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End Conscription Campaign

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9 September 1985

Dear Friends

Recently you have hopefully heard of our 'TROOPS OUT' campaign. It is being launched at this moment to try and stop the growing polarisation in South African society. The campaign was to run simultaneously with a Three week Peace Fast that prominent individuals were to participate in.

This morning we heard news that four of our members were arrested under section 29 of the Internal Security Act, which allows for interrogation. These people have been integrally involved in the campaign to end compulsory military conscription into the Apartheid armed forces. This is clearly an attempt to crush our September/October campaign.

It is for this reason that I am writing to you. As we have appealed for international solidarity and participation in the fast of the 7th October, I would strogly urge you to plan some action in solidaruty with our campaign and with our members in detention. We appeal to you to protest at these detentions both by writing to the Minister of Police and by actions that serve to highlight the issues around which our campaign is based. Protest letters can be addressed to the : Minister of Police, Hon. Louis LeGrange, Union Buildings, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa.

The members of the campaign would also really appreciate messages of support from you or your organisation. It is this support that spurs us on to more action for Peace in our country which serves the cause of international Peace and Justice.

I thank you for all your support in the past and pray that you are able to support us at this critical time.

Yours in Solidarity and Peace

Stephen Lowry
For the National Campaign



End Conscription Campaign

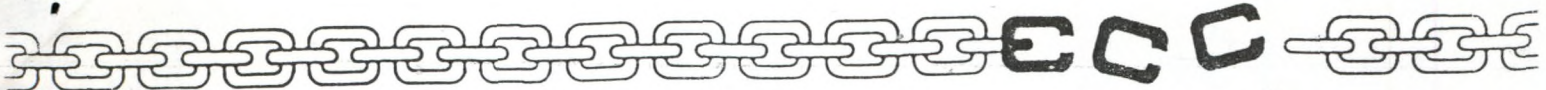
PARTICULARS OF END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC) ACTIVISTS
DETAINED

RICHARD STEELE: Objected to military service in 1980 and was jailed for a year. Commenced a year of Peace Studies in the U.S.A. after this. Presently the caretaker of the Mahatma Gandhi Peace Settlement in Durban. An active member of the ECC.

ANITA KROMBERG: International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) worker in South Africa. Prominent member of the Durban ECC Committee

MIKE EVANS: Son of the Anglican Bishop of Port Elizabeth. Chairperson of the ECC Committee in Cape Town.

SUE BRITTEN: Employee of the Ecumenical Social Action Agency in Durban, Diakonia. Representative of Durban ECC on the National Committee of the ECC.


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PRESS RELEASE

85-09-09 17:18
Msg 401 Title: ECC

ATTN:

PROMINENT WHITE ANTI-WAR ACTIVISTS DETAINED

THIS MORNING THE HOUSES OF FOUR JOHANNESBURG END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC) MEMBERS WERE RAIDED AND SEARCHED BY SECURITY POLICE. IN PIETERMARITZBURG THE HOMES OF THE CHAIRPERSON, TREASURER AND PRESS OFFICER WERE RAIDED. IN DURBAN THREE ECC MEMBERS, RICHARD STEELE (ALREADY JAILED FOR OBJECTING TO MILITARY SERVICE), ANITA KROMBERG AND SUE BRITTEN WERE DETAINED. RICHARD WAS SHORTLY TO COMMENCE A TWO-WEEK FAST FOR A 'JUST-PEACE'. THEIR HOMES AND OFFICES WERE SEARCHED AND DOCUMENTS WERE CONFISCATED. IN CAPE TOWN THE CHAIRPERSON, MIKE EVANS (SON OF THE ANGLICAN BISHOP OF PORT ELIZABETH), WAS DETAINED. ALL HAVE BEEN DETAINED UNDER SECTION 29 OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY ACT FOR PURPOSES OF INTERROGATION.

THE ECC CONDEMNS IN THE STRONGEST TERMS THE REPRESSION METED OUT TO OUR MEMBERS THIS MORNING. THESE ARE CLEARLY NOT ISOLATED INCIDENTS DIRECTED AT A FEW INDIVIDUALS. THEY REPRESENT A DIRECT ATTACK ON OUR CAMPAIGN BY THE STATE. THESE ACTIONS COME AT A TIME WHEN THE ECC IS GAINING A GROWING FOLLOWING. MANY ARE CALLING FOR AN END TO CONSCRIPTION AND FOR A JUST PEACE. THERE ARE A WIDE RANGE OF ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE ENDORSED OUR CALL. THE ACTIONS OF THE STATE CAN BE SEEN AS NOTHING BUT A RESPONSE BASED ON FEAR. A FEAR THAT THEIR SYSTEM OF CONSCRIPTION AND THE DEPLOYMENT OF TROOPS IN THE TOWNSHIPS IS MEETING WITH GROWING OPPOSITION, EVEN WITHIN THE WHITE COMMUNITY.

THE ECC CALLS FOR AN END TO CONSCRIPTION AND A JUST PEACE IN OUR COUNTRY. IS THIS WHAT THE STATE FEARS?

THE ECC IS CURRENTLY ON A 'TROOPS OUT OF THE TOWNSHIPS' CAMPAIGN WHICH INCLUDES A PEACE FAST BY PROMINENT INDIVIDUALS AROUND THE COUNTRY. WE ARE CALLING FOR TROOPS TO BE WITHDRAWN AS THE PRESENCE OF SUCH TROOPS IS FURTHERING THE CONFLICT AND DISTANCING US DAILY FROM A JUST PEACE IN OUR LAND.

THE FAST AND THE CAMPAIGN WILL CONTINUE DESPITE THIS STATE CLAMPDOWN ON OUR ORGANISATION.

SIGNED:
STEVEN LOWRY,
NATIONAL COMMITTEE, END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN.

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END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)

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