the level



n rights,

pupil barrister stage, that figure is police service, not the BPA.

to our profession and encouragefficult to achieve than it appears SIONALLY?

Black Associations

Bowing out gracefully

Sir Herman Ouseley has announced his decision to do it. Now Peter Herbert, chair of the Society of Black Lawyers and his equivalent at the Black Police Association, Paul Wilson, are on the verge of doing it. The 'it' is the decision by all three to retire from their successful positions as chair: Wilson next week after six years and Herbert - after five years - in December. Public Sector Editor Joy Francis met with them to uncover the full story.

OLICE OFFICERST

STEP DOWN

They release? 'The Society
of Black Lawyer?' Continuous
of Black Continuous
of Bl

Paul Wilson: My reasons are indamentally the same as Peter's. IN THE WAKE OF MACH-SBL AND BPA VIEWED BY on to be seen as the figurehead THE WHITE ESTABLISH of that organisation it's nice hav-ing all the publicity, but it places MENT AND BLACK PEOPLE IN YOUR RESPECTIVE PRO-

WHAT ARE THE MAIN
PRESSURES FACING YOUR
MEMBERS [LAWYERS AND]
The need for a Black Association.
However, certain sections of the
police service said that we have PH: The ability of Black and This was very frustrating. And Asian people to access their cho-sen career of law is one example. attitude changing. So we were It is not just about getting a always having to justify our exis-degree, but qualifying as solicitors tence. Since Macpherson we have and barristers and eventually moved forward tremendously. But becoming judges. One in five Black Black and Asian police officers are and Asian students aim to enter still fearful of raising their head graduate school, but by the time above the parapet. The only thing hey reach trainee solicitor or that can change that fear is the

battleground that we have to fight PH: The SBL has been around met who had their battleground that we want to see our for about 26 years so the land-communities achieve the promiscape is slightly different for us. sence they desire in the future. The legal profession is more how many fatalities nence they desire in the future. The legal profession is more formany fixtulities (Ingly firms are very keen to give accounted to having it around young Black lawyers work place—and more used to hearing the you need, crothing contracts. Discission in the same policials. They don't recruit from the had a shot in the arm policials reaching instructions where most with the Mapheron report as exchanging the property of the propert and indirect discrimination is How me establishment see us in Neville and a state and a state marginal far too ndical. Dorein's house Carlo was been Oxford and and something that Inverse days after mandrige educated And half of shouldn't be invoked with But Supplem was killed to resurre the control of the state of the control of the c for the Government come from members of ethnic minorities go again, it wasn't awo sets of chambers out of 330 who either say that race is not a until a number of at the bar. All this privilege and problem or appoint people to international solutional solutions and side of the problem of appoint people to international consult with who they know are speakers came to offer the problem. very safe and won't challenge offer their support

taking the clothing of the PATION IN THE LAWRENCE provide a turning point. The report received size But that is more PERSONALLY AND PROFES has enabled British



was the fifth

PW: [Nodding]. It is about their reality. Our own communirouting Black and Asian people were around.

Their reality. Our own communities would still prefer that we very still the still prefer that we very still prefer

that the White media came alive We knew it would society to hold up a

when it held its firs meeting, less than month after the murder

tion at the lip service paid by the Metropolitan Police to equal opportunities and race relations.

• In September 1994, the BPA was officially bunched at New Scodand Yard, London.

Its overall aim is to improve the working environment of Black staff members. This is being

achieved through: Working towards equality

 Providing a social network
 Assisting in policy development Providing a support network Working towards improving the recruitment of

Black staff and reducing premature resignations • Improving the relationship between the police and

Currently, it has over 200 members. Paul Wilson will stand down at the BPA's AGM which will be held next week on Monday 25



THE SOCIETY OF BLACK LAWYERS (SBL)

incaring profile.

quickly. Coincidentally, the

BPA was formed around

the time of Stephen's

death. We had our first

meeting within weeks of

Stephen's murder. We

came together in April

place in March. The subse-

lack of publicity didn't

environment we were

operating in at the time

was influenced by internal

media and internal pres-

sures, so we probably had

a laundiced view around

• To pursue the achievement of true equality of opportunity and equal access to justice for ethnic

In 1986, Nelson Mandela agreed to be SBL's

the society to a range of high profile family campaigns including The Joy Gardiner Campaign. The Rolan Adams Family Campaign and the Stephen Lawrence

In November 1995, the society hosted Race for ustice, the first international conference on crimina justice for ethnic minority community organisations

 SBL was one of the founding organisations of the Anti-Racist Alliance (ARA) and the Lawyers Against Racism Group (LARG).

 Last year in December, the SBL and the Community Advice Project held the first ever Anglo-USA conference on race hate crimes

SBL has over 500 members.

HOW HAS THE MACRUER SON REPORT SHAPED THE WORK AND VISION OF YOUR ASSOCIATIONS

PH: Strategically, we have decided stay and progress. that we have to be self-financing and more community-based. The legal WHEN ARE WI ower is £14 billion a year. To get a legal slice of that means we have

SEE BLACK AND ASIAN WOMEN AT THE HELM OF YOUR ASSOCIATIONS?

improving the working environment, women come on based and are for our Black personnel. The report developed, we will not more beforeard, has gone a long way but not nearly far enough in terms of desemblying the condition of th

successful in getting onto the list of Black councillors for the GLA. Like many, I was told about the briefing for ethnic minority candidates a week after it had happened. It was kept



singular event in British Great minds: Wilson and Herbert both feel it's a fundamental weakness of Black organisa-Black history that has tions to have one individual representing the whole organisation moved us forward so

from crime. We will also give advice is the issue of visibility. Also, we men immigration adjudicator and 1 do to become an important business resource for the Black community. We need greater ethnic representation in Parliament and in the forthcoming Greater London Assembly 1993 and the murder took (GLA). We are going to form a Black wish to have the profile. place in March.The subsequent investigation and the within the Crown Prosecution Service and a Black and Asian Judges impact on us at all. The and Magistrates Association.

PW: What the Macpherson report. There are two women on the execu- and am still called upon to speak at has done for the BPA is give us a ref- tive at the moment. Black women face conferences. I have to look at my erence point and a strong sense of dual discrimination in the police ser- career in the Met and propose mose direction. It has given credibility to vice and elsewhere. Black males tend for the next stage which is chief what we have said for years. There to be in stronger positions and have inspector. I want to progress within what was happening. I felt was a school of thought that claimed access to certain parts of the organisation and I need to give frustrated, but that is how we were unnecessary. We could never sation. When we formed, there were that aim quality time, I am feeling a bit we have always felt. There dismantle those negative views on too few women at the time with the jaded so need to step back and let wasn't this great liberal air our own. Having said that, we still necessary experience. But until we others have the opportunity to do

to Black and Asian elders. We want confer to type and can be a victim of what I can in that position of influour own mannerisms. We are quite ence. I would like to sit as an assis-

week's AGM. It will recommend that people in all organisations.

happy to take centre stage and be in tant recorder in a crown court and the limelight. So it is about us moving chair an employment tribunal part aside, myself included. Like Paul said it time. It is about trying to affect is about bringing people forward who change wherever I can and have a career at the same time.

PW: I am tabling an amendment PW: I definitely want to do some for the BPA's constitution at next research into the barriers facing Black three seats are reserved for women. happy to act on a consultancy basis