

The meeting felt that the campaign itself should be launched early next year, but that the inaugural meeting of the committee should take place within a month. The meeting felt strongly that the type of work which was needed before the inaugural meeting was education of the members of the constituent organisations on the militarisation of South African society and the broader implications thereof. The COSG representatives said the COSG would be in a position to do this kind of work, and assist wherever necessary, as they had much experience in this field.

6. It was decided that the interim committee could operate until the launching of the committee, and one of their functions would be to inform other bodies particularly the churches who were not present at this meeting. After discussion it was decided that the name of the committee would be the End Conscription Committee.

The date for the inaugural meeting was set for November 17, to be held in the Rondebosch Congregational church hall at 7.30 pm.

### END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN

The End Conscription Campaign is launching its declaration against conscription on Monday 15th October.

A press conference will be held to introduce members of the press to the campaign.

Date : Monday 8th October  
Time : 1 pm  
Venue: Metropolitan Methodist Church, cnr Church  
and Burg Streets

Five prominent individuals will indicate why they have endorsed the declaration, and members of End Conscription Committee will be present to answer questions.

Panel members will include:

Revd Doug Bax, active for many years in the conscientious objection movement.

Mrs Mary Burton, chairperson of Black Sash.

Prof Jakes Gerwel, professor of Afrikaans and Nederlands UWC  
(unconfirmed)

Dr. Ivan Toms, Crossroads doctor and conscientious objector.

Prof Mike Savage, professor of sociology at UCT.

For further information please contact:  
Michael Evans 47-7407 (chairperson)  
Richard Goode 47-3758

## THE ECC DECLARATION LAUNCH

### PUBLIC MEETING

DATE : Monday 15th October  
TIME : 8.00 pm  
VENUE : Claremont civic centre  
SPEAKERS: REVD ALAN BOESAK, president World  
Alliance of Reformed Churches  
MRS SHEENA DUNCAN, Chairperson Black Sash

Plus statements, short play and a slide show on the declaration

### PRAYER VIGIL FOR AN END TO CONSCRIPTION

DATE & TIME : Friday 12 October at 1 pm to  
Saturday 13 October at 1 pm  
VENUE : St Michaels Church, St Michaels  
Road Observatory

The vigil will end with a communion service at 12 noon on Saturday the 13th

### "ROCK AGAINST THE RATEL" CONCERT

DATE : Tuesday 9 October  
TIME : 9.00 pm till late  
VENUE : UCT Yellow Level

Bands will include the DYNAMICS, BACK TO NORMAL and SOCIAL CAMOUFLAGE

### OTHER ACTIVITIES

- \* PICKETS - "CANCEL THE CALL UP" and "NO TO APARTHEID'S ARMY" will be held on Friday 12 and Monday 15 from 4.30 to 6.00 pm
- \* MEDIA will include a publication, pamphlets, a display, banners, T shirts, badges, a slide show and posters
- \* A CULTURAL ROAD SHOW ON CONSCRIPTION is being taken to organisations

## THE END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN - A SHORT HISTORY

In March 1983 the Black Sash passed a motion at its annual conference calling on the government to end compulsory conscription into the South African Defence Force.

The Black Sash call was taken up by a range of church, womens, student and human rights organisations late last year. 18 organisations came together as a response to the escalating violence in the sub-continent, the threat of extension of conscription to coloured and indian youth and the harsh Defence Amendment Act.

Similar committees were set up in Johannesburg and Durban.

The major activities of the committee so far have included a survey of the attitudes to conscription amongst students and church-goers, educative programmes, and a two-week focus on Namibia, which was highlighted by a visit of Advocate Lubowski, Mr Hans Rohr and Pastor Cornelius Kameeta.

The ECC is now embarking on a new phase of its campaign - the launch of the declaration against conscription.

### ARGUMENTS WHICH UNDERLIE THE ECC'S OPPOSITION TO CONSCRIPTION

- 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 can 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.

## ECC MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

Anglican Board of Social Responsibility  
Black Sash  
Catholic Justice and Peace  
Catholic War and Peace  
Civil Rights League  
Conscientious Objectors Support Group  
Methodist Christian Citizenship Department  
National Union of South African Students  
The Ecumenical Action Movement (TEAM)  
United Democratic Front - Claremont, Gardens and  
Observatory area committees  
University of Cape Town Students Representative Council  
Western Province Council of Churches  
Womens Movement for Peace  
Detention Action Committee (observer)  
United Womens Organisation (observer)

Over 40 organisations have endorsed the declaration. Besides the above these include:

South African Institute of Race Relations (Western Cape)  
South African Council of Churches  
Evangelical Lutheran Church  
United Congregational Church of South Africa  
Quaker Church  
National Catholic Federation of Students  
Congress of South African Students  
Cape Areas Housing Action Committee  
Cape Youth Congress  
Organisation of Appropriate Social Services in South  
Africa

A range of prominent individuals have also endorsed the ECC declaration. Besides those appearing at the press conference, these include:

Revd Alan Boesak  
Sir Richard Luyt  
Bishop Orsmond  
Dr Margaret Nash  
Prof David Welsh  
Prof Francis Wilson  
Dr Oscar Wollheim  
Revd David Russell  
Mr Peter Moll  
Mrs Noel Robb  
Mrs Di Bishop, MPC  
Mr Brian Bishop  
Mr Keith Gottschalk

## TOWARDS A JUST PEACE IN OUR LAND

### A Declaration to End Conscription

We live in an unjust society where basic human rights are denied to the majority of the people.

We live in an unequal society where the land and wealth are owned by the minority.

We live in a society in a state of civil war, where brother is called on to fight brother.

We call for an end to conscription.

Young men are conscripted to maintain the illegal occupation of Namibia, and to wage unjust war against foreign countries.

Young men are conscripted to assist in the implementation and defence of apartheid policies.

Young men who refuse to serve are faced with the choice of a life of exile or a possible six years in prison.

We call for an end to conscription.

We believe that the financial cost of the war increases the poverty of our country, and that money should rather be used in the interests of peace.

We believe that the extension of conscription to coloured and Indian youth will increase conflict and further divide our country.

**WE BELIEVE THAT IT IS THE MORAL RIGHT OF SOUTH AFRICANS TO EXERCISE FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE AND TO CHOOSE NOT TO SERVE IN THE SADF.**

**WE CALL FOR AN END TO CONSCRIPTION**

**WE CALL FOR A JUST PEACE IN OUR LAND**

A CAMPAIGN TO END CONSCRIPTION

Rationale

For the past few years the churches and many organisations from NUSAS to COSG, have been struggling to get the government to recognize the right of any individual to refuse, in conscience, to do military service, and for appropriate alternative service to be provided for them instead, be their grounds religious or secular, pacifist or just war. This came to a head earlier this year when the government in the Defence Amendment Act made it very clear that they would not recognize the right to C.O. outside the narrow grounds of religious pacifism and imposed very punitive penalties on objectors.

At the COSG national conference in July, where Black Sash, NUSAS and SACC inter alia, were also represented, delegates decided to adopt the "call to end conscription", which had first been made by Black Sash earlier in the year, as the most appropriate way of responding to the new legislation. "If the government is not going to allow the human right of C.O. then we have little option but to call for an end to conscription."

Also in its favour was that it is legal to campaign to end conscription. The provisions of the Defence Act make most critical discussion and reporting on military matters, and any suggestion that people refuse to render military service, illegal.

The COSGs in the different areas were mandated to convene an "end conscription committee" in their area.

Aims

The campaign is unlikely to meet with much success in ending conscription. Its aim is primarily educative and awareness-raising. Issues like Namibia, the vast resources spent on "defence" at the expense of housing, drought relief, etc, the increasing political influence of the military, and the pervasive attempts to indoctrinate the population with a military/national security ethic, etc would necessarily be the focus of the campaign and could be brought to public attention by, for example,

petitions, public meetings, pamphlets, creative use of the press, seminars, and so on. Hopefully the campaign will have a certain broad appeal and will enable us to draw in a substantial number of people outside the organisations represented on the committee.

There are also a number of demands we can make under the umbrella of an end conscription campaign where some progress is possible. e.g.

- 1) that the compulsory registration of white males at 16, cadets and veld schools be made optional or require parental approval.
- 2) that alternative national service be reduced in length and extended to all conscientious objectors.
- 3) that conscription not be extended to "Coloureds" and Indians. In this area especially, it will be necessary to link up and liaise with organisations in these communities. This is a particular challenge of the campaign.

The campaign is being initiated in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town and hopefully elsewhere. The first steps will be to get the campaign off the ground early next year. Before this constituent organisations need to educate their members about militarisation and its consequences.



## END TO CONSCRIPTION MEETING

Clearly a campaign to end conscription is unlikely to meet with much success in ending conscription; at least in the immediate future. Its intention is primarily educative and awareness raising. ~~And~~ Hopefully the campaign will have a certain broad appeal. Many politically inactive South Africans are dissatisfied with being conscripted or having their sons or spouses conscripted, ~~or~~ <sup>further</sup> there is the ~~with the~~ threat of conscription to other race groups. This will enable us to draw in a substantial number of people outside of the organisations represented here.

There are a number of demands we can make under the umbrella of an end to conscription campaign where some progress is possible.

Firstly, that the compulsory registration of white males at 16, without any potential consent or personal choice, be revised. Perhaps, parents could insist that their approval be necessary, before any registration form is signed. It is interesting that registration is the only occasion when 16 years olds are considered legal adults.

Secondly, another closely related area is the question of military indoctrination and the cadet system, and here action and demands from parents about what they are not prepared to tolerate in schools, ~~have~~ <sup>possibilities</sup> could have decisive influence in

OPPOSING MILITARIZATION IN SCHOOLS.

THIRDLY, IT ~~IS~~ WILL REMAIN IMPORTANT ~~TO~~ FOR US, TO CONTINUE TO INSIST THAT ALTERNATE SERVICE BE EXTENDED TO ALL C.O.'S.

FOURTHLY, THE SPECTRE OF EXTENDED CONSCRIPTION LOOMS ON THE HORIZON, AND THE CAMPAIGN WILL HAVE TO DEMAND THAT THIS DOES NOT HAPPEN. IN THIS AREA, IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO LINK UP AND LIASE WITH GROUPS IN THESE COMMUNITIES, AND THIS IS A PARTICULARLY CHALLENGING <sup>ASPECT</sup> OF THE CAMPAIGN.

RETURNING TO EDUCATION — IN CALLING FOR END TO CONSCRIPTION, WE ARE ~~POSSIBLY~~ POSING VERY SHARPLY THE QUESTION "WHY IS THERE CONSCRIPTION?" IN ANSWERING THIS QUESTION WE WILL HAVE TO STUDY THE SADF AND THE EXTENT OF ITS ACTIVITIES. THIS WOULD INCLUDE THE ROLE OF THE SADF IN

\* NAMIBIA — AND WE COULD PERHAPS STRENGTHEN THE CALL OF CATHOLIC AND ANGLICAN BISHOPS THAT SA TROOPS BE WITHDRAWN FROM NAMIBIA

\* THE ROLE OF THE SADF IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE COUNTRY

\* THE DESTABILISATION OF NEIGHBOURING STATES

~~→ A LOOK AT THE QUESTION OF~~

~~\* THE NATIONAL PRIORITIES — WHICH SEEMS TO~~

\* A LOOK AT THE QUESTION OF NATIONAL PRIORITIES;  
~~BE~~ THE PRIORITIES SEEM TO BE SOLDIERS  
INSTEAD OF PEACE LOVING SOUTH AFRICANS,  
QS'S & RATES INSTEAD OF HOUSING.

SOME IDEAS OF ~~TAL~~ ACTIVITIES FOR THIS COMMITTEE  
INCLUDE

— PETITIONS, PUBLIC MEETINGS, FACT SHEETS, THE  
DRAWING IN OF  
A ORGANISATIONS ~~DRAWING IN~~ TO SUPPORT ~~OF~~ THE  
CAMPAIGN, EDUCATIVE WORKSHOPS FOR CONSTITUENT  
ORGANISATIONS, <sup>ENSURING PUBLICITY IN THE PRESS</sup>  
~~USING THE PRESS FOR PUBLICITY~~,  
SUPPORT FOR OBJECTORS, AND IN VIEW OF THE  
ABSENCE OF ALTERNATE SERVICE, SUPPORT FOR  
EXILES.

WORKING PRINCIPLES OF THE WESTERN CAPE END-CONSCRIPTION COMMITTEE

1. This committee is brought together on the common understanding of the harmful effects of compulsory military conscription and increased militarisation on our lives and our society.
2. The committee believes the SADF is active in upholding injustice in our society.
3. The committee shall consist of a formal representative plus observers from each constituent organisation.
4. The function of the committee will be to decide on and co-ordinate a campaign against enforced conscription.
5. In order to effectively oppose conscription, education should take place within constituent organisations as well as the community at large.
6. This committee will liase with similar committees to co-ordinate the campaigning nationally.

**Collection Number: AG1977**

**END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)**

**PUBLISHER:**

*Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive*

*Location:- Johannesburg*

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