



44.11.8

PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF SOUTH AFRICA

12 June 1985

Mr. D. Runciman
Mingalo Bay
Bass Road
ZEEKOEVLEI
7945

Dear Mr. Runciman,

I acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 5th June, 1985, and wish to respond as follows.

I did not specifically refer to the ECC when I talked about "cheap and sensational propoganda aimed at undermining or evading military service" simply because there are aspects of that campaign and attitudes adopted with which I have no difficulty in associating myself. But, I have read statements and in fact heard, personally, again after I had made that statement, from people who speak at meetings or conventions organised by the ECC in which extraordinary views are propogated.

For myself, I find it totally illogical to use the issue of Conscription in order to in fact attack the SADF, and the role which it plays in South Africa. The Defence Force can do away with conscription tomorrow completely (which no doubt would help a great many morally anguished and privileged White South Africans), but would in no way affect the negative and counter productive role that the Defence Force can play if not called to account or controlled in society.

I have not the slightest doubt that should the Defence Force embark on a voluntary recruiting campaign offering competitive wages, it would easily recruit manpower from the Black, Coloured and Indian communities far in excess of its needs. Should such a Defence Force be used for doubtful ends, it would be far less accountable if there was no conscription.

That is why I believe to seize upon the issue of conscription in isolation and to make sensational and melodramatic statements about why it is deemed to be necessary and used by the Government or the Defence Force is in fact counter productive.

I might also add that at such occasions when presumably the issue is the role of the Defence Force and Conscription, the debate inevitably tends to move into the political arena and I myself and others like me have been referred to as collaborators and sell-outs, etc.

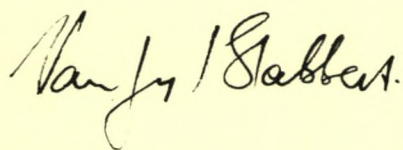
Again I find it difficult to understand how what I am trying to do in Parliament necessarily is linked up with a particular view on conscription.

Let me again assure you that I am in favour of phasing out compulsory racial conscription as soon as possible precisely because I think it politicizes the role of the Defence Force. It is a drain on our economy and I believe it is counter productive to any constructive role that a Defence Force can play in a period of social transition.

Again, let me assure you that I have no axe to grind with any organisation and am quite willing to debate this position wherever and whenever possible.

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely,



DR. F. VAN ZYL SLABBERT MP
LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

COALITION

For a New Foreign and Military Policy

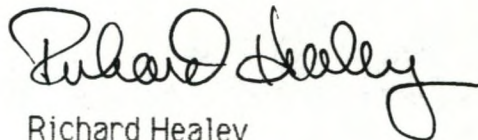
712 G Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003
(202) 546-8400

September 17, 1985

On behalf of the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy, a coalition of 55 national organizations, incorporating millions of Americans, I am writing to you in support of your "Troops out of the Townships" Campaign and the fasters who will be attempting to draw national and international attention to the practices of the South African military.

For the first time in history the realities of life under apartheid are starting to seep into the American consciousness as we see live footage of "riot control" on our television screens and the divestment debate rages on in this country. We are eager to lend our moral and active support to organizations like yours which are struggling to end South Africa's unjust war against its people. We send our support and solidarity to the fasters and pray that their impact will ultimately be felt in Pretoria.

Sincerely yours,



Richard Healey
Director

The following organizations are members of the Coalition: American Baptist Churches USA, National Ministries • American Committee on Africa • American Ethical Union • American Friends Service Committee • American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee • Americans for Democratic Action • Center for International Policy • Center of Concern • Church of the Brethren, Washington Office • Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Department of Church and Society • Church Women United • Clergy and Laity Concerned • Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross • Council on Hemispheric Affairs • Democratic Socialists of America • Episcopal Peace Fellowship • Fellowship of Reconciliation • Friends Committee on National Legislation • Friends of the Earth • Friends of the Filipino People • Institute for Food and Development Policy • Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Peace Section • Movement for a Free Philippines • National Assembly of Religious Women • National Association of Social Workers • National Council of Churches • National Federation of Priests' Councils, USA • National Gray Panthers • National Office of Jesuit Social Ministries • NETWORK • New Jewish Agenda • North American Federation of Temple Youth • OXFAM America • Presbyterian Church (USA), Washington Office • Presbyterian Peace Fellowship • Quixote Center • SANE • Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace • Union of American Hebrew Congregations • Unitarian Universalist Association • Unitarian Universalist Service Committee • United Church of Christ, Board for Homeland Ministries • United Church of Christ, Office for Church in Society • United Methodist Church, Board of Church and Society • United Methodist Church, Board of Global Ministries, Women's Division • United States Student Association • War Resisters League • Washington Office of the Episcopal Church • Washington Office on Africa • Washington Office on Latin America • Women's International League for Peace and Freedom • Women Strike for Peace • World Federalist Association • World Peacemakers • Young Women's Christian Association of the USA.

Dr François Choffat et Frédéric Choffat
Medecine generale
1531 Grandcour
Tel (037) 67 18 18
Suisse

Grandcour, le 7 octobre 1985

Monsieur Louis Le Grange
Ministre de la loi et de l'ordre
Union Buildings
0001 PRETORIA
République Sud-Africaine

Monsieur le Ministre,

Comme beaucoup de nos concitoyens, nous sommes préoccupés de l'évolution des conflits interraciaux dans votre pays. Nous croyons que si les autorités ne modifient pas rapidement leur attitude face à la majorité noire, la violence risque de dégénérer en une guerre civile dont la responsabilité incombera aux autorités de Prétoria, et à son Ministre de la loi et de l'ordre en particulier.

La campagne "Troops out of the townships" organisée par "End Conscription Campaign" est légitime et exige de façon non-violente une première mesure apte à détendre les tensions.



Nous nous associons aujourd'hui à tous ceux qui jeûnent en Afrique du Sud et dans le monde pour commémorer le 7 octobre, date de l'invasion de Soweto par l'armée. Avec eux nous demandons la libération de

Monsieur MICHAEL EVANS

membre de l'EEC détenu au Cap, et la libération de tous les prisonniers enfermés pour des convictions en désaccord avec la politique d'apartheid.

Dans l'intérêt de votre pays et de la paix, nous souhaitons la levée de l'état d'urgence, et demandons que votre Gouvernement renonce à faire intervenir l'armée dans les quartiers noirs.

Dans l'espoir que votre pays trouve sans inutile violence la voie de la justice raciale, nous vous prions d'agréer, Monsieur le Ministre, nos respectueuses salutations.

Copies à: M. l'Ambassadeur de la République d'Afrique du Sud à Berne
M. le Chef du Département Fédéral des Affaires Etrangères à Berne

Collection Number: AG1977

END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)

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