

4. PLENARY: NATIONAL ISSUES AND CAMPAIGNS:

The cross-regional groups reported to the plenary group on their discussions. There were 6 groups and all came out with similar results. After plenary discussion of these, unanimity was reached on the following as national campaigns:

- \* Call up - this would be under the banner of Peace and Friendship but would not overtly focus on the Freedom Charter.
- \* Namibia - This would be in the context of destabilisation.
- \* Civil War/Sebokeng
- \* Youth - this was the area of least clarity. It was felt that the campaign should happen for about 2 weeks in June.

There was extensive discussion on youth ensuing. It was explained that the United Nations had declared 1985 International Year of Youth under the theme: Peace, participation and development. The focus would be on 'Third World' countries. UDF and the Church has an IYY Committee, also the State. Thus, there are both progressive and reactionary forces working on IYY. It was stressed that there are a number of youth groups that are not being reached at all. Cape Town said that youth is becoming an increasingly important constituency for its ECC, this having arisen organically. It was felt that the IYY and ECC theme or focus were compatible, for example there was a youth anti-war rally in Cape Town in September. ECC brings very specific skills and understanding to other organisations, and it was felt to be important, particularly for ECC profile, to link the youth theme to other campaigns. Other centres agreed that youth is important, but said that this was taken up differently in different regions. It was suggested that ECCs slot this into a number of other foci happening through the year.

It was resolved that ECC take youth up nationally around the middle of June, given that the UDF National Youth Week and the Church IYY National Day of Action is happening around this time, to get the most out of it. It would also serve as a prelude to action around the call-up. Otherwise, regions should focus on youth whenever appropriate.

After this session, previous groups were welded together in twos to discuss plans for the 3 main campaigns:

- \* Youth and Call-up
- \* National Day of Protest
- \* Namibia

5. PLENARY: REPORT BACK ON PLANS FOR NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS:

(i) Youth and Call-up

Republic Day looks like it will be 'celebrated' again and there is a need to counter this.

- \* May 29 - blitz schools with a national pamphlet
- \* May 30 - poster stand in town
- \* June 1 - public event to be regionally defined, eg. Rock the Republic concert.
- \* June 16 - 26 - National Council is to discuss plans for this week. Plans need to be made well in advance as this will be a very busy period.
- \* July - call up - a national pamphlet will be needed, as well as national slogans for a picket. Letters

to the authorities and the press should be written. The National Council should also discuss the question of the possibility of a peace march by C.O.s around this time.

The media people in each region should note the media needed.

(ii) National Day of Protest (September 3)

\* Objectives: to focus on civil war.

to build popular feeling for the demand: 'Keep Troops out of the Townships'.

to challenge people facing call-ups.

as an expression of solidarity with those faced by the military in the townships.

\* Timing: a) Reactive (i.e. response to an invasion) - particular regions can initiate this.

b) Commemorative - Parliamentary Defence Debate  
Sharpeville  
Sebokeng

\* Preparation: There needs to be close contact with what is happening in the townships, and there needs to be media packages.

\* National Campaign: a) reactive - creative protest action

\* national picket

\* street theatre

\* vigils

b) commemorative - public meetings, close press liaison, letters & opinions in the press.

- \* National media campaign: (it is important that this be targetted)
- exciting posters
- pamphlets for schools and parents
- graffiti
- national slogan (to the effect 'Keep Troops out of the Townships')
- stickers

There needs to be close co-ordination with the national organiser and the National Council.

(iii) Namibia (reactive)

The national organiser will be in contact with people in Namibia, and will get the input back to ECC. This will help with the Namibia campaign. In the event of something flaring up there, the national organiser and the National Council need to work out:

- \* the feasibility of launching the campaign
- \* the slant of the campaign and slogans
- \* allocate regional work
- \* regulate press releases.

Resource material is needed NOW. The issue needs to be hooked into other campaigns, the costs of war, civil war, destabilisation, 'call-up for what' and so on.

Other times at which a campaign could be launched are around Hurley's trial in February, and on Namibia Day August 26. The latter could be planned at the conference in July. The former should be the particular responsibility of Johannesburg as that centre has access to the affidavits, international press agencies, and the trial is in Pretoria.

The programme for the year thus stands at:

February (18)	Hurley and Namibia
May (29 & 30)	Republic Day
June (16 - 26)	Youth Focus (tie in with UDF and call up)
July (1st week)	Church IYY focus
August (26)	Namibia Day
September (3)	National Day of Protest (Sebokeng)

After this session, regional groups met to elect a national organiser; reps. to the committees on media, theme and July Conference; and two National Council reps.

6. PLENARY: REPORT BACK FROM THE MEDIA, THEME AND JULY CONFERENCE COMMITTEES:

(i) Media

This committee did not report back to the plenary session, but the following is a summary of its discussions.

\* Two media contacts in each region were appointed:

Cape Town - Margo and Basil

Jo'burg - Jon and Anne

Durban - Fiona, Gary and Vernon

\* The possibility of a national media meeting at the end of April was discussed.

\* Distribution was discussed as a priority area - finances would be dealt with through the national account.

\* Centres are to inform each other immediately of any bannings.

\* Cape Town is to send the other centres all the media they have

produced thus far (i.e. examples thereof), so that orders can be placed.

- \* Projects:
  - \* letterhead - CT is to send a draft around
  - \* logo - CT is to send a bromide to the other centres
  - \* badges - JHB is to send around the designs by the end of February
  - \* national pamphlet for schools is to be ready by the end of April. Everyone is to do drafts and think up slogans by then, these will be priority mailed around the country and a decision made.
  - \* national pamphlet for the caII up is to be ready by the end of May, and the same as above applies.

(ii) Theme

'Peace' is the linking word in IYY, NUSAS, and the UN's themes. A flexible slogan is necessary to draw people broadly into ECC: We call for an end to conscription, We call for a just peace in our land. Any bit of this can be used. Other slogans may be appropriate in particular campaigns, eg. Sebokeng: civil war.

(iii) Conference

It was felt that this should be more along the lines of a festival. It would be held for a night and a day. There would be a big open day with a high profile speaker giving the opening address, and small interest groups looking at specific aspects of militarisation and conscription. A high profile speaker would also end the conference. A broad range of people and anti-militarisation groupings should be encouraged to attend. Motions tabled at the conference should be released to the press. These would be motions of the conference and not ECC. The aim should be to get people from the affiliate organisations, signatories

and from the public to hear the major speaker. He/she would be a drawcard and an important contributor. Academics would be important to target, and reasonable academic input would be useful. A small, closed gathering of ECC activists could meet either directly before, or after the conference. It was felt that July would be a good time because it was vac time, and any later would mean towards the end of the year.

The problems raised with this was that COSG's conference was also in July in Cape Town, and NUSAS July Festival was in Jo'burg. It would be easier to organise in Cape Town as there would be good press coverage and enough workers. However, there were possibly more gains to be made in Johannesburg in terms of drawing more members of the public. This is to be discussed in the regions and reported to the National Council. Gains and resources should be looked at particularly in making this decision. National Council needs to have an answer by the end of February.

During the course of discussion, it was felt that a night and a day was too short if so many people were to be transported from one end of the country to the other. The argument countering this was that the idea was more to attract people in the particular region it is held in. Moreover, neither Cape Town nor Johannesburg felt they could undertake a bigger conference. A question was raised as to how the ECC conference would relate to the COSG conference. It was felt that there need not be a clash or overlap as a broad range of people would be expected to attend, and it was mainly a show of strength.

It was recommended that towards the end of the year, National Council plan for next year and take decisions about Conference. Reservations were expressed about July as many activists would be rushing from one conference to the next, having just had a very busy time as regards the youth focus, and the call up action. (There is the SACC, NUSAS, COSG, ECC conferences as well as the possibility of another Botswana Arts Festival) The regions must assess this, report to National Council and a decision would be taken by the end of February. Cape Town is to inform the other ECCs of the dates for the COSG and NUSAS conferences by the middle of February.

#### 7. ELECTIONS:

Motivations for the nomination of Laurie Nathan were put to Conference. Laurie Nathan was unanimously elected national organiser. Some reservations had been expressed regarding Laurie's lack of experience with the Churches. Steve Lourie is the Catholic War and Peace National Worker, and he is to liaise with Laurie.

The National Council reps are:

\* Cape Town: Benita (main rep)

Peter/Jon

\* Jo'burg : Mike (main rep)

Paula/Beaver

\* Durban : Sue

unsure of back up person, but this would be a rotating position to be changed every 6 to 12 months.

## 8. PFP DEBATE:

Johannesburg outlined its reasons for challenging the PFP to a debate on conscription, and Cape Town outlined the difficulties it had with contact with the PFP. There was discussion on the possible implications of Johannesburg going ahead with its debate. The resolution was that debate is a confrontation, not co-operation and has as its intention a 'view to conversion'. Therefore debating with the PFP is not the same as giving the PFP credence or legitimacy. It was decided that ECC nationally would not take a policy decision in this regard, although Cape Town ECC has already decided not to have contact - formal or informal - with the PFP. Each region must assess the position in this regard as it is faced with the problem. A lesson learnt was that any decision taken must be thought through in all its implications.

## 9. GENERAL:

Christians for Justice and Peace: This is a regionally-based programme and therefore regional ECCs may be touched by it. It was an initiative of Church people who have picked up on an appeal by Archbishop Hurley at the 1983 SACC Conference. He called for Christians to come together in small groups, and to network these groups towards the end of transforming South Africa into a more just society. A small group has started to translate this call to Church action in the last 18 months. The National Commission of Church Leaders has looked at this, and subsequently set up a National Research Committee with a part-time fieldworker.

The programme envisages Christians throughout South Africa trying to encourage small groups to form networks, and sometime during 1987 to have a big Christian Conference, which will bring together these groups, sharing experiences and ideas, and going out to mobilise more Christians. Groups are being set up in Johannesburg and Cape Town and possibly other centres as things develop. A group has already been set up in Durban. The focus is on Christians, but not necessarily those within the Church. ECC might find it useful to link in with these groups, and the contact will keep ECC informed on the different positions of the Churches and enable it to choose who it wants to work with.

United Nations Commission on Human Rights: This is to be held in Geneva in March and will be discussing the adoption of conscientious objection as a fundamental human right. People will be coming from all over the world to give evidence. Richard will be attending the hearing, and speaking about the state of conscientious objection and opposition to militarisation in South Africa.

Messages of support: Archbishop Hurley passes on his regards, prayers and support. Mike Van Graan sends his greetings of solidarity and support.

#### 10. EVALUATION:

Some useful points to come up in the evaluation were:

- \* to exchange regional reports before the conference so as not to waste time reading them there, and to give people time to

think of questions and comments.

- \* regions need to have ongoing assessments
- \* reports need to be more indepth and analytical as opposed to descriptive.
- \* more time for outdoor activities
- \* some social event
- \* to look at this evaluation in planning next year's conference.
- \* to get press coverage of the conference

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