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# **ECC NEWS**

## **Ecc in Europe & India**



The End Conscription Campaign was recently represented by Laurie Nathan (National organiser) and Pete Hathorh (Cape Town ECC) at two important international conferences. In September 1985, ECC recieved an invitation from War Resisters International (WRI) to attend an international conference on Conscientious objection in Helsinki, at the beginning of December, and the WRI Triennial conference in India in early January.

Not all their time over the seven weeks was taken up by the conferences, and in five short weeks Pete and Laurie did a whirl wind tour of Europe, visiting England, Germany, Switzerland, France, Belgium and Holland. During the course of their tour, they made contact with a number of organisations in the following categories: anti-apartheid groups, church groups, CO and pacifist groups and the big institutions (i.e. UN, EEC, The European Parliament.) A great deal of time and energy was also spent in addressing a myriad of smaller meetings.

In London: Laurie and Pete addressed the AGM of the National Peace Council, and a public meeting organised by WRI (which was chaired by Meg Beresford, the new gen.

sec. of CND). They were also interviewed by CBS television, for a documentary on South African War refugees. Helsinki: The conference was really exciting and for the first time Laurie and Pete began to realise the full potential of international solidarity networks.

They found Germany to be particularly alive with 'information about, and concerning ECC' In Stuttgart and Frankfurt there were solidarity fasts at the end of our Troops out involving hundreds of Also, many national and regional religious publications have carried articles on the ECC (At a Catholic meeting place where Laurie spoke, there were ECC posters and our declaration in German on the walls.)

In Geneva, they met with the UN Human Rights sub-committee on conscientious objection, as well as showing the ECC video, and speaking to 50 WCC staff members. 'These contacts will give us access to 100's of groups and millions of people throughout the world.', says Laurie.

The tour then took them to Paris, Brussels and finally to Amsterdam, where they met with the Holland Committee on SA and the Cairns (an ecu-

menical organisation working on SA).

### **India**

Pete and Laurie found India a 'complete assault on the senses' Even the most simple of activities-eating, sleeping, going to the toilet, or riding on the train was a huge adventure and required great courage. They soon realized though that as westerners they were not equipped to understand what they were seeing. They obviously were not equipped to handle what they were drinking, because Pete returned home with diarrhea and Laurie with dysentery

The WRI Triennial, held at an Ashram (a Ghandian community) near Bombay was a great success-300 people from 55 countries. Although in Europe people were immensely interested in the 'Working for a Just Peace Campaign', they found that in India this campaign assumed a fuller meaning, attracting an enormous amount of enthusiastic support and interest. The highlight of the triennial was the contact made with delegates from the third world. 'ECC is now in a position to address its poor contact with the third world groups', says Laurie.

Throughout the tour, without exception, Pete and Laurie were extremely well received. As a result of the current international focus on SA, they were 'star attractions'. Their standard presentation tended to focus on the three main points: a) In Europe in particular, Pete and Laurie explained the role of the SADF and the nature of the violence in SA - that the street violence on TV was just symptomatic of the under lying structural violence, b) They elaborated on the role of whites in the struggle, and the non-racial character of the ECC, and c) They also tried to get across the intensification of the resistance and repression since the TV blackout.

'Of course the information flow was not all one-way. We have learnt a tremendous amount from the strategies and tactics of the groups we met', said Laurie. 'Most importantly ECC is now in a stronger position to get solidarity action from various groups, because we made personal contact with them, and because we now have a better understanding of the ideological and organisational dynamics of the different types of groups with which the ECC has contact.'

# January Call-Up

The latest intake of SADF conscripts did not go unnoticed by the Pietermaritzburg ECC. In fact our January Call up campaign began back in November with the formation of a lively and enthusiastic Schools Group. Schools action included the widespread distribution of an information pamphlet aimed at potential conscripts completing their matric exams.

The 'Schools Out' pamphlet explained the role of the conscript, his rights, his options and his obligations.

As the departure date for the conscripts drew nearer the campaign moved into the streets. A leaflet drop in the city centre was followed by a highly successful picket by our platoon' of dedicated placard bearers. Saturday morning shoppers couldn't fail to see our message 'STOP THE CALL-UP'. The basic aim of the campaign - to create a public awareness - was achieved.

## Advice Bureau . . .

Worried about your call-up?  
Need advice or information-  
contact our military advice  
bureau:



Vernon 22066  
Mark 944079  
Anton 26058

## Working For a Just Peace Campaign

Progressive movements in South Africa have often been accused of being too negative, too critical, and for failing to supplement their rhetoric with action. The End Conscription Campaign is about to confound its critics. In April the 6 ECC regions will launch the 'Campaign for a Just Peace' by initiating a variety of community projects to prove that 'true National Service' involves building one's country, not breaking it. The projects will be tackled with the co-operation of local community leaders in each region.

Pietermaritzburg ECC has several projects under consideration and feasibility studies and project planning are well underway. Possible projects include tree planting and the construction of a clinic at Campensation. The emphasis is on construction and the environment. The project will run from 2 to 30 April. During March a project recruitment drive will take place and anyone interested in helping is asked to contact Mark at 42668.



## FORCES FAVORITES

Good news for those of us who are fans of the ECC record 'Forces Favorites'. A second volume is due out in September. It is planned to include a greater variety of artists (perhaps even someone from PMB?) and to focus on the conscription issue. Copies of the first volume are still available at R12 from the ECC Office.

## Laurie Nathan

National Organiser Laurie Nathan recently paid a weeklong visit to the Pietermaritzburg region. Laurie presented a Public Speaking workshop, addressed a public meeting dealing with his overseas tour, gave a press interview and attended several ECC committee meetings.



## PEACE FESTIVAL

Last year ECC Peace Festival was so successful that it looks like becoming an annual event. Another festival with a cultural emphasis is planned for December. It will be held in either Cape Town or Durban. The ECC is dedicated to creating a Peace Culture in South Africa.



# News

## ECC FOR UNITED NATIONS

Two representatives of the ECC have been invited to attend a session of the United Nations Committee on Apartheid in New York next month. The tour is to be extended to include several meetings in other North American cities.



## SADF WASTES MONEY

We were hardly surprised to hear that the SADF are a major contributor to South Africa's debt woes. According to the Auditor General's report, the SADF wasted R33 million on 'fruitless and avoidable expenditure'. For the SADF a R3,5 billion rand defence budget isn't even enough!

## PMB ECC OFFICE

We have opened an office at 16 Harwins Arcade (upstairs). Initially the office will be staffed by voluntary workers and funded by monthly contributions from supporters. If you can spare an hour or two or are able to make a small monthly contribution to help pay the rent, please phone Karen at 20052 (mornings). We are also appealing for office equipment, typewriters, chairs etc.....

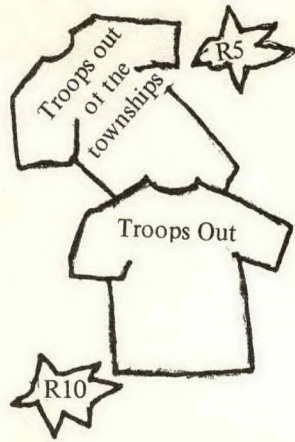


## CAMPUS SOCIETY

An ECC committee has been formed on the local

# Briefs

University Campus. The group aims to improve the ECC's profile amongst students. Several meetings have already been planned and a membership drive will be held at societies evening. Students who wish to participate in the activities of the campus ECC can phone Jac at 67788



## ECC T-SHIRTS

ECC has a number of T-shirts for sale. Prices range from R5-R10. Shirts are available from the ECC office or Pacsa offices.

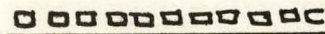
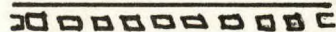
## GELDENHUIS COMMISSION

The Geldenhuys commission on the SADF will be reporting back on its findings in late March. ECC together with several other groups gave evidence to geldenhuys. Our interium demands to Geldenhuys were:

Until such time as conscription ends, conscripts should be given the choice not to enter S.A. townships or neighbouring states.

All objectors should be recognised and community service should be broadened to include service outside of the department of Manpower.

Alternate service time should be reduced to 4 years. (i.e. the same period as national service)



## FILM FESTIVAL

ECC is planning to hold a Film festival later this year. Films will focus on issues of militarisation, nuclear power and arms, war resistance and peace.



# Conference '86

The ECC National Conference was held at Oakford Priory near Durban from the 31 January to the 2 February. By all accounts it was a resounding success. Despite an extremely tight schedule, the conference was informal, dynamic and, due to excellent organisation and chairing, very productive.

## CONFERENCE DECISIONS

Amongst the decisions made at the conference were the following:

- 1) Two campaigns, 'The Working for a Just Peace Campaign' and the 'July call-Up Campaign' were discussed at length and planned.
- 2) A National ECC Newspaper was mooted and approved. It was decided that the ECC will undertake the responsibility of producing a replacement to the COSG newspaper 'Objector'.
- 3) The new full-time position of National Secretary was approved and David Shandler was appointed to the job. In line with the need to steam line National finances of ECC, a National Finance Officer was appointed. Laurie Nathan was reappointed for a second term as ECC Organiser.

## SEMINARS

Apart from decision making, the national conference devoted time to a thorough update on political events in Southern Africa. A delegation from Port Elizabeth delivered a skilled 'State of the Nation' Presentation which stimulated an interesting discussion on the role of ECC in the democratic struggle. A Cape Town delegate followed this up with an excellent and comprehensive paper on the appalling destabilisation of the Frontline States by the SADF. As a result the ECC decided to focus future campaigns on the external activities of the SADF'

## CONTACT

Perhaps the most productive aspect of the National Conference is the opportunity offered by inter-regional sub-committee meetings and an 'assessment and direction' session provided valuable contact between regions. A Saturday night social evening further cemented contact and friendships between ECC members from different parts of the country.

## GROWTH

For delegates who attended last years conference the ECC's progress over the past year was most obvious. This years conference was the largest ever - three times the size of the January 1985 conference. Only three regions existed last year as opposed to the six at present.

For those who attended their first ECC national event, the 1986 conference showed ECC at its best.

# Contributions

ECC News encourages people to contribute poetry and articles. These can be sent to ECC (Box 2338) or interested people can contact Andrew at 945853.

## DID YOU HEAR?

Magnus Malan refused to give numbers of those who failed to report for call-up claiming that these figures had in the past been abused by groupings working against conscription.

## HOUSE MEETINGS

ECC has decided to hold a number of House Meetings. These are aimed at giving people an opportunity to listen to a mother from one of our townships talking about what is really happening. Despite the increased SADF presence in the townships, there are some people who want to listen. People interested in hosting such a meeting or attending a meeting please contact Jenny at 65593.



## MIDLANDS COMMANDO

The Midlands Commando has announced the compulsory registration of all males between the ages of 16 and 55 living within the area under its jurisdiction. Military training for those concerned begins in May. The End Conscription Campaign opposes any further militarisation of the Natal Midlands. It is widely believed that this latest step is in response to the SARMCOL dispute and the popular discontent in the Mpopomeni township near Howick.

**THE CRY**

Fragile bodies torn by a hail of bullets  
 The conscripted army wreaks its wrath  
 Tearful voices, mourning the agony of children.  
 Angry voices raised against unjust schemes..  
 Angry voices rise to angry fists.  
 Angry fists rise to angry hate, spurred on by hate,  
 ever hastening, ever rising spiral.  
 A cancer setting the rulers apart from the people.

A cry is heard throughout the land,  
 A cry for justice and a cry for peace.  
 A cry to stop those fragile bodies being torn,  
 Being torn by a rage of hate..

The Baron

**QUOTE**

'Good is that which makes for unity;  
 Evil is that which makes for separateness.'

A' Huxley

The End Conscription Campaign faces a very busy and challenging year ahead. In line with a decision taken at National Conference we are about to embark on two major campaigns in the first 6 months of the year. The 'Working for a Just Peace Campaign' will require each region to conduct a community project as a symbolic protest against the compulsory conscription. The July Call-up action will be an extension of a similar campaign held in January to coincide with the departure of the SADF conscripts.

Both campaigns provide us in the Pietermaritzburg ECC with testing demands on our organisation. For the campaigns to be successful it is necessary for us to develop our sub-committee structure and to continue to build on the foundations we laid in 1985. We need to increase the active participation of our affiliates and broaden our constituency through the year.

We are moving in the right direction. Our media group is dedicated to creating a peace culture through communication the school's group aims to deliver our message to those who will face conscription in the future, and the churches group will help raise issues of war and peace in the churches. Our newly formed campus society will aim to take ECC to campus. For these groups to succeed, individuals must come forward and participate.

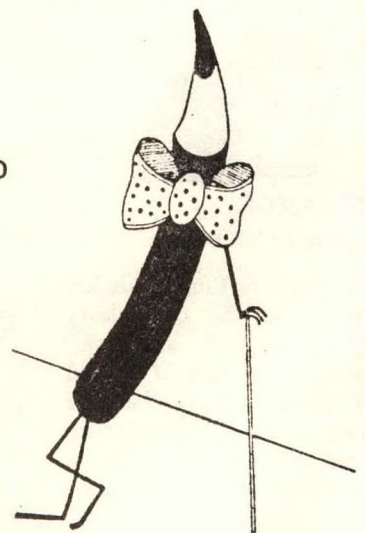
In political terms, what can we expect in 1986? What can we expect from the state? Will we see more clampdowns detentions and raids? Or, will conscription be abolished? Frankly, there is likely to be more repression, conscription is unlikely to be abolished in the near future. Does this mean that we are losing? No. Repression means that we are Our threat is recognised by our opponents. With regard to our ultimate goal, in the end we cannot fail. Increased resistance by the people, a more conscientised white community and greater pressure resulting from abroad will inevitably bring about change.

**Subscriptions**

PEOPLE INTERESTED IN SUBSCRIBING TO THE ECC NEWS SHOULD SEND  
 THEIR SUBSCRIPTIONS TOGETHER WITH THEIR NAME AND ADDRESS  
 TO ECC BOX 2338, PIETERMARIZBURG  
 SUBSCRIPTION RATES: R5 PER ANNUM  
 OR A DONAR SUBSCRIPTION OF R10 pa CAN BE PAID.

NAME:

ADDRESS:



Anyone interested in helping with ECC work please contact Jac at 67788.

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