

**AD14**

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# SADF into townships

In the past two months over 160 people have been killed in the townships of the Transvaal and Eastern Cape. Progressive organisations accuse the government of provoking civil war, and of using the SADF to crush popular demands. Following the Vaal stay-away a blanket ban was imposed on reports on the use of troops in the townships.

Some of the facts of SADF involvement are:

October 6 - The army patrols townships in Port Elizabeth and Grahamstown. Law and Order Minister, Louis le Grange, flying over the strife-torn Vaal, announces close cooperation between army and police in "controlling unrest".

October 8 - The army moves into Soweto to assist in police operations.

October 23 - "Operation Palmiet" - 7 000 troops invade the township of Sebokeng at 3 in the morning. All exits are sealed. 354 people are arrested, most of them for pass offences. There are accusations of brutality: 60 people are treated for injuries.

October 24 - The 7 000 strong force moves into Sharpeville and Boipatong townships.

November 5, 6 - In the Vaal and East Rand half a million workers stay away from work. In Ratanda the residents force the community council to resign.



The SADF moves into Tembisa and Tsakane townships: people barricade the roads with stones, old cars and burning tyres. 24 people are killed.

November 10, 11 - The SADF moves into Grahamstown's townships with arm-

oured troop carriers. Two deaths are reported. Armoured troop carrier ploughs into taxi - kills four people.

November 14, 15, 16 - Nearly 2 500 people arrested in Sebokeng, Tembisa, Sharpeville, Daveytown and Katlehong.

## SADF-65% conscripts

The SADF consists of 83 400 full-time soldiers, according to the "Military Balance" issued annually by The International Institute for Strategic Studies. Conscripted national servicemen contribute 32 300 soldiers to this figure.

The troop numbers for 1984/85 are down by 9 000 on the 1981/82 estimate of 92 700 (66 100 national servicemen). The South West Africa Territory Force is listed separately, and credited with 14 000 soldiers.

## Buddhist precedent for Board

The Board for Religious Objection has refused to grant Buddhist, Dave Hartman, a Rhodes University graduate, religious objector status. The Board referred Mr Hartman's application to the Supreme Court because it felt that while his beliefs were "sincere and honest" they did not fit the definition of "religious" as understood by the Board. The Board's definition of religion required belief in "a supreme being or beings of divine nature".

A Free State Supreme Court judge will have to rule on the acceptability of the claim.

According to Dr Jan Hofmeyer, a lecturer in the Department of Religious Studies at UCT, who appeared as an expert witness for Mr Hartman, the Western sense of religion which implies belief in a supreme being, is not necessarily applicable to Buddhism. Dr Hofmeyer testified that to question whether that is a supreme being is considered wrong in Buddhist belief, for it does not necessarily lead to the state of nirvana.

Two Cape Town teachers, Mike Roux and Ronald Louw, were granted alternative service at the recent Board sitting in Bloemfontein.

## ECC firmly on the map

"We are now on the map," said an End Conscription Campaign spokesperson after the October launching of the campaign in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban.

"We attracted widespread support both at our meetings and in the number of people and organisations endorsing our declaration.

"Our public and press profile has consequently increased substantially. What we are saying can no longer be ignored."



He added that the energy that the right-wing National Student Federation was putting into combatting the campaign nationally through distributing a glossy "The Soviet Union needs you - 'End Conscription'" pamphlet, putting centre-spread ads in the Sunday press and even attending ECC meetings to wave the flag, "was a compliment to the impact the campaign had had."

# ECC national take-off

The Declaration to End Conscription was launched by the End Conscription Committees across the country during the month of October.

Creative and exciting projects were used to take the message 'Cancel the Call-Up' to thousands of South Africans who up till now have simply accepted conscription as inevitable.

## Cape Town

1 000 people packed the Claremont Civic Centre on 15 October to hear Rev Allan Boesak and Black Sash national chairperson, Sheena Duncan, address the Cape Town launch.

"The glorification of war and destruction can only have a bad effect on the hearts and minds of our people. Haven't we suffered 300 years of oppression? Do we have to add more hatred?" Dr Boesak asked the meeting.

"More than R3 000 million is spent on war, destruction and violence, while little money is spent on decent education for our children and decent housing for our people."

Sue Williamson of Women's Movement for Peace spoke of her fears of her son's call-up. "I dread the day when my son is called on to lift his hand against the people of Soweto."

Dr Ivan Toms, principal medical officer at Empilisweni Sacla Clinic in Crossroads, stated his position clearly. His daily working experience brought him to the position where he must say, "that no matter what the consequences, I could never put on my SADF lieutenants uniform again." "How can I go into the townships to oppress the very people I feel called upon to serve," he asked.



Rev. Allan Boesak speaks in Cape Town.

Cape Youth Congress Vice-President, Trevor Oosterwyk said that CAYCO members would never allow themselves to be conscripted.

The meeting ended with the adoption of the Declaration to End Conscription.

The build-up to the launch included a press conference, a "Rock the Rattel" concert, a church vigil and pickets.

## Durban

UDF lawyer Zac Yacoob, Rev Wesley Mabuza and ex-objector Richard Steele spoke to 200 people at a public meeting launching the campaign in Durban on Sunday 28 October.

The launch was preceded by a workshop on the Saturday to which 15 interested organisations came. This good attendance was seen as very encouraging by the Durban committee.

Durban will host a national ECC meeting in January where questions like direction, national co-ordination, a possible 1985 Youth Focus to coincide with International Year of the Youth and general ECC policy will be thrashed through.

## Johannesburg

The Transvaal Launch of the ECC declaration began with a press conference at Khotso House on 17 October. Kate Philip, Nusas president, Beyers Naude, Dr Kistner of the SACC, Helen Joseph and Dave Webster of DPSC, spoke.

The speakers stressed that in the escalating civil war, with troops in the townships, increased violence was not the way to bring about a just peace. They emphasised that apartheid is the fundamental cause of the conflict and that the SADF is defending apartheid and thus contributing to the intensifying civil war. Each speaker then declared their full support of the declaration and signed it.



Helen Joseph addresses JHB launch

The press conference was almost upstaged by visiting British MP, John Anderson, who chose the same venue for his press conference, and ECC had the doubtful privilege of seeing our Spring Fair posters on TV news as the background to Mr Anderson (!). Needless to say, SABC TV did not report the ECC press conference, but newspaper coverage was good, with the spotlight focussed inevitably on Beyers Naude and Helen Joseph.

Helen Joseph spoke at the Spring Fair held two days later at St Anthony's Church in Mayfair, as well as an. Sheena Duncan of the Black Sash presented the only formal speeches of the afternoon with Sheena explaining the basis of the call to end conscription putting it in the context of the Civil War. Benita Pavlicevic, ECC chairperson introduced the speakers, and gave a brief history of the ECC campaign.

The afternoon was divided between educational films and videos, explaining the crisis in Namibia, and resistance to militarism; and cultural events such as a powerful drama by Mike van Graan, songs by David Schmidt, and break dancers from Bosmont - displaying great vitality and rhythm and much enjoyed by all.

The fair was also successful in bringing the affiliate organisation together: Nusas, Jodac, Neusa, Cosg, Wap, SAIRR, CATH soc, YCS, Matrix, Black Sash and ST

# End Conscription Campaign

Amidst mounting public debate "Objector" approached an ECC spokesperson about the motivation behind the campaign.

The End Conscription Campaign, which unites a range of church, women's, student and human rights groups, bases its call upon the following:

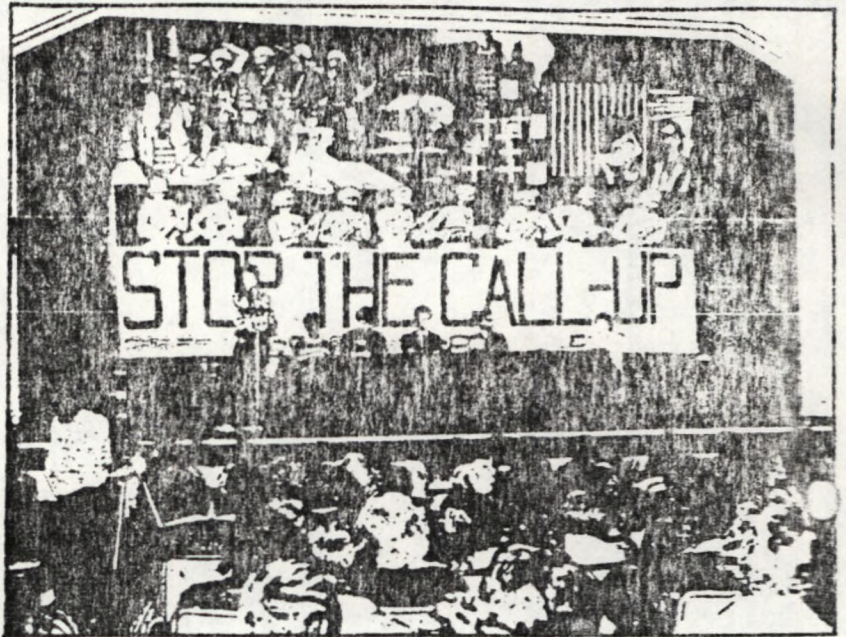
- 1) Conscription intensifies the violent conflict in our society. This conflict is engendered by a political system which denies most South Africans basic human rights. It is not the result of some external "total onslaught".

South Africa is confronted by a civil war. Attempts to stop this by compulsory conscription, by increasing defence budgets and by sending the army into Sebokeng and Sharpeville only result in escalating violence and further division. Conflict can only be resolved by dismantling the apartheid system and recognising all South Africans as full citizens.

- 2) Conscription prolongs the war in Namibia. South Africa's occupation of Namibia is illegal in terms of international law. The Catholic and Anglican bishops, the Namibian Council of Churches and many other church and human rights groups have called for the withdrawal of South African troops and immediate elections supervised by the United Nations so that the people of Namibia can determine their own future. Forcing people to fight in Namibia will slow down this process.

- 3) Conscription violates a human right - the right of any individual to refuse in conscience to render military service and be granted instead a non-military alternative. Present conscription does not recognise this right. The Defence Amendment Act of 1983 imposed a harsh and punitive six year prison sentence on all conscientious objectors who are not religious pacifists.

- 4) Conscription conditions South Africans to accept the growing militarisation of our society - ever higher defence budgets at the expense of better housing, equal education, less poverty; the intrusion of the military into all areas of life, even to the highest levels of political decision-making; destabilisation, raids into neighbouring countries; army involvement in resettlement. In short, military solutions to political problems.



Claremont Civic Centre packed to capacity for Cape Town launch.

## ECC: Where has it come from?

1983

MARCH : Bill comes before parliament lengthening the maximum prison sentence for conscientious objectors from two to six years.

Black Sash national conference calls for an end to conscription.

JULY : The Conscientious Objectors Support Group decides at their national conference to initiate a national End Conscription Campaign.

NOVEMBER : 12 organisations represented at the inaugural meeting of ECC in Cape Town. Similar committees are set up in Johannesburg and Durban.

1984

MARCH : ECC workshop decides on the drawing up of a declaration and the collection of endorsements.

Conscription surveys start nationally on university campuses and at churches.

MAY : Namibia focusses in Cape Town and Johannesburg with public meetings; extensive media and picketing; church vigils; campus concerts and press conferences.

OCTOBER : Launch of the End Conscription Campaign and Declaration nationally

- public meetings in Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg over 1000 people drawn to a meeting addressed by Boesak in Cape Town.
- concerts and press conferences in Johannesburg and Cape Town.
- media campaign and picketing.

# NAMIBIA:

Objection to service in South Africa's army has focussed on the role of the SADF in Namibia. Widespread allegations of torture and intimidation on the part of the security forces have been made. In Namibia itself citizens have refused conscription into the South West Africa Territory Force (SWATF). They argue that it is an army of occupation waging war on the people it supposedly protects. What are the implications of South Africa's continued presence, amidst mounting dissatisfaction from many quarters?

## Torture and Intimidation

"If the army is our protector, who will protect us from the the army?" (Ovambo 'saying')

South Africa presents its rôle as protecting the people of Namibia from arbitrary acts of terror by SWAPO, and fighting to maintain stability under threat of Communist subversion. It is strange, then, that this "love of justice" needs to be asserted through what appears to be a reign of terror directed against the local population.

Though journalists are barred and Koevoet keeps no records, there is extensive evidence of torture. Reports have been given by South African conscripts who deserted because they could not stomach SADF atrocities, and there are the sworn statements from victims. The institutionalisation of torture means that this practice is not casual not occasional, but generalised. People who are arrested face a considerable probability that they will be tortured.

Dr Paul Wee of the Lutheran World Ministry reported from visits to Ovamboland

that 'there is no doubt that the primary source of this escalation (of terror activities) is the South African army. The evidence of South African army brutality among all segments of the population is overwhelming, pervasive and capable of documentation. It makes a mockery of the South African government's claim to be 'responding to the request of the Ovambo people for protection'...' "It is the South African army together with units of the home guards (Koevoet and SWATF) who are responsible for harassing, intimidating and blackmailing the population.....it is they that deserve the name terrorists."

The SA Bishops Conference stated in 1982: "The Security Forces stop at nothing to force information out of people. They break into homes, beat-up residents, shoot people, steal and kill cattle, pillage stores and tea rooms. People are blindfolded, taken from their homes and left beaten up and often dead by the roadside. Women are often raped."

The situation along both sides of the Angolan border is, if possible, worse. Trevor Edwards, a mercenary of 32 Battalion who says he left in disgust with the wanton killing and torture, describes SA strategy against the border civilian population to eliminate SWAPO support: "Our main job is to take an area and clear it - we sweep through it and we kill everything in front of us, cattle, goats, people, everything. Sometimes we take the locals for questioning. It's rough. We just beat them, cut them, burn them. As soon as we're finished with them, we kill them."

The past year has seen no break in this pattern. In November 1983 a Kavango man, Andreas Kapitango, age 63, was roasted over a fire by SWATF soldiers, and had to have his right arm amputated. Members of Koevoet were found guilty of murder, attempted murder, rape, armed robbery and assault in February; their behaviour was defined as criminal because they were off duty. Are we to deduce that "on-duty", it would be acceptable?

The routine intimidation continues. In March over 1 000 Ovambos were rounded up at gunpoint and forced to answer questions as to whom they would support in elections, SA or SWAPO.

In August Hans Rohr, leader of the Namibia Christian Democratic Party, gave evidence of atrocities by SA troops against civilians in Kavango, including abduction, widespread arbitrary killing, frequently of children; the razing of a village and "disappearance" of many people.

If such methods are needed to keep South Africa in Namibia, how can this war of occupation be justified? It has become morally outrageous; how much more suffering will be inflicted before independence inevitably takes place?



# OCCUPATION CONTINUES

While state violence has been South Africa's main strategy in the Namibian conflict, it has been used in the context of initiatives to delay independence and undermine SWAPO. On the one hand SA has sought to "Namibianise" the conflict by incorporating local black police and military units. The SADF has been used in a more "civil action" manner to increase its popularity. On the other hand an extremely aggressive policy of destabilisation has been applied to Angola, attempting to extract concessions from SWAPO and the MPLA. At the same time South Africa seeks ways to bypass the UN independence plan, resolution 435, by forming an anti-SWAPO internal front. Despite these moves SWAPO clearly has a wide support base amongst the Namibian people, and their popularity has been increasing. South Africa has recognised that SWAPO is present in "all walks of life", including the churches, amongst professionals, academics, the media, and even some internal parties. SWAPO has become indistinguishable from the local population who support it. This has forced the South African government to recognise the war as unwinnable.

## 'Namibianising' the conflict

South Africa's strategy to displace the conflict onto black Namibian units has several implications. While shortening the "white" fatality lists and thus reducing desertion back home, it has also served to divide the population to South Africa's interest.

In September 1979 the South West Africa Territory Force (SWATF) was formed out of earlier black battalions (31 and 41 Battalion, plus those of Kavango, Ovamboland and East Caprivi). Not only does the SADF remain in charge of war operations, SWATF's budget also comes from Pretoria. SADF troops are seconded to SWATF.

Today the SWATF is 20 000 strong, operating as an extension of the SADF. In the event of SA's withdrawal, the continued existence of a pro-SA military presence is assured. The label of "police" attached to Koevoet also has serious implications, as it exempts them from potential restrictions on military presence

in the country. There is no doubt that these units will pose considerable problems for any post-independence government.

In January 1981 compulsory conscription for black Namibians was introduced. Opposition was widespread. 1 000 people met in protest under the "People's Action Committee". A wave of young Namibians went into exile. They refused to fight as "brother against brother" in a war against their own people. Eric Binga was the first to take his case to court. The case was lost and is currently on appeal.

Taking up the call to end conscription, the newly formed Namibian National Students' Organisation (Nanso) has come out in support of the South African End Conscription Campaign (ECC). Nanso's president writes: "Young South Africans are dying at the border in an undeclared war." He asks, "How can this war end while the cause is still here among us?"

viewer replied, "You don't agree with their aims, but the people do?", to which the lieutenant answered, "Yes, this is the problem; this is what the war is about."

## Civil Action

The SADF's admission of the 80 percent political/ideological factor in the war is translated into their practice of civil action. Military personnel have played an increasingly civil/political role, filling the infrastructure of the operational area as doctors, teachers, administrators etc. This is coupled with a "hearts and minds" campaign, designed to counter the negative effects of state violence. In 1977 an SADF spokesperson stated: "We want to win the favour of the local population . . . I believe it is in the interests of the local population that we tell them what is right and what is not right, and not the terrorists . . . we do not agree with their aims." The inter-

## The War Goes On

SA has used Angola as a means to block the implementation of Resolution 435. By actively bolstering UNITA and simultaneously calling for a Cuban withdrawal to precede disengagement, the Angolan government has been caught in a 'no in' situation. Such posturing has been impossible without American support. Reagan's government has violated the UN resolution by giving SA succour and credibility in its claimed role of arbiter in Namibia. While negotiations continue, the disillusioning prospect of an SA engineered stalemate looms.

## WHY FIGHT NAMIBIA'S PEOPLE ?



## Dissent in the Ranks

Nevertheless, SA's presence in Namibia is increasingly unpopular amongst their own conscripts and white support base. SADF counter-intelligence reports reveal their chief fears and problems within the ranks. "What is really disturbing," it says "is the damaging of military equipment by military personnel which could indicate sabotage, particularly if the negative attitude of certain conscripts is taken into consideration . . . here, political convictions do play a role." There is warning of "the increasing use of dagga and drugs, especially among conscripts, which makes such people susceptible to manipulation by the enemy" and also "all forms of immorality".

In South Africa, hesitation has followed the rising death toll of young SADF conscripts. The editor of Rapport was prompted to ask whether Namibia was worth the loss of life and capital, when SWAPO shows little sign of weakening and the world community considers SWAPO will inevitably gain power? Indeed, he asked: was there any alternative to letting Nujoma ultimately gain power?

How long will the people of Namibia have to wait before SA leaves them in peace? For how long will South Africans be forced to fight in this senseless, unjustified and brutal war?

# 'END CONSCRIPTION' IS THE CALL

Namibia campaign



Anton Lubowski, Mike Evans and Hans Rohr at the press conference: CPT, May 1984.



Pastor Kameeta in St. Georges Cathedral. "The SADF has no right to be in Namibia without the consent of the people there."

ECC press conference



Earnest discussion at the COSG conference.

COSG July conference



...and the party at the end of it all.

A packed Claremont Civic Centre at the CPT ECC launch

ECC launch Jhb.



Rhythm against conscription!

C.T. launch



NUSAS table at the ECC fete

Rightwing NSF heavies arrive and are well behaved.

CIVIL WAR STARTS IN THE SCHOOLS

NEUSA

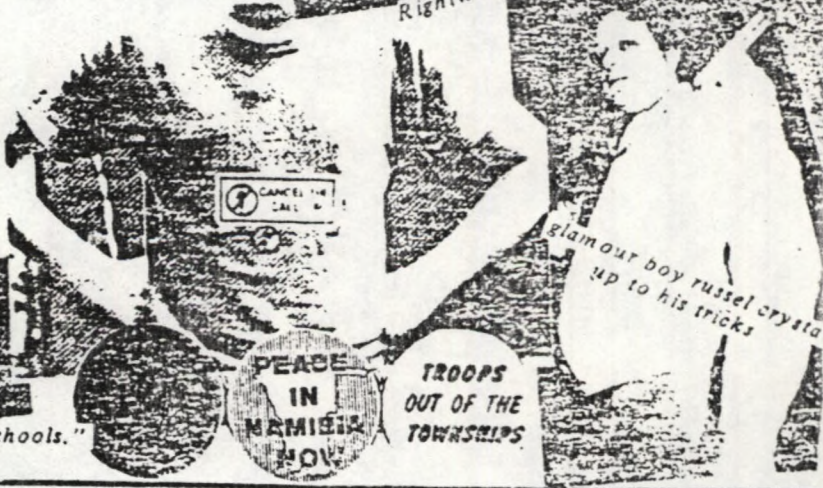


"Civil war starts in the schools." NEUSA stall at the fete

PEACE IN NAMIBIA NOW

TROOPS OUT OF THE TOWNSHIPS

glamour boy russel crystal up to his tricks



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