

End Conscription Campaign

A7.2.35

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STATEMENT OF DEMANDS

- 1) Our country is sinking into a deepening civil conflict.
- 2) The presence of troops in the townships further increases tension and bitterness in our divided country. Many conscripts consequently face a serious moral dilemma. They should be given the right to choose whether to participate in the SADF or not. This is why we call for an end to conscription.
- 3) In the interim, our right to choose would be respected if the government allowed for genuine alternative ways of serving our country.

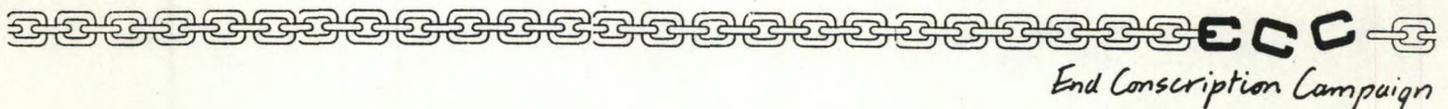
Therefore we call on the government to:

- a) Provide alternative service to all conscripts who in good conscience object to service in the SADF.
- b) Reduce the length of community service from a punitive six year maximum to a maximum of four years.
- c) Make alternative service available in religious and welfare organisations.

Presently for a person who has done no service:

- *Military service is two years continuous service and a total of two years camps;
- *Alternative service is a continuous six years in a government department usually at a private's salary and available only to religious pacifists;
- *Those who do not qualify face six years in jail or exile.

Endorsed



26-2-86

ECC - CAPE TOWN - WJP Survey

Following the Cape Town proposal that ECC conducts a signature campaign around our alternative service demands, useful criticisms were received from Johannesburg. What follows is an alternative proposal as discussed at our WJP meeting - 23-2-1986.

Form

Cape Town agreed that a questionnaire, rather than a signature campaign was a preferable means of getting to our constituency.

Motivation

- 1) The campaign will allow us to engage directly with our constituency and take the issues "onto the streets".
- 2) The campaign will allow us to measure support. We felt that this was extremely important in terms of our public work, international contact, press work etc.

These were the two major motivations. Also important were:

- 3) It would provide concrete work for recruits/volunteers to engage in.
- 4) It will allow us to test support in particular constituencies eg conscripts, parents etc.

Process

We felt the campaign should have three phases:

- 1) Mid-March to end of April

Here the work would complement the WJP campaign. The stress would be on the first motivation, ie engaging our constituency. This could be done through

- * pilot weekend blitzes
- * encouraging volunteers/organisation members to canvass support.

- 2) May

Here we would move into top gear and build up numerical support (not necessarily a targeted figure). Some suggested ways of doing this

- * massive campaign on NUSAS campuses (during the quota bill they reached 14000 students)

- * asking member organisations to distribute questionnaires through their membership mailing lists
- * door to door and street work
- * (perhaps) publishing the questionnaire in magazines and newspapers.

Besides allowing us to measure support, this phase will also allow us to engage our constituency, follow up WJP, provide concrete work for WJP recruits (failure to do this was one of our criticisms of TOC) and test support in targeted areas.

3) End of May

The results of the survey, plus our alternative service demands are taken by an ECC delegation to parliament at the conclusion of the defence debate. In other words, a stated intention would be the presentation to government. This type of concrete political work is something our constituency relates to.

SUGGESTED QUESTIONNAIRE

- A. Sex
- B. Age
- C. Do you face either a 2 year call-up or camp duty?
 1. Should conscripts have the right to choose whether or not to serve in the SADF?
 2. Do you support the SADF being used in the townships?
 3. Should alternative service be available to those who do not wish to serve in the SADF?

We felt the questionnaire should be simple, but if there is room for additional questions, these could be

- D. Does your son face either a 2-year call-up or camp duty?

Between 2 and 3: Should conscripts have the choice whether or not they are used to serve in the townships?

Signatures

This still needs to be discussed. JHB suggested anonymity was important.

Alternative service VIP demands

Support for these would be canvassed independently of the questionnaire by approaching individuals VIP's/church leaders. The demands themselves could still be part of the package presented to the government.

JOHANNESBURG ECCMOTIVATION FOR WJP SURVEY

This is a full motivation for the running of a survey or questionnaire as part of the WJP campaign. Johannesburg has decided to go ahead with this action, but would obviously like other centres, and particularly all the NUSAS campuses to participate in it as well, as a national action.

Form

We see the questionnaire more as a political intervention than as a sociological exercise. One of the main thrusts of the questionnaire would be educational.

The survey would:

- * Provide us with a way of reaching out to and talking with our constituency .
ECC will gain profile; so will WJP.
- * It will inform us about our constituency in a way which will be useful in the long-term.
- * The anonymity of people surveyed will give us a higher success rate than, for example, a petition/demand endorsing programme would.
- * The survey goes along with the general trend of WJP to consult with the people.
- * The results of the survey (at least the campus part of it) could be released by VIP nobs and gain a lot of publicity.
- * In the context of Malan refusing to give statistics, our ability to provide some of these is particularly important
- * It would provide concrete activity for new recruits to work on. Also, people who are not interested in joining our structures, but who would like to do something for the campaign can help with it.

Process

We feel the survey should:

1. Run until the end of May, serving to link the WJP campaign and the July call-up action.
2. Continue at a pace to be determined by each centre, with a step-up in pace after WJP and the possible setting of regional targets at that stage by National Committee,
3. A national target of 50 000 is suggested.
4. On the NUSAS campuses a full-on scientifically controlled survey could be run. The results could be used to point out how many university students are unhappy with conscription and to compare these figures with those of 2 years ago. To reach almost every student on campus would not be an enormously difficult or organisationally draining task.
5. The major part of the survey would, however, be loose, informal and largely a street survey. We would not claim scientificity for this but would be able to point out the significant trends in the results. We would run it in shopping centres and streets, keeping records of the areas in which we work. It may also mean some house-to-house work in defined areas.
6. Cut-out questionnaire forms would be placed as adverts in newspapers (at least in the Weekly Mail and in magazines)

The Pilot survey

R65,00
+40 for copying

On 01/03/1986 we ran a pilot survey on a set of questions which had been drawn up by our Education Committee (which includes highly reputable and trained sociologists). We obtained responses from 60 people in Hillbrow, Yeoville, Hyde Park and Blackheath (ie from a fair spread of class backgrounds).

The Pilot Survey asked these questions:

1. Do you think military service should be compulsory in South Africa at present ?
2. Should men have the choice to serve South Africa in a non-military capacity ?
3. Should soldiers have the choice of not going into the townships ?
4. Have you heard of the End Conscription Campaign?
5. Do you support the idea of choice rather than conscription ?

We got very contradictory results ! 80% answered YES to both question 1 and question 2. Evidently the questions were not all that clear. They have therefore been rephrased. Also, some people answered question 1 in contradiction to question 5. (We think this may relate to being taken through a process). People seemed to want more information about ECC, so it would be a good idea to have pamphlets with us.

It took us an average of 15 minutes to question 10 people. In this light, we don't see the national target suggestion of 50 000 as unattainable.

The Revised Survey

This has been laid out in such a way that collation of results will be very simple. We would estimate the age of the informant and note their sex. However, we feel that for such a large number of informants we should limit the number of correlations we try to work out. Thus we feel that if centres wish to note details such as what kind of military service respondents have done, they should do so. However, correlations for very large numbers are not particularly useful in a practical sense. We do suggest that the Campus survey incorporates a variety of questions to identify the type of respondent. These figures would be significant in that the campus survey would be scientifically conducted.

A copy of the final survey suggestion is enclosed. We would lay it out and print it, and distribute it to other centres. (Not necessary)

Collation.

We suggest that each centre does initial collation of results (ie adding up the number of responses on each page and making a composite list.) Joburg will do the final collation and analysis of results (percentages, statistical testing for the campus survey etc)

WHAT WE NEED NOW

1. GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE SURVEY.
2. AN INDICATION FROM EACH CENTRE AS TO WHETHER THEY SUPPORT THE PROPOSAL FOR THE OFF-CAMPUS SURVEY AS A NATIONAL PROJECT.
3. PLEASE MOTIVATE THE CAMPUS SURVEY VERY STRONGLY TO CAG AND NUSAS PEOPLE. DAVID WILL TRY TO FACILITATE A NATIONAL CAMPUS DECISION ON THE ISSUE.

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