
COMMITTEE ON SOUTH AFRICAN WAR
RESISTANCE
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LONDON WC1N 3XX
UNITED KINGDOM
TEL/FAX: 071-733 3478

29 August 1990

End Conscription Campaign
PO BOX 537
Kengray
2100
South Africa

For attention: Roddy Rayne, National Organiser

Dear Roddy

The weather here is still surprisingly good; we wait however for more rain strange as it may seem. London gets really smoggy without rain to clear the air, and besides we haven't seen any substantial rain for at least 6 months.

The two issues that you need information on, namely the safe return campaign and the future of COSAWR/Resister, are detailed in separate reports. These have also been sent to the ANC in Johannesburg and London, and the Return report has been forwarded to the SACC/SACBC Returnees Programme.

There are some questions to answer, both from your fax and from the report that Jason Askew made from the meeting he had with you in Johannesburg. The answers are detailed below:

1. INVOLVING FRIENDS/FAMILY

Most of the individuals returning have a strong desire to be left alone for a couple of days upon their return. This is why the idea of decentralised regional press conferences has not been received as positively as one might have wanted for the campaign. All of those returning want a press conference at Jan Smuts, and then to be left to their own devices. We suggest that this be the only press conference for the group. There would be no problems with getting the individuals to address meetings or receptions in the days following their return.

2. RESISTER/COSAWR

We will produce the final issue, in its current form at the end of the year. For reference I have included a preliminary note from the final issue that addresses the question:

From **Our Last Issue**:

'This issue of Resister - the 67th - is also the last, unless the magazine re-emerges in a new form inside South Africa. With the return to South Africa of the first group of exiled war resisters, and the closure - except for administration - of COSAWR, it has become impractical to continue producing the journal. But the main reason for ceasing production is political.

We believe we are now entering a new era of struggle, in which the shape of a new South Africa will be determined not so much by the actions of the international community, but by South Africans themselves. Most of the Resister staff are returning to South Africa.

*We believe Resister has done its job of raising international awareness about the militarisation of the South African regime, gaining international support for the South African war resistance movement and spreading COSAWR's ideas and knowledge in South Africa itself. Conscription is not yet abolished, and apartheid is still in place, but we believe we are well on the way to ending both in South Africa (see *The Way Forward*).*

.... We hope that the ideas spread by Resister will live on and bear new fruit. We also hope that our readers will understand that our ceasing production is not a step backwards, but a result of the new opportunities and conditions springing from the advance of the struggle for peace and freedom in Southern Africa.'

With regard to COSAWR and in addition to the attached report I am adding these notes from a preliminary article:

From **The Way Forward**:

'In the past year the face of South Africa has changed dramatically. The legalisation of the ANC and other organisations and the opening of the way to negotiations have created the possibility of a reasonably peaceful transition to a non-racial and democratic society.

But peace does not yet exist. The tasks of what can broadly be termed the war resistance movement are far from over.

Although the ANC has suspended its armed struggle, and the government and the ANC have jointly called for an end to violence from whatever quarter, the government is continuing with its military build-up and the police are unrestrained in their attacks on the people.

Issues which need to be addressed by all those who are campaigning against violence and militarism are:

- * Conscription, which remains in place;*
- * The continued huge defence budget and the SADF's ongoing rearmament drive;*
- * Centralised political-security control through a thinly disguised new version of the National Security Management*

System;

- * Secret activities by the Police Security Branch and organisations like the Civilian Co-operation Bureau;
- * Links between sections of the military and police and ultra-right wing organisations;
- * Police violence and support for vigilantes, especially Inkatha;
- * The future of the armed forces, their relation to political authority and their democratic transformation. '

3. FUNDING/FUTURE COSAWR STRUCTURE

Our funders will not be approached for funding following an appeal for sponsorship for the returnees. They will be receptive to funding applications from the ECC, and we will ask them to support your work in the context of our winding down of operations. A list will be passed on to you personally.

COSAWR will continue to operate a postal address, meet regularly and address issues as they arise. It will not be able to do the work we are currently doing w/r/t campaigning, research etc. Advice w/r/t asylum will still be available although we strongly advise against going into exile.

4. FRESH ANSWERS TO REFUSING TO SERVE

Difficult to address organisationally, and individuals tend to have better answers. There is no correct thing to do, as it must surely be acknowledged that there is as much work to do in the SADF (democratisation) as there is outside it.

The ability to use refusing to serve in the current situation as a mobilising tool for the ECC/COSAWR is obviously limited.

5. COSAWR's POLITICAL CONCEPTION OF THE RETURN

It is a small party of individuals, best described and termed an advance party. It is not a mass return.

It can lead the way, if successful, for exiled war resisters to benefit from the Pretoria Minute i. e. to gain indemnity from prosecution. This will in effect, advance the ending of conscription of individuals who refuse to serve in the present defence force. The dangers of an indemnity are that politically motivated individuals will get it and conscription of 17 year olds will continue... this couldn't continue for too long however as the contradictions will soon be exploited by everyone.

6. EMPLOYMENT/ACCOMODATION/COUNSELLING

No specific arrangements should be made. If any specific needs arise we will inform you.

7. LINKAGE WITH SACC/SACBC RETURNEES PROGRAMME

We will communication links, but in the interim with no *ensure* indemnity for exiled war resisters the return has an active ingredient. The return itself is a political act and we must work seperately to advance the issue of ending conscription.

8. COSAWR IDEAS FOR PUBLICITY/MEDIA

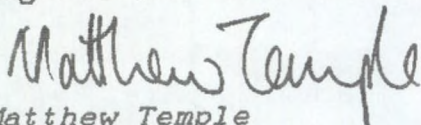
We are happy with the ideas that have been put forward by you, except for the regionalised press conferences. The emphasis in the publicity is more important than what is done. This is that it is an advance party that could lead to the return of most exiled war resisters and the ending of conscription itself.

So to summarise all the points raised in this letter and the two reports:

1. COSAWR office closing/Resister production ending due mainly to practical considerations.
2. Return of advance party end November which we hope can lead to indemnity, return of most exiled war resisters, ending of conscription.
3. Huddleston International Register/liason with international war resisters should be taken on by ECC. This is to keep them in touch with important developments w/r/t their ability to return home without fear of prosecution.

I hope this covers all the issues which need attention.

Regards and best wishes to all



Matthew Temple
COSAWR-UK Administrator

COSAWR

Committee On South African War Resistance

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(attn COSAWR)

ECC NATIONAL EXECUTIVE
PO BOX 537
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2100
SOUTH AFRICA

2 APRIL 1990

Dear friends

We have in the past few days heard the good news that David Bruce and Charles Bester may soon be out on bail. Hopefully our efforts to consolidate any advances in ending conscription will not be thwarted or fudged by the state not coming out into the open on the question.

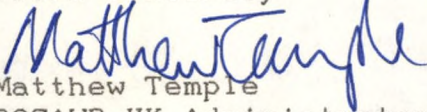
Anyway I write primarily in the context of our earlier letter dated 6 March 1990 (~~a copy included~~) requesting formal contact and relations with the ECC.

At our March committee meeting we discussed strategy for winding down COSAWR. This raised some important issues and we feel that it is vital that this process is not initiated without consulting with yourselves and the ANC.

Assuming that a return by war resisters to South Africa happens, then our primary office worker will also be returning leaving us with a situation where we no option but to wind down COSAWR. There will however remain a need for asylum advice and for international campaigning. One suggestion was that the ECC could take over our work and establish an international office in London.

Consultation with the ANC will take place soon, but in the meantime this issue needs to be discussed. We had thought that it might be possible to send a delegate to your upcoming conference in May, but speaking to Mandy today I gather that the dates clash with the Lusaka conference. Hoping to hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely


Matthew Temple
COSAWR-UK Administrator

The End Conscription Campaign
P.O.Box 537
2100 KENGRAY
SOUTH AFRICA
Phone: (011) 8368423

Monday 23 April, 1990

COSAWR
Attention: Matthew Temple
P.O.Box 2190
London WCIN 3XX
UK

Dear Matthew,

Many thanks for the reports and letters that we have been receiving from you. What follows are some responses from ECC to the issues raised by COSAWR.

1. Formal Relations

ECC would like to establish formal relations with COSAWR. The issue was raised at our national committee meeting and the meeting strongly endorsed the position that we should be developing as much contact as possible with COSAWR. We would appreciate COSAWR's ideas on what formal relations should entail.

2. ECC National Conference

Date: 24 - 27 May, 1990
Venue: Moddepoort, OFS
Theme: "Building the future; not fighting it"

It would be wonderful if a COSAWR member could attend the ECC conference, as we would really value your input in the crucial discussions about the future direction of the war resistance movement. In addition, one of the key issues on the agenda is support for returning exiled objectors.

We enclose a draft programme of our conference. If it is at all possible for a COSAWR person to attend, we would want that person to participate in the workshop on Objection and we would want the person to give a 10 minute input on COSAWR in the plenary entitled International Update.

3. Return of Exiles

My earlier letter indicated the national committee's very positive response to the possibility of a joint and public return by objectors. Here are some additional thoughts that have emerged in regional discussions around the issue:

- such a return could play a crucial role in increasing pressure on the state for a change in the system of conscription. Accordingly it would be good to link it to an internal campaign creating a hype around the issue before people return.
- it would be best if the action happened as soon as possible. Whilst people have thought that the return should be co-ordinated with ANC returns, (particularly viz a viv objectors getting publicity around their return), it has been thought in order to maximise pressure on the state, the returns should not be simultaneous.

The Jhb ECC has recently set up a sub-group looking at possible support work for returning exiles. They have been investigating creating public awareness around the position of exiled objectors, before objectors begin returning. Some of their ideas are:

- * stimulating debate around the issue in the press via articles and adverts. (The idea of asking Moira Levy to write an article for the Weekly Mail on exiled objectors came up.)
- * Adverts by exiled objectors could be placed in the major newspapers before some of the pending objector trials. The adverts could state:
 - that objectors want to return. They are prepared to contribute and help build a new South Africa but they are waiting for a sign from government, that they will not be persecuted if they return. The advert could reiterate the call for the phasing out of conscription, and the interim implementation of a system of alternative service.

The group would value feedback from COSAWR on the above ideas. It will not start implementing any of its ideas until it gets some go ahead from COSAWR.

4. General

- * Forthcoming trials:

27 April

David Bruce appearing in JHB Magistrates Court. Matter will be remanded as the magistrate who initially sentenced David is on leave. Charles Bester is still in prison, having decided not to apply for bail, until after David has been resentenced.

14 May

Douglas Torr (JHB)
Michael Graaf (appearing on 26 April and requesting a remand until 14 May. Appearing in PMB.)

16 May

Gavin Kirk: Appearing in Jhb on a failure to report charge.

28 May

Richard Clacey (PMB)

Gary Rathbone (JHB)

- * Parliamentary question asked by DP: Are white ANC and SACP members liable for military service? The answer, a definite "Yes".
- * I enclose an update for international supporters on SA war resistance issues. Please copy and circulate as widely as possible.

Many thanks and keep in touch.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mandy" with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mandy Taylor
for ECC National

COSAWR

Committee On South African War Resistance

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(attn COSAWR)

1 March 1990

Dear Friends


A brief reminder of the consultative conference which takes place on SATURDAY 10 MARCH at the Jackson Lane Community Centre, 269a Archway Road, London N6. Please note the earlier starting time of 1pm.

An outline of the timetable is printed overleaf. As we have a lot to get through during the course of the afternoon please try to get there before 1pm.

There are a number of further activities coming up in the weeks following the conference details of which follow:

1. Workshop on SADF experiences- the COSAWR research group is holding this to document experiences people have had in the SADF. Anyone who has served or knows friends who have served are welcome to come along. **Sunday 18 March at Jackson Lane Community Centre from 1.30pm-4.30pm.**
2. Campaigning meeting- to look and plan action to raise the profile of war resisters in SA and abroad. **Monday 19 March at 9 Poland Street W1 (Oxford St Tube) from 6.30pm-9.30pm.**
3. National Demonstration- assemble Hyde Park 12 noon for a rally at Trafalgar Square 2.30pm-4pm on Sunday 25 March. Walter Sisulu invited to speak.
4. Resister planning meeting- to discuss Resister 65 and plan the next issue. **Monday 26 March at 9 Poland St W1 from 6.30pm-8.30pm.**

Regards


Matthew Temple

TIMETABLE FOR CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE

1. Welcome and intro from chair (1pm-1.15pm)
2. Address by Richard Steele/Jacques Boule on current priorities and strategies of internal war resistance movement. (1.15pm-1.30pm)
3. Address by Prograssin Naiker on ANC views on war resistance work in current period. (1.30 pm-1.45pm)
4. Address by Gavin Cawthra on COSAWR history and current position. (1.45pm-2pm)
5. Brief question and answers (2pm-2.30pm)

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6. Break into 4-5 groups to discuss the following agenda:

I. WAR RESISTERS RETURNING TO SOUTH AFRICA

- a) possible positive effects of publicised return
- b) ways to ensure maximum positive effects.
- c) possible negative effects of publicised return
- d) ways to minimise negative effects.
- e) non-publicised return of individual war resisters.

II. THE FUTURE OF WAR RESISTANCE IN EXILE

- a) when do we stop our work as an anti-conscription and anti-military force in exile? when political objection to service is accomodated, ie asylum is no longer possible as a CO leaving SA or when a transition of power is real?
- b) until such time as COSAWR ceises to function what should its priorities be?
- c) should the current way COSAWR is structured and the way it functions change?
- d) what should be the nature of links to groups in South Africa be?

III. FUTURE ISSUES

- a) is a anti-militarisation focus necessary in a future South Africa? if it is what form should this take?
- b) what protections are necessary for individuals in a future system of possible conscription for national service?

Maximum: 90 minutes (2.30pm-4.00pm)

7. Tea break from 4pm-4.30pm whilst group leaders who have made notes on the group discussions get together to prepare report back to meeting.
8. Report back to meeting by group leaders and further discussion. Agreement on press release and programme of action (4.30pm-5.30pm)
9. Any other business including dates of further meetings (5.30pm-6pm)

Thursday 27 October, 1989

Dear Matthew

Hi! I hope all is going well for you and other COSAWR people. I enclose a general update on war resistance issues happening here. If you need more information, particularly re the register, please ask. COSG now has an office and telephone so contact should be easier and hopefully from our side will be more regular.

I have two requests: The first is about Resister. Would it be okay to send copies to each of our branches. The addresses are:

JHB	CT	DURBAN
P.O.Box 591	P.O.Box 13032	COSG - The Ecumenical Centre
2100 KENGRAY	7700 MOWBRAY	St Andrews Street
		4001 DURBAN

Many thanks.

The second request is about the register, and particularly the idea that there could be an overseas equivalent, co-ordinated through London. People this end have expressed great support for the idea, especially if it could include objectors from a number of countries eg. Canada, Australia, Zimbabwe - as well as Europe and England. Does it seem feasible from your side? We were planning on press actions every so often when the SA register reaches a certain number and thought that during the February call-up would be the best time for our next major action around the register. If an overseas register could be launched at the same time it might be a very effective way of maximising the input of both.

What might be best is if there is a central address in London that people could send forms to. We could then post forms to exiles that we know of and they could post them back to that address. I enclose a copy of the form that has been used in SA. Incidentally, this weekend, this form will appear in some local newspapers and we will be asking any men who have come to similar decisions not to serve, to complete the form and return it direct to the custodians. It might be an idea to place a similar ad in the Weekly Mail at a later stage, including a London address, so that exiles who receive the WM can be

drawn in.

It would be great to hear from you re the above - its feasibility, timing, how we can help, etc.

We had a very exciting national conference two weeks ago, pulling together all the organisations working in the anti-militarisation field. The issues were quite difficult and we did not reach clear consensus on the way forward except that we all agreed that there is an urgent need for a new national organisation, focussing on conscription, and that we must now embark on a thorough process of consultation with a broader range of people. So the next few months will see quite a lot of low key consultative work and then hopefully in June or so next year, the launch of a new organisation. We will keep you informed.

Dave Schmidt gives notice to the Dept of Manpower and CT City Council at the end of October, and will be stopping his community service at the end of November. He is considering working for the new initiative - particularly helping with the consultative process - whilst the state decides whether or not to prosecute him. His stand is very different from the stands of other objectors and so has to be strategised quite carefully, but we will be linking it in to a Christmas focus calling for the release of objectors.

Doug Torr has still heard nothing from the SADF, following his August refusal, and he has now decided not to push them. He will reassess in six months time if he has still heard nothing from them, but in the meantime has put campaign plans on hold - which is why I haven't mentioned his stand in the general letter.

My job is going well. The national conference of two weeks ago kept me hectic and now I'm sure that the consultations around the new organisation will also keep me very busy. Please give my love to Roger and other COSAWR people, and I do look forward to hearing from you with regard to the above matters.

Keep well.

COSAWR

Committee On South African War Resistance

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MANDY TAYLOR
ECC/COSG
PO BOX 537
KENGRAY 2100
SOUTH AFRICA

3 MAY 1990

Dear Mandy

I write primarily to give you details of the campaign which we have launched. Included with this letter are copies of our campaign leaflet and the petition. I have further included 2 t-shirts which were produced for the signatories of the Huddleston International Register.

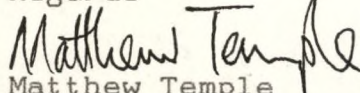
We are meeting tonight to discuss whether or not to send someone to the ECC conference, and as soon as a decision is reached I will inform you.

Aside from the postcards which will be sent to South Africa, we hope that our petition will travel with the group of returning war resisters towards the end of the year. If the ECC and COSG are able to get further signatures in South Africa that would be great for us.

The letter by Graham McIntosh (an old PFP MP ?) in the Weekly Mail of April 27 - May 3, touches on some issues that are no doubt coming under debate within the war resistance community. The question of support for SADF occupying townships as a 'neutral peace keeping force' remains contentious.

Its my personal opinion that it is extremely dangerous for us to be supporting the SADF involvement in areas such as Natal. It deflects the attention that must be drawn to transformation of such state structures.

Anyway we'll be in touch soon
Regards


Matthew Temple
COSAWR-UK Administrator

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END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)

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