

PROMOTION OF ORDERLY INTERNAL POLITICS BILL

The Promotion of Orderly Internal Politics Bill has severe implications for the ECC as it makes it more difficult to solicit funds from organisations, institutions and individuals. In deciding on a strategy to oppose the bill, we have to consider the presenting of evidence to the Joint Committee on the Promotion of Orderly Internal Politics Bill.

PROCESS OF THE BILL

At present a Joint Committee in Parliament is considering the Bill and evidence being submitted to it by outside bodies and individuals. The closing date for submitting evidence was 15 April. However, we have applied for an extension of one month on the basis that we are debating whether we want to submit evidence and the preparation of evidence that we might submit. It seems as if the committee has the power to subpoena organisations and individuals at a later stage. Some analysts believe that a Schleich-type smear could be a by-product of being subpoenaed to give evidence. Sources suggest that the bill will only be passed next year, although it could be passed within six months if it were rushed through parliament.

MOTIVATION FOR SUBMITTING EVIDENCE

- * It could be used publically in the same way as the evidence presented to the Geldenhuys Commission on conscription, was used.
- * In the event that we are declared restricted, we can argue that we acted reasonably by presenting evidence to parliament, and that it was ignored.
- * If we are subpoenaed, either as individuals or as ECC, we could publically argue that we have already submitted our evidence.

MOTIVATION FOR NOT SUBMITTING EVIDENCE

- * collaboration with tricameral parliament (this argument is used by some, but does not effect the ECC with our relations with the Young Progs and various MPs)
- * presenting evidence will not have any effect.

MOTIVATIONS FOR AND AGAINST PRESENTING EVIDENCE TO BE DISCUSSED BY THE REGIONS. FURTHER MOTIVATIONS FOR AND AGAINST CAN BE ADDED.

EVIDENCE

In the event of us deciding to give evidence, we need to decide what sort of evidence we should present. For example, the SACC has presented the committee with a complex theological argument against the bill, while Idasa and Five Freedoms Forum will argue for their legitimate right to exist without legislative interference.

There seems to be a number of possibilities for inclusion in our evidence:

- * Why we oppose conscription and our other demands, eg Alternative Service.
- * Nature of the problems facing conscripts: Troops in Townships, Angola, Namibia, etc.
- * Conscription in other countries and systems of alternative service.
- * What we do for and on behalf of the conscript, eg KYR, campaigning for alternative service, other demands.
- * Our widespread support from conscripts, organisations and individuals.
- * Alternative National Service Campaign and our past campaigns.
- * Our constitution.
- * Media.

Jhb has recommended that if we present evidence, it should be professional, impressive and substantial, but that this should not happen at the expense of our other work.

PRESENTATION OF EVIDENCE

We seem to have the option of presenting the evidence either orally or by sending in a written document. If it is done orally, the evidence should perhaps be prepared by Cape Town as the committee is based in Cape Town. The written report could be prepared in JHB by the Nat Sec, Nat Treas and our lawyer, in conjunction with the local regions.

REGIONS TO DISCUSS THE METHOD OF PRESENTATION OF EVIDENCE

Note: Kagiso Trust is convening regional meetings around the country to explain the implications of the bill to the various projects they fund. It would be a good idea if some one from your region could attend these meetings.

PLEASE SEND FEEDBACK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND NOT LATER THAN THURSDAY 28 APRIL

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