#### MEDIA

**Luke Martin:** Thus far the articles have been positive and informative.

**Sharon:** Added her article to the collection which was then circulated.

Luke Martin gave floor to Ginney re media.

**Ginney:** We should be using the media for education. For people on lower level of society who do not have PC's, money for books, etc. They can be taught by using the radio, TV and the newspapers. We must start an awareness campaign.

**Unknown:** Who will pay for the campaign? Time on TV and on the radio costs a lot of money. And who will be the PR?

**Luke Martin:** Please define awareness.

**Marius:** Need people to become more open. Public must see us. We must become less exclusive and more open to the public.

**Donna Vos:** People must know that we are different from Afro-centric Witches

**Damon Leff:** We need instead to explore the similarities between European and African Witches. We must stop criminalizing people based on differences.

**Butterfly:** Although the Media is a great education tool to use in our quest to show/explain who we are, we need to remember that a lot of people in rural areas don't actually have access to even basic media such as newspapers. Also keep in mind the fact that there are many illiterate out there.

**Sarah Dudley:** Told us how they used to do it in Montreal. Why don't we hold public rituals and invite the media to it. It used to work for them in Canada. Publicity this way doesn't cost a thing. The press come running when invited to a Witches Sabbat.

Delegates informed her they already do that in SA.

**Samantha Perry:** There can be separate stages

General awareness – invite media

After-bill-process – Helpline, structures for support put in place.

**Joy Lerm:** Black newspapers will not be willing to write or report this white cause.

**Luke Martin:** Corrected Joy. The Sowetan and the Mail and Guardian journalists were black journalists.

The Sowetan is a black newspaper and has already reported the matter. Article passed around.

**Enmarie Potgieter:** Reminded those present that Vanessa Fynn (who is black) will soon be starring in an article in the City Press.

We must implement HR- work with Black Organizations who cooperate with THO. It was mentioned that Dr. Motshekga had not yet arrived, but is willing to work with us and the THO. We must make ourselves available to Government.

**Donna Vos:** In all the media she was involved in, she was never defined by “the black problem”. She is concerned with the use of the word “Witch”. She has never used the “black scapegoat”. What concerns her is the term “Witch”.

**Dale Wallace:** The media equates us with Satanists. We get problems with kids, job, etc. None of the problems are coming from the African people. What do we want to achieve with the media? Pagans have never been asked in the media how they relate to the African Witch problem.

**Isabel Maguire:** E-TV is calling for documentaries. Can have a 30 minute documentary for free.

**David:** Proposed a combined educational package to cover full range of Paganism.

**Damon:** Suggested that to reach the rural areas we approach the Traditional Leaders and local Chiefs.

? Someone suggested NGO's

**Luke Martin:** An NGO already exists. We must engage the Traditional Leaders.

**Gustavo Pinto:** Is it appropriate for us to want to educate the Africans. We should look for African people to do it.

**Luke Martin:** The THO will facilitate. Process will go forward. Can be submitted to 26000 leaders of the THO and the information will get out.

**Jenny:** People in urban areas are not ignorant. Need to use media to change their perception of us.

**Andi Fisher:** We must not come across as being arrogant in teaching. We are not the right people to educate the Africans. Are the agendas of the THO and SAPC the same? What position do we put ourselves in?

**Luke Martin:** Be careful of what you put into the media. Careful how you do it. Be positive, up building and informative. State what we believe, not what we think of others.

**Andi Fisher:** Not implying that WC is a white phenomenon. We are a collective of white Pagans. Put out there what we wish to be perceived as. Do not dictate our beliefs.

**Dale Wallace:** Concerned about the fact that we have only mentioned the THO (26000). There are many more organizations and those not under a formal regulatory body. It is bigger than THO. There are a hundred other healing organizations listed under the SA companies Act. There are over 200 000 Healers in South Africa.

**Enmarie Potgieter:** Agreed. She has walked along with the THO but there are other organizations larger than THO. Suggested Pagans make themselves available to work with these groups.

**Luke Martin:** We have a massive task ahead. We self-define ourselves and do not dictate policy. We all have our constitutional right to self-definition.

**Marius:** We need to be judged by our actions. How do we present ourselves to the public? Through communal involvement, e.g. old age homes, feeding the street children, etc.

**Ken Burke:** Put out information of "who we are".

**Donna Vos:** Nobody is working with Witches in Witch Villages. They need food and clothing. They have no jobs. We must do good work there.

**Mynie Geldenhuys:** It is time to stop apologizing for who we are. We are judging ourselves by other's standards. Tell the public about who we really are. We are diverse and that Unity is strength!

**Luke Martin:** Précis: Keep your articles in the press positive and informative, self-defining and never dictating policy.

**Ken Burke:** We must remember that the government has asked us to stop embarrassing them.

**Luke Martin:** Yes, I was approached by the SABC and had to turn it down for I have given the advocate my word that I will not discuss the Act. It has been halted. If you decided to chat to the press, keep it positive, reiterate that the process has been halted. No fuss.

**Mynie Geldenhuys:** Let your interaction with the media be a positive affirmation.

**Luke Martin:** The process has taken on a life of its own. Let's not offend them further. Let the articles be positive and upbeat. You may tell them that we are working side by side with the Traditional Healers Organization and the Government.

**LUNCH**

**TRADITIONAL HEALERS ORGANISATION**

**Phepsile Mashego welcomed by Luke Martin.**

**Luke Martin:** SAPRA has presented formal objections. These were forwarded to the SAPC for discussion today.

**Damon Leff:** He has been mandated with the formal objection to the THO's proposal. SAPRA objects to the definition of Witchcraft. He read from his paper:

· SAPRA has submitted a formal objection against the definition of 'Witchcraft' presented by the THO in their objections to the MWSB. · The THO's definition of Witchcraft constitutes an infringement on the right of self-defined Witches to freedom of religion, belief, equality and dignity, and undermines the security of Witches by characterizing us as a threat to the well-being of the communities within which we live and work. · SAPRA will never permit the drafting of a Control of Butsakatsi Practices Bill as suggested by the THO. SAPRA will continue to ensure that no legislation will ever be drafted which will in any way prohibit or criminalize South African citizens on the grounds of religion or as the result of automatic inference of criminality. · The proposed Control of Butsakatsi Practices Bill will in effect illegally criminalize alleged Witches on the basis of belief, and will only serve to galvanize further violence against suspected Witches. · SAPRA will never permit the establishment of traditional or other Witchcraft Courts as proposed by the THO. Pagans should not permit the establishment of courts of inquisition against persons who define themselves as Witches, irrespective of racial or ethnic origin. · The THO's proposal to create 'specialized witchcraft courts' constitutes the gravest threat to the constitutional promotion of equality and human dignity, cornerstones of the advancement of human rights already enshrined for all South Africans in Chapter 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. (Act 108 of 1996) · The Mpumalanga legislature will not proceed with any other bill - neither the 'Mpumalanga Witchcraft Suppression Bill', NOR the THO proposed 'Control of Butsakatsi Practices Bill' · The Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development has agreed to intervene in order to ensure that the Mpumalanga legislature does not draft any legislation which will in any way prohibit or criminalize South African citizens on the grounds of religion or as the result of automatic inference of criminality.

**Luke Martin:** I see three major issues:

Disagree with definition of witch

Disagree with control of beliefs

Disagree with proposed Witchcraft Courts

The autonomy of every group is guaranteed. The collation to date was done by SAPRA.

**Damon Leff:** SAPRA is open to debate but will not change its mandated position.

**Mynie Geldenhuys:** Will this be done through the Forum?

**Luke Martin:** Yes

**Donna Vos:** Reminded all that Damon has agreed to allow others to pick and change at his work, so that we can come up with a combined document.

**Luke Martin:** As a Forum we are trying to figure the way forward. Please advise.

**Adrian Williams:** He has a problem with compromise.

**Luke Martin:** It's good to debate the issue. Where do we stand as opinion? In knowledge of diversity. We do not have to agree, but we can move forward nonetheless.

**Damon Leff:** He is open to amendment to Bill. He is not open to changing SAPRA'S mandated position. SAPRA will not compromise constitutional rights.

**Luke Martin:** We may disagree intellectually, but we are in agreement with the development of "Paganism". We must avoid personal attacks. Must not attack people, their logic, their intellect, their traits, etc. We must be spurred on by our love of Paganism, not the love/hate of the individual.

**Andi Fisher:** What if the collective decisions are in contradiction with SAPRA's stance?

**Luke Martin:** We all retain our personal autonomy. We have agreed to negotiate in good faith. We are not looking after our vested interests. We cannot negotiate that way. Fall off Forum otherwise – automatically!

**Mynie Geldenhuys:** We must define ourselves as we see fit. We will fight with our lives against any Bill that tries to regulate that right.

**Introduction:** [Pephsile Masheko – National Coordinator of the Traditional Healers Organisation \(THO\)](#)

**Pephsile Maseko:** Greetings to all present. She encouraged the Forum to strengthen themselves. The Forum is a force of the small pulling together. She reassured SAPRA and delegates that the THO does not want to infringe on our religious minority's rights. They realized there was a minority group who would be injured otherwise and decided not to use the word Witch and Witchcraft. The situation has evolved since the first draft that Damon responded to. Phepsile explained further the position of the THO.

**Damon Leff:** Acknowledged the evolution.

**Adrian Williams:** Proposed we release the terms "witch" and "witchcraft" in the interests of spirituality and ask for international support from Pagans abroad to do the same in an act of solidarity.

**Unrest in the house.**

**Luke Martin:** Those in favour of relinquishing the words witch and witchcraft please raise their hands.

Nine delegates raised their hands:

[9/61 – Minority](#)

**Gustavo Pinto:** Requested a show of hands of those who would abstain.

**General Unrest**

**Adrian Williams:** "He asked for the number of abstainers" ([pointing at Gus](#))

**Luke Martin:** The proposal is out of order. You asked for a show of hands on who wanted to relinquish the word "Witch". The count was an overwhelming 9/61. Your request is rejected as out of order and irrelevant. The majority the Delegates wish to reclaim the terms "Witch" and "Witchcraft".

**Ginney:** Phepsile has given us some good advice on this.

**Sarah Dudley:** Get rid of definitions in the Legislation.

**Luke Martin:** Autonomy to Silver Sickle to find its own term and self-define.

**Ken Burke:** It is not harmful to call ourselves Witches. THO does not have a problem with it. This needs to be explained to the Legislators. Proposed we learn from the Burning Times and those trials. Witches are burned for same reasons in Africa today. Let us learn from the past and not legislate against Witchcraft. Let's rather remove the belief that the Witchcraft causes harm in the lives of people, as well as those who are accused, killed or exiled. Let's not revert back to the witch burning times.

**Pephsile Maseko:** We need to strive for unity. We need each other more than ever. This is a revolution. Join hands against the tribulation. Samora Machel said, "The act of liberating yourself is within you". Be prepared to face tribulations. Who else can do it but yourselves? Stand up! Command your coming together to strategize. The People want you to come out. The challenge is to educate the public. We need to know we have sisters and brothers in you if you want us to walk with you. THO and Forum need to stand together! Remember that no legislation can stop you from believing in your belief. The 1957 Act

never stopped us in our belief. Many were killed. Your blood will fertilize the struggle. Stand up. Fight to ensure that you are in control. The THO will go the journey with you. But we need to know you.

What I like about SAPRA's Damon is that he is firm. You need more decisive leaders. But is his position correct?

**Des Borchards:** The problem seems to be translation. The definition in the English dictionary has changed. Perhaps we need a linguist to coin the correct term for Butsakatsi.

**Luke Martin:** Redefine please.

**Joy Lerm:** Pagan Witch. We can use it and it differentiates between Pagan Witchcraft and Butsakatsi

**Luke Martin:** Like this is a Pagan gathering your reasoning is exact.

**Phepsile Maseko:** If you are Pagans, why are you contesting the Witchcraft Suppression Act? It is irrelevant.

**Damon Leff:** We contested it because it says "Witchcraft Suppression". It would be against our right to self-definition. According to it, we could not even admit knowledge of Witchcraft.

**Phepsile:** Asked why we don't simply define ourselves as Pagan or Wiccan.

**Damon Leff:** Explained that Pagan is the umbrella term and that there are many different Pagan paths: Wicca, Witchcraft, Druidry, Shamanism, Magic, etc.

**Colleen:** Reasoned the taking on the definition of "witch". To self-define would then be equal to a criminal act. She would like to know that she has SAPRA's protection if she stood up. Also that of the Pagan Community. Added that we need to be in dialogue with the African Community.

**Ken Burke:** The issue is bigger than the use of the word "Witch". It is associated with various practices some of which are problematic. It is an historical problem. Labelling people as "evil" was done in the 1300's in Europe. The same is happening here. People are labelled for a belief (many of which are totally innocent). We should not let history of the persecution of Witches repeat itself in Africa. We should not legalize the persecution of people. The crimes must be dealt with by the Law.

**Phepsile Maseko:** I do not believe that people should be let loose to do as they please. Everybody has a right to life. People must not be let loose to practice Butsakatsi or being involved in the damage or posing danger to life. Understand within context what Butsakatsi means not to clash with our ideals.

We have come to understand that WC is positive in your belief. It means 'wise'. From the African point of view it is the opposite. This was caused by the disparities of colonization, poverty, etc. You need to reclaim the word WITCH. It is going to be a lot of work. The THO will support you in your definition of yourself.

**Donna Vos:** Is it feasible to reclaim?

**Phepsile Maseko:** The majority of you are women. This means you come from a disadvantaged background. Through the centuries evil has been associated with women. What it means to be a woman needs to be challenged. The Legislation will support you in this. Women are the owners of this century. You can do it. But not in divided spirits.

**Donna Vos:** Addressing Colleen: There are other organizations other than SAPRA to protect you.

**David:** Stated that there seems to be a misunderstanding between the THO and the SAPRA

**Luke Martin:** We need to work together. The Bill is old news. SAPRA's response was their initial response to the THO proposal. Shows level of commitment to meet halfway. Situation has evolved beyond that initial phase. We wish to walk together with the THO.

**Maurits:** We have lots in common with traditional healers. Our brand of Witchcraft is medicine in their culture. They dispense advice. We do too. They are willing to cause harm. We don't do it.

**Dale Wallace:** Understanding of Witchcraft, talking about burning times, the accusations and gender issues. We can take history and see the parallels.

**Luke Martin:** As a group we will use our self-definition as guidance. We will not tell other people what to practice. We will do things and self-promote autonomously. We do not dictate to others. Called for Consensus.

#### GENERAL CONSENSUS REACHED

**Luke Martin:** WHAT IS THE ROAD FORWARD?

**Phepsile Mashego:** You need to use living expertise to help define. Understand it is correct to support anything associated with the word Witch. They do not mind to be convinced. The Government and the THO are not negative. How far can you educate us? Witch has two

meanings. One for the THO and one for you? For westerners it means a wise person. What do we do now?

**Andi Fisher:** But it is perceived as negative amongst traditional healers. Are you saying we should reclaim?

**Phepsile Mashego:** I suggest you reclaim. It is your responsibility and your right to continue to fight. It's a struggle.

**Andi Fisher:** Do you really believe it can be done. Can we change the perception of 40 000 000 rural people?

**Phepsile Mashego:** One man alone (put her hand on Luke Martin shoulder) stopped the MP Legislature. He stopped the Bill. You have so much intellectual power in this room. Yes, it is possible. You must strategize about what instruments of Government you are going to use. The CRL Commission, the Department of Justice and C Development, the Office of the President. Arrange a Conference and invite the Presidency. It won't be easy. But it can be done!

**Enmarie Potgieter:** Not easy task ahead for those of us who wish to take on the task. Every revolution starts with one person. Take each challenge as it happens. Stand together and keep Forum alive.

**Rian:** The question is, "do we have the courage"? We will!

**Ken Burke:** Do not want to be confrontational about this, but the 1957 Act did not stop the Traditional Healers. Is it helpful to us to have legislation? They will do it anyway. Believes we must rather concentrate on changing the mind-set. They should be told that they should not be harming others. They need to be educated not to do that.

**Damon Leff:** Glad Phepsile has mentioned these organizations and showed us the way forward. The SAPC and SAPRA have already initiated these processes. He wants to evolve, learn more about each other.

**Gustavo Pinto:** Not a witch but will offer his support. Let's work together.

**Des Borchers:** Huge task to re-educate 40 000 000 people. He is a teacher and told his pupils that he is a witch. He answered negatively and explained what he does and believes in. In five minutes and without difficulty he was able to change their perception and overcome their initial fear.

**Tanya Davis:** To teach South Africans that there is more than one kind of witch. The people targeted aren't necessarily evil. One's intent is what matters. What is your intent?

**TERMINOLOGY – ALREADY COVERED**

**Luke Martin:** Conclusion; the way forward please?

**Sarah Dudley:** Proposed WSA use "Witch" to describe what WE do. It applies to all of us. We will not give up our right to self-definition. Resistance will be hard. But how important is it to us? Can we not find another English word to define Mtagate?

**Damon Leff:** That would still not change their perception. He will not judge others or criminalize another based on our perceptions of their beliefs.

**Sharon:** Suggested we get together with the THO and with the other groups of Traditional Healers.

**Ken Burke:** Persuade THO that legislation against evil practices will not stop people from doing what they do. It will only serve to criminalize harmless people; people like Phepsile. Suggested that the legislation be scrapped as one cannot legislate/regulate belief.

**Sharon:** Butsakatsi involves the use of human tissue, mutilation and murder. Why do we need an act to regulate? There are Laws that regulate those issues.

**Luke Martin:** We need more dialogue with the THO and other organizations.

**Enmarie Potgieter:** Why choose to separate acts and Bill with problems/crimes. What she liked about the Act was that it criminalized witch-pointing. People were less likely to do it. Why do THO want some kind of legislation of negative Witchcraft?

**Ginney:** Why not work on a People's Protection Act

**Phepsile:** What is that?

**Luke Martin:** She is being pro-active

**Donna Vos:** Need to separate Witchcraft acts

Occult – esoteric

Mutilation – murder

**Damon:** Focus on the positive as per Donna. We find mutilation offensive. But there is already legislation in place to deal with that. How will a Court of Law determine that it is as the result of Witchcraft? Or those predictions are not accurate? There is no evidence. Where there is

mutilation it is open to debate. It becomes complicated. How do you differentiate between a muti killing motivated by Witchcraft and murder?

**Pephsile Maseko:** Do you have a code of conduct?

**Damon Leff:** Yes, each group has its own code of conduct.

**Pephsile Maseko:** Why associate killings with the tissues act? THO members can't use human tissue anyway, according to their code. They would therefore not be involved. But an Umthakathi would. She explained how children are found dead in their yards, with their genitalia mutilated. The people responsible for this must be stopped. Scientific evidence must be presented to the court. These crimes are related to Umthakathi. We must be able to legislate and find out who commissioned the harvest of those body parts. We need to protect our communities. Allegations are not sufficient.

**Ken Burke:** Does not understand butsakatsi. Requests a document from THO. Mutilation is not conclusive of butsakatsi. It could be a paedophile. The Court must determine if the evidence is conclusive. We are all on the same side, we wish to reduce and stop these harmful practices. There should be a law that says you can't call people butsakatsi just because you don't like them.

**Luke Martin:** The Government needs to be seen as doing something concrete about it.

**Cajun:** We should be educating children. Can we add the Department of Education to that list?

**Mynie Geldenhuys:** told us of how she prepared a paper for the University of South Africa, for their religious studies. The same could be done for the schools. We need to make the information available. Need more dialogue. Government has to do something about harmful practices

#### GENERAL CONSENSUS REACHED

**Pephsile Maseko:** The power to emancipate you is in you. You are intellectually rich. Combine your efforts. South Africa needs to be a better place for all. We must stand up for our rights. THO will support you. But they do not see Whites at the conventions speaking up against controversial issues. You must be seen at our consultations to take the process forward. Do not distance yourself from us. We need to know you to walk with you. Take the responsibility to support other groups.

**Dr. Motshekga arrived and was introduced by Luke Martin to delegates.**

**Dr. Motshekga:** Apologies for being late. Said this was a sensitive issue. Africans have their own spiritual science which is suppressed by the Witchcraft Suppression Act. Went into detail thereof. Because of the Christian and Muslim backgrounds the THO are waging a struggle. Traditional Healers are not Witches. Witches are Butsakatsi. African religious science states that there are 3 gifts:

- Earth bound people (not holy) they are concerned with material things
- Spiritually active that can be perfected to rise to the Kingdom of Light
- The spiritually awakened

The earth bound control earth by evil means = those are witches in our culture. Reality consists of positive and negative. Between these two there is a struggle. Initially we are all spiritual beings. We are spirits trapped in the material. Our efforts are directed to the material. Easy for evil spirits to capture us. Traditional Healers are instruments of God. It is their duty to defend the people against witches.

There is a difference in terminology. Western Witches do not mean to harm humanity. What language will you opt for in order not to send out the wrong signals?

Under our leaders we fought hard to have African Religion recognized (as put forward by Christians and Muslims). The basic structure is inside each one of us, transmitted to us through agency of our parents/ancestors. Explained the 7 planets, the ladder, the 4 holy beasts, the 4 quarters, the Father of Light that comes from Nothingness. We must aggressively state our claims. Will you be allied with THO? What are your objectives?

**Ginney:** How do you use the word witch?

**Dr. Motshekga:** explained difference between inyanga those who heal with herbs and those who heal spiritually.

**Joy Lerm:** She is partial to giving up the word Witch. What would you use?

**Dr. Motshekga:** Spiritual workers. The word Witch is loaded. Gender issue terms are loaded. Wouldn't use them.

**Jenny:** Explained that most of delegates believe in reincarnation and that they believe they were burnt at the stake in a past life. Those who don't have ancestors who were bunt at the stake. We need to protect them.

**Dr. Motshekga:** The term was an accusation against them. You must drop it. If you don't adapt you will retard your human development.

**Ken Burke:** The idea would be to convince the people to do good and not evil.

**Dr. Motshekga:** Spoke about the church and the Nag Hamadi scrolls, the gospel of Judas, Jesus did not come to teach us to repent. He came to help those to come out of ignorance. Each one of us is good. Trapped in a physical body our spiritual power is limited. When this body is dissolved we can travel the cosmos. We can't do it because of our actions. We cannot unite with the Divine Light from which we emanate. There is no such thing as original sin. Our Divine Sparks are entrapped in matter. We don't see that we are equals with the Gods.

**Martin Kratz:** We have the potential to do more. Our problem is a hurdle. How do we define our practices? The craft of the wise?

**Motshekga:** Pagan. The Roman Christians colonized the Wisdom Religion. You stand for Wisdom Craft. The word Pagan means country dweller. Its use is of no gain to you. You are practitioners of the Craft of Wisdom.

**Luke Martin:** There was a motion and general consensus with the reclamation of the word Witch as per Phepsile's address. A minority of 9/61 voted for **not** reclaiming the word Witch. It was decided that we will fight for our ancestral heritage that falls under the term of "Witch". Asked for a show of solidarity by requesting all who wish to claim "Witch" as a self definition.

**Almost the entire room stood up in unison, including most of the previous parties who had voted for NOT reclaiming the "Witch" word.**

**Dr. Motshekga:** As a politician he would opt to make a law to suppress Witchcraft. We must start working on a way to convince them that our brand of Witchcraft is different to the one they wish to legislate against.

**Luke Martin:** The Forum stopped the Act. Petitions were sent forward already.

**Gustavo Pinto:** Circumvent the word Witch. For the Bill use African words, avoid the word Witch in the legislation.

**Ginney:** Supports Gus

**Damon Leff:** Cannot criminalize any group on basis of terminology. Government must look at preventing crime.

**Enmarie Potgieter:** The Act has been a blessing and a bane. We stood up in the media. We must not step back. We cannot compromise in what we are. Don't back down now! We want to be called Witches.

**Luke Martin:** Explained to Dr. Motshekga the earlier vote and the overwhelming majority for the reclamation of the word Witch.

**Dr. Motshekga:** It's important that you state your objectives clearly. The Public has the right to know.

**Ian:** We must get the Government to understand that there are two types of Witchcraft. We must get them to understand our brand of it, so we don't fall under the wrong one.

**Dr. Motshekga:** We must look at the content. If it is harmful it will lead to suppression. If the content is right, the Government cannot forbid it.

Donna Vos presented her book to Phepsile Mashego and Dr Motshekga.

#### BREAK – PHOTOS WITH THE FIVE PAGAN REPRESENTATIVES

**Luke Martin:** Answering delegates, explained that these will run concurrently with the I&AP's. The Bill can still be contested at white paper level. We are looking for 5 Representatives, preferably leaders, who have experience in dealing with Government and these processes, and who are familiar with the process to date. They must also have the resources. Damon Leff and Jenny needed to know the time and the preparation time. 5 Reps will be needed for 2 to 3 meetings at the most, a sitting each. They can choose the date once called upon for a certain date. They may say it does not suit them and pick a suitable date.

Of the 9/61 voters against reclamation of "Witch" - They can be part of 5 Reps, provided they put their personal issues/agenda aside. They must be disciplined, they must be people who can behave and act maturely. A reserve will be there in case one of the 5 is not available. Simple vote between 5 to resolve issues. If no resolve is reached, they can call for a referendum on the FORUM. He stressed twice that the 5 Reps were only for the Mpumalanga Draft Bill - nothing else.

**Adrian Williams:** Can a Rep be removed from the 5 Reps if one goes against others. What if this happens at a meeting?

**Damon Leff:** This person can only be removed by those who gave the Mandate. The general Forum present.

**Adrian Williams:** They don't have carte blanche to act on their own.

**Luke Martin:** The Pagan people dictate policy.

**Jenny:** We must understand that we are there for the people, not to tip scales in our favour.

**Luke Martin:** Volunteers for 5 Representative please rise and give your names.

**Representatives:** Donna Vos, Andi Fisher, Damon Leff, Chris van Eck, Gustavo Pinto, Enmarie Potgieter, Mynie Geldenhuys, Samantha Perry. Luke Martin stood up by popular demand.

Votes were counted by and marked on the Ballot Result Sheet by: Cajun, Morgause, Mynie, Luke, David, John.

Results were out of 61:

**Luke 60**

**Donna 51**

**Damon 48**

**Enmarie 39**

**Samantha 39**

**Mynie 34**

**Andi 30**

**Adrian 27**

**Gustavo 16**

**Chris 10**

**Gustavo Pinto:** The 5 Representatives were announced: Luke, Donna, Damon, Enmarie, Samantha and Mynie as the reserve. A round of applause.

**Luke Martin:** The reserve Mynie Geldenhuys will be involved, informed and consulted all the time. Called for consensus.

#### GENERAL CONSENSUS REACHED

**Damon Leff:** SAPRA has already contacted the Minister of Justice who promised to look at the possibility of reforming the WSA. Suggested we appeal for reform. Will harass them for results and come backs as soon as possible.

**Luke Martin:** Will e-mail proceedings and minutes to all.

**Enmarie Potgieter:** The World Cultural Charter is being drafted. Enmarie asked to give feedback. This is an international thing.

**Luke Martin:** Andi Fisher - CNCI – will take it internationally

Damon Leff - PFISA – will take it internationally

USSI – will take it internationally

CHM – will take it internationally

Mynie Geldenhuys - PFSA – will take it to affiliates in Argentina and America.

TEA

POTENTIAL PITFALLS (COVERED)

1957 WC ACT LEGISLATIVE REFORM (COVERED)

FUTURE FOR SA PAGANISM

**Luke Martin:** The vision is Cooperative Unity. The Future looks bright. Comments open to the floor. Process is bigger than us. It is an honour to act as your servant.

**Spiral:** As long as we are under threat it seems we can really stand together. Amazed at what she experienced today.

**Gustavo Pinto:** told us an anecdote on infighting. "As long as we fight in the kitchen, the customer wins".

**Donna Vos:** 10 years ago we reclaimed the term Pagan. We almost fully reclaimed the word. It is no longer a bad word. We have been given a new challenge. To reclaim the word Witch. This is an incredible challenge. We can do it.

**Rian:** The mood is good. We are unified in our goals. We must play to our strengths in the future. Instead of fighting we must work together to make up a unified whole. Each group has a something which they excel at: eg. The PFSA is networking.

**Luke Martin:** Asked Sunny, as a young man born and raised in the Craft, for a comment. Damon suggested he say thank you to all the delegates. Mynie spoke of raising two grandchildren in circle too.

**Luke Martin:** The future is amongst us.

Ginney handed out blue glass pentagons with delegate names and covens with the assistance of Lei Meiring and Sunny.

CLOSING AND THANKS

**Mynie Geldenhuys:** Reminisced about the late Norman Geldenhuys and his greatest dream to be sitting in meeting like this one today. She told us how she had been thinking about him and had decided not to write a speech. She waited and observed and commented on events of the day. She felt privilege being there speaking on Norman's behalf. She thanked Donna for reminding us of our beginnings, for her involvement and hard work. Both these are vital for our continued health. She will always respect Donna.

She thanked Damon for his hard work. She complimented him on his power of debating. She cannot ever repay him, so she will stand behind him 100%.

She especially thanked Dale Wallace for years of research, of assistance in her studies, for her wisdom, for being at the conference, for understanding what drives and motivates us. We appreciate you.

**Luke Martin:** Asked Dale if she's available as a special consultant to the Forum?

**Dale Wallace:** I would like that!

General Applause

**Mynie** expressed surprise by the reasonableness of Dr. Motshekga. Pephshile has softened her stance to us. Two different points of view found common ground. They inspired us to find common ground too.

She thanked leaders: Donna, Andi, Debbie, Damon, Luke, and other leaders, the solitaires will know that it was an uphill battle. But the difficult things are worth fighting for. If it is easy we rebels don't appreciate it. We will relish every horrible moment of the fight for our freedom.

She thanked everyone for putting aside issues and for applying logic. Thanked those who made the gifts and a very special thank you to Luke and Mize' – ask of us Reps what you want; we will move heaven and earth to help. She will do all she can do to help the cause and her two groups too. Thanked Donna for organizing the gifts.

Opening of gifts and request that all sign the scrolls in the foyer.

Meeting Adjourned at 17h30