

ECC WC ASSESSMENT

88.4.B

The following points are an attempted summary of our position on various questions for the purposes of reporting back too other regions. We will also be getting reports from other regions over the next week. This is an attempt to establish a common basis for discussion about the future of ECC. The points included here are by no means conclusive or exhaustive, and are merely areas or categories that CT has discussed over the last month or so.

- 1.) We have assessed the state's intention in the State of Emergency to be to stop legal mass work. Thus we understand the state intends to continue to make it illegal/impossible for us to campaign in the way we have in the past i.e. mass meetings, legal pickets, pamphlets, posters, WJP projects etc.
- 2.) The state included ECC in its general onslaught on progressive organisation because of our success in mobilising the white community against conscription, against particular actions of the SADF and against the military solution in general. At the same time ECC managed to mobilise whites in favour of other paths - peace, non-racialism, etc. The government felt that potentially or actually we could cause a significant rift in the white community around these issues.
- 3.) The state has had some measure of success, at least temporarily in silencing the legal opposition to their policies.
- 4.) We feel it is not a given that the state is able to close off all legal space. Thus we have prioritised a process of 'testing' the legislation. This means we embark on particular action that is, or could be, legal in an attempt to set legal precedents. This may entail being taken to court by the state and winning the case, or it may entail the state ignoring particular actions we embark upon because they don't feel confident to win it in court. In either of these cases we will have opened up 'legal space' in which we can continue to work.
- 5.) Within this 'testing', new forms of work, or ideas for work have come up. Firstly there is the low profile work amongst our immediate support base and secondly work that entails initiative from other, more protected groups (individuals or organisations). Our responsibilities in this area are to keep in close contact with our so called 'VIP' supporters and potential supporters, and to stimulate initiatives in other organisations. Note: These are new emphases, and the implication is not that we stop testing the established forms of our work.
- 6.) The slogan that characterises much of our public work is the demand for ECC to be given the right to oppose conscription. This can only be a limited and temporary slogan and must be a stepping stone towards work which actually challenges militarisation.
- 7.) Alongside this we are preparing to discuss the education of our activists. This is likely to be an emphasis of our work, particularly if we are denied space to do much public work.
- 8.) We have considered, and are preparing to consider in more depth the long term future of ECC. We will know when to make decisions about radically altering our course by constantly checking whether we can achieve anything worthwhile in the current conditions i.e. by testing the regulations.



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