

# ECC NEWS

BS2



VOL.1 NO.1 JUNE 1988

## "BOETIE GAAN ANGOLA TOE"

The South African military intervention in defence of UNITA in Southern Angola has served to provoke two polarised reactions amongst South Africa's white public.

There are those who support the war with a gung-ho attitude with the rationale for this being the Cuban troops and Soviet advisors that are assisting the Angolan army. Patriotism has come to mean that one never criticises one's own side.

The other view differs somewhat. Many people are concerned with the massive destruction of lives and property in Angola, and the prospect of a long war from which the SADF cannot extract itself. Above all they fear for the lives of friends or family members who may die in a war that conjures the kind of Vietnam imagery portrayed on our screens.

### MOTIVES

The rationale for the arrival and continued presence of foreign forces in Angola is directly related to the SADF acts of aggression. Upon achieving independence in 1975 the MPLA controlled 11 of the 16 provinces and when it became clear that they would become the governing party, Angola was invaded by the SADF and Zaire. Facing defeat by foreign armies with superior equipment, the MPLA requested assistance from Cuba, which was duly provided. General Magnus Malan has attempted to justify South African intervention by stating that it will continue until the Cuban forces are withdrawn from Angola. This statement is puzzling in light of the fact that the SADF was the initial aggressor.

The government attempts to justify its presence in Angola according to the total onslaught thesis. The Cubans in Angola are seen as being part of a master plan to destabilise Southern Africa and enslave its people in the cause of Russian Imperialism. In reality the Cuban presence and the Russian armaments have escalated at exactly the same pace as the South African intervention.

### CASUALTIES

The fighting in Angola has exacted a spiraling toll of losses. Angop, the Angolan news agency has claimed that the South African forces have suffered the



BUFFELS AND TROOPS STATIONED IN XANGONGO, ANGOLA

loss of more than 342 lives between September and December last year. According to official SADF releases a total of at least 69 SADF and SWATF troops have been killed in Angola, while three are officially missing and one captured. These are all white troops and this figure does not include black troops. The Minister of Defence has recently refused to release information on the SADF, SWATF or UNITA troops. This has led to the situation whereby the Angop reports can be viewed as the more reliable source as this agency includes losses incurred by 32 Battalion (made up of black mercenary troops).

The bottom line is that there are many whites, particularly those expected to fight in Angola, their friends and family, who do not believe in the SADF's cause in Angola enough to pay the ultimate price. ECC knows, we represent that sentiment amongst the unwilling conscripts. They seek us out in growing numbers looking for assistance we cannot give, except to refer them to the Conscription Counselling Service and, to repeat our call to the government - give the conscripts the right to choose, and bring our boys back home.

### TENSION

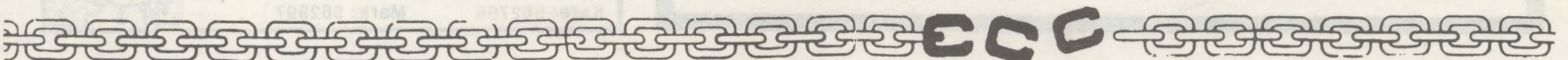
The public remains unaware of the extent to which young South African males are being maimed. The voice of dissent is however rising, in that the effects of the Angolan war are being brought back into the South African household. Every day young men, scarred mentally, physically

or both, return to normal civilian life. In the domestic household parents, wives, girlfriends and family are beginning to seriously question the motives that are bringing this destruction home. These living reminders of the war in Angola serve to constantly keep this conflict in the immediate foreground and one question seems to be rising at every instance. What the hell are we doing there?

Recent events such as the Cuban build up on the Namibian border has led to the development of a right wing mentality that is calling for the mobilization of Citizen Force units to take the fight to the Cubans. This bizarre conception of the glory of war overlooks the gore of the scenario. In recent months many had a glimpse of the latter and this has been a bitter experience. For once the Government must try and act rationally in the interest of it's people so that further bloodshed in Angola can be prevented. Our boys should not be in a foreign country, thousands of kilometers away.



Issued by the Port Elizabeth  
END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN



# NEWS • NEWS • NEWS

This is the first issue of ECC NEWS which we hope will be published on a regular basis. The aim of the newsletter is to keep you in touch with ECC news and happenings. We will also print articles of general interest concerning conscription and militarization in South Africa. Readers are encouraged to write letters and contribute articles to ECC NEWS (Box 947, PE)

## SO WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Nationally all the regions are gearing up for the CAMPAIGN FOR ALTERNATIVE NATIONAL SERVICE. Essentially this campaign is calling for the provision of alternative forms of National Service for the many young white South Africans who object to fighting for apartheid, illegally occupying Namibia and invading Angola, a country thousands of kilometres away from our borders. To highlight these demands and to show how serving one's country can be constructive, the ECC will be working on community based projects. A component of the campaign will be to provide information to conscripts facing the August call-up about their rights and obligations in the SADF. To this end "KNOW YOUR RIGHTS" meetings will be held and ECC

will be publishing a booklet on this topic. **SADF INTERDICT**

The Supreme Court in Cape Town has granted the ECC an interim interdict against the SADF, restraining them from illegally smearing the ECC. The interdict arises out of the court case of three national servicemen who exposed that much of the propaganda, anonymous and under the names of bogus organisations, emanated directly from the SADF.

## ON THE LOCAL SCENE

The committee in Port Elizabeth has been busy. The first major event of the year was the Church Service and all-night vigil held in support of jailed conscientious objector and ECC member Dr Ivan Toms. Dr Toms who is a lieutenant in the Army was jailed for 21 months for refusing to serve on a camp he was called up for. Thousands of pamphlets were distributed at a Savuka concert and placard stands are held each month.

The ECC participated in a political forum at UPE organised by the SRC. Presently only academic and sporting societies are permitted to operate at UPE. All other groups, including the ECC are only al-

lowed on campus for such occasional events. The forum was attended by about 250 people, most of whom were very supportive of the ECC speaker. The speakers on behalf of the Positive Students Organisation (PSO) and the National party could not respond to the many poignant questions posed by the audience. The PSO, an affiliate of the National Students Federation (NSF), an apologist for the National Party and the SADF, was formed in March this year.

Its primary aim is to smear the ECC and other progressive groups. One of the members of the audience, a founding member of the NSF, exposed that the NSF was funded directly by the government. Also represented at the forum, were the Concerned Students Group (a progressive students organisation), the PFP, Idasa and Jeugkrug.

The ECC recently distributed thousands of pamphlets outside the Opera House where the smash-hit musical, District 6, was playing. There was a good public response to the pamphlet which revealed that conscripts were involved in forced removals and drew attention to the forced removal of Lawaakamp near George.

## ECC DIARY

- Wednesday June 22, braai and jori  
At 12 Begonia Drive, Linton Grange,  
7.30pm.

- Wednesday June 29, 7.30pm  
FOCUS ON ANGOLA. IDASA Conference Room, 4th Floor, Standard House, Main Street, North End (Opp. SA Breweries)

- Wednesday July 20, 7.30pm KNOW YOUR RIGHTS FORUM. St. Johns Methodist Church Hall, Havelock Street, Central.

The ECC holds regular orientation meetings for people wishing to join ECC or to find out more about the organisation. Phone Howard at 563494 (after hours)

## DO YOU HAVE ANY CALL-UP HEADACHES? CALL THE CONSCRIPTION ADVICE SERVICE

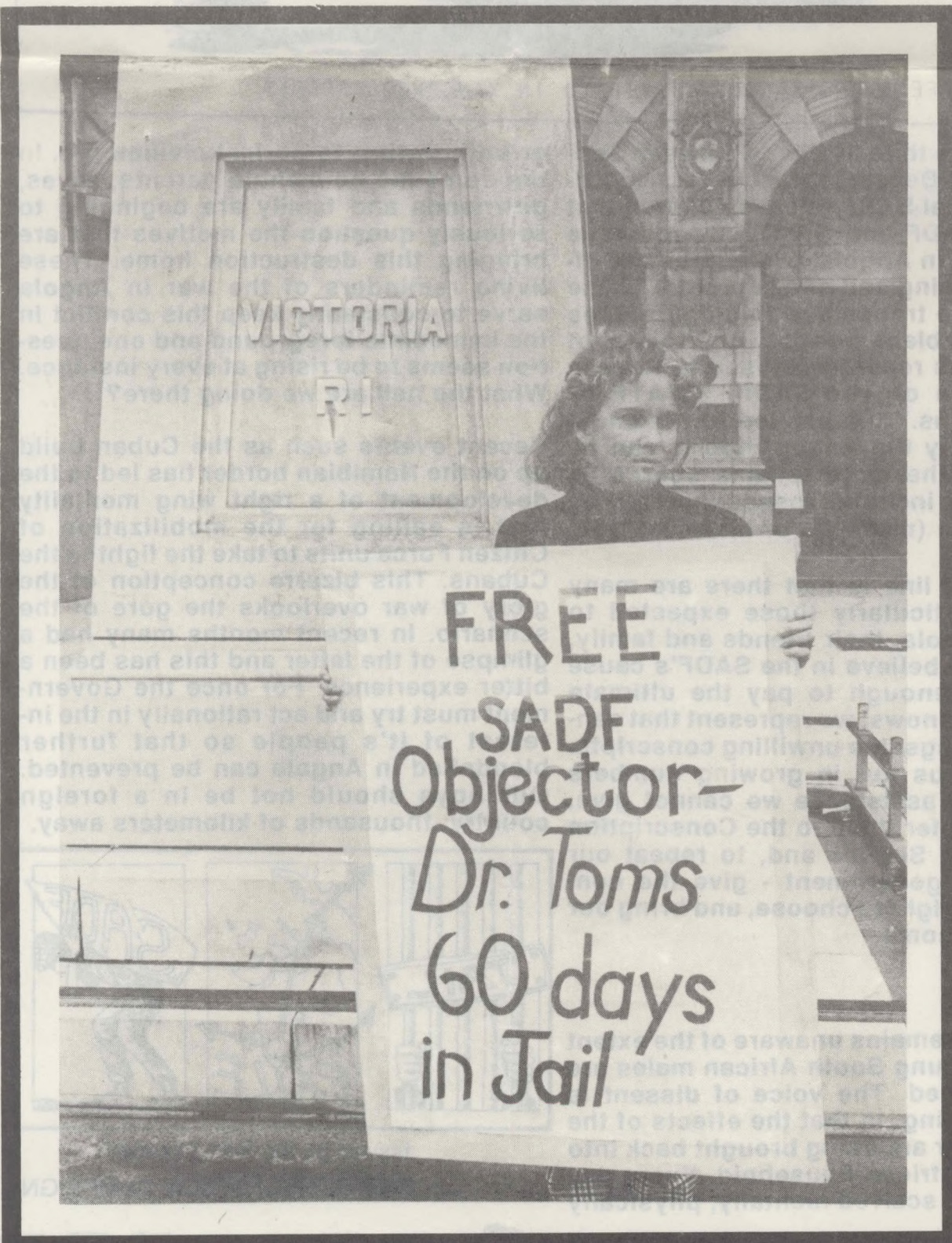
Our service can help you with information about your legal rights, your alternatives and the Board for Religious Objection. We can also refer you to lawyers, psychologists or ministers of religion.

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**Collection Number: AG1977**

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**PUBLISHER:**

*Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive*

*Location:- Johannesburg*

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