

CONTENTS1. INTRODUCTION2. ADVICE BUREAU

- problems with it
- giving direction/focus?

Workshops:- Pre-Conscript

Four categories on campus

- most males on campus in this category
- we didn't utilise this resource

Conscript

- 75th Anniversary cake to Wits Command
- action was not developed further
- August Call Up pamphlet
- wide distribution
- Namibia Day Meeting
- ex-conscript speaker
- minimal discussion around these events, focus lost

Camper

- activist as witness in Wilkinson trial

3. 1988:

More determined focus on our campaign - broaden appeal on campus.

4. PROPOSALS FOR 1988:

- Information Bureau
- Professional Organisation
- Be more accessible
- Correct our profile
- Conscript Rap-groups
- Become EXPERTS on conscription
- Affects Front relationships
- Clearer ways for Front to participate
- Moral and religious issues create broader appeal
- Re-define "Opposition to Conscription"
- One-issue campaign

FOCUS ON THE CONSCRIPT

WITS REGION REPORT

INTRODUCTION:

Our discussion of 'Focus on the Conscript' developed largely from our evaluation and criticism of activities during 1987. A visit from National Workers gave us more insight and a solid base on which to develop our discussion.

We have looked at various areas of 1987 where we dealt with a focus on the conscript:

1. ADVICE BUREAU

- People who came received help or were referred
- Staffing was irregular
- People did not take it seriously - possibly due to SRC involvement
- Not well advertised
- Few conscripts/campers came

On the whole, the Advice Bureau was not successful and did not add to a particular focus for our branch.

2. WORKSHOP ON THE CONSCRIPT

Identified three types:

1) Pre-Conscript:

- schools - not our constituency
- varsity - conscientious objectors in their different categories
- those who object politically to SADF
- people who see no alternative but to go
- people who support/have no objections to SADF

- most males on campus fit into this category - these are the people who whom we could have been directing our campaign
- few of our activities in 1987 focused on this group, they had very wide appeal.

2. Conscript/ Servicemen

- On the SADF's 75th Anniversary we made a cake in the shape of the castle, displayed it on campus and delivered it to Wits Command. We developed this action very far and the effects were minimal.
- For the August Call-Up, we printed a copy of a call-up letter with "Perth, Phalaborwa or Pretoria Central?" printed on it - it had a very wide distribution.
- Namibia Day Meeting - one of our activists (a camper) gave insight into the conscript's role - a very worthwhile event
- Besides these activities, we did not focus on the conscript at all, there was minimal discussion around these actions, and the focus was lost.

3. Campers

- One of our activists, Steve Louw, gave witness in Philip Wilkinson's trial. An excellent pamphlet that was produced, was circulated very widely and posters were printed at Wits for the trial.

Our discussion continued in 1988, with more determination to focus the campaign on the conscript, yet broaden our general appeal on campus.

PROPOSALS FOR 1988:

- have an 'Information Bureau' not an Advice Bureau where we will provide information, not counselling; We would refer people to COSG, CAS, etc., for counselling.
- to professionalise our organisation
- to be more accessible to average students
- to 'clean up' our profile as a political/service/rights organisation
- to begin conscripts rap-groups on campus
- to begin (on campus and then nationally) to be the experts on conscription that for eg DPSC are in detention
- our "new line" is important in our relationships with the Front:
- it will give Front organisations a clearer idea of how they can participate
- moral and religious issues will be exposed - therefore broader appeal
- we will need to re-define "opposition to conscription" to each organisation - we need to be open to avoid suspicion
- we need to keep in mind that we are a one-issue campaign, not a broad political organisation

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END CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN (ECC)

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