

# The doctor in the cathedral

Argus 1/10/85



Dr Ivan Toms . . . living off water alone for a just peace.

Picture: PIERRE OOSTHUYSEN, The Argus

For two weeks Christian conscientious objector Dr Ivan Toms has been living off water alone. Staff Writer SYDNEY DUVAL reports

A LONG silent walk through a darkened St George's Cathedral takes you down to the crypt where a young man is fasting for a special cause.

You will meet a new kind of monk. The habit and sandals have been replaced by denims, jogging shoes and a fisherman's jersey.

For two weeks now Christian conscientious objector Dr Ivan Toms, who runs the Sacla clinic at Crossroads, has been living off water alone.

He has lost 6kg — 5kg in the first week — and though his weight has been stable the past few days he expects it drop again in the final week of his three-week fast.

From his cell-like room, where nearly 900 supporters have called on him since he began fasting for a just peace in South Africa and the removal of troops from the townships, Dr Toms talks modestly of his existence on water alone.

"It's very nice to know there's only one week to go," he says in a voice hoarse from talking to 70 visitors a day.

"The big thing is I'm now weak and feeling it. It's hard to get up in the morning. Where I shower is two flights up. By the time I get to the top of the stairs my muscles ache and I'm very tired. I have to rest.

## 'No stamina'

"This lethargy is creeping over me. I've no stamina. You could say I'm feeling like many old people feel. At night my mind does not switch off as it used to. I lie there quite a time before I fall asleep."

He thinks about food, but with a new perspective. He realises how important it is as a part of life.

"Food should not be thrown together and eaten without

feeling," he says. "I see food as one of the joyous rituals of life, something to be appreciated and shared."

All his time is spent in the cathedral where he fasts, sleeps and talks. Time is set aside for him to pray and meditate alone.

He believes that his fast, and the fast of those in sympathy, has prompted other churchgoers to realise that they must do something about the crisis South Africa is in, even if to fast for a day. In his view whites are also part of the struggle for a just country.

## 'Sharing'

"We are fasting as a way of sharing in the suffering of the townships," he explains. "We hope that a little act of commitment will lead people into a deeper commitment to changing things. The support so far and the broad appeal of our End Conscription Campaign have been very encouraging."

"The fast ends on Monday, October 7, the anniversary of troops entering townships for the first time. We call on people to fast in solidarity from 8pm on Sunday until Monday evening when they are urged to join us in a rally for peace at the City Hall."

Dr Toms is a committed lay churchman of the Church of the Province. He grew up in Durban where he went to school. He became aware of Gandhi and his Phoenix settlement north of Durban much later.

With his blue eyes, fair hair and solid frame Dr Toms and Gandhi are worlds apart in physique and colour — but in spirit there are affinities.

"Our fast is a creative, non-violent, passive way of highlighting things for people here," he says.

Weak as he is, water alone is enough to put iron in the soul of Dr Ivan Toms.

Sunday Times  
29/9/85

## Five in 'troops out' protest fast

By SHAUN HARRIS

FIVE people in different parts of South Africa are on a "protest fast" to urge the Army to withdraw from black townships.

The five men, including a medical doctor and the caretaker of a Mahatma Gandhi centre, have not eaten for a week and plan to fast for at least another week as part of a national "troops out the townships" campaign.

They are expecting other South Africans to join them in a 24-hour fast at the culmination of their campaign in just over a week's time.

"The basic reason for the fast is simple. We know that many young South African national servicemen do not want to be in the townships helping the police, and we are calling on the Defence Force to get out of the townships," 28-year-old Richard Steele said in Durban this week.

Two students at the University of Natal in Durban — Donn Edwards and Steve Collins — have joined Mr Steele in his two-week fast.

In Cape Town Dr Ivan Toms, nicknamed the "Crossroads doctor" because of the clinic he has run in the squatter settlement for five years, has also fasted for a week, as has Wits student Harold Winkler in Johannesburg.

## Support

"A number of people have contacted me to say they are fasting for shorter periods in support of our campaign," Mr Steele, caretaker at the Gandhi settlement outside Durban and a member of the End Conscription Campaign, said in Durban.

In 1980 he spent a year in detention barracks for refusing to do his national service, and was released from nearly two weeks' police detention late last week after a Supreme Court judgment ordered that he, and two other people detained with him, be released by the security police.

Mr Steele said his fast was being strictly monitored by doctors, and he didn't intend to harm himself in any way.

"I choose fasting as a form of protest because it is completely non-violent, and doesn't affect anyone but myself," he said.

"And one thing that nobody can stop you from doing is refusing to eat. Historically, fasting has been used by people as an effective form of protest."

Mr Steele is staging his "troops out" protest fast at St Anthony's Catholic Church in Durban.

Mr Ian Koenigsfest, Kenilworth: "I would like to extend my support and strength to Dr Ivan Toms and would like to call on thinking South Africans to join in and fast on 7 October." C.T. 27/9/85

## C.T. 24/9/85 Freed ECC man 'to fight'

Staff Reporter

THE chairperson of the End Conscription Campaign in the Western Cape, Mr Mike Evans, is "more determined than ever to fight for the release of detainees" following his release from Pollsmoor Prison yesterday afternoon after 15 days in solitary confinement.

Mr Evans, who was detained under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act earlier this month, said last night he was determined to continue fighting for an end to conscription and to the system of detention without trial.

"The worst things about my experience in detention were the isolation, the lack of access to news and the constant threat that I could be kept there indefinitely," he said.

Mr Evans said he was convinced his detention, and the detention of other ECC members in Durban, was part of a nation-wide investigation into the ECC's activities.

CT 24/9/85

# Peter Krummeck to fast for peace

ON THURSDAY night Peter Krummeck will join Dr Ivan Toms of the SACLA Clinic, Crossroads, and the Rev John Freeth, rector of St John's Parish, Wynberg, to fast for a just peace.

Peter will remain in St George's Cathedral for a period of 24 hours, leaving only to perform in *Isn't It Romantic* at the Baxter Theatre.

After the show on Thursday he will begin his fast and will leave again on Friday night for his performance.

"I hope to generate an awareness of the power of peaceful protest as well as demonstrate the need for individual involvement," he said. Portraying Christ in *The Passion* has helped him to experience a kind of discipline, he said. "I stopped smoking and prayed a lot."

Although he is not a member of the End Conscription Campaign which has organized the nationwide fast and prayer vigil, he supports the call for the removal of police and troops from the townships.

CONSCIENTIOUS objector Dr Ivan Toms has no illusions that his three-week fast will change the mind of the Defence Minister Magnus Malan. When someone suggested he fast until troops were withdrawn from the townships, he said: "I'm not interested in committing suicide." B.O. 26/9/85

# Support for peace fast pours in

CAPE TOWN. — With Dr Ivan Toms halfway through his three-week fast for a just peace in Cape Town's St George's Cathedral, messages of support for the End Conscription Campaign (ECC) have been flowing in from around the world.

Most of the messages have been supportive of the ECC and its call for the removal of the troops from the townships as well as for Dr Toms, and his co-fasters in the cathedral.

War Resisters International said in its message that "the ECC offers one of the best hopes for minimizing the violence in South Africa." — Sapa.

4/12/85  
28/9/85

# Silent Tutu avoids Press at start of 24hr fast

Citizen 28/9/85

BISHOP Desmond Tutu, the Anglican Bishop of Johannesburg, remained silent throughout a Press conference at which he formally joined an end conscription campaign fast aimed at bringing about the removal of troops from the townships.

Bishop Tutu, on a 24-hour fast yesterday, avoided the many cameras, foreign news television teams and reporters present as he sat with his head bowed and his hands together, at the Khotso House Chapel in Johannesburg.

He had joined Mr Harald Winkler, a 21-year-old social science student at the University of the

Witwatersrand who is fasting for 21 days.

Rabbi Ben Isaacson of Johannesburg also joined the Bishop and Mr Winkler.

### Fasting

The Press was asked to leave shortly after Mr Winkler, who is on his eleventh day of fasting, had made short introductory remarks to them.

Bishop Tutu declined to sit beneath an ECC campaign banner when asked to do so by a photographer.

Mr Winkler said the campaign was a "call for a time to meditate . . . and a call on the churches and

all religious communities," to take note of the situation in the townships.

"It is also doing something in your body to feel there is something wrong, as there is wrong in society."

He said he was weak but well. He had a bottle of mineral water at his side.

Rabbi Isaacson said that when he awoke yesterday morning he did not feel like eating, but instead read Chapter 58 of the Old Testament Prophet Isaiah, which teaches about "true fasting".

"It (fasting) is (done) to loosen the bonds of wickedness and to let the oppressed go free.

"As Jews, we identify with this cause . . . it is a spiritual issue," he said.

### Foyer

In the foyer of Khotso House, outside the chapel where Mr Winkler spends most of his days fasting, is a poster with photographs of troops in townships with a quotation by Mr Winkler saying:

"Fasting for three weeks will bring home to me that the person on top of the Casspir could be my friend, and the one being shot could be my fellow student at Wits."

In another statement on exhibit, Mr Winkler said he faced military "call-up" on January 13, when he would possibly have to enter the townships.

On another ECC poster with a map of South Africa dotted with red images of the Castle in Cape Town is headed by the slogan: "Where is the border now?"

The Press left as friends joined Mr Winkler, the Bishop and the Rabbi to begin meditation. — Sapa.

B. Day 27/9/85

BISHOP Desmond Tutu, the Anglican Bishop of Johannesburg, will begin a 24-hour fast today in solidarity with members of the End Conscription Campaign who are fasting as part of a call for the removal of the Defence Force from the townships.

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THE Black Sash yesterday pledged its full support to the "Troops out of the Townships" campaign being conducted by the End Conscription Campaign, and at the same time rejected claims that the ECC was influenced by "external organisations". The Sash said its support was motivated by "the concern of white women at the increasing militarisation of South African society and the involvement of their menfolk".

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THE End Conscription Campaign yesterday established an interdenominational "Churches Group" to unite "the many Christians who have strong feelings of opposition to conscription".



Rabbi John G Spiro, of the Jewish Progressive Synagogue in Temple Israel, Greent Point (right), hands over a copy of the Days of Awe, the Jewish prayer book used on the high holy days, to Dr Ivan Toms at St George's Cathedral yesterday.

# Worldwide support for peace fast

*Case Times 28/9/85*

Staff Reporter

DR IVAN TOMS is halfway through his three-week Fast for a Just Peace in St George's Cathedral and messages of support for the End Conscription Campaign (ECC) have been flowing in from around the world.

Yesterday Dr Toms said he felt "fine" after 10 days of fasting and losing 5 kg in weight.

"The hunger pains have gone but I must say I feel a bit old. However, an amazing number of people have come in here to give us support, including many Jewish people during their holidays," he said.

So far 650 people have signed the Fast for a Just Peace visitor's book at the Cathedral.

Among the messages of support are those from the War Resisters International, a federation of pacifist and anti-conscription organizations; the Quakers of Britain and the United Nations; Kirsten Fredslag, the Norwegian division of the International Fellowship for Reconciliation; the Student Christian Movement of the Phillipines; the US Coalition For a New Foreign and Military Policy; Diakonisches Werk, a German Evangelical church; the Dutch Bishops' Lenten Campaign; and Jubilee, a US Christian organization.

## Fasts in solidarity

Most of the messages have been supportive of the ECC and its call for the removal of the troops from the townships as well as for Dr Toms and his co-fasters in the Cathedral.

The War Resisters International said in its message: "The ECC offers one of the best hopes for minimizing the violence in South Africa. Your commitment to non-violence and justice has won admiration around the world. In London there was a vigil on September 19 outside the (South African) embassy. There will be fasts in solidarity on October 7, including by WRI staff."

Apart from sending greetings to the fasters and the ECC, the Kristen Fredslag sent a letter to the Minister of Law and Order, Mr Louis le Grange, calling for the release of detained ECC members.

Jubilee's message said the fast was "particularly timely, and a visionary response by concerned white South Africans at this time".

"Too easily we have seen rage and irrationality take hold of many hearts. Your courage and Christian commitment is truly a beacon for us."

# 23 citizens committed to work for *Evening Post 18/9/85* 'just peace'

CAPE TOWN — Twenty-three leading Cape Town citizens including prominent theologians, academics and civil rights leaders and the principal of the UCT, Dr Stuart Saunders, have signed statements re-dedicating themselves to work for a "just peace".

They said that over the past year they "have witnessed the escalation of violence throughout South Africa and a continuing failure on the part of Government to make significant moves to bring about a just and lasting peace.

"We believe that the presence of troops and the use of force will only inhibit the establishment of a climate in which a negotiated settlement of SA's future is possible.

"On this International Day of Peace we re-dedicate ourselves to working for a just peace in our country. To this end we call on Government to:

- Create the conditions whereby all can freely participate in the peace process.

- Eliminate all forms of apartheid and racial discrimination.

- Create a non-racial SA based on the concept of common citizenship for all.

"The choice SA faces is a clear one: to continue to move towards a state of civil war or to dismantle apartheid and use the resources of our country to build a SA based on principles of justice and democracy."

The signatories were:

Dr S J Saunders, Sir Richard Luyt, Monsignor Henry, Roman Catholic Bishop of Oudtshoorn; Mr Michael Evans; Mr Gerald Gordon, QC; Mrs Jose Olivier, Professor Nic Olivier; Mr H Bernadt; Mr John Whitehead; Mrs Frances Whitehead, Mrs R N Robb; Prof Francis Ames; Mr D James Baigrie; Prof John de Gruchy, Dr Charles Villavicencio; Prof J Leatt; Prof Francis Wilson; Mrs Moira Henderson, Prof Michael Savage; Mrs D Cleminshaw; Mrs Di Bishop, Mrs Mary Burton and Mr Brian Bishop. — Sapa

# Attention of the young 'ironical in Year of the Youth

By Susan Fleming

Star (Africa)  
11/9/85

ical that in this, the Year of the Youth, held under emergency regulations had the age of 25, said Dr David Webster, of the Parents Support Committee, last night addressing about 400 people at a meeting at the Central Methodist Church in Johannesburg in protest against the banning of the Congress of South African Students (Cosas).

Dr Webster said there was more repression in South Africa when a state of emergency had been declared in 1960. Then, 1 500 to 2 000 people had been killed while under this year's state of emergency, and 10 000 were held.

In the last six months, about 650 people had died, and the state of emergency had been declared, and 10 000 people had died.

Dr Webster said an "undeclared" state of emergency existed throughout South Africa and that the government was treating non-emergency areas, such as the Eastern Cape, as if they were among the 36 emergency townships.

Dr Webster said a sad reflection on the state of democracy in South Africa," he said.

## 'SA trying to crush campaign for peace'

The End Conscription Campaign (ECC) last night strongly condemned the "severe police harassment" of its members.

A statement delivered at a protest meeting against the banning of Cosas, held at the Central Methodist Church, said the State was trying

to crush a campaign which called for peace.

On Monday four ECC members were detained in security police swoops on the homes of about 20 ECC members.

The statement said the ECC was a legal campaign working towards getting the State to recognise individuals

should have the choice of joining the SADF.

The ECC was about to launch a three-week campaign to call for troops to be removed from townships, and members would fast for 24 hours on October 7 in protest against compulsory military service, the statement said.

Dr Webster added it was obvious the state of emergency was really concerned with crushing the United Democratic Front (UDF) and about 86 per cent of those who had been detained were believed to be members of the UDF, or its affiliated organisations.

He said it was naive to believe the army would quell trouble in the townships. "Our police have not had the training to use minimum force in riot control and our army has even less training," he said.

Father Albert Nolan, a Catholic theologian, criticised the media and the State for their "loaded" use of the term violence.

The State and the media had called stone-throwing and other activities violence, yet they excluded the word violence when they described any activity of the police, he said.

"They also exclude the institutionalised violence of the apartheid system. This misuse of language is hiding the true reality."

Many people said the township youth were the ag-

gressors in the conflict, but it was really the apartheid state which was the aggressor, he said.

A member of the Black Students' Society at the University of the Witwatersrand, and of the African Students' Organisation, Mr Dali Mko, said the government was in a dilemma.

"They (the Government) are trying to convert the right wing that no change is taking place and are also trying to convince the freedom-loving people that they will talk to the leaders of the party," he said.

Discussing the banning of Cosas, Mr Mko said the Government believed Cosas was behind township violence. Cosas had, in fact, often expressed the anger of students, he said.

"Is it better to now have those students in the streets when they do not have any discipline to answer to?" he asked.

The president of the National Union of South African Students, Mr Brendan Barry, said one of the most valuable principles of Cosas was that it was non-racial.

Referring to the recent closure of 454 schools in the Western Cape, Mr Barry said the banning of Cosas had done nothing to quell trouble in the schools.

## ECC to fast in bid for 'just peace in SA'

N. A. News 11 Sept 85  
Witness Reporter

The ECC also called for a mass peace fast on the last day of the campaign.

"Through the fasts ECC will be observing a traditional and widely honoured means of non-violent protest," Pietermaritzburg ECC chair, Ms Jacque Boule said yesterday.

"The campaign is intended to highlight ECC's calls for individual conscripts to be allowed to choose not to serve in the SADF and that troops be ordered out of the townships.

"The 200 deaths in the townships since the declaration of the state of emergency underlines the urgency of our call," Ms Boule said.

MEMBERS of the Pietermaritzburg branch of the End Conscription Campaign (ECC) are to undertake a two-week relay fast at a city centre church as part of a national campaign for a just peace in South Africa.

The three-week campaign begins on September 17 — the United Nations International Day of Peace — and will end on October 7, the first anniversary of SADF presence in one of South Africa's townships.

ECC has announced that at least three of its members — Dr Ivan Thoms in Cape Town, Dave Hartman in the Eastern Cape and Richard Steele in Durban — will fast throughout the

# Troops in SA townships wrong

## — Bishop Evans

← Herald 18 Sept '85  
CAPE TOWN — The Government was putting another nail into the coffin of South Africa every time it sent troops into the townships, the Anglican Bishop of Port Elizabeth, the Rt Rev Bruce Evans told about 170 people at an End Conscription Campaign meeting in Cape Town last night.

The meeting, to launch the period of fasting which is the focus of the organisation's "Troops out of the Townships" campaign, was to have been chaired by Bishop Evans's son, ECC Cape Town chairman Mr Michael Evans.

Mr Evans, however, was detained under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act last week, and is still being held.

Bishop Evans, who said he was speaking in his personal capacity, said he fully supported the ECC.

A person had a right to decide for himself if he wished to be placed in a position in which he might have to kill, maim or injure another human being.

Bishop Evans said forcing young conscripts to serve in the townships created a "tremendous tension of conscience" for them.

● most important reason for getting the troops out of the townships was that a hatred was being built up among young blacks, he said. It was immoral that black people should have to pay taxes which were used in part to maintain the SADF, so that their contribution was turned against them. — Sapa

## ECC in new drive to get troops out

By Jo-Anne Collinge

The End Conscription Campaign is renewing its demand for the withdrawal of troops from the townships in a three-week programme of talks and symbolic acts of fasting in which leading figures are expected to join.

The campaign started yesterday, on the United Nations International Day of Peace, and is expected to culminate in a mass 24-hour "Peace Fast" on October 7.

October 7 is the first anniversary of Operation Palmiet in which 7 000 members of the security forces occupied the Vaal township of Sebokeng.

Three young men — Wits student Mr Harald Winkler, Crossroads' Dr Ivan Thoms and pacifist Mr Richard Steele —



Harald Winkler ... "troops have no place in the townships".

have committed themselves to taking nothing but water for the entire three weeks.

Mr Steele is currently detained in Durban and it is not known whether he is fasting.

Nobel Laureate Bishop Desmond Tutu and Black Sash president Mrs Sheena Duncan are among those expected to join the fasting.

The ECC is concerned that township residents

are beginning to see not only the SADF but all whites as enemies.

"The non-racial character of our struggle is being so severely undermined that a spirit of reconciliation in a new South Africa seems so remote," it says.

The ECC says many conscripts are experiencing an acute crisis of conscience at being forced to serve in the townships.

Mr Winkler (21) finishes his BA degree this year and faces the call-up in January.

He said: "Fasting for three weeks will bring home to me ... that the person on top of the Caspir could be my brother or my friend — or me. And the one being sjambokked, teargassed or shot could be my fellow-student from Wits."

# ECC launches protest by fasting plan

By JEREMY MAGGS

THE End Conscription Campaign yesterday launched a national "Troops Out Campaign" which is scheduled to last three weeks.

For the duration of the campaign the Port Elizabeth branch of the organisation has planned that one person will fast each day at St Augustine's Cathedral in Central.

"Each faster will drink water only for 24 hours or longer, as a show of personal commitment to peace as well as a protest against the presence of the South African Defence Force in the townships in the Eastern Cape," Miss Janet Cherry, chairman of the Port Elizabeth branch, told a Press conference.

She said those fasting would come from different affiliates and supporters of the campaign including the Black People's Front youth branch, various churches, conscripts and mothers of conscripts.

Just before the Press conference commenced, a television cameraman, Mr Prince Msutu was approached by a man who identified himself as a Sergeant Faku from the Security Police.

An Eastern Province Herald reporter witnessed Mr Faku being grabbed by the man.

The Catholic Bishop of Port Elizabeth, the Right Rev Bishop John Murphy, then intervened and told the man that he had no au-

thority to interfere on church property. The man then left.

The SA Police liaison officer for the Eastern Cape, Lieutenant-Colonel Gerrie van Rooyen, confirmed last night that the Security policeman had been at the church hall because he "wanted to have certain discussions" with Mr Msutu.

The "Troops Out Campaign" was also launched in Grahamstown, Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban and Maritzburg yesterday.

Another event planned during the campaign is a debate between the ECC and Mr Ken Owen, an associate editor and columnist for South African Associated Newspapers on the subject "Is the ECC's call for troops out of the townships a justified one?"

The debate, which is open to the public, will be held in the Port Elizabeth City Hall next Wednesday.

On the last day of the campaign there will be a nation-wide "Fast for Peace" from 8pm on October 6 to 8pm on October 7.

All those who participated were invited to donate the money they would have spent on food to a fund to aid those who had suffered as a result of SADF action in the townships, Miss Cherry said.

Ministers of the Algoa Christian Leaders Committee (Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational churches) yesterday voiced their support for the three-week fast

# 4 fast at ECC man's arrest

Witness Reporter  
FOUR Natal University students in Durban have begun a fast in protest at the detention of Mr Richard Steele.

Mr Steele was detained for fasted for a fortnight as part of a national campaign for a just peace in South Africa and calling for the army to be withdrawn from the townships. Although he was detained last week under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act, members of the End Conscription Campaign (ECC) are confident that he will continue the fast in detention.

Mr Michael Graaf, the conscription action group on the Durban campus, said that he had heard Mr Steele speak and "felt I should fast myself to highlight his detention". Since Mr Steele's detention, Mr Graaf has taken only water. He has been joined by three other students.

The ECC has organised a national fast for a just peace which begins in Durban on Sunday, September 22, and continues until October 7. During this period there will be daily programmes at St Anthony's Catholic Church in Durban to highlight the theme — Justice in troops out.



# Why we're fasting for peace

Weekly Mail 27/9/85

MORE than seven years separate Harald Winkler and Richard Steele, both fasting for peace. That seven years could be a generation.

Winkler is a 21-year-old Wits student who takes a practical approach to issues, seeing two or more sides to most questions.

Steele, 28, released by court order on Friday after two weeks in detention, belongs to a different world, where things are possible solely because they're right — where a "truthful act" has "natural correlations".

Winkler is fasting as a way of communicating with conscriptees, churches and black communities most affected by military patrols. He sees his fast as a way to re-integrate the spiritual and the political, but also as "good political strategy".

Steele says his decision to fast was "quite a natural choice", given his total commitment to non-violence. "I'm just being," he says. "People can respond to me on the level they choose."

Steele spent 1980 in detention barracks for refusing to serve — for what he calls choosing to "non-cooperate".

Winkler has applied to the SADF for classification as a religious objector, a move, he says, that is only possible because of the stand Steele took five years ago — which is where the generations come together.

After Steele's heavily-publicised case, a Commission of Enquiry recommended grounds for CO status beyond membership of a "peace church". It is on personally religious and fairly — but not strictly — pacifist grounds that Winkler applied to do community work, rather than combatant service, when he is called up in January.

Winkler, whose background is Lutheran, plans a career in the church, studying for a bachelor's degree in divinity at Unisa where, he says, one can follow a non-denominational course.

He takes a pragmatic approach to issues. He is a vegetarian primarily out of a concern for the waste of resources in feeding livestock rather than people, but would eat meat in a social situation rather than hurt the person who offered it.

And in his application for religious objector status, he does not claim to hold firmly to the principle of non-violence. He concedes that if his house were robbed, he would probably punch the burglar on the nose.

He argues the "just war" theory which, he says, has a long tradition in the Christian Church — and then states that actions the SADF is taking in Namibia, Angola and South African townships do not meet any of the criteria, "all of which must be fulfilled for the war to be deemed just".

Indeed, he notes that he does not categorically reject all forms of violence, distinguishing between violence used by the state to enforce the status quo and violent acts performed as a reaction of the

Three members of the End Conscription Campaign have begun lengthy fasts in support of the "Troops out of the townships" campaign. BARBARA LUDMAN spoke to two of them in Johannesburg this week.



Richard Steele, also fasting to get the "Troops out of the townships". Pictures by Paul Weinberg, Atrapix

oppressed to change the system.

"I personally would prefer to seek peaceful ways to change South Africa," he notes, "and try to avoid ... violence. However ... I can afford to espouse non-violence because I am privileged; little violence is being done to me."

He is quick to point out that he, Steele and Cape Town Dr Ivan Thoms are not the only people committing themselves to lengthy fasts for peace.

"Some people are doing it in a quieter, personal way," he says.

But that is not necessarily his way. "To quite a large extent, I'm doing it for the effect," he says. "The ECC decided on this strategy, and I thought it was a good one. I see a fast at this particular time in a country under an Emergency as a good thing to do, because it's basically very difficult to stop a fast. Even detention cannot stop it."

And from a personal point of view, "I see this fast as an opportunity to have more time to integrate social analysis and my personal beliefs. I've been going through a rapid time of becoming politically aware and I feel that to some extent that has become separate from my values and my faith. One has grown more quickly than the other."

"Although I'm in a movement which tries to combine both aspects, I feel my focus has been on the political side of things, learning about myself as someone with political responsibility. How one relates that to God, to the life of Christ is much less articulated."

"I don't think the majority of people in the mainline churches would do what I'm doing, for the reasons I'm doing it. It would be seen as too political."



Harald Winkler, who has eaten no solids for a week now, talks to a group this week about why he is doing it.

"But I have got a particular understanding of Christianity that doesn't try to be apolitical but is aware of Christianity's social and political dimensions."

In one way only, Steele is also a pragmatist. He favours fasting as a way of communicating because it is accessible. "It is something anyone can do," he says.

It is also "a radical stopping, stepping out and becoming aware of the way we live our lives."

"We are socialised to follow certain habits. If you're able to step out of that habit, even for 24 hours, it gives you a chance to look at the other habits you are following."

"Eating," he says, "is one of our most basic social actions. Meals are a time of fellowship and sharing together. Also, in South Africa, food and the lack of food are important elements in people's lives. There is massive starvation in the rural areas and the cities."

Fasting, then, is "an action that comes from the centre. It is a way to reach into the centre of ourselves." There are good things at the centre, but also "the pain of our society. We need to feel that, to weep with that pain, and respond in a creative way."

"One crux element of the violence in our society is the SADF," he says. "We are aware of the other kinds of

violence, but we are specific focusing on the SADF, because are focusing on us, on our lives. the SADF that conscripts, and w both males and conscripts."

He had intended to begin fasting in detention, but was released on Friday and began his fast — up to four litres of water a day, half of it mineral water — on Sunday night.

Brought up as a Baptist, he spent a year in the US at a Mennonite seminary after his release from detention barracks, and two months with the Movement for a New Society. He returned in late 1983 because, he said, "I learned what I needed and it was time to come back."

When he heard there was a need for someone to run the Phoenix Settlement, Gandhi's memorial in Inanda, he volunteered. He is currently as well as caretaker but prefers the latter designation, the notoriety of caring. There is little enough to do for since the settlement was attacked in August — just a clinic which serves the black community.

He saw the attack on the settlement as a symbol of non-violence, as evidence of frustration, a lack of cohesion, manifestation of tremendous social confusion, fear and anger.

But he did not react violently. His commitments are complete.

Like Winkler, he's a vegetarian but he would not eat meat in a social situation, because, he says, conviction springs from a reverberation for life. Other reasons — his own and his concern for world hunger — are secondary.

It is the same with non-violence. Commitment is absolute.

"In order to be able to kill another person, you first have to kill yourself," he says. "I would rather draw suffering and stress onto myself than cause other people suffering through my actions and my words."

"Fasting functions as a light conductor. Non-violence does that. It absorbs violence rather than perpetuating it, and then earths it."

"To me, this is something that happens naturally. It's not that someone goes out to absorb violence. But any truthful act has its natural correlations. When you plant flowers you get natural beauty. You don't do it for effect. You do it because it's truthful and it's good and it's right."

"I'm not haranguing people with words or weapons," he says.

"Violence generally generates violence in response, but there is another option, total vulnerability. See the birth of Jesus as a strong example of that option. It is a strong one. It cuts that spiral of violence and it challenges others to a moral level to make a choice."

●The ECC has called for a hour peace fast on October 10th, the anniversary of the first of troops in the townships year.

For details of camp events, see public meetings page 24.

# STOP APARTHEID WARS

The fast is part of the ECC "Troops Out Campaign." This is a response to the increasing use of violence to suppress the resistance of black people, who will no longer tolerate the suffering they experience under apartheid. Troops have allegedly beaten and raped township residents, looted houses and have been involved in forced removals. The fast is also a protest against these alleged atrocities.

The three week campaign started on the 17 September and will end on the 7 October. Those fasting will be joined by prominent people in 14 hour fasts. A mass fast is also planned from sunset on October 6 to sunset on October 7. Other events are also planned, all of which will take place at Khotso House.



Harald Winkler, rejects Military service on religious grounds.

my brother, or my friend, or me. And the one being sjambokked, teargassed or shot could be my fellow student from Wits."

Harald Winkler, a third year BA student at Wits, is one of three people who are fasting for three weeks, in protest against the use of SADF troops in the townships and the role of the SADF in South African society. Dr. Ivan Thoms and Richard Steele, both conscientious objectors, are also fasting. Although Richard Steele has been detained he has confirmed that he will continue the fast.

In a statement Harald said: "I do not believe that I can go to the army and remain sincere in my understanding of my Christian faith." Harald, who faces a January call-up, is objecting to military service, on religious grounds. He opposes the use of the SADF in the townships because, "the person on the Casspir could be

## Tutu holds fast...



### to his words at ECC 'troops out' protest

BISHOP Desmond Tutu remained silent throughout a Press conference at which he formally joined the End Conscription Campaign's fast to protest the presence of troops in the townships.

Bishop Tutu, on a 24-hour fast today, avoided the cameras and reporters as he sat with head bowed and hands clasped.

He had joined Wits University social science student Harald Winkler at Johannesburg's Khotso House Chapel and Rabbi Ben Isaacson of Johannesburg.

The Press was asked to leave shortly after Mr Winkler, who is on his eleventh day of his 21-day fast, had made short introductory remarks to them.

Bishop Tutu declined to sit beneath an ECC campaign banner when asked to do so by a photographer. — Sapa

WITS STUDENT 26/9/85



## Give Peace a Chance

IN CO-ORDINATED pre-dawn raids around the country, members of the End Conscription Campaign were detained and material confiscated by the security police.

Mike Evans, chairperson of the Cape Town ECC, as well as three members of the Durban ECC, Anita Kromberg, Richard Steele and Sue Britton were detained under section 29 of the Internal Security Act.

This gives them no access to lawyers, very few privileges and they

can be detained indefinitely. The houses of four Johannesburg ECC members were raided and material was taken.

In a statement the Johannesburg ECC said "the ECC is a legal campaign working for a change in the law relating to conscriptions in SA. The campaign is premised on the fundamental belief that individuals should have the freedom to choose whether or not to participate in the SADF."

Commenting on the raids an ECC spokesperson said that it is ironic that the state is clamping down on an organisation whose call is for peace. It is not the first time that ECC has experienced this kind of repression. Their National Conference in January was raided, and shortly before the Peace Festival in June, the visa of guest speaker Cardinal Arns was withdrawn by the SA authorities and an ECC organiser was detained.

In support of those people faced with a defence force which upholds apartheid, ECC has re-committed itself to call for an end to conscription and a just peace in our land.

## Students slam SADF centre

city press 29/9/85

By MARTIN NTSOELNGOE

MABUYA High School students in Daveyton this week claimed they were turned away from a SA Defence Force complaint centre.

Faith "Tshepo" Mlangeni, 19, whose left eye was blinded after she and other students were allegedly assaulted by soldiers, said she and others went to Daveyton's Lionel Kent Centre last Thursday to lay their complaints.

She claims they were made to wait for about three hours in Room 7.

Later, a white man in plainclothes, stormed into the room and ordered them to leave.

Citizen Force Manpower's senior liaison officer Basil Ginsburg dismissed the allegations. He said his men wouldn't do a thing like that.

"My men know the aim is to help all the victims," said Colonel Ginsburg

## Support for peace fast pours in

CAPE TOWN. — With Dr Ivan Toms halfway through his three-week fast for a just peace in Cape Town's St George's Cathedral, messages of support for the End Conscription Campaign (ECC) have been flowing in from around the world.

Most of the messages have been supportive of the ECC and its call for the removal of the troops from the townships as well as for Dr Toms, and his co-fasters in the cathedral.

War Resisters International said in its message that "the ECC offers one of the best hopes for minimising the violence in South Africa." — Sapa.

citizen 28/9/85

# General's remarks reveal the political role of the SADF

IN the Sunday Tribune's *News Briefs* column last week, General Magnus Malan slammed the Black Sash, the United Democratic Front (and the African National Congress that one cannot speak for) for their part in the End Conscription Campaign.

True, the Black Sash and the UDF are in support of an end to conscription and have made no bones about it. These organizations are of the view that conscription means the preservation of the apartheid system and the subsequent dogma and brutality that has emanated as a result.

General Malan said there "existed no moral grounds for a national serviceman to refuse to act in black areas".

Does this mean that the Minister of Defence is not aware of what the Defence Force has been in support of in those areas? Or is he only speaking about his own morality when he glances at the daily scoresheet of the killings and the maimings which have caused so much cruelty and hate in virtually every township throughout the country?

That any young man should be thrust into this situation against his will or, without redress, is told to fight in another country's war is bad enough.

To speak of it as the general has done destroys an individual's right to think and believe for himself but, and much more ominously, it also illustrates the real role of the military in this country and the obvious political force it has become.

Rita Easton

Durban

## Say 'No' to Botha's army!

THE racist Pretoria regime has done its dirty work. It has sent its troops into Angola to assist the dissident Unita which is facing defeat by the MPLA Government.

It is no wonder that foreign countries propose economic sanctions against this Government. It is no wonder that many black youths have skipped the border to join the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress.

Even in Mozambique, this Government is helping dissident Renamo to destabilise the economy of the Frelimo regime. Pik Botha acknowledges that they have sent the Defence Force into Mozambique to "diffuse" war and "make friendship".

Between Frelimo and Renamo? That's absurd! How can Pik Botha say that when he is failing to bring peace inside South Africa? Doesn't he know that charity begins at home?

White parents must stop sending their children to the army. They are not defending "their" country but the monster, apartheid, and they are destabilising the economy of our neighbouring countries.

White parents must support the End Conscription Campaign.

Say "No" to Botha's army! South Africa must withdraw from Namibia. It is an illegal squatter!

Nusi S'thole

Umlazi

# protest fast

SUNDAY TIMES 29/9

By SHAUN HARRIS

FIVE people in different parts of South Africa are on a "protest fast" to urge the Army to withdraw from black townships.

The five men, including a medical doctor and the caretaker of a Mahatma Gandhi centre, have not eaten for a week and plan to fast for at least another week as part of a national "troops out the townships" campaign.

They are expecting other South Africans to join them in a 24-hour fast at the culmination of their campaign in just over a week's time.

"The basic reason for the fast is simple. We know that many young South African national servicemen do not want to be in the townships helping the police, and we are calling on the Defence Force to get out of the townships," 28-year-old Richard Steele said in Durban this week.

Two students at the University of Natal in Durban — Donn Edwards and Steve Collins — have joined Mr Steele in his two-week fast.

In Cape Town Dr Ivan Toms, nicknamed the "Crossroads doctor" because of the clinic he has run in the squatter settlement for five years, has also fasted for a week, as has Wits student Harold Winkler in Johannesburg.

## Support

"A number of people have contacted me to say they are fasting for shorter periods in support of our campaign," Mr Steele, caretaker at the Gandhi settlement outside Durban and a member of the End Conscription Campaign, said in Durban.

In 1980 he spent a year in detention barracks for refusing to do his national service, and was released from nearly two weeks' police detention late last week after a Supreme Court judgment ordered that he, and two other people detained with him, be released by the security police.

Mr Steele said his fast was being strictly monitored by doctors, and he didn't intend to harm himself in any way.

"I choose fasting as a form of protest because it is completely non-violent, and doesn't affect anyone but myself," he said.

"And one thing that nobody can stop you from doing is refusing to eat. Historically, fasting has been used by people as an effective form of protest."

Mr Steele is staging his "troops out" protest fast at St Anthony's Catholic Church in Durban.

# Silent Tutu avoids Press at start of 24hr fast

**BISHOP** Desmond Tutu, the Anglican Bishop of Johannesburg, remained silent throughout a Press conference at which he formally joined an end conscription campaign fast aimed at bringing about the removal of troops from the townships.

Bishop Tutu, on a 24-hour fast yesterday, avoided the many cameras, foreign news television teams and reporters present as he sat with his head bowed and his hands together, at the Khotso House Chapel in Johannesburg.

He had joined Mr Harold Winkler, a 21-year-old social science student at the University of the

Witwatersrand who is fasting for 21 days.

Rabbi Ben Isaacson of Johannesburg also joined the Bishop and Mr Winkler.

## Fastening

The Press was asked to leave shortly after Mr Winkler, who is on his eleventh day of fasting, had made short introductory remarks to them.

Bishop Tutu declined to sit beneath an ECC campaign banner when asked to do so by a photographer.

Mr Winkler said the campaign was a "call for a time to meditate . . . and a call on the churches and

all religious communities," to take note of the situation in the townships.

"It is also doing something in your body to feel there is something wrong, as there is wrong in society."

He said he was weak but well. He had a bottle of mineral water at his side.

Rabbi Isaacson said that when he awoke yesterday morning he did not feel like eating, but instead read Chapter 58 of the Old Testament Prophet Isaiah, which teaches about "true fasting".

"It (fasting) is (done) to loosen the bonds of wickedness and to let the oppressed go free.

"As Jews, we identify with this cause . . . it is a spiritual issue," he said.

## Foyer

In the foyer of Khotso House, outside the chapel where Mr Winkler spends most of his days fasting, is a poster with photographs of troops in townships with a quotation by Mr Winkler saying:

"Fasting for three weeks will bring home to me that the person on top of the Casspir could be my friend, and the one being shot could be my fellow student at Wits."

In another statement on exhibit, Mr Winkler said he faced military "call-up" on January 13, when he would possibly have to enter the townships.

On another ECC poster with a map of South Africa dotted with red images of the Castle in Cape Town is headed by the slogan: "Where is the border now?"

The Press left as friends joined Mr Winkler, the Bishop and the Rabbi to begin meditating.

# Newly-released deta

Pacifist Richard Steele joins nation-wide campaign to get troo



JOY and relief show on the face of newly released detainee Susan Britton as she is reunited with her three daughters: Graham (23), Mrs Britton and Fiona (15).

*Sunday Tribune 22/9/85*

BY LINDA VERGNANI

NEWLY-RELEASED detainee Richard Steele is to begin a two-week long fast today as part of a nationwide campaign to get troops to withdraw from the townships.

A universal Christian pacifist and conscientious objector, Mr Steele was one of three detainees released in terms of a Supreme Court judgment on Friday. The case followed the landmark civil rights judgment of Mr Justice Leon which led to the release of Diakonia director Mr Paddy Kearney earlier this month.

Following an urgent Supreme Court application, Mr Justice Wilson ordered the immediate release of Mr Steele, Anita Kromberg and Susan Britton declaring that their detention in terms of

Section 29 of the Internal Security Act was unlawful.

The Minister of Law and Order, the Commissioner of Police and the Divisional Commissioner of Police for Port Natal were given leave to appeal against the judgment.

After their release the three detainees said physically they had been treated well by the security police, but they feared for the safety of black detainees still being held. They expressed compassion for the security police.

Mrs Britton, a Diakonia worker and committed Christian, said it was "actually possible to pity" the security police.

"I realised when I started being questioned that those guys are just caught up in their own propaganda and they really believe what they are saying. I

don't think they are being cruel for the sake of being cruel. I think they are caught in the story that is being fabricated that this country is under threat."

The security police had never physically molested her but had "bullied" her for the first few days and reduced her to tears several times.

"The worst thing was being locked into a cell — I hated it, being locked in alone for hours and hours.

"The thought of those still in detention makes me feel very, very sad but almost glad that I shared something of what they are going through."

Mr Steele, an End Conscription Campaign worker, said he would start his two-week long water-only fast on Sunday night. He had intended to start the fast for peace and a withdrawal of troops while in detention.

Now he would begin his fast in private while visiting his family in Johannesburg but would continue the fast in St Anthony's Catholic Church in Durban from Tuesday night.

Mr Steele said he felt anger and concern about his "brothers and sisters still in detention".

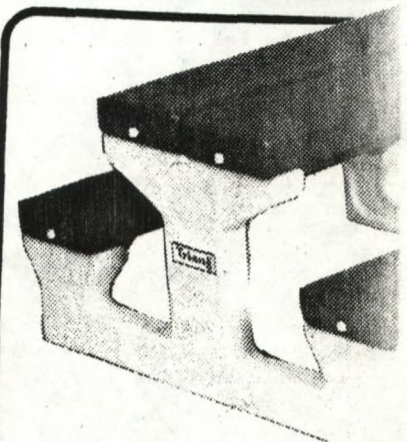
He also felt "a great compassion for the security police and an urge to shout to them. They weren't ogres to me, they were just human beings.

"I was in those offices against my will but they chose to go into barred rooms and spy on people after day. They were stopping my life unfairly, cutting me off from my friends and family unfairly. I had the moral responsibility for looking after me up.

"Part of our liberation struggle is



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# released detainee fasts

joins nation-wide campaign to get troops to withdraw from townships



released detainee Susan Britton as she is reunited with her three daughters. From left are Mandy (18), Colleen Graham (23), Mrs Britton and Fiona (15).  
Picture: Morris Reddy

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Internal Security Act of Law and Order, the Police and the Director of Police for Port Elizabeth to appeal the sentence. The three detainees had been treated by security police, but they said it was "ac- pany" the security police. Diakonia worker and said it was "ac- pany" the security po-

don't think they are being cruel for the sake of being cruel. I think they are caught in the story that is being fabricated that this country is under threat." The security police had never physically molested her but had "bullied" her for the first few days and reduced her to tears several times. "The worst thing was being locked in a cell — I hated it, being locked in alone for hours and hours. "The thought of those still in detention makes me feel very, very sad but I shared something of what they are going through." Mr Steele, an End Conscription Campaign worker, said he would start his two-week long water-only fast on Sunday night. He had intended to start the fast for peace and a withdrawal of troops while in detention.

Now he would begin his fast in private while visiting his family in Johannesburg but would continue the fast in St Anthony's Catholic Church in Durban from Tuesday night. Mr Steele said he felt anger and concern about his "brothers and sisters still in detention". He also felt "a great compassion for the security police and an urge to reach out to them. They weren't ogres to me, they were just human beings. "I was in those offices against my will but they chose to go into those barred rooms and spy on people day after day. They were stopping my normal life unfairly, cutting me off from my friends and family unfairly. They had the moral responsibility for locking me up. "Part of our liberation struggle is to

help those people to be free in themselves, free of their paranoid fears." Mr Steele said after a few days in detention he had taken a decision not to co-operate with security police interrogation. He had discussed broad philosophical and moral issues with them but would not respond to questions about his own activities. "I live my life publicly and I felt if they thought I had broken the law, they should lay charges against me and question me publicly in court. I've got nothing to hide." The security police threatened to leave him sitting alone in his cell "forever" because of his stand. Miss Anita Kromberg, regional secretary of the International Fellowship

of Reconciliation, said: "I feel great about being out, but I feel very anxious about the people still in detention. It was not a pleasant experience. They treated me with kid gloves because I was white and a woman." The special treatment was "unfair". Miss Kromberg said if detention was the result of working for peace then it was "alright to be in there". ■ The public has been invited to join in the just peace and "troops out" fast for 24 hours at a stretch. Those who fast will be asked to donate the money they would have spent on food to a South African Council of Churches fund which will be used "to assist the victims of SADF actions in the townships".

# Detainee joins 21 day fast

for peace  
Weekly Mail  
20/9/85

DETAINEE Richard Steele has pledged to fast as part of the "Troops out of the townships campaign", despite being held by the Security Police.

He will be one of three people around the country who are holding a three-week "fast for peace". Others — including Bishop Desmond Tutu, Dr Beyers Naude and Sheena Duncan — will be fasting for 24 hours at a time in solidarity.

And the organisers, the End Conscription Campaign, have called on the public to join them in the fast for stretches of 24 hours or more.

The campaign, which includes a full programme of meetings and events, was centred on the three-week fasters. However, one of them, Steele, was among the ECC leadership detained last week in terms of Section 29 of the Internal Security Act.

Friends and family say that when he was held he pledged to continue with the fast in prison.

In Johannesburg, 21-year-old student Harald Winkler has based himself in the chapel at the SA Council of Churches headquarters and will drink only water and herbal tea for three weeks.

Winkler is facing a January call-up for his military service and he has applied to be registered as a conscientious objector on theological grounds.

He said this week that his fast was in support of the ECC call for troops to be removed from the townships and, in the interim, for national servicemen to be given the right to refuse to serve in the townships.

The ECC said in a statement this week that it believed the use of the army would not break the cycle of violence in South Africa and was creating an "acute crisis of conscience" among many conscripts.

Also in Johannesburg, members of the St Antony's United Church in Pageview are fasting in solidarity with Steele in shifts of 24 hours each.

And in solidarity with a member of their congregation, Anita Kromberg, who is also detained, they will be releasing a balloon every midday in the city centre.

Spearheading the Cape Town "fast for peace" is Crossroads squatter camp doctor, Ivan Toms, a conscientious objector who has received non-combatant status.

YOUNG MEN WHO REFUSE TO SERVE ARE FACED WITH CHOICE OF A LIFE OF EXILE OR A POSSIBLE 6 YEARS IN PRISON



Harald Winkler

solidarity with those who are suffering at the hands of the SADF in the townships".

After serving his two years' initial training in the SADF, Toms decided he was "unable to reconcile the Christian injunction to love my enemy and the demand of the SADF to shoot him".

As a doctor at the Empilisweni SACLA clinic — a Christian primary health care clinic for about 100 000 squatters — Toms said, "I have learnt first hand of the viciousness of apartheid and the extreme oppression of the blacks".

In Port Elizabeth, 16 white activists, based in the St Augustine's Cathedral, are to refuse to eat for up to 48 hours at a time.

At a press conference to launch the campaign, ECC local leader Janet Cherry said all 16 were white and privileged, but had become critical of conscription to protect white advantage.

"Many of us do not want privileges based on the colour of our skin. We want an equal and non-racial society ... We are not willing to defend and kill for this system of apartheid we abhor."

During the build-up to the campaign over the last week, Cherry has been the victim of a dangerous act of vandalism, while police searched two houses and ECC media and minutes were confiscated.

While in Grahamstown, Cherry made a routine check at a filling station to discover that one tyre of her car had been overinflated to almost five times the normal pressure. Another had been deflated by nearly a third.

"The attendant came over to me with an incredulous look on his face and asked me, 'Who pumped up your tyre?'"

"We have been confronted with heightened Security Police surveillance, but this has not held us back," she said.

## Police and troop action: Dr Ivan Toms has seen it from the 'other side'

Sunday  
By Chris Whitfield  
Tribune 22/9/85

DR IVAN TOMS, the man spearheading of the End Conscription Campaign's three-week fast, has seen the police and troop activity in the townships from the other side.

As a medical doctor at the Empilisweni SACLA Clinic in Crossroads, Dr Toms has treated the victims of police actions. "Many of the people we treated were innocent folk."

"One man had been shot twice while trying to get rid of a teargas canister that had stuck on his roof and was billowing gas into his house."

"The black children see all the police and troops as 'amaJohnny' and they feel a lot of aggression and anger towards them."

The catalyst that changed the doctor from a non-combatant medic during national service to a conscientious objector was a three-week period in 1983 when he saw "riot police and Administration Board people ripping up shelters and leaving people in the rain".

"It would be crazy for me to leave work in Crossroads and then come back and shoot the people living there."

This week he started his three-week fast in Cape Town's landmark St George's Cathedral — only metres away from the Houses of Parliament — for a "just peace".

He is drinking only water. "I still feel good but I'm sure it will be different after 20 days," he laughed.

"The ECC has two demands — for a just peace and for the withdrawal of troops from the townships."

"And we think that troops should at least be allowed to choose whether they want to go in," he said.

His personal reasons for fasting were his "Christian perspective" and as a member of the ECC to "highlight issues for people".

He served two years in the army as a national serviceman and "thought during that time that I could serve as a non-combatant doctor".

"But I found that even in as a non-combatant you are a cog in the whole military machine."

"Then when I came to Crossroads I saw for myself the viciousness of apartheid."

"So I felt it was right as a Christian, a conscientious objector and a member of the ECC to highlight the issue and to pray and make contact with the people by this fast."

The opening day of the fast was marked by visits from about 40 people expressing solidarity and wanting to discuss the issue. A rabbi joined Dr Toms for the first 24 hours of his fast.

A solidarity relay fast is also taking place at the St Mary's Catholic Cathedral in Cape Town.

The ECC has also called on people to fast in solidarity with Dr Toms and other ECC members on October 7.



IVAN THOMS, doctor for the Crossroads community in Cape Town, lights a candle at St George's Cathedral on Tuesday at the start of his three-week fast "to express our prayers for the withdrawal of troops from the townships".

Others around the country will join him in fasting as part of the End Conscription Campaign's "Troops Out" call.

Thoms was joined in the first day of his

fast by Rabbi Selwyn Franklin of the Green and Sea Point congregation in Cape Town and by Mary Burton of the Black Sash.

In Johannesburg, Harald Winkler of the Young Christian Students association, moved into the chapel at Khotso House to begin a three-week fast there "to make a strong statement to conscripts that they have a choice, that they should not follow orders blindly".

Picture: MURRAY MICHELL (AFP)

*Weekly Mail 20/9/85*



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