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ATTACKS ON ECC EXPOSED

A22.8.16

A consequence of the growth in support for ECC and its call to end conscription has been an extensive campaign of harrasment to undermine it.

In a series of unsubstantiated allegations by members of the government and smear attacks by conservative groups and publications, attempts have been made to link ECC to unlawful organisations and to allege that the ECC is a front for the Soviet Union. It has also been contended that ECC has a "hidden agenda".

The April 1986 issue of the Aida Parker Newsletter was devoted to a virulent attack on the ECC. It included most of the allegations previously levelled at the campaign. The publication was very widely distributed and quoted from.

ECC referred the publication to the Media Council for a ruling. Under the chair of retired Appeal Court judge, Mr Justice Diemont, it was found that the Newsletter had made many false allegations and had told lies about ECC.

An attempt to link the ECC to the Soviet-aligned World Peace Council was found to be "misleading and untrue". There was "no evidence that the ECC is in any way involved with any Soviet organisation or any Russian surrogates".

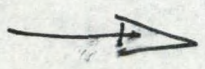
"The Aida Parker Newsletter contains a number of untrue or incorrect allegations. Some of them are trivial, some more serious and many of them disparaging," said the judgement.

It continued: "Not only did the Aida Parker Newsletter contain factual inaccuracies and untruths, but there is also the innuendo which runs throughout the newsletter that the ECC is not what it appears to be but is guilty of "dangerous duplicity" and that it furthers the aims of unlawful organisations." The Judge went on to point out that it had been wrong in claiming that ECC had a "hidden agenda".

Said an ECC leader, "The smear attacks on ECC have been damaging in that they have been widespread. The Aida Parker Newsletter was also used by the Security Police as the basis of their detaining ECC members. Clearly they were held on the basis of false information and allegations.

*"The judgement by the media council is evidence of our legitimacy + lawfulness."*

Towards a Just Peace



SOUTHERN AFRICA DESTABILISED BY THE SADF

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16

04 Job  
A cross 22 pins

Outside the borders of South Africa the SADF has also played a destructive role.

1/12 Tihbid.  
In 1971 the Internatioanl Court of Justice declared South Africa's occupation of Namibia illegal. Yet 15 years later the SADF maintains its presence in that country against the will of its people.

In at least seven other Southern African countries the SADF has played an aggressive role. There have been many cross-border raids and full scale invasions. In Angola alone, there have been twelve major incursions since 1975. The SADF has also conducted acts of sabotage and given support to rebel movements whose aim is to overthrow established governments.

In all these incidents the SADF ahs violated the sovereignty of independent countries.

On many occassions the South African governemnet has categorically denied these involvem-ents. These have proved false when the truth has emerged as was the case in the acts of sabotage in the Cabinda province of Angola, and in support for the MNR in Mozambique.

NEGATIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS CREATED BY CONSCRIPTION

Military service has many negative psychological effects. In a study by behavioural psychologists at four universities it was shown how "violence, drunkenness and sexual frustration in returning national servicemen are inevitable consequences of a border war (in Namibia) which is growing in intensity." (Weekend Argus 18/3/81)

In a number of court cases the effects of military service have been pointed to as the reason for former soldiers committing serious violent crimes. Dr Dap Louw, a Potchefstroom University clinical psychologist ointed out that soldiers "who cannot handle stress are potential murderers." (Weekend Argus 28/3/81)

Recent investigations have shown that township duty is having a similar effect. Moreover it is encouraging serious forms of racism and racial violence on the part of conscripts.

An alarming statistic is that in the first two weeks of the 1985 call up there were 60 attempted suicides in the SADF. (Human Awareness Project, March 1986) Between July and December 1984 there were 10 suicides and 67 attempted suicides in the SADF. (Rand Daily Mail 6/3/85)

*underline = bold*  
*use headlines from mock up. 01 Job*  
FREE TO CHOOSE - THE END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN WORKS TO END THE CALL-UP

*set across (B&C)*  
*2*  
In a recent court victory the ECC was found to have been seriously misrepresented by the Aida Parker Newsletter. The Media Council found that the Newsletter had been "misleading and untrue" in allegations levelled at the campaign. In recent months similar statements to those <sup>a</sup>heavily criticised by the Media Council have been made in pamphlets and by members of the government and the SADF. They have presented a consistently incorrect image of the ECC.

*In the light of ECC's victory at the Media Council we present*  
ECC RESPONDS TO EXCRUCIATING DILEMMA *a picture of the campaign + its activities.*

*set across B&C*  
For thousands of white South Africans the dilemmas associated with conscription are increasing daily. Counselling services for conscripts have been inundated with calls from men opposed to serving in the SADF. In the large majority of cases there is little counsellors can do. Realistic alternatives to military service are few.

*id* *conscription* *MAYORS*  
*Says* a Cape Town counsellor, "We can tell the conscript what his options are, but when one looks at what those consist of, it comes down to three or four pretty harsh choices. Many choose to leave the country. It is so obvious that they hate doing that but they see no other alternative to going and fighting in the townships."

This is the context in which people from throughout South Africa have over the past three years been working to end conscription; or at least improve the alternatives. They are all part of a new and dynamic Movement - the End Conscription Campaign.

*The campaign*  
has galvanised support from Pretoria to Cape Town, from the middle-aged to schoolchildren, artists and office workers - all have united behind its call for an end to the system of conscription. For the past three years it has conducted a vigorous campaign to change the conscription laws. And it is not only conscripts who are represented in the ECC.

"Parents, sisters, brothers, friends, girlfriends, all are affected," says Claire Oosthuizen the Chairperson of the Pietermaritzburg branch of the campaign. "Conscription is not only the conscript's dilemma. We in the ECC are giving voice to a whole community of people affected by conscription."

*a broad range*  
Through many exciting campaigns of people involved in the work of the ECC have brought it to the fore as a leading movement for legal reform.

*\* \* \**  
In addition to organising public activities, ECC has also made representations to the government. A notable example was the ECC delegation to the Geldenhuys Committee, an official commission of inquiry into all aspects of the operation of the SADF.

*\* \* \**  
Despite the state of Emergency the ECC remains lawful + has continued with its ongoing work.

THE CONSCRIPTION SITUATION

02 Job

maybe

\* Conscripts have to serve four years in the SADF - a two year initial period and a further two years over the twelve years that follow. Thereafter they are placed on the Defence Reserve until they reach 55. In this time they can be called up for 12 days annually.

\* The law provides alternatives for religious pacifists who can be recognised by the Board for Religious Objection in one of three categories. These are

- 1) Non-combatant service in the SADF;
- 2) Non-combatant non-uniformed service in the SADF;
- 3) "Community service" in a government department for a period 1½ times the length of military service.

\* Many who have refused to serve

have

- lived as fugitives constantly evading the military police who might be searching for them;
- left the country;
- facing prosecution for refusing to do military service. This is an offence which carries a maximum six year sentence.

MANY REASONS FOR CALL

why end conscription

In its evidence to the Geldenhuys Committee the ECC explained that it based its opposition to conscription on the fundamental belief that individuals should be free to choose whether or not to do service in the SADF. Many international documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognise the principle of freedom of choice with respect to military service.

"If the government upheld this right I would have the freedom to say no to military service as it is against <sup>my</sup> principles," said a conscript involved in ECC.

It is particularly in the South African situation that the individual's right to choose is very important. The system of apartheid and the SADF's role in upholding it, has led to many organisations and individuals supporting the call to end conscription.

The SADF is an institution which is not neutral and independent of government. In many respects it is responsible for devising, implementing and defending government policy.

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TOWARDS A JUST PEACE

An ongoing theme of ECC work has been its call for a just peace in South Africa.

"Our call to end conscription is based on our commitment to justice and peace in South Africa," said Wilhelm Liebenberg, the chair of the Grahamstown branch of the campaign.

"All around us we see more and more militarisation occurring as a response to the situation in our country. The government has much to do in order to solve our problems. But the way it is going about its work is in no way contributing to a solution. The problem is in fact growing."

For  
more

The ECC sees the use of troops in the current South African situation as providing a military solution for what is a profoundly political problem. Political solutions are called for which will satisfy the demands of the majority of people in the country. The abolishing of apartheid is foremost on the ECC's list of priorities *as the basis for peace in south Africa.*

Said Dirk Klopper, a Pretoria ECC leader, "We see it as our responsibility to be doing the work which we are <sup>involved in</sup> ~~are~~ <sup>we are</sup> contributing to a peaceful solution to the crisis in South Africa. We are showing that people should not be forced to participate in a fight which should not exist in the first place. Without conscription people will not be forced to participate in violent solutions. They would be free to choose to work for a just peace in more constructive ways."

Figures on township deaths show that an intensification of state action has led to more deaths. During the last emergency there was an average death toll of 3,6 people per day. This compared unfavourably with the 1,65 deaths per day for the two months before the d-eclaration of the emergency and before the increase in security force actions. (Weekly Mail 7/2/86)

Stone Sizane, the Eastern Cape publicity secretary for the UDF has spoken on the effects of the troops in the townships. "The SAP has always been with us in the townships," he said. "Nothing has happened to them until the situation was militarised with these para-military riot cops and the SADF soldiers. We are not saying the ordinary policemen should get out of the townships. We need them to take care of crime prevention. It is these armed forces who behave in such a hostile and aggressive fashion we want out.

"Our people grow angrier by the hour when they see how their residential area, already so dilapidated neglected, is being used as a testing range for the army and police forces. It is like a battlefield in there sometimes. It cannot continue."

The use of the security forces has militarised a highly sensitive political situation. Events over the past two years has shown that the military solution is not the answer.

It has been argued that many deaths in the township conflict are the result of "black on black" violence and do not involve the security forces. The point is often made that the SAP and SADF are necessary to prevent these situations from escalating.

Research by academics and a recent book by leading Johannesburg lawyer Nicholas Haysom have shown that the true situation is quite different. There is much evidence to show that right-wing township vigilantes have been operating with the assistance of the security forces. These vigilantes have been responsible for many of the "black on black" deaths.

"A trend which has caused concern amongst human rights activists and victim communities alike is the induction of vigilantes into the state's formal law and order machinery," says Haysom. "The incorporation of many Queenstown vigilantes into the Queenstown Commando is one such example."

Haysom also wrote that vigilantes from the Crossroads squatter camp with the alleged support of the SAP and the SADF raised the squatter camps of Nyanga bush, Nyanga extension, Portlands Cement and KTC to the ground. This forced removal represents a peak in collusion between the security forces and the vigilantes.

In its evidence to the Geldenhuys Committee the ECC said, "The SADF is directly involved in the defence and maintainance of apartheid. In this context its enemy is not a foreign external aggressor, but black South Africans. We therefore believe that the cause served by the SADF is fundamentally unjust."

The Black Sash  
 Catholic Justice and Peace Division  
 Methodist Christian Citizenship Department  
 Women's Movement for Peace  
 National Education Union of South Africa

Conscientious Objector Support Group  
 Anglican Justice and Peace Division  
 National Union Of South African Students  
 Civil Rights League

All Came together to campaign against conscription. Many prominent individuals also expressed their support. Among them are:

*Sir Richard Luyt	*the late Molly Blackburn
*Sheena Duncan	*Di Bishop
*Archbishop Dennis Hurley	*Nadine Gordimer
*Reverend Peter Storey	*Andre Brink
*Dr Beyers Naude	*Alex Boraine

From its small beginnings in 1983, ECC has grown into a major national movement. New and active ECC groups have since been established in Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown, Pietermaritzburg, Stellenbosch and Pretoria. The ECC coalition has grown to over 50 local and national groups. ~~Over 200 people are actively involved in ECC sub-committees.~~

As well as growing in size and attracting ever greater numbers of supporters and active members, the ECC has also united many diverse groups. *Thousands have been involved in ECC activities.*

ECC unites everyone who opposes conscription because of the role the Defence Force plays in our country. We have drawn together both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary groups like the PFP and the UDF," said leading ECC member Richard Steele.

Young and old, student and working people, English and Afrikaans have all come together into a single movement. Differences are overshadowed by a common commitment to ending conscription.

As well as the successes inside South Africa, the ECC has also won much support internationally. ECC members have represented the campaign in tours of Europe, the United States and India. ECC was hosted by the United Nations. Through this international contact ECC has both learned from the experience of the international peace movement as well as gaining much by way of support and solidarity from organizations overseas. Many of these have run campaigns on behalf of ECC in which they have officially called on the South African government to end conscription. *Conscription in South Africa has also been taken up in the UN, European Parliament and the British parliament.*

#### CAMPAIGNS

(This section will be largely visual with images from our various campaigns - issues not covered in the pics will have brief write ups)

22  
 one column (to go next to pic)

## CREATING AND IMPLEMENTING APARTHEID

Through its participation in the all powerful State Security Council and the locally based Joint Management Centres, the SADF plays a central role in determining government policy. The State Security Council, dominated by military and security personnel, has become known as the "inner cabinet" and is one of the most powerful bodies in government. Many observers have referred to this domination of government by the military as a "silent coup".

The SADF maintains apartheid more directly when it assists in the forced removal of black communities, the enforced segregation of beaches, and the demolition of squatter camps. In the recent past it helped arrest black people under the now rejected pass laws.

22

## THE CUTTING EDGE IN THE TOWNSHIPS

The most significant and vivid role played by the SADF in recent years has been its involvement in attempting to put down popular resistance to apartheid in the townships. According to Defence Minister Magnus Malan, 35000 troops were deployed in 96 townships during 1985. (Star 7/5/86) And according to its own statistics the SADF has been responsible for the death of a number of township residents.

Many independent surveys of township residents have shown that there is widespread opposition to the troops being there. A study conducted throughout the Witwatersrand showed that 90% of township residents felt that the troops should be removed from the townships. (Citizen 15/10/85)

The presence of the troops in the townships has led to many horrific excesses. A number of cases have been documented. In one instance a 70 year old Cradock grandmother was raped by two young soldiers.

"There is a basic fact about the troops in the townships and that is that they have not done what the government intended them to do," says a Johannesburg political scientist. "They have not brought the resistance to an end. Instead, the effect has been to intensify resistance and deepen conflict.

"The bottom line is that they are seen as the enemy by the majority of township people. Their actions reinforce this.

"They are seen as the enemy because they have only been used to suppress popular protests. When people protested at rent hikes they couldn't afford, the SADF was brought in. When students protested against their miserable education and conditions in the schools, it was the SADF that was pulled in," he continued.



- \* ECC calls for a end to conscription and the introduction of a system of choice regarding military service;

While conscription continues ECC calls for:

*to conscientious objection.*

- \* the rights *[redacted]*. All who in good conscience object to serving in the SADF should be allowed to do alternative service, not only religious pacifists as at present;
- \* the length of alternative service should be the same as military service, not a punitive 1½ times the length as at present;
- \* alternative service should be available in welfare and religious organisations, and not only government departments as at present.

ECC believes that soldiers serving in the SADF

- \* should be given a greater say over the nature of their service, They should have the right to choose not to enter South Africa's townships or neighbouring countries, including Namibia.

#### A GROWING CAMPAIGN

From small beginnings the ECC has grown into a nationwide campaign with widespread support.

The initial impetus for the formation of ECC came at the 1983 annual conference of the Black Sash at which a strongly worded resolution was passed calling for an end to conscription.

This came in the wake of changes to the Defence Act that year. Military service was extended to four years, provision was made for religious pacifists to do non-military national service but all other objectors were now liable for a maximum six year jail sentence.

These changes were a response to the rapidly growing conscientious objector movement. The government hoped that the new legislation would divide it and take the wind out of its sails. The opposite happened.

Towards the end of 1983 the first three branches of ECC were formed in Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town. A wide range of religious, human rights, student, women's and professional organisations were represented in the formation of ECC as a coalition.

Among the organisations in ECC are:

**Collection Number: AG1977**

**END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)**

**PUBLISHER:**

*Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive*

*Location:- Johannesburg*

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