

Introduction

This report was drawn from an afternoon assessment and planning session. We started the assessment by (very briefly) re-examining why we take up the campaign in the first place. In doing so we attempted to establish a reference point for our planning and assessment. This report is divided into three main sections: A - Successes and Failures; B - E.C.C. Internal; C - E.C.C. External.

A. Successes and Failures

i. Successes

The first that came to mind was the "Troops Out" campaign, in particular the Peace Rally, and the Art for Peace exhibition. Both were very well attended, and provoked considerable public interest. The Peace Rally was a landmark in Cape Town political history, swaying many undecided people onto our side. The exhibition was the first of its kind for many years, and created a ripple effect within the arts community.

Other successes were our media 'presence', and our reputation as a dynamic political organisation.

Contact work in the form of 'open forums', the newsletter, press work and international liaison has been very successful.

Other points of note are our non-hierarchical methods of organisation and our ability to cope with crises e.g. Mike's detention.

ii. The Failures

Our IYY campaign was, in a word, a flop, into which we had channelled considerable planning and energy. In part this was due to objective conditions and the demise of the IYY campaign generally in the Western Cape, but we certainly failed to address ourselves to Western Cape youth.

The Claremont Civic meeting following the Uitenhage massacre was poorly attended. We had considerable problems with the City Council over our advertising.

Organisation for the meeting to launch the fast was poor, and created some friction. The cathedral programme organised during the fast was planned too late, poorly publicised, and poorly attended. Follow-up to the fast was non-existent.

Other low points, are our lack of skills training, the neglect of front structure, poor publicising of SADF activity beyond the townships, internal education programmes. Cape Town ECC also has a very poor grasp of the national ECC dynamic.

B. ECC Internal

i) Recruitment into ECC structures

This has been a major problem area. Not only do we fail to involve new contacts in areas of ECC work, but we are faced with a high activist turnover rate, and have provided poor follow-up to campaign work so as to pull in peripheral supporters. A number of approaches to these problems have been suggested:

- i) the need for an 'Orientation' group to provide new recruits with an overall grasp of ECC work, and the arguments behind it, and to present them with an exciting and enjoyable "first contact" with ECC.

- ii) the opening up of new constituencies into which we can channel activists.

iii) the creation of more initiatives like CAG (loosely affiliated grouping).

iv) the awareness of a group of peripheral supporters who do not want to work in sub-committees - we must provide regular suitable activities such people can participate in.

ii) Making space for individuals' participation and development in ECC?

Activists are often too busy to be passing on skills, and we need to set up regular skills work-shops. We should also be developing leadership skills with ECC. (assessment workshops are a small part of this). Certain patterns of domination within group discussions have become entrenched, reflecting a limited perception of humanism within ECC. The need to address the area of feminism in ECC work has been expressed. While internal education has failed to get off the ground as a viable answer to these problems, there is a programme in the pipeline that may well go some way to redressing them.

iii) Building the ECC front structure

The organisation vs front dilemma has been raised a number of times over the past year. In its formative stages Cape Town ECC put a lot of work into its front structure. Later, as campaign orientated work became a priority, far more attention was focussed on sub committee work and building up an organisational machinery. The front structure has as a consequence been neglected. Contact committee has done much to correct this, but it is seen as a priority for 1986 and will receive far greater attention.

C. ECC External

i) Popularising ECC

The last year has provided us with a number of opportunities of which we have taken advantage. In particular the Troops Out Campaign. The bulk of our profile has been through good media, press and public relations work. This has given us an image that is at times 'larger than life', and helped to make ECC a household name. We have generated a fairly popular and 'trendy' image amongst younger constituencies. Our international profile has been given an enormous boost. Certain key constituencies, however, have been neglected (see later).

ii) Exposing the role of the SADF in South Africa

While our media has conveyed the overall pattern of SADF actions within the townships, we have failed to provide detailed information on these actions, and we have neglected to emphasize SADF activity beyond the townships (border conflict, resettlement, etc.). In many ways this reflects our failure to adequately collate this material, and an information group has been set up to fill this gap. It has been suggested that we bring out a informative magazine on SADF actions that acts as a counter to Paratus.

iii) Presenting Alternatives to the SADF

This has been a major omission of our work, and is very much behind our motivation for taking up the alternative service project. It is vital that ECC presents itself in a positive light and is seen to be engaged in looking for new alternatives.

iv) Building Non-Racialism

While our priority has been organising whites we have had some successes in building non-racialism through the efforts of some of our activists. The Troops Out Campaign was pushing demands that were relevant to a township audience, and the Peace Rally was well supported by township residents. Informal contacts with CAYCO have been maintained, and we have produced a play jointly with their NYI branch. ECC media has also penetrated the townships on a number of occasions. The Sand Castle action was an expression of non-racialism. We are lacking in a more formalised approach to work in black areas, but we are surprised at the widespread knowledge of ECC and its objectives within the townships.

v) Target Groups

a) Schools

Although continually identified as a priority area, our gains have been small. Our media has achieved a presence and identity in some schools. It is other organisations like PAAG that have made greater inroads. Our concerts have attracted some school students.

b) Conscripts

This has been our most neglected area, and prompted our recent January call-up focus. It has been suggested that we form a 'conscripts' group. 'Campers' constitute a numerically very large group and need attention.

c) Students

While our presence on UCT campus through CAG is good, we are not maintaining our gains there. We must liaise through CAG and NUSAS and clearly strategise our future work on campus. The Technikons have to date been ignored (except by MSM!).

d) Academics

A neglected area. Other centres e.g. Johannesburg have made far more use of this constituency.

e) Yuppies (Young upwardly mobile professionals).

They have been clearly targeted by ECC and are a heterogeneous grouping. Where are the Yuppie breeding grounds?

f) Churches

The ECC churches group is starting to make inroads in this area, considerably improving our previously in-strategised approach.

g) The Liberal White Public

Again, hard to define as a group, but certainly we have addressed ourselves mainly to this constituency during the year's work.

This area has probably been where the majority of our gains have come from, but a definitive 'right of centre' has become evident and they view ECC with grave suspicion.

h) Afrikaans Constituency

We are very tentatively making initiatives in the Stellenbosch community, and may well develop these further soon.

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