

88.8.21  
ECC Outreach Committee housemeeting with conscripts and campers

Soldiers/ campers perceptions of ECC

- ECC is elitist and cliquish
- bunch of student politico's out of touch with normal people
- soldier seen to be the enemy by ECC
- never heard of ECC in the army
- ECC portrayed as communist in the army
- there's nothing ECC would actually do for me
- problem with women and older people in ECC who don't face call-up, most respect for vets and objectors in ECC

On ECC using political or material arguments

- mistake for ECC to abandon political arguments in favour of material
- nothing ECC can do about the material conditions in the army
- unhappiness for material reasons often leads to greater aggression towards township residents; residents seen as the reason for soldiers being where they don't want to be.
- not an easy step from material unhappiness to political opposition
- 'troops out' the most appealing of ECC's demands
- stick to political issues; don't try and make the army a 'better place' - will be seen as 'moffies' and anyway can't do it: troops in townships the key issue.
- portray the reality of SADF's role and attitude of township residents, question SADF's definition of who the enemy is
- use church positions against conscription and role of SADF more

On ECC's ability to reach serving soldiers

- very very difficult to get through to soldiers
- army is not like you people (ie ECC) - its white society at large, with the broadest and wierdest range of views.
- only likely to reach guys who already have doubts
- can't see ECC reaching people in the army
- naive to think you can reach soldiers, must reach them before they go in or once they're out of the army
- can reach troops stationed in cities

On anti-authoritarianism in army

- very high level of anti-authoritarianism (ie balanced by respect for/subservience to officers) and not clear where the problem lies.
- very little intellectualising - too fucked all the time

On soldiers legal rights

- you don't know what your rights are as a soldier
- advice service not publicised widely enough
- important that soldiers know their rights before they go in
- you can stand up for your rights if you know what they are and have the guts
- (army seems to back away from soldiers who assert their rights)
- army frightened by civilian lawyers
- soldiers believe that they don't have any rights, if they did know the guys would take a firmer stand
- lawyeres very important

On rehabilitation

- big problem that no provision for rehabilitation
- support for rap groups but depends on experiences and especially of combat

On campers/vets joining ECC

- campers are very skei for joining ECC unless they have decided not to do further camps; otherwise a contradiction and anticipate condemnation from ECC
- too scared; will be victimised and ostracised on camps

Other problems experienced in army

- high degree of disillusionment because of brutality and isolation
- very isolated
- physical, emotional and psychological isolation, and numbing
- complete waste of time
- boredom and frustration
- being bullied by intellectually inferior officers

Positive aspects to being in the army

(Army experience is contradictory; even those who hate it/ think its kak will see positive thinkgs about it)

- excitement of combat
- proud of being a soldier, wearing a uniform, carrying a gun
- fulfilling stereotypes of soldiers as heroes
- proud of making it through the army
- don't have to think, no responsibilities
- camaraderie and friendship
- learnt skills

On ECC's interim demands

- have some potential but probably only amongst soldiers who already are receptive
- will be most attractive to guys before they go in or once they're out.

This report of the housemeeting is copying down things verbatim, it is not a position on anything but was interesting and useful. It was also only with about 8 people, and one can't see that as entirely representative etc etc. However, it is useful to find out how ECC is seen, and the people at the housemeeting were amazed at how open ECC was to criticism and what they were saying.

## MASS MEMBERSHIP DRIVE: Proposal from the Outreach Committee

As part of the second prong of our new two pronged strategy, we are embarking on a mass membership drive. The aim of this drive would be twofold. Firstly, to involve a broader range of people in ECC's activities and to enable them to identify with ECC in a tangible way. Secondly, for ECC Cape Town to become financially less reliant on ECC National.

Outreach's role in the membership drive is one of coordination with sub-committees and individuals taking responsibility for areas of work.

### Membership

It is proposed that people join up as "Members or Supporters of ECC". For people who are interested in becoming formally involved in ECC, there will be space on the form for them to indicate a sub-committee of their choice or other areas of interest. Thus the membership form would also serve the function of being a recruitment form. The vagueness of the membership definition has the advantage of enabling a range of people, from our keenest activist to our most laid back supporter, to be regarded as part of our membership.

The subscription would be as follows:

working people	R25			
student or				
unemployed	R15			
School pupils	R5			
Donor members	R50	R100	R2000	etc.

Apart from a close identification with ECC, our members and supporters would receive the following fringe benefits:

- \* a membership package: this could possibly include a pamphlet outlining the history and aims of ECC, and a card.
- \* a FREE subscription to our tabloid !!!!
- \* regular newsletters/letters keeping them informed of our activities.
- \* invitations to quarterly meetings: at these meetings ECC speakers could outline and review activities, eg forthcoming campaigns. We could also have guest speakers.

The emphasis of the "fringe benefits" would be on contact and communication with our membership.

### Process

- 1) Proposal to be discussed before GB of the 19th March.
- 2) Publicity committee to look into suggestion of producing a membership form and package, and to report back to GB.
- 3) Other sub-coms to brainstorm ideas of recruiting a mass membership, looking particularly at their constituency/area of work.
- 4) If GB approves of the proposal, a mass membership drive to be launched as follows:

- \* invite people on mailing list to become members.
- \* invite ECC activists to become members.
- \* invite members of front organizations to become members.
- \* invite housemeeting participants to become members.
- \* people attending meetings can become members.
- \* constituencies such as churches, schools and culture to be tapped.
- \* advert in tabloid.
- \* advert in Varsity.

### Notes

- the office worker would be responsible for the initial recruitment from the mailing list. S/he would also be responsible for monitoring the members and supporters, making sure they send subscriptions and for mailing items to members and supporters.
- there needs to be discussion with campus ECC on the question of a mass membership drive on campus.

## ECC MEMBERSHIP DRIVE - ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

A large scale membership drive is intended to accommodate/deepen support for, and membership associated with, ECC. These members would be able to choose between different levels of involvement in ECC. At the basic level they would be placed on the mailing list and would receive the ECC newsletter, possibly a monthly factsheet, ECC media (stickers, badges) etc. Deeper involvement would include attendance/hosting of housemeetings, the distribution of media, and participation in ECC campaigns where needed. Associate members would pay an annual membership fee.

### Political motivation

- There are many people who sympathise with and support the broad aims of ECC, but who do not have the time, inclination or energy to actively participate. Associate membership would cater for these people and create a space for them within ECC.
- The membership drive would provide ECC with more profile and would raise general consciousness around the military issue, as we would be reaching far more people on a far more concrete level and providing them with a concrete way of indicating their support.
- Housemeetings would be reaching people not normally reached and would deepen as well as broaden our support. They would also be beneficial consolidating our organisation, and strengthening active members who would be chairing these meetings.
- Mass based support and paper membership figures would give ECC more clout with the media and could provide a degree of protection from repression.
- A well developed network of support for ECC would ensure the spreading and continuation of our issue.

### Method:

- Initial application forms can be sent to the names on the existing mailing list(s), allowing people to commit themselves to different levels of participation e.g.: Would you like to:

Receive ECC media.....( )

Distribute ECC media....( )

Attend a housemeeting...( )

Host a housemeeting....( )

- Advertisements inviting people to write in for such forms can be placed in the Focus and Weekly Mail(?).
- All replies would be computerised by the part-time worker, and those replying would immediately receive media etc, according to their desired level of participation.

### Membership in ECC

The membership drive would mean ECC developing a far more systematic and therefore professional approach to our constituency. We need to be very clear as to the types of membership of ECC. People wanting to join ECC need to understand exactly what is required of them and what their membership entails. We would thus motivate a system that is understood both within ECC and by those individuals/organisations approaching us to become members. We suggest that the constitution be updated to formalise this process (see appendix 1.). We would envisage four types of membership:

#### 1. Member/Affiliate/Subscriber organisations who would:

- Pay an annual subscription fee,
- Participate in decision making in general body meetings or other suitable forums,
- Have their names used publicly by ECC,
- Be on the mailing list,
- Possibly receive a special newsletter.

#### 2. Honorary Membership - (which would be uniformly conferred on our VIPs) - who would:

- Not pay subscription fees, but could be approached occasionally for financial assistance,
- Have their names used publicly by ECC,

- Not participate in decision making,
- Be approached for advice, comments, suggestions and support,
- Be on the mailing list,
- Possibly receive a special newsletter.

3. **Active members** who would:

- Need two referees supporting their application for membership,
- Pay an annual subscription fee,
- Participate in an ECC sub-committee,
- Participate in decision making through general-bodies/sub-committees,
- Receive all ECC mail/media.

4. **Associate members** who would:

- Pay an annual subscription fee,
- Not participate in decision making,
- Receive ECC mail/media,
- Possibly receive special newsletter,
- Help with campaigns through low-key distribution of pamphlets, stickers, newsletters and attendance of public meetings,
- Possibly become active members through a process of attending a number of house meetings.

**Conclusion**

The success of a large scale membership drive depends on a slick, professional approach to it. This can be achieved by developing a computerised system and ensuring that everything runs smoothly and efficiently.

Johannesburg therefore motivates for a part-time worker to:

- Run the computer system
- Coordinate the administration
- Regulate the renewal of subscriptions/membership
- Handle all correspondence
- Send campaign material to associate members.

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**THE END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN  
APPLICATION FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP**

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Name:..... Title:.....  
 Address:.....  
 .....  
 Code:.....  
 Telephone Home:..... Work:.....

**I would like to:**

- Receive ECC mail and media .....( )
- Distribute ECC media .....( )
- Attend an ECC housemeeting .....( )
- Host an ECC housemeeting .....( )
- Become involved in ECC campaigns .....( )
- Other (please specify) .....( )

(Please tick whichever is applicable)

**Subscription rates:**

- Youth - R10 per annum .....( )
- Unemployed - R10 per annum .....( )
- Ordinary - R20 per annum .....( )
- Donor - R50 per annum .....( )
- R75 per annum .....( )
- R100 per annum .....( )
- Other (please specify) .....( )

(Please tick whichever is applicable)

Please return this form with payment to  
 ECC, P.O. Box 1234, JHB 2000

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(This form will be accompanied by a detailed explanation of ECC  
 associate membership.)

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THE END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN  
APPLICATION FOR ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

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Name:..... Title:.....  
Address:.....  
.....  
Code:.....  
Telephone Home:..... Work:.....

**I would like to be involved in:**

- The CHURCHES sub-committee ..... ( )
  - The MEDIA sub-committee..... ( )
  - The CULTURE sub-committee ..... ( )
  - The NEWSLETTER sub-committee..... ( )
  - The CONTACT sub-committee..... ( )
  - The CAMPUS sub-committee..... ( )
- (Please tick whichever is applicable)

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  - R75 per annum..... ( )
  - R100 per annum..... ( )
  - Other (please specify)..... ( )
- (Please tick whichever is applicable)

**Support for your application:**

Please indicate the name, address and telephone number(s) of two people known to ECC or its affiliates (JODAC, Black Sash, NEUSA, OASSSA, PFP youth, YCS, NUSAS, War and Peace group), who are willing to support your application.

Name:..... Name:.....  
Address:..... Address:.....  
.....  
Phone:..... Phone:.....

Please return this form with payment to:  
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most respect for vets and objectors in ECC

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- army frightened by civilian lawyers
- soldiers believe that they don't have any rights; if they did know, the guys would take a firmer stand
- lawyers very important

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- (support for rap groups, but depends on experiences and especially of combat)

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condemnation from ECU

- too scared; will be victimised and ostracised on camps

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- don't have to think; no responsibilities
- comradeship and friendship
- learn skills

### On ECU's interim demands

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- will be most attractive to guys before they go in or once they're out



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**END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)**

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