

SECTION 3THE CALL TO END CONSCRIPTION

This campaign would adopt the following structures:

1. Relationship to existing CO Support Groups:

* COSG's would establish a group to concentrate on CO support and maintain this work, including counselling and legal advice.

* Another grouping would be responsible for the campaign.

2. Relationship to other groups:

* Those in COSG's responsible for the campaign would initiate a committee in each region by inviting representatives from other organisations.

3. National Co-ordination:

* COSG's should nominate a person in their region to correspond and communicate on the campaign.

Two further working groups met to discuss the manner of launching the campaign and the necessary rationale behind the campaign.

The first re-iterated the need for a broad front (cf para 2), while the second pointed out that the campaign should be perceived as an attempt to raise questions about the conflict and explore the contradictions in each of the groupings within society.

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PRESS STATEMENT

issued by

CO CONFERENCE, DURBAN

17 July 1983

The fourth Annual National Conference of the Conscientious Objectors Support Groups was held at the University of Natal, Durban, from 14 to 17 July 1983.

COSG's from centres around the country were joined by representatives from Church, student, youth and women's organisations at the Conference.

The Conference was unanimous in its continued and active support of the stand taken by young South Africans who refuse, on the basis of conscience, to participate in the SADF.

We reject the new Defence Amendment Act which is punitive and draconian in its measures. All objectors who do not fall into the category of religious pacifism now face a harsh six year prison sentence. In spite of this attempt to divide the CO Support Groups, we stand united in our support of all conscientious objectors.

We note that last year's extended call-up is part of the ongoing subjection of all South Africans to the dictates of the Government. In the light of the new constitutional proposals, we also note the probable extension of conscription to Indians and so-called Coloureds.

We wholeheartedly support the demand of the Black Sash that "the South African Government abolish all conscription for military service" taken at the Black Sash National Conference, Cape Town, March 1983.

We call on all South Africans to take up this demand and we dedicate ourselves to a concerted campaign to abolish conscription.

RESOLUTION PASSED BY ANGLICANS PRESENT AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON
CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION, DURBAN 14/17 JULY 1983

We, Anglican delegates at the 1983 Conscientious Objectors Support Groups Annual National Conference:

NOTING the CPSA declaration that apartheid is a heresy the upholding of which has necessitated the increasing militarization of our society;

BEING AWARE of the important role of Christians as reconcilers and peacemakers;

REQUEST THE BISHOPS:

- a) to give guidance to the Church as to possible ways in which its members can counteract the militarisation of our society, and in particular the ways in which our children are being socialized into an unquestioning militaristic mentality which accepts violence as a norm;
- b) to inform members of the Church of the Christian values and Biblical principles which should guide and determine their response to militarism;
- c) to remedy the lack of Christian teaching related to the causes of the present civil war conflict in South Africa;
- d) to exercise their authority as far as possible to not allow the practice of cadets in Anglican private schools, cadets being both a symptom and a reinforcing agent of the increasing militarism in our society;
- e) to bring to the attention of all Church members, particularly those who are or will be parents of schoolgoing boys, that Section 57 of the Defence Act No. 44 of 1957 allows for parents or guardians to object in writing to their sons being trained in the para-military cadet system.

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END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)

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