

On July 31 Rifleman Alan Dodson, serving a one month camp in the No. 1. Reconnaissance Unit in Durban, refused an order from his superior officer to go on a vehicle patrol. At his court martial two weeks later Alan was sentenced to a fine of R600.

As SADF troops are used more extensively in the townships and given greater powers under the State of Emergency, the crisis of conscience experienced by national servicemen like Rifleman Dodson is becoming more acute.

And the debate around the system of compulsory conscription and the presence of troops in the townships has intensified.

On the one side of this debate are the Government, the SADF and those who support them. They argue that conscription and the troops are necessary to maintain law and order and to deal with criminal elements in the townships.

According to the military tribunal that court-martialled Alan Dodson, "the SADF is trying to protect the lives and property of other citizens who have not the wherewithal to do this."

Ken Owen believes that the SADF is one of P.W. Botha's instruments to suppress revolution (Sunday Times 18/8/85). Campaigns against conscription and militarisation, like the murder of black policemen and councillors, are intended to deny Botha this instrument.

On this side of the debate there are also many soldiers. Having never before been into a township in peace and friendship, they

now go in with a gun and a sense of absolute power. Trained to kill 'the enemy', they are confronted by ordinary people whose lives are completely foreign to them and whose suffering and anger they do not understand.

The consequences are inevitable and tragic. Arrogance and aggression. Teargas, sjamboks and live ammunition. Further brutalisation of soldiers and township residents. Greater anger and hatred.

On the other side of the debate is Rifleman Dodson.

Alan went into the army after school and did 14 months border duty for which he received the Pro Patria medal. He then studied law at Pietermaritzburg University and graduated B Comm LLB cum laude in 1983.

He was extremely perturbed when he reported for a camp this year and was briefed, in racist and ~~offensive~~ language, that his unit might have to assist the SAP in nearby townships. Alan immediately informed the unit's welfare officer that he was not prepared to do this and was told that his views would be accommodated as far as possible.

This arrangement applied until the end of July when he was given an order that conflicted in a fundamental way with his conscience. Alan disobeyed the order.

At the court martial, Alan's lawyer argued that his views were not exceptional. In January this year 7589 conscripts, 50% of the intake, failed to report for duty. By comparison only 1596 men failed to report over the whole of last year.

There would be several reasons for this dramatic increase but it is no coincidence that it followed the first extensive deployment of troops inside SA since 1961.

Like Alan, there are many conscripts that find it intolerable to have to take up arms against fellow South Africans.

They know that the primary role of the SADF, which is involved in forced removals and arrests African people on pass law and influx control offences, is to defend apartheid.

They know that the army, which fires teargas at funeral mourners and assaults and kills township residents, has not brought peace to the townships but fear and destruction.

Above all, they know that the use of troops is no solution to the escalating cycle of violence and that a just and enduring peace will only prevail when the root causes of conflict - minority rule and the system of apartheid - are eradicated.

They understand that the violence of apartheid is the reason for black ^{rebellion} resistance, even if they do not agree with all the forms that the resistance takes. And they therefore find it morally repugnant to have to participate in attempts to crush it.

Yet under current legislation there are no adequate alternatives to ~~doing~~ ^{military} national service. Community service can only be granted by the Board for Religious Objection to Christian pacifists. Those who object on moral or ethical grounds are sent to jail for six years or have to leave SA forever.

The call for an end to conscription and the provision of acceptable alternatives has been made by a wide range of organisations and institutions: the Black Sash, Nusas, the PFP, all of the mainline churches, the South African Council of Churches, the United Democratic Front, and the groups that make up the End Conscription Campaign (ECC).

The ECC was formed at the end of 1983 as a broad front of organisations united around the calls to end conscription and for a just peace in our land. The Campaign has experienced dramatic growth and now has six regional branches and 46 member organisations.

Their opposition to conscription is based on the fundamental belief that individuals should be free to choose whether or not to serve in the SADF.

This belief is solidly founded in international principles, contained in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and the Nuremberg Principles, which recognise the right of freedom of choice with regard to the taking up of arms and the taking of life.

The ECC is saying quite simply to the Government: give young men the right to choose; until this happens, at least give soldiers the right to refuse to go into the townships.

The national servicemen like Rifleman Dodson that are opposed to conscription are not cowards or unpatriotic. Their love for their country and its people lies at the heart of their opposition.

They would be prepared to serve SA in constructive ways that bring black and white people closer together, and our country closer to a just peace.

They believe that if one wants peace one has to work for justice and not engage in war.

They should not be punished for this.

On Riflman AD, 1 mo camp in No 1 Recc Unit Durban
crit married for refusing order vehicle patrol sentenced
to R600

As army used more extensively + soldiers given > powers
under SoE, crisis of con experienced converges +
soldiers like Alan becoming more acute

And debate and system of comp con + pres of troops
becoming more intense

On 1 side of debate: Govt, SADF + supporters

Argue: con + int. use of troops necc 2 maintain l + order, +
contain crim. elements bent on overthrowing S thru viol.

- 1) At AD crit marital, mil trib stated "SADF trying 2 protect
lives + prop of other citizens" - for some reason... "who
have not where withal to do this."
- 2) KO believes SADF 1 of PW instruments 4 supp of revol +
that the camps agnet con + mil, like murder of 44 policemen
+ councillors, intended 2 deny PW this instrument.
- 3) Parasus: one step further + links all opp 2 con to ANC

On this side of debate, there are also many soldiers

* At Alan cr martial asked yrg guys wearing uniform of MP who we were doing there.

Told them abt A, refused to go into townships.

Surprised: . Saffiro

* Rec I rec a letter

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* Not surprising that many soldiers feel have this attitude

Bright up in racist tght to hate + fear bl people convinced racial superiority

Bright up also highly mil soc where enemy becomes something less than human, sold bec. smthg more than human - a symbol of race, ~~wild use~~ use of viol ~~to express~~ ~~self~~ is sexual rather than abnormal means of expressing oneself.

* These yrg guys

On other side of debate Affirm AD

Went into army after school / 14 mo's border duty Pro Patria
Then studied law @ Penn + grad B. Comm / LL.B cum Laude.

Called up to camp in Jan this yr.

Last part. by briefing told, in race + db long, deployed
townships to ass. SAP

Informed wch. db not prep ... views acc. as far as poss

This in fact happened - border guard duty

July same until 31st when given order ..

Refused to obey order

At int mtg, AD's lawyer views not exceptional

In Jan 7500 convictions, 50%, failed to...

By comparison over

Obv zero reasons ...

No coincidence dramatic increase follows loc evnt dep
of SADF troops inside country '61.

A growing no of cons, soldiers, families, teachers + ministers
under army arrest pass law ... as in Soweto
army vis forced removals in Uix + elsewhere - is not
supp. rev or making law + order

They know teargas assaults shoppers bills
not bringing out fear + destruction

BS off.

Closing
Churches

SL II

indemnity

Even if troops ... AD not exceptional

A growing no. of people who comm ~~know~~ find it invol
young men forced ~~army~~ to take up arms against fellow
citizens in def of A

For this reason con opp CBC, AS, other mainline churches;
PPP Uth, N, BC, ~~off~~ over 50 gpp off 2 ECC nat.

Formed @ end of '83

Now have 5 reg. branches CT, E, D, PE Pub \approx 300 people act. inv

U. leaving 6 branch here @ Rhodes

Work closely \approx Africa comm

Reg by Cong w/ing newspaper as legit + act. go course + quoted
fav in editorials

Censored explicit by SACBC + AS

ECC not itself a pol org, rather a broad form of org.

Alth these grps have v. diff pol + thed. pers range of issues

united opp 2 con + role of SADF inside + outside

united and common desire for peace + commit 2 act.

work 4 peace

Our call 4 just peace as NA call for troops out + end
2 con.

By peace obs. mean more simply absence of war

A just + end peace not poss root causes... - min rule +

A - completely + totally eradicated

It is not poss. \approx out the scrapping of sec leg disarming of SADF + SPP

to exit used 2 def A

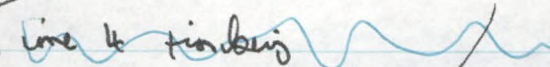
And it not poss \approx out release from jail NM + unbanned ANC

+ other banned org.

No half measures - MMA, Pol Tax Act - will be with #frills etc

by B to pull ~~us~~ bl so-called leaders from Act rabbits will

get us anywhere. And will not 10 pol groups

Time 4 thinking  fundamental 2

Abt all 6 def ... worries wh comm

Sucked into war
unjust / can't be won /
destruction

Secs of vid
Surely necc, 2 prot maj of residents from vid prog
min so that real prog made peacefully

We Done accept

1st place: real prog and the corner
of War hopelessly naive

2nd place: maj, not just a handful, vid is just 2 end

A.

ST

with girl

- characteristic
- resist can't despise let of over 1500 ..
- to bld resist to wld need 2 dex millions of people or
and crush them brute force

3rd place ~~not sup~~ we can easily understand, even condoning
why vid is comm.

Not sup or unused - opp + expl denied or a vote
stripped of citizenship + treated as less than human
whose children are starved + rec an inf educ ∴ of colour
of their skin, fight back

Not sup very peaceful resist

resist intensifies

Uix priest

Viol applauded not to be approved - unless why
brow can't until the vid of A is no more

• Can we do anything ...

ECC incredible prog in use short existence
~~Measure prog~~ — end to con

Support many diff contexts

artists, bands, schoolkids, teachers, drama groups, parents + ministers
students

Within context raising cons + aware ... so view critically

Changing conscious - bldg anti-war cult + con orient peace

Changing our own lives + replacing fear + uncert
↳ vision of new soc where ...

Doing more - consid press on S

Poni underestimate

Both 1. leaders so many

↳ rules bl common

rules wh common

to make A needs our consent

individuals
we're continuing entire world

By opp con we deny S supp + consent; desire for 2 in layers
so intensify the crisis S

real crisis - its dang ~~democratic~~ / Rubicon

is drawing not using in with Rubicon

Bldg non racialism - stay spln

Thru message - bl + wh have with goals

- dandi



End Conscription Campaign

There are 2 sides to debate good

Important choose what side + live our choice society

Because in a hard way choice is being made for us

Whether we like it or not drawn into civil war
as combatants

But also they are i + o law, moral + pd dx

By joining calls to troops + end to con

+ by act in ourselves in prog org like N + ECC

Can deny the S supp it deep need for us

stand tag c our pl bro's + sisters struggle for peace
+ freedom

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END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)

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