

End Conscription Campaign

A433

227/9 Khotso House
42 De Villiers Street
Johannesburg
2000
Tel: 337-6796
Telex: 4-86519 S.A.

Administrative Officer
SACC
42 De Villiers Street
Johannesburg . 2000

20 March 1987

Dear Sir

Termination of Office Lease.

I would hereby like to inform your office that the End Conscription Campaign will no longer require the use of the office space in Khotso House. This will be both the national office and the regional office, rooms 227 and 229 respectively.

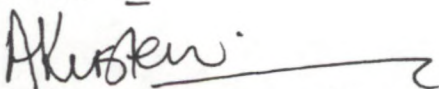
We would like to request that the national telephone (337-6796) which has a colindictor remain in room 227. This phone would only be used for incoming calls and is one of our only means of keeping in contact with members of the public and others who want information on ECC. The continued use of that phone facility would be essential to the smooth running of our organisation.

On behalf of ECC I would like to thank you for the use office space in Khotso House. Our time there was most productive. Thank you also for accomodating us during the last 9 months of the State of Emergency, a period which has made it difficult for us to operate out of an office.

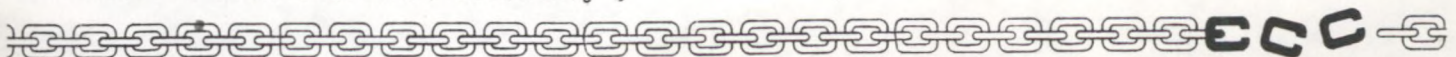
Please would your forward notice of any outstanding rent to the above address.

Thank You.

In Peace and Love



Adele Kirsten (National Secretary)



End Conscription Campaign

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227/9 Khotso House
42 De Villiers Street
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2000
Tel: 337-6796
Telex: 4-86519 S.A.

25 March 1987

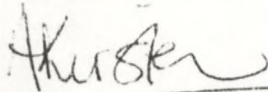
Dear Gavin,

Thank you for enquiring about the activities of ECC. I have enclosed some of the more recent pamphlets that we have produced as well as some stickers.

Unfortunately we are unable to give you a copy of our declaration and other publications which would more clearly spell out the nature of our work and what we believe in, as they are considered to be subversive under the present Emergency Regulations.

I hope that you will find the enclosed material of benefit. You will also be put on the Johannesburg ECC mailing list and so will get copies of the newsletter, ECC Focus, and be kept in touch with what's happening in the Johannesburg region.

Yours Sincerely



Adele Kirsten (National Secretary)

27 March 1987

Dear ECC

Time again for a note from Cape Town about what is going on here and what issues we are discussing.

As far as action goes ECC is starting to be back on the road again, although bearing in mind the State of Emergency (which can clearly not be forgotten) and trying to think of creative ways through which we can get to the broader public but not expose ourselves. Whilst this is something we have thought about, I think that some of the standard forms of a campaign can still be used, eg public meeting, pamphlets and so on.

So far, we have been doing bits and pieces and making our presence known and felt once more. Tomorrow we will be doing our second stint of pavement art on the Grand Parade, an activity that is great fun for all of us and also attracts attention. Last Sunday we all trekked off to Muizenberg to build a large peace sign on the beach and again this was very good for our own morale and enthusiasm, and also attracted interest and attention (and a wonderful pic in the Cape Times as well as a TV crew). Unfortunately we had not predicted that the SAP rugby team would also be on Muizenberg, but there they were (can't seem to get away from them, can we?). So there we were, happily building our peace sign and gradually the number of thuggish looking onlookers increased and started to look rather threatening and intimidating. They were very provocative and managed to get a few of the ECC people to argue with them. There was quite a lot of general interest in the arguing and the beach constables started to approach talking nineteen to the dozen into their walkie talkies. Soon it was real policemen and before we knew it two of our members wearing TROOPS OUT t-shirts were whisked off. As we were walking away rugby team types came chasing after us and dragging lots of us back. There was a bit of discussion and arguing, it looked as though every member was about to go to jail, and them mercifully every one else was allowed to leave and the other two were held for three hours and then released. The whole incident was amusing, funny, frightening and taught us how ill-prepared we are for coping with police confrontation and provocation. We immediately had an assessment and came up with the following points:

- should have a workshop on the area so that we are all clear on how to handle the situation
- need to work out someone who will not only negotiate with the police but will take control in any difficult situation
- others must listen to the 'leader' and act on her/his instruction
- where possible we should pull together in the situation and work out the best thing to do
- it is silly to do small illegal things eg wear a t-shirt that is illegal as it just gives the police the excuse they need to pick someone up.
- don't bother to argue with someone who is never going to agree with you
- before each 'action' need to have a clear briefing, elect a leader, discuss what we are trying to achieve through the action.

Whilst there were mistakes made, all in all it was very useful for us.

Our constituency work is also going very well, and the schools group is working extremely hard and closely with other organisations in the schools, particularly pupil organisations. This does detract somewhat from their purely conscription focus, as they are doing a lot of general organisational assistance and education. But, in the long term, the benefits outweigh the losses, and we were finding it very difficult to get ECC's message into the schools directly. *Also ECC's issue is on the agenda of those organisations.*

Churches is going regularly to youth groups, and after having been a small and fairly weak subcommittee the group is now looking quite healthy and is pleased with the work they are doing. Churches pulled together a service around Philip's trial in a very short space of time, and organised street posters, pamphlets etc. The service was very beautiful, in a small chapel - there were about 120 people. It was a very warm, sincere and lovely service. Syd Lockett was the priest, Peter Moll and I spoke and David Schmidt led the prayers.

Parents and supporters is also going well, although struggling a bit with defining their role. They had a housemeeting a couple of weeks ago and are planning another in a month or so. The group works at a completely different pace from other ECC subcomms, and this has to be respected. They try to make their meetings no longer than 1 and a half hours every two weeks, so the opportunity to have a meaty discussion and assessment is limited. It takes them about an hour to catch up on everything else that is going on in ECC and so reports etc need to be streamlined. Also whilst the members may be older, it must be remembered that they are not skilled and so some things that the rest of us take for granted, they can't.

Otherwise culture is going full steam ahead and has a whole long list of things they are planning or thinking of planning. Murals, party, film festival (small), cabaret/roadshow, t-shirts, comic strip.

Publicity, a new subcommittee has three subsections, one of which is the "Out of Step" tabloid group. The tabloid will be coming out in the next couple of weeks, and then another soon after to coincide with the peak of the campaign. *Press and general publicity the other committees are small but okay.*

Outreach, the group that is supposed to be thinking about our new area of work - the second prong of the two pronged approach - is struggling. We are starting slowly to get the mass membership off the ground, and have had some discussion about housemeetings. But ECC is struggling a bit with membership, and most people are very committed to their subcommittee and don't appreciate the idea of changing or adding to their workload.

Campus ECC has added a new and wonderful dynamic to ECC work in Cape Town. They have a very good cabaret that has been touring around - to the Sash conference, Stellenbosch, Medical school, all over the show - and it has been very well received. The comments are flying about 'here goes ECC again, always so creative'. One feels very proud to be a member of this organisation. Campus has also had its launch campaign over the past couple of weeks, and they have used the slogan 'Conscription - everyone's issue'. They have had a couple of really nice meetings and a grand launch in the Jameson Hall at UCT. The hall was packed (and the gallery) chairs and aisles and the back of the hall were just overflowing, there must have been well over 2000 people there. Boesak spoke and I did and the response to ECC was incredibly inspiring.

The meeting, however, has raised some interesting points that we will be discussing at our next GB. Boesak ripped into the PFP and he also ripped into conscripts who go into the army. Some people are really unhappy about this as it is contrary to ECC policy and gives the wrong image of ECC to the public. Is it damaging to ECC to have these things said? It is definitely going to be controversial, there are extremely strong feelings both ways, but I think that it will also be useful for us to have the discussion, it raises all sorts of questions about who we are, what we are trying to do, where we do and don't make compromises etc.

There is also quite a strong push for joint action around the time of the elections from organisations working in the white community. Whilst people are sympathetic to ECC's front nature and single issue they would appreciate our support as an organisation, and also as activists with experience at organising in the white community.

All these questions that raise once again ECC's difficult situation, how we have to be acceptable to so many different organisations, and to the different individuals working in our own organisation. I am quite sure that we can have very constructive discussion around both these issues and can work out positions that are satisfactory, progressive, good for us, good for them etc etc etc. WE ARE MARVELLOUS.

Goodness, this letter was going to be a little note, it appears to have become something of a long short story. And I haven't told any of you anything yet about the campaign. We are not crazy about the slogan, but in the interest of national unity, national campaigns and the like will use the slogan. However we are looking to coming up with a regional slogan (regional = CT, UCT and Stell.) which is shorter, sharper and clearer. We had a regional meeting last week and will be meeting again in about a week where all these matters will be confirmed. Last week there were some great ideas for action (there were hundreds, I'll try to remember a few). Fasting on the day of mourning, meetings and services also on that day. Building an edifice to conscripts and the war, an edifice that is a permanent structure (to be demolished with glee when we end conscription and the war), forming a human chain through SA, petition, fun run, and lots and lots and lots. Once we have prioritised and sifted through the brainstorm we'll let you know what we really plan to do. It seems that coordination within the region is about as complicated as national coordination.

— and can use both the nat. + regional slogans.

Briefs: we are starting to think seriously about security, maybe for a change we'll be one step ahead of the SP; national committee can only make decisions if they are urgent or for security and we want agendas weeks before; we are very excited that Clare is out and about; thank goodness the US tour can come off our agendas. We'll do something crazy for the SADF birthday.

Fast forward to a just peace
Lots of love

Paula

P.S. Its obvious that its a Friday afternoon at work and I don't have a very pressing job

Now its Monday morning and there are just a few things that I want to add. We had a campaign meeting over the weekend, and came up with some wonderful ideas for the campaign.

- launch with a cheese and wine for front members and supporters. Have a guest speaker.
- national day of mourning. We would like to have a national fast on the day. Choral service in St Georges cathedral.
- then move into May. Go for fair and rally towards the end of May.
- as a major project during this time build an edifice for conscripts and for the war
- and in addition a WJP project
- multi media evening early May (just after the elections)

As far as the content of the campaign goes, we were not very happy with the angle of the pamphlet that was sent around and felt that the whole thing on conscripts and the choices they should be able to make for peace needed to be the bulk of the content, with most of that pamphlet summarised into an opening paragraph or two that provides the context. The subslogan that we will probably be using is LET CONSCRIPTS CHOOSE.

We felt that none of these events are adventurous, although together they will have some impact. Our next meeting will focus primarily on how to take up the campaign through some of the second prong, looking at the role of housemeetings etc. Although the second prong and the whole discussion about how to handle public work has influenced the type of things we have chosen to do in the campaign.

Good bye and good luck
CT

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