

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Present: Women for Peaceful Change Now, <sup>Diakonia</sup> Anglican Justice and Reconciliation, National Community Servers Group, Conscientious Objectors Support Group, NUSAS, Joint Academic Staff Assoc, Idasa, Organisation for Appropriate Social Services in SA, Durban Democratic Association, R Goldman.  
Apologies: PFP

2. RECAP ON DEVELOPMENTS TO DATE, AIMS AND BACKGROUND

Since at least the mid-1970's there has been evidence of dissatisfaction among the white public with the system of compulsory military service for white males. The most consistent call in response has been for the concept of national service to be broadened to include non-military forms of service.

In the last year of its existence the ECC began to place stronger emphasis on this call, something it had first put to the Geldenhuys Commission in 1985 and elaborated in a meeting with the SADF in May last year. Also in 1988 three conscientious objectors were jailed, fuelling unprecedented public debate about the need for, and value of alternative forms of national service.

Following the restriction of ECC, organisations in Durban concerned with the militarisation of society and conscription established a forum for coordination among themselves. This forum gave rise to a Working Group on ANS in November which was comprised of concerned individuals. In February the ANS Working Group reconstituted itself as an independent forum representative of organisations.

The separation from the original Militarisation Forum was necessitated for three reasons. Firstly ANS is supported by a wide range of interest groups, for a variety of reasons, not all political. Secondly the ANS Working Group involves participation on the basis of support for ANS and does not imply or assume any interest with other militarisation issues. Thirdly the ANS Working Group has the explicit objective of initiating a campaign for ANS through having the relevant legislation amended.

A similar ANS Group was formed in Cape Town just prior to our own with very similar objectives, representing a similar range of organisations. We should keep in contact and look for areas of mutual support.

3. READING OF REPORT DRAWN UP BY CAPE TOWN ANS WORKING GROUP

See attached report

Issues arising:

It was agreed that organisations needed to make a commitment to the issue of Alternative Service before agreeing on the organisational form any Alternative National Service (ANS) campaign takes.

It was raised that if we are going to have people actually own what we do we need to use document from Cape Town as starting point but need to add to or delete from it if necessary.

It was agreed that the working document is sent out with the minutes as the basis for discussing within our organisations:

- a. The system of alternative service and what it should look like.
- b. An ANS campaign and what it should look like

#### 4. PROPOSED SEMINAR FOR ORGANISATIONS

The idea of a seminar was raised which would focus peoples attention on the idea of an ANS campaign. People present agreed.

Someone mentioned the need to spark enthusiasm within our organisations around the issue of alternative service, it was felt that such a seminar would do this.

It was also agreed that the seminar would be for people from our own constituencies plus wider organisations and not for the public.

The following purposes of the seminar were agreed upon:

1. Looking at present alternative service system
2. Understanding what the problem is eg universities talking on brain drain  
and why we have it.
3. To consolidate understanding of the function of this organisational forum.  
plus the aims of an ANS campaign

The question was raised of some kind of publicity coming out of such a seminar.

**SPEAKERS :** 1. Have a panel of four speakers speaking for four minutes on how they have experienced the existing system of alternative service to be a problem.

2. Have someone who has been doing research on the problem present us with the data

3. Have two international speakers paint the international picture.

**WHEN:** Some time between the 8th and 11th of May.

#### ORGANISATIONS TO INVITE

The Following were mentioned in a brainstorm, organisations should suggest others.

Valley Trust, NICRO, Catholic and Methodist Justice and Reconciliation structures, National Medical and Dental Association, National Association of Democratic Lawyers, Durban Youth Congress, Natal teachers Society, Child Welfare Societies, Representative bodies of the professions, Lawyers for Human Rights, Black Sash, Red Cross, St Johns Ambulance, FAMSA.

#### 6. REPORT ON TOUR OF WEST GERMANY

Rob Goldman has just completed a tour organised by war resisters. He highlighted two interesting points.

Firstly, he as a South African had been challenged as to why were we lobbying for alternative service. There is a strong call in Europe for total resistance of all conscription whether military or non-military. There experience of alternative service is that it has neutralised anti-military work. In West Germany there are 60 000 who do alternative service but who have no power in challenging nuclear weapons.

The second point was that he had been invited to a Seminar in Amsterdam on the question of Europeans, or South Africans with access to European citizenship serving in the SADF. There were representatives from seven European countries present. It is becoming a growing issue on Europe.

Next meeting will be on the 25 April at 7.30 in the Diakonia Meeting Room.

**Collection Number: AG1977**

**END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)**

**PUBLISHER:**

*Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive*

*Location:- Johannesburg*

©2013

**LEGAL NOTICES:**

**Copyright Notice:** All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

**Disclaimer and Terms of Use:** Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of paper documents and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.

This document is part of a collection held at the Historical Papers Research Archive at The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.