

CASSINGA MASSACRE, ANGOLA, 4 MAY 1978

The Cassinga Massacre marked South Africa's first large-scale attack on Angola after the SADF's invasion and defeat at the hands of Angolan troops in 1975/76.

On the 4th May 1978 the SADF launched an airborne attack on the Namibian refugee camp at Cassinga, a town 240km north of the Namibian border. Mirage fighter planes strafed and bombed the camp. Two hundred paratroopers then assaulted the camp, overwhelmed its defensive unit and proceeded to hunt and kill unarmed women, men and children for six hours. By the end of this atrocity they had killed 147 men, 167 women, 298 children and 12 soldiers. In addition 689 people were wounded and some 200 taken prisoner. The captured were taken into detention without trial in Mariental, southern Namibia. They continued to be held there for six years until, under internal and international

pressure, the authorities released them in mid-1984.

At the time of the massacre the South African press carried reports which relied solely on SADF information sources: the SADF had achieved a massive victory over thousands of 'SWAPO terrorists'. When the truth started filtering into South Africa via overseas newspaper reports and photographs of mass open graves, the SADF then admitted that women had been killed and acknowledged that "Many of our troops said afterwards that it was hell to have to shoot women" (*Sunday Tribune* 7.5.78).

TEN YEARS LATER

Ten years down the road nothing much seems to have changed. In contravention of international law the SADF has maintained an almost uninterrupted presence in Angola. Since September 1987 there have been large troops and weaponry build-ups in Angola and

major offensives have been mounted together with UNITA.

The SADF would be unable to pursue its policy of aggression in other countries without the use of conscripts, and as a net result they and their families have borne the brunt of suffering. During the current offensive which began in September 1987 at least 39 conscripts have been officially acknowledged killed in Angolan action. Most were in their teens or early twenties.

The father of one twenty year old conscript who died deep inside Angolan territory said "My son got a raw deal. [He] had no choice in the matter. It is so unfair to send young boys who have not even had the chance to mature to the front line. Our young boys leave school, get called up for service, train for three months and then face rocket fire while the PF are sitting behind desks controlling from a distance." (*Sunday Star* 15.11.87)

The ECC believes that conscripts should have the choice.

SADF Destabilisation in Southern Africa

Respected political analysts have long recognised the South African Government's policy of destabilisation of its Southern African neighbours as a strategy for imposing its dominance over the region.

Of the consequences of this policy columnist Gerald Shaw recently wrote "The cost to Southern Africa of Pretoria's successful entrenchment of white control has been appalling. The toll in civilian lives has been frightful, not to speak of destruction of the economic infrastructure of the region ... The immediate advantages for whites are plain enough. But our children will pay the price." (*Natal Witness* 14.3.88)

An Angolan example

In 1985 the South African government vehemently denied any SADF presence in Angola until a commando was captured and two were killed in a clash with Angolan troops. The captured commando later said his unit had intended to blow up a key oil depot so as to cause "considerable economic setback to the Angolan government" (*Citizen* 26.5.85) The total cost to Southern Africa of this type of destabilisation totalled over 52 billion Rand between 1980 and 1986 according to two recent estimates (*Weekly Mail* 16.10.87).



CONSCRIPTS NEED ALTERNATIVES

At the moment only a small group of conscripts, those who are religious pacifists, are allowed to do alternative service. Their conditions of service are a punitive one and a half times the maximum military service they are liable for, and it can be performed only in state, provincial or local authority departments.

Conscripts do not want to fight in wars in neighbouring countries whose sole purpose, when all is said and done, is to perpetuate apartheid rule. Conscripts are

being forced to engage in aggressive actions in sovereign Southern African states, against international law.

Conscripts are being forced to fight in defence of a fundamentally unjust system which has been declared by all major churches to be a heresy and biblically indefensible. Clearly conscripts need alternatives. They need the option to serve their community in constructive, non-aggressive ways. They should have the opportunity to do alternative service in church, welfare and community organisations for the same length of time as military service.

WELL, WHAT CAN I DO?

It may seem that there is very little that we can do. That is not true. Even the smallest contribution is important. Nothing that we do in God's name is wasted. Here are some practical suggestions.

- Have a notice based on the information in this pamphlet put on your church notice board or pew leaflet.
- Arrange for prayers to be said for the families of the Cassinga victims, for conscripts currently in Angola, and for peace in that country.
- Write to the Minister of Defence, Private Bag X427, Pretoria 0001, asking him to

withdraw the SADF from Angola, and to allow alternative service as an option for all conscripts.

- Write to the State President, Tuynhuys, Cape Town 8001, asking him to end South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia and to implement UN Resolution 435, in keeping with his governments commitment to do so ten years ago.
- Lobby your local MP to raise these issues in parliament.
- Invite an ECC churches Group person to speak at your church or small group.

You can phone us at (031) 304-5883, or write to ECC Churches Group, 56 Ecumenical Centre, 20 St Andrew's St., Durban 4001.

CHURCH

NO. 1 MAY 1986

Notes



KERNAGTIGE NOTULE VAN DIE 'KERK-GROEP' VAN DIE PRETORIA TAK VAN ECC SE VERGADERING TE 14de STRAAT 31, MENLOPARK, OP SONDAG 25 MEI OM 4.30 NM.

1. a) TEENWOORDIG:- David Bosch (Unisa), Fritz Bosch, Bibi Bosch, Dani Kokot, Bridgit Hamman, Steven Lowry (Jhb ECC), Ian Neethlinghuys, Hannes Schulz, en Ernst Zöllner.
- b) VERSKONINGS:- Ian Stevens
2. STRUKTUUR VAN ECC: - Steven Lowry van die JHB ECC het kortliks verduidelik hoe struktuur van 'n ECC-tak prakties funksioneer en wat die posisie van die Kerkgroep tov ander groepe is. David en Fritz Bosch het verskeie vrae gevra oor die wese van ECC - in hoe 'n mate ECC ook maatreëls soos bv. die nuwe 'Le Gransie-wette' kan beveg. Die vrae is deur Steve, met verwysing na die deklarasie, beantwoord.
3. SPESIFIEKE DOEL MET DIE KERK-GROEP: - 'n Algemene bespreking is gehou oor hierdie onderwerp, maar daar kon tot geen spesifieke gevolgtrekkings gekom word nie. Uit die bespreking het dit duidelik geword dat van die persone teenwoordig nie duidelik die algemene doel van die kerkgroep begryp nie. Spesifieke doele genoem sluit in: ontmoetings met kerklui in 'n poging om hul steun te wen en moontlike ondersteuning van die deklarasie; pogings om debat binne die verskeie kerke oor diensplig en militarisasie te stimuleer; ontmoetings met jeug-groepe en 'n skakelfunksie tussen gemeentes en die Raadgewende-groep. David Bosch, professor in teologie aan UNISA, het gewaarsku dat die amper onmoontlik sal wees om huidiglik debat oor diensplig in die meer Afrikaanse kerke te begin. Die rede is o.a. dat die weermag vir hierdie gemeenskappe 'n "heilige koei is", maw geen bevraagtekening word geduld nie.
4. METODES OM DOELSTELLINGS TE VERWESENLIK:- Alle persone teenwoordig het saamgestem dat metodes sal verskil tussen werk met die sg. Engelseprekende-kerke en die Afrikaanssprekende-kerke. In eersgenoemde geval het ECC sinodale steun onder van die kerke - op plaaslike en nasionale vlak - terwyl die ECC by die lidmate van o.a. die drie SUSTERSKERKE nog heeltemaal onbekend is. Ook predikante in lg. kerke is nie ingelig omtrent ECC nie.

5. ALGEMEEN:- a) Persone het hul posisies te teenoor die Kerkgroep verduidelik, dws hoeveel tyd hulle aan werk en vergaderings kan afstaan.

b) Daar is besluit dat die volgende vergadering 1 Junie sal plaasvind. Daar is nie op 'n vergaderplek besluit nie.

6. AFSLUITING:- Tee/Koffie

— 00 —

— DOVELINK —

RELEVANT ADDRESSES FOR PACIFISTS
MAY 1986

* ROB ROBERTSON
85 PRINCESS STREET
MAY FAIR
2092 JHB

* ANITA KROMBERG
+
RICHARD STEELE
I.F.O.R.
20 ST ANDREWS ST
4001 DBN

* DAVE SCHMIDT
5 MANLESON ROAD
MOWBRAY
7700 CAPE TOWN

PEACE LIBRARIES

PRETORIA →
MARIT GREENWOOD
(012) 627315

x x x x

P.E. →
HOLY ROSARY CONVENT
28 WESTERN RD
6001 PE

x x x x

PIETERMARITZBURG
PACSA, 165 PIETER-
MARIT ZBURG ST
3201

x x x x x

CONTACT ABOVE ^{NAMED} PERSONS
FOR INFO ON LIBRARIES
IN JHB, CAPE TOWN
AND DURBAN

x x x x

(PREPARED BY ANGELA +
GUDON, BFT)



Die Kerkgroep is een van die "werk-groepe" binne die ECC-tak in Pretoria.

'Church Notes' is 'n versameling kort aantekeninge oor gebeure in en om die werk van die Kerkgroep.

DIGGER UPDATE

— AN INFORMAL REPORT
ON OBJECTOR ACTIVITIES
IN BLOENFONTEIN —

"DIGGER UPDATE" IS A MONTHLY PUBLICATION- (HANDWRITTEN) ISSUED BY "THE DIGGERS", A LOCAL ~~PA~~ CHRISTIAN (PACIFIST) PEACE GROUP IN BLOENFONTEIN. "DIGGER UPDATE" CONTAINS RE-PORTS FROM THE LATEST SITTINGS FROM THE BOARD FOR RELIGIOUS OBJECTION, INFORMATION AND SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING THE WRITTEN AND ORAL TESTIMONIES BEFORE THE BOARD AND GENERAL NEWS FROM OBJECTORS' ACTIVITIES.

"THE DIGGERS" ALSO PROVIDE SPIRITUAL AND PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE TO PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE THE BOARD — TRANSPORT ETC.

CONTACT CAN BE MADE AND COPIES OF "UPDATE" OBTAINED (CHCC) FROM:

23 A WHITES ROAD
WAVERLEY
BLOENFONTEIN

9301 TEL (051) 312747 (Angela)

1. HISTORY

The Churches Sub-committee operated in Durban in 1986, but with the June S.O.E. it went underground and basically never emerged again. However, we are pleased to report that as at September 1987 the sub-comm. is alive and well. It is comprised of 12 members, 2 or 3 of whom were in the previous sub-com. and were active in ECC from its inception; while others had never set foot into an ECC event before our August '87 campaign.

Well, what happened in-between? A core group of die-hard activists with a vision committed to resurrecting the group started meeting soon after the day-long ECC planning workshop in February this year. We started from scratch, defining who we were and what our objectives were. We did a PR job with church leaders in Durban to explain who we were and to gain their support. We then had our official 'launch' into the Durban community on the 18th of June. The launch consisted of a light supper, drama, music + poetry, participatory prayer, an address, and an response and symbolic welcoming and commissioning of the group by Archbishop Hurley ~~in his~~ as representative of the churches in Durban in his capacity as Chairperson of Diakonia.

2. ACTIVITIES

Our first activity was to draw up an information brochure on who we are + what we have to offer. This was mailed to every church minister in Durban.

While we thought this was good initial publicity

3

we need to follow up with personal contact. We have only been invited to one church so far, with a promise of one or two to come.

We next organized a 'Message to Conscripts' on behalf of Durban + PMB Christians + Christian organizations. This was about a 1/4-page ad. which appeared in the Sunday Tribune on the 2nd of August, the day before call-up day. It was good to see the 'message' appear, but the lay-out could have improved a lot. The Veterans for Victory ad. ~~was~~ further back in the same paper was definitely more eye-catching than ours.

That same afternoon we held a Service for Peace to pray for all people caught up in the civil war. There was a message, prayer, songs, a candle-lighting ceremony and tea. We were disappointed at the lack of local support, despite wide-spread advertising. Security Police presence, the distribution of a smear pamphlet during the service and the appearance of an organized opposition presence all helped to disrupt the event. Nevertheless, we felt it was worthwhile, and whenever truth is in action, there's bound to be reaction!

The following day (Monday the 3rd of August) the 3½ week Fast for an end to Conscription began. Under the Apartheid Out - SADF Out theme the fast focused on conscripts, township people and Namibians and we produced three different pamphlets addressing these three groupings. The fast had a central focus at the Central

Methodist Church in town where we had a table, vigil candle etc. About 70 people participated in the relay fast, while about 10 fasted for the entire time. It was at quite a public venue and we managed to reach a lot of people with our message. This was also an opportunity to develop a working ~~working~~ relationship with other organisations - COSA, Sash, Anglican J+K and Catholic J+P.

However, we tried to do too much. The fast was too long and there were gaps in the relay, and there wasn't enough of a sense of community through it.

Our banner, Bible, and two Message Books were stolen at various times during the fast, a lot of our posters were ripped up and we had both S.B. and military attention at odd occasions. However, the lack of a serious clamp-down vindicated our strategy of testing the limits of the S.O.E. - defined 'subversive statement', and gives space for ECC nationally to be a bit bolder now.

Despite working hard on the press we got little coverage.

* see end.

Our final event was a Fast-Closing Ceremony on Namibia Day, 26th of August. We had songs, prayer, a message on fasting, a focus on Namibia and ended with bread and soup. There were about 70 people there, with Veterans for Victory strongly in evidence. They distributed pamphlets afterwards and engaged people in debate with holy zeal. The next day a lot of their posters appeared in town, including all the way down the wall of the Central Methodist. Some good street work by some of our activists ensured that they didn't see the day through!

3. THE FUTURE

The feedback we've received, as well as the reactionary forces which have come out of the woodwork in response to our activities (including an Editorial devoted to us in the August issue of Uniform) indicate that we are having an impact.

However, our assessment of where we've come so far has revealed 3 priorities for the months that lie ahead:

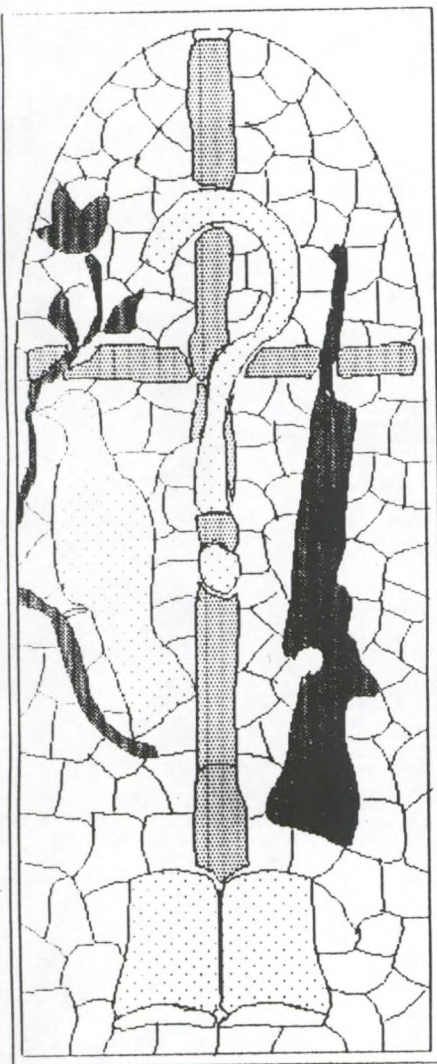
- ① we are a very disparate group, with someone new coming in at just about every meeting since we launched. A lot of us don't know each other and we need to 'gel' and build community in order to work effectively in the future.
- ② we need to strategise for our future activities generally, and we need training on how to deal constructively with disruptions of the type we've been experiencing.
- ③ we need to be pro-active and get ourselves invited to church, youth, student & social action groups.

For priority ① + ② we are planning an all-day work-shop and get-together in early November. We plan to work on priority ③ from now onwards.

* During the course of the fast we held a small house meeting on conscription in general + on Namibia specifically, and on the work of the churches group. A woman from Namibia gave input, as well as a member of our group who's visited the war zone.

SERVICE FOR PEACE

On the eve of the August 1987 Conscription Call-up, you are invited to pray for all the people affected by the South African and Namibian Civil War, especially conscripts.



SUNDAY 2 AUGUST

3:00 PM

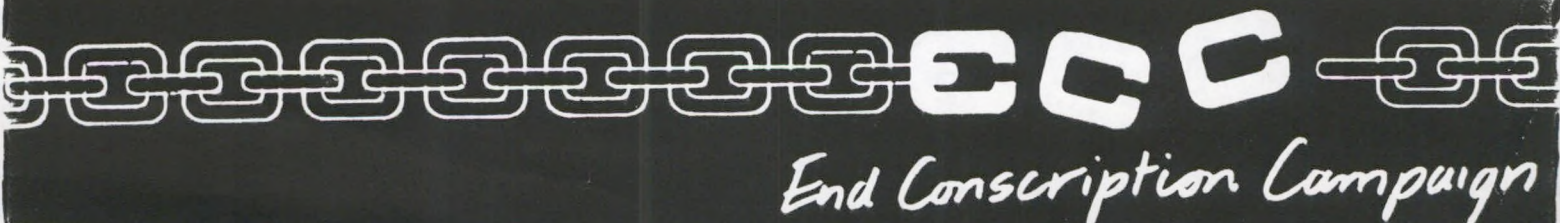


**CENTRAL METHODIST
CHURCH**

6th FLOOR CHAPEL

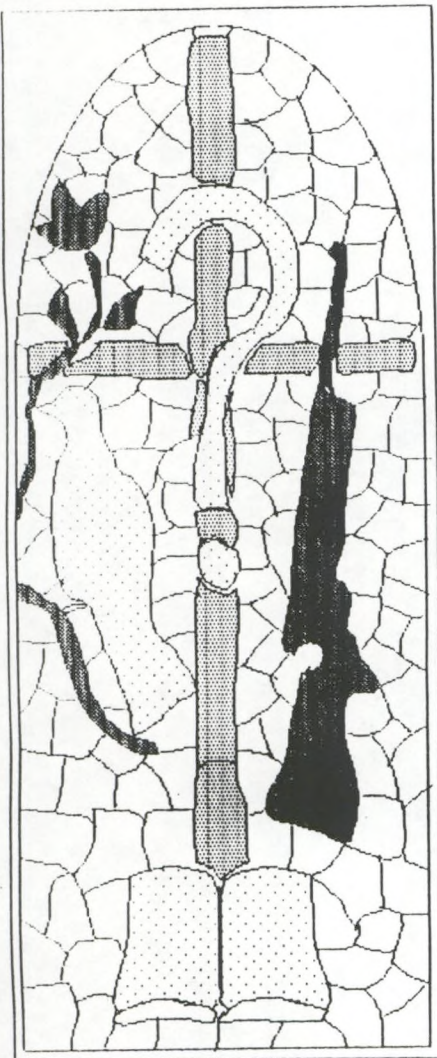


APARTHEID OUT SADF OUT



SERVICE FOR PEACE

On the eve of the August 1987 Conscription Call-up, you are invited to pray for all the people affected by the South African and Namibian Civil War, especially conscripts.



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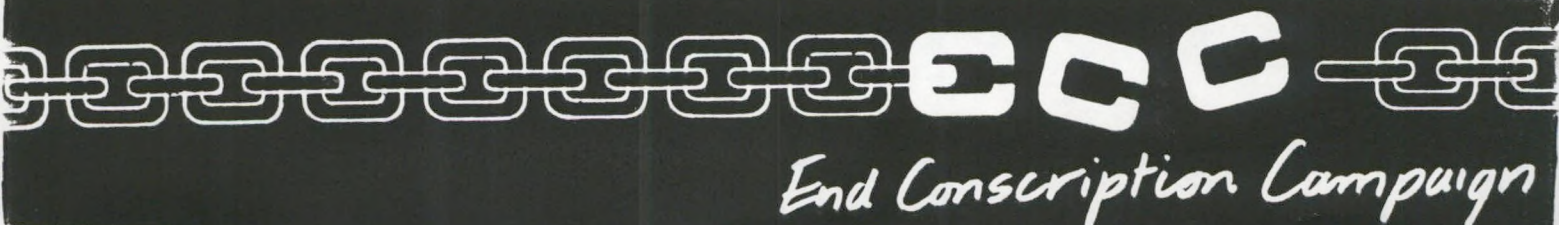


**CENTRAL METHODIST
CHURCH**

6th FLOOR CHAPEL

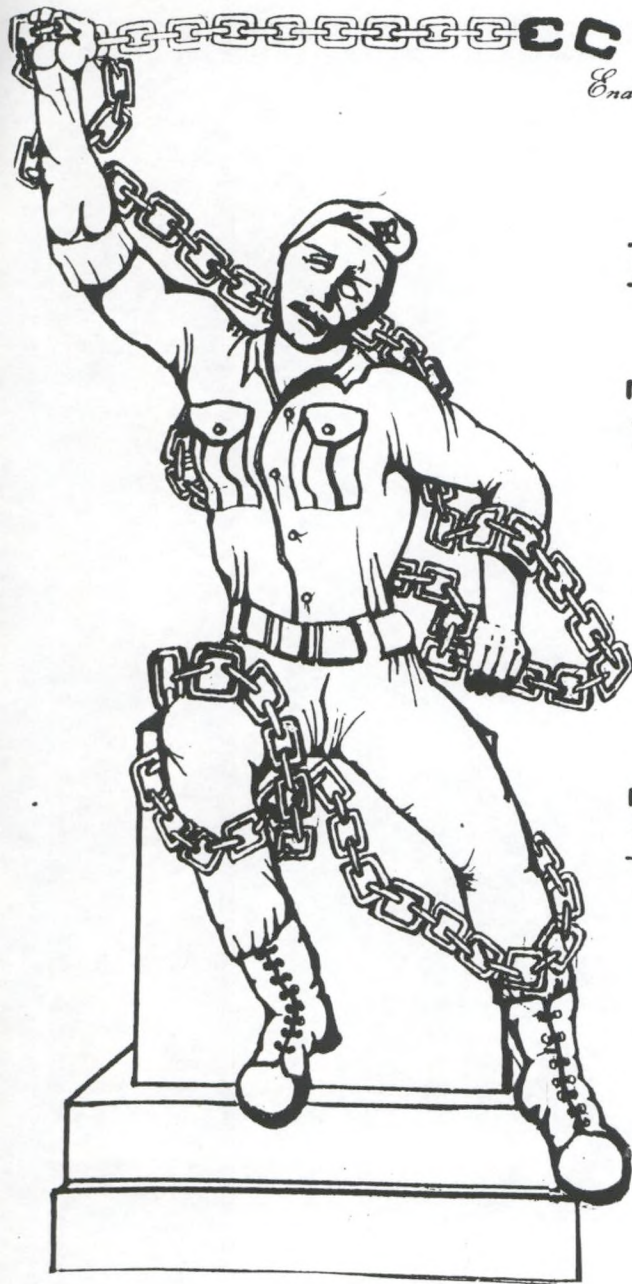


APARTHEID OUT SADF OUT



FAST FOR AN END TO CONSCRIPTION

ECC CHURCHES
End Conscription Campaign Churches Group



From: Call-up Day Monday
3 August

To: International
Namibia Day,
Wednesday 26
August.

Time: 8:00 am to 8:00 pm

Venue: Central Methodist
Church, Ground
Floor Foyer, Aliwal
St. Entrance.

You are warmly invited to participate in the fast. Phone Sue on 312-600. You are also invited to visit the venue of the fast. On the last day of the fast, a Fast-Breaking Ceremony will take place on Wednesday, 26 August at 5:00 pm at the Central Methodist Church. 6th floor Chapel.

APARTHEID OUT • SADF OUT



End Conscription Campaign

CAPE TOWN E.C.C. CHURCHES GROUP REPORT JANUARY - AUGUST 1988

The Churches group seeks to present a christian response to the militarisation of our country and the reasons why - as christians - we are unable to support conscription into the S.A.D.F. We see our main activity as being involved with youth groups (in churches or schools) and presenting the E.C.C. to them from a christian perspective.

1988 has thus far been particularly exciting and challenging for us. At the beginning of the year three members left - but since then five new people have joined bringing the present membership to ten. We've enjoyed the opportunity of getting to know each other, not only through various social events, but also by working together on various projects. This has been particularly important in bringing about a cohesive atmosphere in a group where half of the members are new recruits. At the beginning of the year the churches group organised the inter-faith service at Bishopscourt (Archbishop Desmond Tutu's house) in support of Ivan Toms.

Later in the year the S.A.C.B.C. approached the E.C.C. Churches Group in the Western Cape asking them to organise a workshop for local churches to advertise the "Churches Alternative Service Program". The workshop was held on 21 May, but was poorly attended, in spite of the large number of invitations sent to church ministers. In addition we saw this workshop as an important opportunity to establish more contact with churches in the Cape. Three member from the churches group were invited to attend a national S.A.C.B.C. conference on the 22 June in Pretoria. This was an extremely exciting and stimulating occasion and made us even more convinced of the concrete and positive ways in which National Service could be approached in our country.

Churches group has also presented programmes at Herschel School and at St Stephen's Youth Group in Pinelands. These have taken the form of slide/tape presentations, roleplays and input on the history of and the laws concerning militarisation in S.A. as well as presenting E.C.C. as an organisation outlining its aims and policies. On both occasions opportunities were given for people to vocalise questions and problems. We have also supported E.C.C. campaign activities attending public meetings and participating in such events as car-boot sales, pavement art and picketing on 3 August.

We have embarked on a series of self education lectures with each member of the group preparing a paper from the E.C.C. resource manual and presenting it at our regular weekly meeting. An afternoon workshop to prepare for our meetings with youth groups was very useful in sorting out the groups ideas about conscription and how it related to their faith as well as their political involvement.



**They will hammer their swords
into ploughshares, and their
spears into pruning hooks.**

***GOD WILL SETTLE DISPUTES
AMONG THE NATIONS.***

***THEY WILL HAMMER THEIR
SWORDS INTO
PLOUGHSHARES, AND THEIR
SPEARS INTO PRUNING
HOOKS.***

***NATION WILL NOT LIFT UP
SWORD AGAINST NATION,
THERE WILL BE NO MORE
TRAINING FOR WAR.***

Isaiah 2:4

Christians, Church groups and Christian organisations in the Durban and Pietermaritzburg area express concern and prayer for all conscripts, especially those who commence their initial training during the coming week.

We recognise that, for many, their call-up has presented them with serious moral dilemmas.

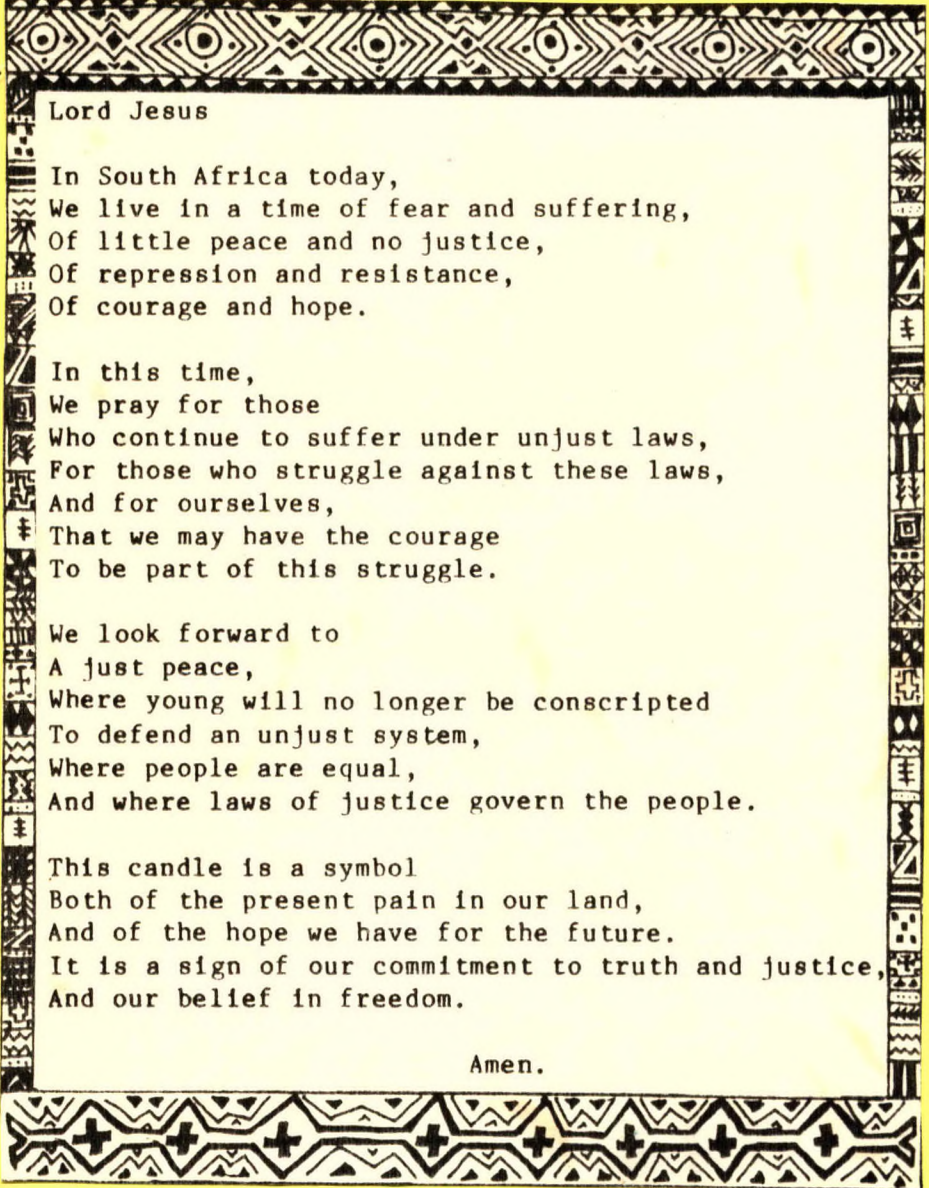
We understand the conflict in their hearts.

We pray for them.

We commit ourselves to working for justice and peace...

1 August 1987

**PIETERMARITZBURG AGENCY FOR CHRISTIAN SOCIAL AWARENESS
P.O. BOX 2338, 3200 / 170 BERG STREET, PIETERMARITZBURG**



Lord Jesus

In South Africa today,
We live in a time of fear and suffering,
Of little peace and no justice,
Of repression and resistance,
Of courage and hope.

In this time,
We pray for those
Who continue to suffer under unjust laws,
For those who struggle against these laws,
And for ourselves,
That we may have the courage
To be part of this struggle.

We look forward to
A just peace,
Where young will no longer be conscripted
To defend an unjust system,
Where people are equal,
And where laws of justice govern the people.

This candle is a symbol
Both of the present pain in our land,
And of the hope we have for the future.
It is a sign of our commitment to truth and justice,
And our belief in freedom.

Amen.



End Conscription Campaign

YOU ARE WARMLY INVITED TO THE

LAUNCH

OF THE DURBAN ECC CHURCHES GROUP

This will be an opportunity for you to get to know us and what we have to offer.

It will be a chance to hear what role we believe Christians and the churches in Durban should be playing in the unfolding drama of war and peace in our country.

It will be a time of reflecting together on the challenges facing our Christian witness today.

- * please join us in a very informal coming-together
- * where there will be a short address
- * some items of artistic merit
- * interesting displays
- * a light meal shared together
- * lots of opportunity to catch up with old friends, and make new ones

If you wish to bring a small item of food or drink to share, that would be welcome.

Please feel free to bring children along!

DATE : THURSDAY THE 18TH OF JUNE
TIME : 6.30 PM
VENUE : CENTRAL METHODIST CHURCH

WAR IS NOT COMPULSORY - LETS CHOOSE A JUST PEACE

LORD, MAKE ME AN
INSTRUMENT
OF THY
PEACE

30%
TIN



AND PEACE SHALL COME TO AZANIA

We shall dance in the yards of the prison . and dance through the prison gate,
We shall dance on the hills of the country . and dance in the streets of town,
We shall dance with the old at the sunset . and dance with the young till dawn,
We shall dance in the arms of the prophets . and dance to the spirit's drum,
Chorus: And the dogs of the days of darkness . the dogs shall cower on the sand,
And peace shall come to Azania . when love is lord of the land.

And the walls in the hearts of the hated . the walls shall be broken down,
And the walls in the hearts of the hater . the walls shall be broken down,
And the fear in the bowels of the tyrant . the fear shall be pacified,
And the wrath in the blood of the captive . the wrath shall be pacified,
And the dogs of the days of darkness . the dogs shall cower on the sand,
And peace shall come to Azania . when love is lord of the land.

And the stones of the people's power . the stones shall be gathered up,
And the bullets of the tyrant's power . the bullets shall be melted down,
And the flame of the people's necklace . the flame shall be cast aside,
And the knot of the hangman's necklace . the knot shall be torn apart,
And the dogs of the days of darkness . the dogs shall cower on the sand,
And peace shall come to Azania . when love is lord of the land.

And the steel of the soldier's rifle . the steel shall become a plough,
And the blood of the broken bodies . the blood shall become the soil,
And the bomb of the freedom fighter . the bomb shall become a seed,
And the sweat of the worker's forehead . the sweat shall become the rain.
And the dogs of the days of darkness . the dogs shall cower on the sand,
And peace shall come to Azania . when love is lord of the land.

And the wounds that are deep as the dongas . the wounds shall begin to heal,
And the scars that are grim as the ghettoes . the scars shall begin to heal,
And the grass on the hills of freedom . the grass shall be green again,
And the grapes on the vine of freedom . the grapes shall be sweet again,
And the dogs of the days of darkness . the dogs shall cower on the sand,
And peace shall come to Azania . when love is lord of the land.

444
Ethel Hill
360

TECHNICAL NOTE

This poem is not designed to be read on the page in silence by an individual but to be recited aloud in a group. It is a script, a latency that becomes a poem in performance. That explains its openness, the wide spacing of its symbols.

The design is based on the call-reponse structure of indigenous black music with the addition of a western-type chorus. The call is made up of the words of each stanza, the response a handclap in the middle and at the end of each line. And as the rest of the group become familiar with the chorus, they join in.

The rhythm is steady & stately as befits the subject matter, with three strong beats to each half of the line, marked as follows:
We shall dance in the yards of the prison . etc. Don't be rushed, don't let the beats crowd up on each other because that will make the meaning less accessible to the audience, especially if they're hearing the poem for the first time.

If they are new to oral poems, work them into the rhythm by chanting the rhythm in much the same way as a drummer lays down his track on a tape before a band records a song. You could for example chant:
da da dum da da dum da da dum dum . da dum da da dum da dum
and gesture where the handclaps come and then introduce the group to the words of the chorus. There are no rules, the reciter will decide, depending on the mood of the audience. If you are apprehensive, try the poem on a friend.

Conscription crisis

— The role of the Church

In this difficult and challenging time in South Africa, perhaps one of the most difficult situations confronting young white men is the question of compulsory military service in the SADF. Many young conscripts are faced with a crisis of conscience as they appear to have no choice in this matter. As Christians within the E.C.C. we see the need for the Church to be actively involved in helping to resolve this crisis.

What does the law say about objectors to military service?

The 1983 Defence Amendment Act makes provision for the recognition of *bona fide* religious pacifists, whose credentials are tested by the Board for Religious Objection which was set up by the Act. The Board, chaired by a judge, includes theologians and military personnel. Applicants can apply for non-combatant service within the SADF, or, if they totally reject the idea of serving in "any armed force", the Board can refer them to the Department of Manpower for non-military service in a government department or local authority, for a maximum period of six years (i.e. one and a half times as much as the total military commitment required from national servicemen).

What's wrong with this system?

The existing law fails to accommodate conscientious objectors who are not religious pacifists. Many Christians who are

not pacifists are unwilling to serve in the SADF, on the grounds that they will be defending the apartheid system either on the borders or in the townships, and that this is in conflict with their religious convictions. Other young men have genuine moral objections to war, although they have no religious affiliations. The Board for Religious Objection cannot cater for these people at all.

The provisions for community service are too narrow, and we believe that other alternatives should be allowed, such as nursing and teaching in non-government institutions, church-supervised youth or rural development work, non-professional work for registered welfare organisations, and many more.



The role of the Church

CONSCRIPTION CRISIS

What can we do as Christians?

Most major denominations have passed important resolutions about the shortcomings of the present system, including the composition and terms of reference of the Board for Religious Objection. Individual Christians or study groups can begin by studying these resolutions and encouraging action at local church level; for without the involvement of local congregations, such resolutions are worthless and soon forgotten.

Church youth groups and confirmation classes provide an ideal opportunity for discussing the issues of violence and military conscription and the role of the SADF. These are vital issues for young Christians, and perhaps we in the churches have been shirking our responsibility to offer young people the opportunity to work out their own position about military service, in the light of a Christian conscience.

Local congregations or parishes can press their denominational leaders to make it a priority to work for a change in the law to rectify the current inadequacies.

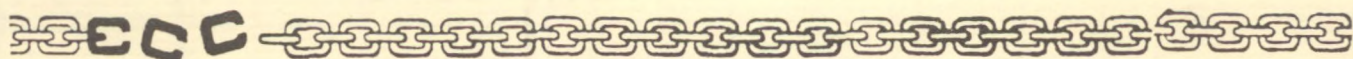
You may wish to become actively involved in the E.C.C. in your region.

Let's be honest. Conscription is an issue that affects us all, and one that is becoming increasingly painful in the face of the polarisation of our society. The End Conscription Campaign is eager to work with the churches to help them implement these suggestions.

Contact:

**We call for an end
to conscription**

**We call for a just peace
in our land**



Issued by: E.C.C. Churches' Subgroup

THE END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN: OUR RIGHT TO SPEAK

The State of Emergency

Ever since the State of Emergency was declared on June 12 1986, South Africans have lost the right to speak about a number of issues. In particular, it has become a severely punishable offence to discredit or undermine the system of compulsory military conscription.

Harassment

Since 12 June 1986, 48 ECC members around the country have been detained and thirteen of these people are still being held. In addition to this, members' houses have been raided, and media confiscated. The End Conscription Campaign stands for freedom of choice, but continual attempts are being made to confound the campaign.

The Right To Follow One's Conscience

The issue of conscription has become more and more problematic in South Africa. Quite simply, the army is seen to support the system of apartheid which has been condemned as a heresy by many South African churches. Now that the army has occupied many townships across the country, young men find themselves in the position of waging a veritable civil war.

Surely, they should have the right to choose whether or not they would like to render national service in this way! The End Conscription Campaign believes in working for a just peace by calling for an end to conscription and campaigning for alternative forms of national service, which would foster friendship and peace; for example, a national service community project rendering assistance to rural farming.

The Right To Speak

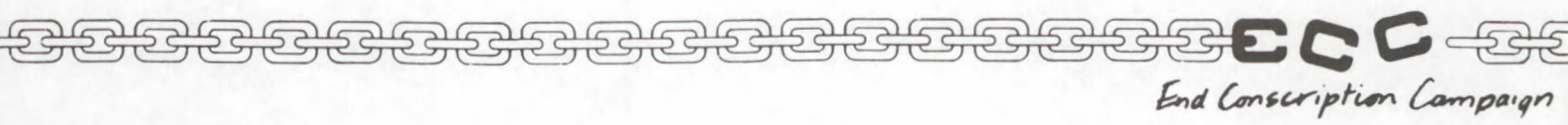
Can any progress be made before we have regained our right to speak? We urge the churches to examine the continuing corrosion of freedom in our country and to join the September campaign for **THE RIGHT TO SPEAK**.

Christians can show that they are calling for the right to speak by tying a yellow ribbon around a tree, postbox, car bumper, car aerial, lamppost or anything else one deems suitable. One can also tie a yellow ribbon around one's arm as an armband. By doing this, they will be responding to a call " **to tie a yellow ribbon if you still believe in peace**". It will also signify support for the right to speak, the desire for the return of soldiers from the townships and solidarity with detained compatriots.

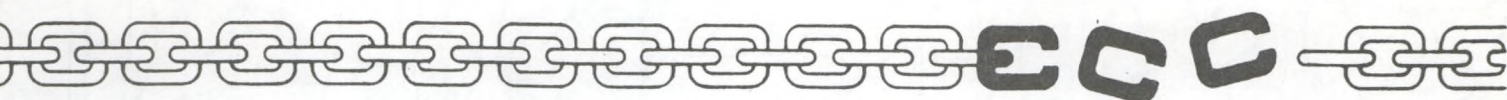
In services of worship, Christians can remember and pray for people who have been detained because of their views and whose right to speak has been denied them. We would like to suggest that a candle surrounded by barbed wire (a symbol of the hope and promise that the Gospel carries in the midst of hardship) be lit during a service and that prayers be offered for those in detention. Congregations can also pray for specific detainees by name.

Christians are called to be vigilant about human rights and the well-being of those around them. **Join us in voicing our support for the RIGHT TO SPEAK!**

Issued by the JHB ECC Churches Group.



ECC Churches Group



End Conscription Campaign

Who we are

- We are Christians
- Representing a variety of churches and Christian groups in the greater Durban area.
- We support the End Conscription Campaign

What our objective is

- To be facilitators of a learning process
- whereby conscripts and all Christian people come to an informed, well-considered and independent understanding
- on the crucial ethical issues of conscription, violence, war and militarisation, nonviolent action and civil disobedience
- and their responsibility to live and work for the justice and peace of God's kingdom
- based on Biblical principles and Christian ethics.

What we offer

- Interesting, stimulating and participatory seminars or group discussions on:-
- the different Christian positions on war,
- the Christian call to peacemaking and working for justice,
- nonviolent action,
- obedience to the authorities and civil disobedience,
- the laws pertaining to conscription, conscientious objection, legal alternatives to serving in the SADF, and the Board for Religious Objection.

We also offer

- Study material and other relevant resources.
- A counselling referral service to conscripts

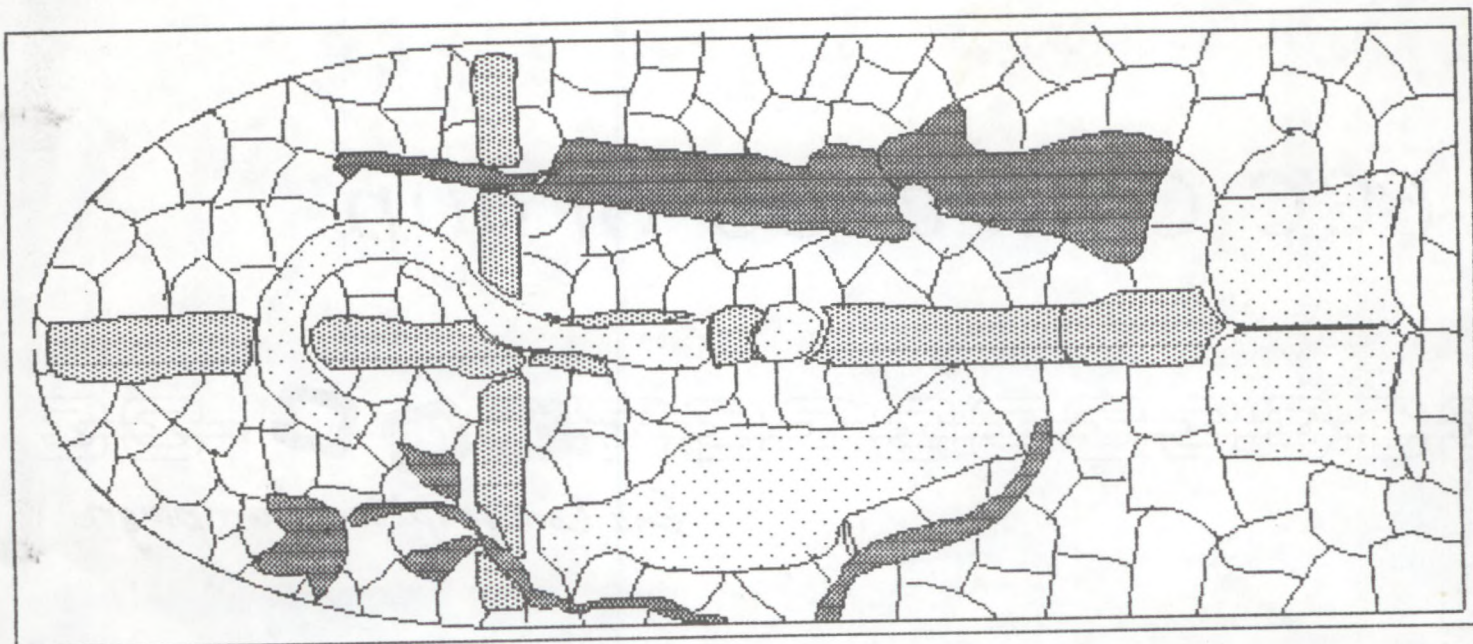
Who we offer it to

- local church/parish groups
- conscripts
- church youth groups
- clergy
- social action groups
- school, college, technikon and university Christian groups
- any other group or organisation for which the subject matter has relevance.

If you would like more information or want to make use of the services we are offering, please feel free to phone

Jackie 305-1685 (Office hrs)
Sue 312-600 (Office hrs)
Rob 593-355 x 612 (After hrs)

P.S. We can tailor our programmes, in consultation with you, according to the needs of your particular group, organisation or church.



What others say about the group

"Military conscription is a burning issue of conscience for many young people in South Africa — an issue to which the ECC has responded in an energetic and imaginative way. I'd recommend to all church groups — especially those for students and youth — to meet with them and discuss their message. They have much to offer all those who are questioning whether more guns, more soldiers and more training for war can provide a solution to South Africa's problems."

*Paddy Kearney,
Director of Diakonia.*

"I find that an increasing number of young South Africans are concerned and perplexed about the ambiguity in which they find themselves when confronted with the demands to undergo military service. Many are considering the variety of options open to them. I believe that the arguments for Christians to consider need to be looked at very carefully and I encourage Methodists to work out their responsibilities in terms of the justice and peace of God's kingdom in a careful way."

*John Borman, Chairman of
Natal Coastal District,
Methodist Church*

"I have heard with deep gratification of the establishment of the ECC Churches Group. I understand that its object is to spread among Christian congregations, and especially members likely to be conscripted into the armed forces, awareness of all the issues connected with war and military involvement.

"I thank God for this splendid initiative, welcome its activities among church congregations and pray that its truly admirable endeavours will be blessed by the Lord with abundant success."

*Denis E Hurley, OMI
Archbishop of Durban, Catholic Church*

"Whereas I am aware that the chances of a peaceful non-violent revolution in our country are limited, I nonetheless believe that God is in control and is able to change the trend of events. The ECC commitment to non-violent action is commendable. It is a sign of God's Kingdom with us."

V G Nyobole, CEYD, Methodist Church.

"Ideally, Christians should have the freedom to decide for themselves whether or not, in any given situation, they should participate in war. Conscription makes this very difficult. Here is a group wanting to air and discuss the issues. I commend this initiative as a valuable and important one."

*Michael Nuttall
Bishop of Durban, Anglican Church*

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END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)

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