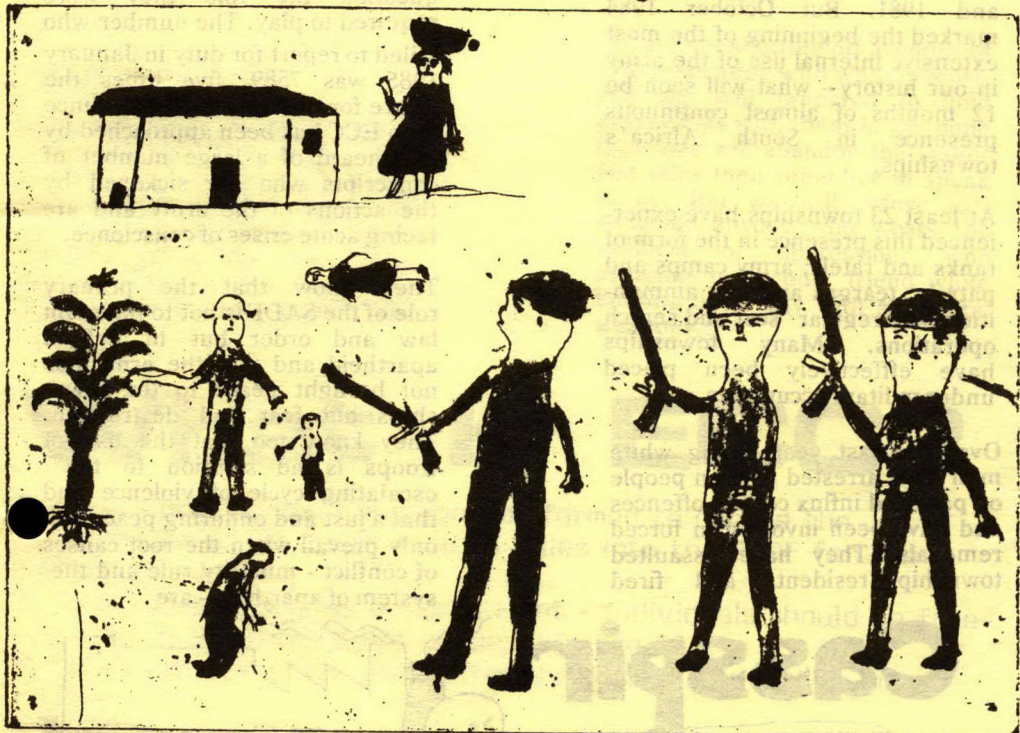


Troops out of the townships!



end conscription campaign

TROOPS OUT NOW

When South African history is re-written, October 7, 1984 will be remembered as a significant date. For on that SADF troops assisted the police in combined search and seize operations in Soweto and Grahamstown.

It was not the first time that the SADF had been involved in quelling internal resistance. They had done so in 1976, 1980 and 1981. But October 1984 marked the beginning of the most extensive internal use of the army in our history-- what will soon be 12 months of almost continuous presence in South Africa's townships.

At least 23 townships have experienced this presence in the form of tanks and ratels, army camps and patrols, teargas and live ammunition, and regular "scar and search operations. Many townships have effectively been placed under military occupation.

Over the last year young white men have arrested African people on pass and influx control offences and have been involved in forced removals. They have assaulted township residents and fired

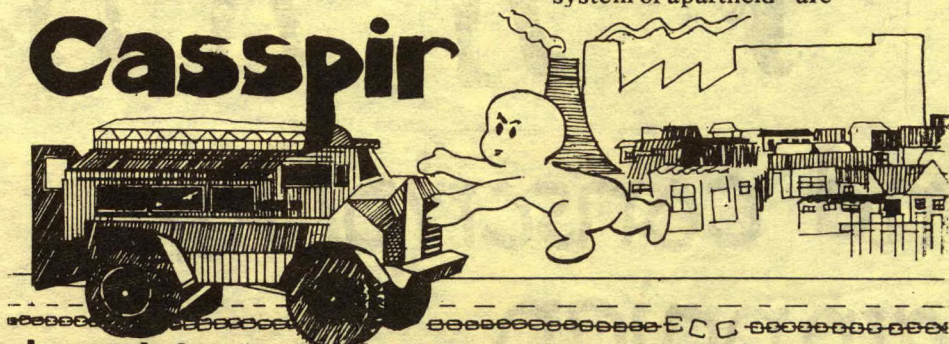
teargas at funeral mourners. And they have killed at least five people, according to official estimates.

Conscription questioned

Not surprisingly, October 1984 marked the point when conscripts began, in large numbers, to question the role they were required to play. The number who failed to report for duty in January 1985 was 7589, five times the figure for the whole of 1984. Since then ECC has been approached by and heard of a large number of conscripts who are sickened by the actions of the army and are facing acute crises of conscience.

They know that the primary role of the SADF is not to maintain law and order but to defend apartheid and that the army has not brought peace to the townships but fear and destruction. They know too 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

Casspir



is not just a friendly ghost!

eradicated.

Above all, they know that the violence of apartheid is the reason for black resistance, even if they do not agree with all the forms 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 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 leave South Africa forever.

Troops seen as enemy

Since October 1984, another significant development has taken place; township residents have come to fear and hate the SADF and to see white soldiers as their enemy. According to Stone Sizane, publicity secretary of the UDF in the Eastern Cape: "The

SADF and SAP act jointly to pick up large numbers of young people who are on the street. If you happen to resist arrest because you are frightened, they can shoot you. Everyday people are being shot.

At the moment people are too afraid to move in the streets, especially after dark, because they are terrified of being confronted by a weapon wielding eighteen year old in browns. We are not saying that ordinary policemen should get out the townships. We need them to take care of crime and prevention. It is these armed forces, who behave in such a hostile and aggressive fashion, that we want out.

We are not shutting off avenues of communication with white people. We are still prepared to hold discussions with them in the hope that they will abandon the laager and relax their prejudice to speak to us. But we will refuse to welcome anyone who wears the uniform of oppression, who pretends to be our friend while holding us at bay with automatic weapons."

What Is ECC?

The End Conscription Campaign was formed to oppose the conscription of all South African males into the SADF for the following reasons :

- * Conscription violates a human right - individuals should be free to choose whether or not to serve in the SADF.
- * Conscription further intensifies the violent conflict in our society.
- * Conflict can only be resolved by eradicating its root cause, apartheid. We need political, not military solutions to political problems.
- * Conscripts are forced to take part in the invasion of neighbouring states.



What are the alternatives?

A call up to the SADF does not mean that a person has to fight. The Defence Act of 1983 makes provision for alternative service, but only for religious pacifists. Political Objectors face 6 years in jail or a possible life time in exile.

WHAT ALTERNATIVES ARE AVAILABLE FOR RELIGIOUS PACIFISTS ?

- * Non combatant service within the SADF.
- * Non- combatant service in the SADF without having to wear uniform
- * community service.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY SERVICE ?

Under the present legislation, community service is granted only to religious pacifists who would be opposed to the use of violence in any circumstances. Community service involves working , at army pay, under the Department of Manpower, for 1½ times the length of all SADF service outstanding. Community Service is rendered for a continuous period.

WHY IS THE PRESENT LEGISLATION INADEQUATE ?

- * There is no provision for people who object on non-religious grounds.
- * People who refuse to serve in the SADF on political grounds face up to 6 years in jail.
- * Alternative service is longer than military service.
- * Community Service generally involves bureaucratic work which does not utilise people's skills properly.

WHAT ARE THE REAL ALTERNATIVES ?

- * An immediate end to compulsory conscription.
- * Until such stage, individual soldiers should have the right to refuse to serve in the townships.
- * National Service should truly serve the needs of all South Africans and should contribute to the building of a peaceful and just society for all.

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