

# **S.T.O.P. ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2008**

Two meetings were held during 2008, the first being the Annual General Meeting on 31 March at 7.30p.m.in the Meadowridge Library. There were 37 persons present including Committee Members. 7 apologies were received.

The second meeting, at the same venue, was on 27 October. Attendance was 16 including 3 Committee Members. There were 19 apologies.

A comprehensive newsletter dated 8 August was circulated in lieu of a mid-year meeting. This updated supporters with the happenings since the A.G.M. on 31 March.

Committee Members for 2008 remained unchanged.

Our secretary and part-time office assistant held everything together!

In looking at the general trends of 2008 it can be seen that these followed closely on those of the previous year with our credibility and recognition being sustained. Again we were in demand as speakers and participants in radio and T.V. programmes with this entire "portfolio" being handled by the spokesperson. Due to the spokespersons wife being on extended furlough, He alone was also responsible for the telephone counseling and the face-to-face meetings, for the scores of men and women at the end of their tether due mainly to the porn addiction of themselves or spouses/partners. Statistics are given elsewhere in this report.

Legislation was monitored by the Chairlady with indispensable assistance from an ex-public prosecutor. Our attention focused on the comprehensive and valuable Sexual Offences Act which had been signed into law mid-December, 2007 and on the progress of the Film and Publications Amendment Bill through its various stages. The former contained a far-reaching definition of pornography and, in Section 19, dealt with the offence of exposure of "a child" to pornography. However the latter proved to be a particularly time-consuming exercise. Again details follow in the body of this report. However in overview of the Parliamentary year it can be said, in both these pieces of legislation, that Government appears to be standing firm on their intention to uphold the interests of women and children.

The following report summarizes events of year 2008.

## 1. A.G.M. 31 March 2008

1.1 Our two invited speakers gave interesting presentations. Errol Naidoo spoke about the newly formed Family Policy Institute of which he is president. The Institute is a research and education organization to advance a pro-marriage, pro-family philosophy. It is based on the American Family Research Council from whom he learnt much during his recent stay in Washington.

Jessica Samson, who ardently opposes the "Tabloid" press, then spoke on her personal daunting experience of complaining via the Press Ombudsman route, currently the only mechanism available to the public.

Both speakers were intently listened to and warmly applauded.

## 1.2 S.T.O.P. Constitution

It was agreed to by vote at the March 2008 A.G.M. that the item concerning meetings be changed to:- "There will be at least two meetings per year, one to take the form of an A.G.M. Thereafter necessary supporters will be kept informed by newsletters".

## 2. Anti Child Porn Indaba 1-2 June

This Indaba, held in Johannesburg, was an initiative of Government's Department of Home Affairs and the Film and Publications Board (FPB). We had, initially, had to refuse the invitation due to financial constraints but were greatly encouraged when the FPB offered to pay all expenses.

Together with four other N.G.O.s we were required to give a 10 minute presentation, ours to be entitled "Children accessing sexually explicit material in the media". This was in line with our request as our emphasis on, and interest in, the harm to children lies in the need to regulate – or, better still, to eliminate – ALL pornography, not only the child pornography which formed the essential focus of the Indaba.

There were approximately 300 delegates including Cabinet Ministers, Deputy Ministers, M.P.'s, international experts in the legal and telecommunication field and N.G.O.'s as well as various voluntary organizations.

Our contribution written by the Chairlady and presented by our spokesperson was well-received. When STOP again raised the suggestion that Government should admit their error and should re-look at making all forms of pornography illegal, it was met with a standing ovation and this was re-iterated by other M.P.'s later in their address to the Indaba!

A number of interested people approached the spokesperson afterwards. Among them was Annelize van Wyk, the A.N.C. M.P. and Chairperson of Government's Ministerial Task Team on Child Pornography. She said he had made some interesting and valid points and that she wanted him to join the Law Enforcement and Legislation group for the all-important 2 hour "workshop" phase of the Indaba.

This workshop was very rewarding, attended by about 40 delegates and chaired by Professor Susan Kreston (University of O.F.S. and ex-U.S.A.) and Adv. Retha Meintjies (Deputy Director National Prosecuting Authority) who offered to look into the charges laid by S.T.O.P. against the tabloids. S.T.O.P.'s suggestions were well received and were included in the final Indaba declaration. Interestingly the general consensus was anti-all-porn (including on T.V.), even to the extent of "banning" pornography.

As with all such events the major benefit to S.T.O.P. came in the potential "networking" opportunities – that is having been able to meet with influential people and like-minded organizations.

We were greatly encouraged to see that the first point in the Final Indaba Declaration reads: *"We should explore the possibility of completely banning pornography in South Africa"*

They also intend taking a firmer stance with the media.

### 3. Film and Publications Amendment Bill

The legislation had its origins in 2006. The aim, in brief, was to more effectively combat the scourge of child pornography and to protect children from potentially disturbing, harmful and age-inappropriate material in any medium whether it be, for example, publications (particularly magazines), films, cellular phones, T.V, or computer games.

Bearing in mind that opposition to, and action against, child porn is universal, S.T.O.P. has rather concentrated on protecting children from exposure to **ALL** forms of porn. In March 2008 it became known that the Amendment Bill, which had been delayed for many months awaiting the routine ratification by the National Council of Provinces (N.C.O.P.), had been subjected to changes by the N.C.O.P. These changes had, in effect, watered down certain provisions and indeed, as a result, compromised the original intention of the Amendment. This was of great concern to us and on 17 June 3 members of S.T.O.P. attended a Home Affairs Committee meeting where this was scheduled for discussion. Our numbers were boosted by the National Director of Africa Christian Action (A.C.A.) and the ex-Public

Prosecutor who assists us in legal matters. Before the meeting opened we distributed a short written submission to Mr. Patrick Chauke, M.P., Committee Chairman, and some of the Committee M.P.s. In this we highlighted the watered-down areas. Mr Steve Swart A.C.D.P. M.P was able to use our written submission as a guide to introduce discussion in the areas of concern to us.

The N.C.O.P. legal adviser explained that their changes had in the main been motivated by concerns that the original provisions of the Amendment (particularly re pre-classification of "harmful" material) could have laid the Government open to a Constitutional Court challenge by the media. However the Committee in general disagreed with this stance. He admitted that one of the changes made by the N.C.O.P. which, he said, had been pointed out by S.T.O.P., was incorrect and should be rectified.

The outcome of the meeting was inconclusive and, as a result of deficiencies in the proposed legislation having been pinpointed (to which S.T.O.P. and others had contributed), Mr Chauke proposed that a Workshop be set up at the end of July. The N.C.O.P would be invited to participate in this. In closing Mr. Chauke reiterated the importance of the original purpose of the Act not being lost.

Subsequently two such Workshops took place at Parliament on 29 and 30 July. Again our "Watchdog" contingent from S.T.O.P. attended as well as National Director of Africa Christian Action (A.C.A.) and the ex-Public Prosecutor. As at the previous June meeting we had prepared submissions to be handed out to all present. This was in the form of a letter to Mr. Chauke and Committee members, together with copies of a few extracts from the Bill and the "Indaba" Declaration.

At both Workshops there were only 3 to 4 of the Home Affairs Committee members present, of which the ACDP representative, Mr Steve Swart, was the most informed (by ourselves and A.C.A.!) The legal profession was predominant with the presence of the State law adviser, the N.C.O.P. advocate, the Committee law adviser and others, including Advocate Iyavar Chetty, legal adviser to the Film and Publication Board. Some positive decisions, relatively minor, were taken at the first Workshop. As a whole the proceedings missed the mark compared to what we had hoped for.

At the second Workshop there was a "12th hour" reprieve when Mr. Steve Swart suggested that the word "explicit" be inserted before "sexual conduct" in two Sections of the Bill. Immediately there was general interest and agreement and, after further discussion, a satisfactory definition of "explicit" was arrived at -this to be inserted in the Definition section of the Bill. In

effect this opened the door to more material being given stricter classifications – music to our ears given our determination to impact the sexually explicit magazines. with their age un-regulated display, at commonly “family-store” check out points.

The Bill was subsequently passed by Parliament and sent to the State President to be signed into law. Unfortunately the media, notably the S.A. Editors’ Forum (S.A.N.E.F.) strenuously appealed to the President not to sign the allegedly “flawed Bill”, claiming “Censorship” and threatening Constitution Court action should he do so. Counter-pressure was brought to bear by the pro-Bill front, notably by a Coalition joined by a significant number of concerned bodies including S.T.O.P. and by signatories to an “On-line” petition.

#### 4. Film and Publication Board (FPB) Workshop.

This was held on 17 October at Idasa House, Spin Street, Cape Town and hosted by the Wynberg branch of the FPB headed by Western Cape Compliance Inspector Clive Borman. S.T.O.P. was represented by the Chairlady and the spokesperson. Advocate Iyavar Chetty, Acting C.E.O. of the FPB was the speaker on the overall subject of Child Pornography (the more correct terminology being, as suggested by Mr. Chetty, Child Abuse Images). Goodness Dlamini, head of the FPB’s child pornography unit, chaired the meeting. The proceedings were largely intended as instruction for the Police. About 30 to 40 people attended with police men and women predominating. There was also a representative from the Dept. of Education and from Social Services. Prior to the proceedings we had handed a letter to Mr. Chetty outlining our concerns which were mainly about the urgent need for updated guidelines to be drawn up to minimize the exposure of children to sexually explicit material in publications, particularly magazines freely available to the public. We also recommended that sexualized, lewd covers should justify imposing a high age classification and enclosure in an opaque cover irrespective of contents, as is done in Australia. Re the Broadcasting Code we urged meaningful interaction between FPB and ICASA.

During the day we gave out 20 copies of the letter to other delegates.

There was an encouraging presence of several other representatives from organizations campaigning for the same values as ourselves. These were the International Co-ordinator of Africa Christian Action, a delegation of three Imams from the Muslim Judicial Council, the ex- public prosecutor in her own capacity, Patrick Solomons of Molo Songololo, a member of the Söeter Church in the Northern suburbs and their Pastor, who is also a member of the Consultative Conference of Christian Churches.

The morning session was directed to child pornography, the speaker being Iyavar Chetty. Two of the interesting facts that emerged were, firstly, that South Africa is rated amongst the 5 top nations of the world with effective legislation to deal with child porn and, secondly, that it can not be viewed in the context of a S.A. problem as it is a global phenomenon. The FPB thus liaises closely with major overseas countries.

In the afternoon there was discussion, with good input from the floor, on the unsatisfactory mechanisms in place for the public to complain to the Board and on the absence of updated Guidelines for publications. Mr Chetty said there was very little input from the public, apart from S.T.O.P., when previous Guidelines had been put out for public comment. This made it difficult for public tolerance to be gauged.

The "finale" to the afternoon session came when ACA displayed a particularly lewd copy of "Hustler" bought at Fish Hoek C.N.A. It was in fact being sold illegally insofar as it contained, as a "free gift" an uncertified D.V.D. of the "over 18" genre. Immediately there was a shocked flurry of response from Mr Chetty, Goodness Dlamini and the two Compliance Inspectors – and the assurance that action would be taken. (On 24 October ACA received an e-mail from Clive Borman, Compliance Monitor, FPB, Cape Town, stating "I will give urgent attention to this matter".)

In closing the meeting Goodness Dlamini said it was clear from the input from the floor that there was much concern and many frustrations that needed attention. She was of the opinion that there should be a follow-up workshop in the immediate future.

## 5. Outreach

### 5.1 Counselling

#### 5.1.1 E-mails and phone calls

During the year S.T.O.P. received 128 e-mails and phone calls from persons seeking advice. These were, in the main, from extremely distressed men and women who were victims of their own or their spouse/partners addiction to pornography. Two from the business sector (Dept. of Labour and a Johannesburg-based Company) each acting on behalf of an employee, required advice and information on porn addiction.

#### 5.1.2 Support Group

S.T.O.P. has continued to facilitate a Support Group for men addicted to pornography. They reports as follows:

- Firstly, I would like to extend sincere thanks to his assistant for his invaluable support, wisdom and insight as well as his sacrifice and dedication to the Support Group and its members over the last year.
- The Support Group has been well attended. We have had men from all over the peninsula and Northern suburbs visiting and joining the group. We have been very blessed as we have witnessed God at work with and through various men in the group. We have seen lives changed for good with spiritual and marital relationships being restored.
- We are encouraged that another support group has started in the Table View area under the auspices of St. Matthews Church. They are growing and making a difference in that community. We have also been contacted by another church in Durban asking for advice and help as they start a "much needed" support group in their area. We have also been approached by a person in the Robertson area wanting to do the same. We will offer help, advice and encouragement where we can.

## 5.2 Talks

Two Churches requested talks by S.T.O.P. These were at The Message Church in Rondebosch and at a Men's Breakfast at St Matthews in Table View. Two talks, organized by the YMCA, were given on U.C.T. middle campus. In addition we gave two lectures/talks, for the pastoral counseling course, at the Baptist Seminary.

The Chairlady was asked to give a talk, "The Effect of Pornography on Women" at the Islamic Unity Convention Women's Forum Conference on Gender Issues held at U.C.T. on 28 June. Shortly afterwards she participated in a live Radio 786 programme "Families in Crisis".

## 5.3 Radio

S.T.O.P. participated in 12 live radio broadcasts. These were C.C.F.M. – 2; KFM/Cape Talk – 1; Radio 786 (Moslem) – 1; Voice of the Cape (Moslem) –

1; Radio Tygerberg – 1; Radio Namaqualand – 2; Bush Radio – 2; SAFM – 1; 702/Cape Talk with Dr Eve - 1. (Some were also re-broadcast)

The above last-mentioned broadcast deserves some amplification. On the morning of 1 October Cape Talk hosted two porn “stars” in an hour long prime show of the merits of the porn industry. (This was during school holidays!) There were graphic descriptions and the language used was in line with the subject! Callers who phoned in were obviously titillated by the conversations. The Spokesperson and a local school teacher both wrote letters of complaint to the Broadcasting Complaints Commission (B.C.C.S.A.) True to the record the complaints were not upheld!

However following the broadcast S.T.O.P. challenged Cape Talk to air a show giving details of the effects of porn. This came to fruition two weeks later with the Spokesperson and the well-known “pro-porn” Dr. Eve participating. She admitted that, with the amount and easy accessibility of porn to children today, “I don’t want to be in this business in ten years time because of the effects it will have on children”. She agreed with STOP on a number of points – but not on others!

#### 5.4 T.V.

The Sunday morning one hour T.V. 2 programme “Issues of Faith” broadcast on 3 February featured a documentary on porn in which the Spokesperson and his wife had participated (much of it having been shot in their home). There was an amazing response to this programme with calls for help still being received months later. Together with exposure on radio it had also resulted in a nation-wide response from people and other organizations offering help. This enabled us to refer callers from other parts of S.A. so that they could access help nearer their homes.

The spokesperson mentioned that he had subsequently been contacted again by T.V.2 who envisaged re-visiting the issue of porn and the effects on children i.e. their “Life 24/7” programme. He had sent them relevant information. He also had to turn down another request from SABC TV as he was away at the time.

#### 6. Moslem Initiative

The Chairlady read a letter of 4 March from Advocate Sheriff Mohammed (Convenor) and Habib Khan (Co-Convenor). It was addressed to “All Organisations, Associations and Religious Affiliations”. It read as follows:-

*"Re: Election of Steering Committee for the purpose of bringing a class action in the Supreme Court, interdicting TV networks, more in particular E.TV Channel, from airing television programmes on open channels which has a pornographic content to which young children have access.*

*Your organization has been cordially invited to attend a meeting on Thursday 6 March 2008 at Salem, 39 Johnson Road, Athlone at 9.00pm."*

We were unable to attend the meeting but the Spokesperson was invited to be a guest on the follow-up programme broadcast by Voice of the Cape/Radio 786 entitled "Pornography and the effects on children and society"

Other members of the panel were Adv. Sheriff Mohammed, Adv. William Booth and the Secretary-General of the Muslim Judicial Council. Communities were encouraged to stand up and say "No". There were many callers to this phone-in broadcast reflecting an "Enough is enough" standpoint. The programme was re-aired several more times.

It was envisaged that an organization known as the "Anti-Pornography Society of S.A." (A.P.S.S.A.) be formed. A member from S.T.O.P. was invited to serve on the committee but had to decline.

## 7 Press Letter

On the morning of our A.G.M. (31 March 2008) our letter to the Cape Times was published. We wrote to affirm the excellent letter of 24 March written by Zama Mvulane, Political Adviser to the National Council of Provinces (N.C.O.P.) which defended the Film and Publications Amendment Bill against the attack by the media.

## 8. Finances

We are deeply grateful to our major donor – Meadowridge Baptist Church (M.B.C.) for the support which is our "life-line". Warm thanks also go to other supporters for their generous donations.

These amounts are reflected in our Financial Statement for the year ending 31 December 2008. A summary of this statement is available on request.

The Financial Statement was compiled by a supporter who is a Chartered Accountant (S.A.) and volunteered to take over this task as from the beginning of 2008. For this we are extremely grateful.

## 9. Thanks

We extend our deepest appreciation to those who once again have so willingly given of their time to support S.T.O.P. The ex-public prosecutor who has generously provided us with professional help in legal matters and the assistance given by the chartered accountant and the support group assistant have been mentioned elsewhere in this report. All our endeavours have been faithfully supported in prayer by our co-ordinator and her team. Special thanks go to the MBC office staff as well as our ever-willing "back-room boys" always ready to lend a hand. To our office assistant – always ready to go the extra mile – our appreciation is immeasurable!

Report compiled by the Chairlady.