

Natal suspends school cadets for safety reasons

STAR 27/4/87

Own Correspondent

DURBAN — For "safety" reasons, cadet activities have been suspended at all Natal high schools at the directive of Mr Arthur Olmesdahl, new director of education for Natal.

The decision, which affects about 25 000 cadets, has been welcomed by opposition spokesmen and teachers.

Mr Olmesdahl said he gave the instructions late on Thursday afternoon because he was "concerned about the safety of the boys. I felt it wise in the present political atmosphere and with the elections coming up to suspend cadet activities until further notice."

NO THREAT

He said there had not been any threat of any kind to pupils and no specific incident had prompted his decision.

Mr Hylton Johnstone, president of the Natal Teachers Society, said: "If it is a question of ensuring pupil safety, we must support Mr Olmesdahl's move."

Mr Roger Burrows, PFP MP and education spokesman, said his party welcomed Mr Olmesdahl's decision. The decision applied only to Natal, but it was the ideal opportunity to review

compulsory school cadets for whites throughout the country.

Natal had a "fine tradition of volunteer cadet forces" long before the Nationalists came into power, said Mr Burrows.

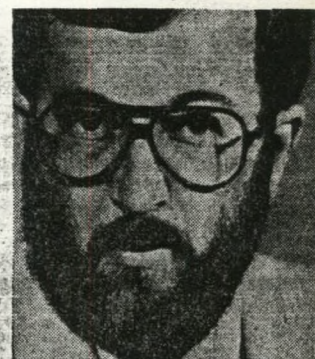
"In the last few years an interdepartmental committee of education departments and the SADF took the position that cadets be made compulsory.

"In Natal, this has meant that the wishes of parents, principals and staff were overridden in a dogmatic enforcement."

The PFP had previously proposed that cadet training revert to being voluntary "with community service or other areas accepted as alternatives".

In 1985, the Minister of Defence had said 25 021 white boys at 69 Natal schools were undergoing cadet training. In the Transvaal more than 105 000 from 1 201 schools, in the Cape 47 754 from 934 schools and in the Free State 15 349 from 593 schools. In terms of the Defence Act every person between the 12 and 17 might be required to undergo cadet training.

Mr Howard Varney, regional organiser of the End Conscription Campaign, said: "ECC is concerned about the safety of all South Africans and if this



PFP MP Mr Roger Burrows... "fine opportunity to review compulsory school cadet training throughout the country".

move is designed to ensure the wellbeing of school children then the ECC supports it."

Mr Mike Ellis, former Natal Teachers Society president and PFP Durban North electoral candidate, said Mr Olmesdahl's decision was "very wise".

"In view of the two-year call up for young men, cadets is a total waste of time. We should be making children aware of the broader realities of South Africa rather than instilling a narrow military view. It is a highly provocative issue in many white homes, not to mention the way it is seen in the black, coloured and Indian communities."

Write to Box 61682 Marshalltown 2107

School callup system wrong

My son is 16 and in Std 9. Recently, he came home from school and said he had registered for the army. He said the army had come to the school and all the boys in Std 9 had filled in forms and handed them in.

Is this common practice? It is disturbing that the SADF is able to use school as recruiting bases, and children have to fill in forms without the consent of, or even discussion with their parents.

This method of recruitment is yet another example of the increasing militarisation of our society. Do other parents feel concern about their 16 and 17 year old sons signing away two years of their lives without even a family discussion? Are our boys compelled by law to sign these forms?

Outraged parent

Parkview

● *The Director Public Relations, SA Defence Force comments: "In terms of Section 63 of the Defence Act, Number 44 of 1957 (as amended), all white male South African citizens must register for national service between the first day of January and the last day of February of the year in which they become 16. The registration may be done at any SA police station or military command headquarters.*

"As a matter of convenience to all concerned, special per-

mission was obtained by the SA Defence Force from the different educational departments to have the registration for national service done at the schools.

"It is not a time-consuming operation and it is convenient for the scholar to complete the registration form at the school. It is also convenient for the scholar to complete the registration form at school rather than having to visit his local police station after school hours.

"No family discussion is deemed necessary because the parent is not required to sign or counter-sign the registration form as all white male SA citizens are compelled by law to register for national service.

"The schools are also not visited by members of the SA defence force. The registration is conducted by the staff of the schools concerned. This practice has been taking place since 1968 and is not to be regarded as militarisation of schools, or even recruitment."

Dienspligweiering as politieke daad

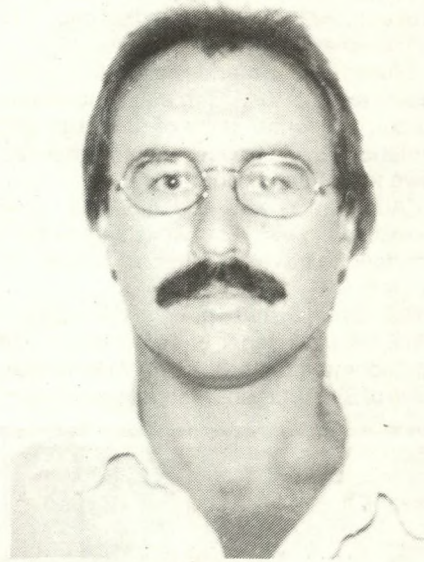
Dr. Hennie Strydom
(Regs fakulteit UOVS)

GELOOFSBESWARE teen militêre diensplig is 'n ou en bekende verskynsel. Met die instelling van verpligte militêre diensplig in Suid-Afrika gedurende die sestigerjare, is dit 'n aangeleentheid wat ook hier te lande meer en meer die aandag van die Parlement en gevolglik ook van die geregshowe geveer het.

Ten einde 'n meer sinvolle afweging tussen religieuse vryheid en die plig van die individu om sy deel tot die verdediging van die land by te dra, te bewerkstellig, is die Verdedigingswet van 1957 dan ook in 1983 gewysig. Voorsiening is onder andere gemaak vir (a) 'n subjektiewe (i.p.v. die vorige objektiewe) toets ten einde die bonafides van 'n geloofsbeswaarde te bepaal; (b) die instelling van 'n Raad vir Geloofsbeswaardes wat hoofsaaklik uit teoloë saamgestel is en aansoeke om vrystelling van militêre diensplig moet aanhoor; (c) die moontlikheid van alternatiewe diens van 'n nie-militêre aard en (d) die dekriminalisering van geloofsbeswaardes, dit wil sê, om geloofsbeswaardes nie net as blote oortreders van militêre wette te sien nie.

Hierdie veranderde benadering het baie daartoe bygedra om weg te doen met die stigma wat voorheen aan geloofsbeswaardes gekleef het sodat hulle makliker as normale gevalle deur die openbare mening hanteer kon word.

Gedurende die tagtigerjare het 'n ander dimensie van beswaar teen militêre diensplig in Suid-Afrika sy verskyning gemaak. In dié geval was dit nie 'n religieuse dogma wat die grondslag van die beswaar gevorm het nie, maar 'n moreel-politieke oortuiging. Sommige blanke Suid-Afrikaners het



Dr. Hennie Strydom

toenemend nie meer hulle weg oopgesien om deel te wees van 'n militêre mag wat 'n ontspoorde en korrupte politieke ideologie teen mede landsburgers moes afdwing nie. Om oorlog teen mede Suid-Afrikaners in die "Townships" te maak, is totaal anders as om 'n vyand wat van buite die landsgrense 'n militêre aanval op jou land loods, die hoof te bied. Dit is uit hierdie omstandighede waaruit die jongste geslag beswaarmakers teen militêre diensplig gebore is.

Vanuit die oogpunt van die (tot onlangs) verkrampte politieke ideologie is dit te verstaan dat sommige van ons politieke en militêre bewindhebbers sulke optrede as landsverraad en onpatrioties sou bestempel. Wat diegene wat so dink nie verstaan nie, is dat dit juis 'n liefde vir die land is wat

'n afsku in die politieke sisteem meebring.

Anders as in die geval van geloofsbesware word besware teen militêre diensplig van dié aard nog ongenaakbaar as kriminaliteit veroordeel wat lief met lang tronkstraf die hoof gebied moet word. Dit verbaas eintlik nie. Die Suid-Afrikaanse owerheid en regstoepassers het nog altyd moeite gehad om die gewone kriminele daad van die politieke geïnspireerde daad te onderskei. In die lig van die onlangse vrylating van politieke gevangenes sou dit nie onvanpas wees nie om die posisie van diegene wat tans tronkstraf uitdien weens hulle moreel-politieke besware teen militêre diensplig onder die apartheidsregime, te heroorweeg. In dié verband kan gerus nagedink word oor die volgende uitlating van die hof in die saak van *S v Budlender* (1973): "...one must remember that the people who commit political offences are frequently people of high political morals and ideals who commit these offences, not for personal gain, but because of the beliefs they have - things they may believe in very strongly. An offence of this nature carries for a certain section of the community little or no social approbrium. It may even carry approval."

By die beantwoording van die vraag oor watter aangehoudenenes se daad politieke geïnspireer was, kan daar tog in beginsel nie 'n onderskeid gemaak word tussen die ANC-lid wat deur een of ander daad van 'n rassistiese en outokratiese politieke regime wou ontslae raak, en die dienspligtige wat weier om deel te wees van die militêre mag van daardie selfde gehate regime nie!

**(INTUSSEN het Dr. H. Strydom sy militêre rang as luitenant neergelê in protes teen die SAW se betrokkenheid by moordben-des. - Red.)*

Township lingo and smaller traditions



F.H. Mokoka

WITH the winds of change in South Africa pointing to reform and greater association between blacks and whites, it would perhaps be an excellent idea for those whites who occasionally brace themselves

and venture into the township ("to see for themselves") to start learning the lingo used in the township, lest they conclude that they have been sworn at when this language is rapidly spoken in their presence. When you arrive in the township and a "mjita" (young man) welcomes you with a smile, don't start going on about, "How do you do". The standard greeting is "Hola!", accompanied by a great handshake. If this

"mjita" takes you to a house full of many friendly people and even more beer bottles, you'll soon discover you're in a "spot". Rest assured, you are not in any kind of trouble. You are in the equivalent of a shebeen.

It may be normal, after a number of drinks, to start wondering where the lavatory is. Don't be embarrassed to ask your friends to show you the way. However the correct way to do this is to inform them that you want to "shaya 6-9". If the urge is greater, the term is "4-5", and for this you'll need your own supply of toilet paper.

It has been determined that the amount of "spinza" you consume grows in inverse proportion to the amount of "zak" or "lozana" in your pocket. There'll come a point where you'll feel you've spent enough and you want to concentrate more on the conversation than the drink. Depending on the mood, the topic may focus on the former, it may be to debate on who is "blind": The

PAC or the ANC, or alternatively, the AWB or the BV. "Blind" in this case does not imply lack of sight. The Afrikaans equivalent of the word would be "gevaarlik", but the type of "gevaar" that warrants respect.

If the word "medi" is uttered here and there, then the conversation has shifted to women, and to be on the safe side, bring your own "medi" along to avoid making advances on those of other "mjita's", which would certainly not endear you to your hosts. If you are still staying at your parents' home, as night approaches morning, feelings of apprehension may set in, what with your "timer" and "old lady" wondering where you are at this time of night. You'll know your hosts are in the same frame of mind when one says: "zingila, my bra! It's time to 'waai'". Your last parting words will be "sharp, my bra!", which means "everything is fine, my brother." Once you get tuned in, you'll see it's as easy as one-two-three!

SA draft evaders face EC rejection

The Common Market could act soon to cut the number of South African war resisters seeking asylum in Britain and other EC countries. **THE STAR BUREAU** reports

LONDON — South African conscientious objectors, along with a wide range of other refugees, could be prevented from settling in Britain with a set of tough new laws coming into effect over the next three years.

The London-based Committee of South African War Resisters (Cosawr) said Wednesday that it was worried that EC plans to tighten controls on aliens could prevent conscientious objectors gaining political asylum, but admitted that at this stage it was unable to take action to protect its charges.

The plans, scheduled for 1992 when the EC becomes a single market, aim to cut back on all immigration from non-Market countries. Asylum-seekers will be included in the controls.

Speaking in London, Cosawr spokesman Mr Roger Field said: "We are certainly concerned that these new measures will inhibit people making applications to stay. This is a concern we share with a number of other organisations which deal with refugee applications."

'A bit early'

"But our problem at the moment is that we don't know the precise forms these restrictions will take."

It is a bit early to make plans." EC officials are aiming to tighten controls against a broad group of aliens, including visa applicants, suspected criminals, refugees and people who are regarded as *persona non grata* for reasons of national security.

At this point in the negotiations, the British government is opposing the European Commission's suggestions that national frontier controls against non-Community nationals be abandoned.

The Home Secretary, Mr Douglas Hurd, believes this will undermine the pan-European battle against terrorism.

But France, West Germany and the three Benelux countries maintain that the disappearance of internal frontier controls can be compensated for by increased exchange of information between police and security authorities. Each would respect the others' claims against individuals regarded as "undesirable".

The new proposals include the suggestion that aliens should cross external EC borders only at certain points and fixed times, if they do not have criminal records and pose no threat to security, and have proof of sufficient financial means.

Alarming

The acceleration of what looks like fairly extensive measures is also alarming other refugee organisations.

According to Ms Anne Owers, general secretary of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, greater controls and checks on ethnic minorities could also ensue.

Britain has already taken several steps over the past few years to reduce the number of asylum-seekers from an average of around 5 000 a year.

Not all the South African war resisters among them, however, are granted political asylum.

Mr Field said: "Each case is judged on its merit and applicants who are allowed to stay are either given 'exceptional leave' to remain or full refugee status, depending on their circumstances."

"We are watching the situation to see what steps need to be taken when and if the situation changes."

No call-up for ballet dancers

CAPE TOWN — Professional male ballet dancers employed by provincial arts councils will no longer be swapping ballet shoes for army boots — they will be exempt from military service.

This is the result of a two-year campaign by the Administrator of the Cape, Mr Gene Louw, and the Cape Provincial Arts Board, and 15 years of negotiations by Professor David Poole, artistic director for Capab Ballet.

Professor Poole said: "Army training can be harmful to muscles and develop them the wrong way."

Of the 21 Capab male dancers, four have already done military service. Dancers who leave the company will be eligible for call-up.

Mr Louw said: "Dancers often left the country after their ballet training — which can cost R25 000 — for fear of injury in the army." — Sapa.

Church treads warily in new counsel service

By Karen
Mac Gregor

HELP is on the way for conscientious objectors in need of counselling — but a church scheme to set up a national register of counsellors will have to tread a thin legal line or face large fines or jail sentences.

If counsellors are caught encouraging young men to avoid military service, they risk being prosecuted under the emergency regulations and sentenced to a whopping R20 000 fine or 10 years in prison (possibly with no option of a fine).

If they are prosecuted under Section 121 (c) of the Defence Act the sentence could be up to R5 000 or six years' imprisonment, or both.

The new national register of counsellors for conscientious objectors is the brainchild of Anglican Rev Andrew Dotchin. It will be kept country-wide, and volunteers can join at any local Anglican church.

Mr Dotchin was one of the clergymen who took part in a countrywide vigil for jailed conscientious objector Dr Ivan Toms.

Scant support

"It struck me that while there are a lot of well intentioned people within the End Conscription Campaign, conscientious objectors have little support from counsellors.

"Many of the young men cannot speak openly to their families, or even to their peer groups," Mr Dotchin said.

"The clergy, because of our clear stand on the issue, are in a special position to speak to objectors, their peers and their families."

Mr Dotchin said he had experienced a tremendous response from objectors since they became aware of the service.

"There are a number of young men struggling with their consciences over the issue of military training."

He said about eight young members of his St Martins congregation who were of national service age had expressed moral qualms about joining the defence force.

Camps

"I have found most objectors are national servicemen who have completed their two years but do not want to return to camps, mostly because they have doubts over township duty. Many are graduates.

"What these young men know of the townships, what they are told by the Defence Force and what they experience on duty doesn't tie up anymore. Many of them say to me: 'My friends live in the townships'."

Mr Dotchin said any person who was prepared to do counselling would be accepted. It did not matter if they were not qualified or had no experience.

"But our volunteers will have to tread a very thin line to ensure they do not encourage young men not to do military service"

Counsellors stepping out of line could be prosecuted under the emergency regulations of December 11, 1986, in which the definition of a subversive statement includes a "... statement by which the system of compulsory military service is discredited or undermined".

The Defence Act is even more comprehensive, citing as convictable any person who says or does anything with intent to "recommend, encourage, aid, incite, instigate, suggest to or otherwise cause" anyone not to render any service to which they may be liable.

Namibia nuwe skuilplek vir weieraars?

Jacques Pauw

NAMIBIA kan 'n toevlugsoord vir dienspligweieraars uit Suid-Afrika word indien Swapo die verkiesing in November wen. 'n Leier van dié organisasie het vandeeweek gesê hulp en bystand sal aan alle vlugteling van apartheid gegee word.

Vrye Weekblad verneem 'n beduidende groep jong Suid-Afrikaners wat nie wil diensplig doen nie, woon reeds in Windhoek waar hulle hoop om Namibiaanse burgerskap te kry en diensplig vry te spring.

'n Woordvoerder van die Conscientious Objectors Support Group (COSG), Chris de Villiers, sê dit is ook sy indruk dat talle dienspligbeswaardes Namibia as 'n nuwe alternatief en tuiste sien.

Hidipo Hamutenya, Swapo se sekretaris van inligting en publisiteit,

sê vandeeweek uit Windhoek: "Natuurlik sal 'n Swapo-regering jong Suid-Afrikaners wat weens apartheid weier om diensplig te doen, ondersteun en bystaan.

"Swapo het self dekades lank onder apartheid gely en daarteen geveg. Ons was self dekades lank uitgewekenes in die buiteland. Daarom het ons simpatie met gewetensbeswaardes. Hulle sal heel moontlik vlugtelingstatus kry.

"Ek moet dit egter duidelik stel dat gewetensbeswaardes sal moet bewys dat hulle weens apartheid weier om diensplig te doen en nie om ander selfsugtige redes nie."

Hamutenya sê Swapo het nog nie 'n amptelike beleid oor gewetensbeswaardes uit Suid-Afrika nie en het nog nie oor hul moontlike burgerskap of status besluit nie.

Intussen het 'n woordvoerder van die Suid-Afrikaanse Weermag in Pretoria gesê gewetensbeswaardes wat na Namibia uitwyk is 'n politieke aangeleentheid waarop hy nie kommentaar kan lewer nie.

Pierre du Plessis, 'n Suid-Afrikaanse joernalis wat in Windhoek woon en nog nie diensplig gedoen het nie, sê dit is te vroeg om nou reeds van 'n "gemeenskap van dienspligweieraars" in Namibia te praat. Talle gewetensbeswaardes uit Suid-Afrika woon egter reeds daar.

Volgens Swapo se verkiesingsmanifes wat onlangs vrygestel is, sal buitelanders eers Namibiaanse burgerskap kry nadat hulle tien jaar in die land woon en nie skuldig is aan enige "fascistiese misdade" nie. Alle burgers sal ook twee jaar lank moet diensplig doen.

Gewetensbeswaardes in Namibia hoop hulle sal gouer burgerskap kry en glo dat 'n Swapo-regering nie genoeg geld sal hê om almal twee jaar lank op te roep nie.

"Dit is soveel makliker om na Namibia as enige land in die buiteland te emigreer. Hoewel daar ook hier onsekerheid oor die toekoms is, gaan dit vir gewetensbeswaardes daarvoor om nie in die Suid-Afrikaanse Weermag en in die townships te dien nie," sê Du Plessis.

Hy sê Namibia is veral aantreklik omdat daar werk vir gegradueerdes en geskooldes is.

Chris de Villiers sê Namibia is nou deel van die sogenaamde "tuisland-opsie". Talle dienspligtiges wat voorheen in veral onafhanklike tuislande gaan skuil het, beskou Namibia nou as 'n alternatief.

"Beswaardes praat al hoe meer oor Namibia as 'n nuwe alternatief vir diensplig. Dit is 'n logiese keuse omdat dit minder vreemd is as enige ander buurland, of Europa of Amerika," sê De Villiers.

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