

CAPE TOWN ECC CAMPAIGN REPORT

Cape Town ECC is currently, happily and busily, planning a new campaign, around the slogan: "war is no solution."

1. Origins: Arising out of a workshop which looked at future plans, came the idea for a campaign which somehow related to the idea: this war is not worth fighting.

This was further supported post the "Right to Speak" campaign - essentially and necessarily defensive. We felt we needed to reclaim our public credence and articulate the validity of ECC's position.

2. Aims:

- ▷ Reclaiming our legal space
- ▷ Regaining public presence & credibility
- ▷ Broadening our support - recruitment?
- ▷ Posing positive alternatives to prevalent white fears
- ▷ Energizing our organization.

3. Theme: Our theme was to encompass the following concerns -

- ▷ Focussing on the nature of war in general; civil war in particular
- ▷ Focus on the nature of conflict in our society
- ▷ Highlight the effects of the S.O.F.

D Stress informative content — with a sober assessment of the situation, posing peace as a future if people participate in the process of change.

4. Slogan: Initial slogan seen as potentially alienating, as it presupposes acceptance of the notion of civil war. Modified our concept to present slogan: War is No Solution. We felt this addressed issues such as conflict & violence and the "imminent threat" of civil war, which ~~at~~ our constituency could relate to.

Other ideas for slogans: Is this war worth fighting?  
Is this all we have to offer? There is another way.

5. Central Action:

The central action of the campaign is a walk to a ~~destination~~<sup>township</sup> chosen on the basis of its specific military symbolism. Further symbolic actions, such as the planting of olive trees, taking messages of support, or a church service are envisaged.

The route of the walk to be discussed with community organizations; to try & find an accessible township that

allows for maximum participation. Concern  
Protection against banning is a ~~problem~~ -  
notables, thorough practical organizing,  
and the notion of a "sponsored walk";  
perhaps in alliance with ShawaCO are  
possible solutions. An alternative action  
to be planned to cater for a banning.

Motivation:

- ▷ Symbol of our protest at role of SADF in civil conflict.
- ▷ Demands personal sacrifice
- ▷ Is flexible enough to allow a for a range of commitments to campaign, by public.
- ▷ High profile media event.
- ▷ Less planning than some of our other campaigns.
- ▷ Could draw in the front and concerned NOBS
- ▷ The township chosen could be used as the focus of our media; to particularize the broad issues we'll be raising.

Weaknesses:

- ▷ Sound alternative action needed to make gains out of a banning.
- ▷ Potential public participation difficult to gauge.

6. Other ideas for action:

▷ Delegation to ANC on war and peace

- ▷ Mother's symposium
- ▷ Peace picnic
- ▷ Symposium of informative public lectures
- ▷ Films showing II's with other civil wars.  
(possibly aimed at schools)
- ▷ Building an anti-war / peace edifice or museum.
- ▷ Inviting the SADF on our tour of the war zone.
- ▷ Canvassing conscripts demands = a "conscripts' charter"
- ▷ Symbolic Churches action
- ▷ VIP picket
- ▷ Arts Festival component (roadshow, cabaret, permanent displays, stalls)
- ▷ Booths in shopping centres
- ▷ Pavement art competition, on our theme

#### 7. Timing:

- ▷ 3 weeks campaign, culminating in walk, which is scheduled for a weekend in early December.
- ▷ Arts Festival component will continue to carry our theme, and act as follow up.

#### 8. Structure:

- ▷ A campaign group, of interested activists + formal reps from each sub-comm.
- ▷ Sub-commms are adopting the "war is no solution theme" & adapting work to it.

Room 22  
Ecumenical Centre  
20 St Andrew's St  
4001 Durban  
October 17 1986

Dear Friends

1. We now have our own office - phone number 031 3045883. The office has not been "harassed" at all so far, which is quite a relief. In fact, it is relatively quiet on the harassment front here in Durban at the moment, and has been ever since our three activists were released from detention early in August. The only item of harassment recently has been a visit to Sarah Hills' house (she was detained for a while in July). The visit occurred on Monday morning the 22nd of September. Howard Varnay, from the Legal Resources Centre, is investigating it further in terms of trying to identify which branch of the security forces was responsible, and to recover the material taken.
2. Durban ECC has been involved in two very successful coalition-type public meetings (see enclosed cuttings). The first was on August 27th. This was a tentative testing of the water in terms of police response. The police did threaten the chairperson before the meeting - that he would be held responsible for any subversive statements made at the meeting - but the meeting went off well. By common acclaim, the ECC speaker, Mike Evans, was the star of the show! The second meeting, on October 7th, was a massive success - 1500 people! We were aiming to reach the "average white community", which is exactly what we did. At least 60% of the audience looked like people who had never been to an extra-parliamentary political public meeting before. The sponsoring organisations set up tables in the foyer and dished out literature, sold t-shirts etc. at a rate of knots. The speakers were all superb, pitching their talks at exactly the right level. It certainly helped having a big name (Van Zyl Slabbert) as a draw card, but we also think the title we chose and the media we used to advertise the meeting had a lot to do with the success. Both were "soft" and simple. The only drawback for ECC was that there was no ECC speaker. The toss up was between an education crisis speaker or ECC. The education speakers spoke well, and gave an important insight into a significant national problem, but it is a pity that it was at the cost of ECC profile. We did, however, get a few favourable mentions, especially from Van Zyl Slabbert.
3. Enclosed is a copy of AT EASE. This is the last copy Fiona Dove will be editor of - she has taken on a job as CCAWUSA organiser in Pietermaritzburg, so is leaving town.
4. The "national delegation" idea has produced no fruit. We feel the original impetus has been lost. If we still feel the idea is a good one, we should relaunch it as a current initiative. What do you think?

5. STRUCTURES AND COORDINATION. When the S of E was declared, all meetings were stopped and area-based "support groups" were formed. These groups met once a week. Each support group elected one member to a coordinating group. This group met at least once a week. There were no general body meetings.

In August we were able to hold a series of general body meetings. We decided to revert back to the sub-committee system - churches, culture, media and contact. However, the system never really worked. This was because: a) we were not involved in the sort of campaign which could occupy these groups, b) the groups themselves were not generating their own work, c) there were not as many people involved in ECC as before the S of E, so the sub-committees were all very small, and felt very isolated. Thus, at a general body meeting in September we decided to revert, for the time being, to the original structure the Durban ECC worked from before sub-committees were formed.

The central feature of this original structure is that we will work from one group (the general body) rather than various set groups. In practise this means:

- \* general body -- meets every two weeks;
- \* coordinating committee -- meets every other week.  
Composition: portfolio holders (treasurer, secretary, spokesperson, press officer, regional organiser, national committee representatives), reps from campus ECC, a rep from each working group in existence.
- \* ad hoc working groups -- meet as often as necessary. These groups will be set up to pursue particular tasks. When those tasks are over, the group is over.

We recognise that a formal sub-committee structure is ideal, but that system just was not working for us. When appropriate, we will reintroduce it.

With regard to elections for office bearers: the present office bearers were elected in February this year. Office bearers from that time are: regional organiser - Gary Cullen, spokesperson - Richard Steele, treasurer - Val Lindsay. Richard is the current NC rep. Roweena Broomhead has been elected as the second rep. The portfolio vacancies filled recently are: secretary - Frankie Hills, press officers - Tam Alexander and Rob Evans. We have decided not to hold a whole new election at this stage because of the present state of the organisation, and because the current office bearers' mandate extends to February next year anyway.

6. We have no formal internal education programs. We want to set up such programs, but have not yet managed to do so.

7. Unfortunately we have very poor affiliate participation on a small group and general body level. This is partly due to them being very caught up in other things, and partly us not making the required effort to reinvolve them. Those that were participating fairly regularly we lost when we reorganised ourselves at the

beginning of the S of E. We still have excellent cooperation with them, as evidenced by support for the Right To Speak campaign, and during the organisation of the public meetings.

8. The Right To Speak campaign has gone reasonably well in Durban. It has not been a particularly active campaign. Elements were:
- \* gathering the signatures for the petition. As part of this we arranged a meeting with the Durban Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce (see separate motivation);
  - \* visiting newspaper editors to see whether they would accept an advert based on the petition. At that stage (early July) their response was unanimously negative;
  - \* printing postcards to Botha and Eglin;
  - \* sending these postcards and covering letters to our supporters;
  - \* co-organising an "Our Right To Know" public meeting on August 27th;
  - \* mention of the campaign in a Sunday Tribune newsarticle (August 31);
  - \* petition advertisement in The Natal Mercury (September 25th).

We feel we are now finished with that campaign as such although we will keep it in mind as a basic call in all that we do.

9. October 2nd is Mahatma Gandhi's birthday. Every year the Phoenix Settlement Trust hosts a memorial lecture on that day, at Phoenix Settlement (in Inanda, near Durban). Gandhi founded it in 1904). This year Richard, as an ECC activist, was asked to give the lecture (see enclosed newspaper article).

10. We are planning an anniversary celebration dinner, for October 31st (see enclosed pamphlet).

11. Regional organiser: Gary's original mandate was for 6 months ending at the end of August. He has prepared evaluation forms which all local members are filling out. In the mean time, there was unanimous consent to continue his mandate.

12. Campus ECC has formed itself as a broad front. Local contact person is Roweena Broomhead, 031 216129.

13. Donn Edwards: Legal Resources Centre is working with him to take the Board for Religious Objectors refusal of his CO application to the Orange Free State Supreme Court. It would be nice if people phoned him to give him support - 031 29 7912.

14. Campaign for National United Action: two reps from the UDF-COSATU coordinating group addressed our recent general body meeting. We expressed our desire to have "troops out" and "end conscription" more prominently featured. We agreed to support the Campaign. A separate planning meeting has been set aside to

work out the nature of our participation and how we can link with other groups in furthering the Campaign.

15. Current ECC campaign plans

At a general body meeting in September we brainstormed campaign ideas on the general theme "Is it worth it?" We came up with quite a few ideas, not all directly related to the theme. The main ideas being developed at the moment are:

- a. Big conference on the cost of war - economic, social, political, psychological etc. Possibly in February next year. Contact: Gary 216129, Mark 723072.
- b. Anti-war toys campaign, including research, letters to newspapers and magazines, stickers, pamphlets, direct action at shops and shopping centres against war toys, creating alternative peace toys. Should be able to gain support and co-working from more conservative, mainstream, groups. To culminate around Christmas. Contact: Rob 222646.
- c. A WJP type project. No date yet in mind. Contact: Gary 216129
- d. Various factsheets. Contact: Roweena 216129
- e. Dramatic actions, mainly in December. Contact: Tam 222564

At our last meeting we decided to have a yellow ribbon campaign along the lines of the Johannesburg event. This will be on Saturday morning, November 1st. We are very enthusiastic about it, and are finding it easy to enthuse others too - just what we need!



DURBAN ECC MEETS WITH THE DURBAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Date: August 18th, 1986.

Venue: Chamber of Commerce offices.

ECC representatives: Gary Cullen, Laurie Nathan, Richard Steele.

DMCC representatives: Mr Tyler, senior manager; Mrs Wilson, secretary of the Chamber's Manpower (sic) Committee.

ECC's motivation.

1. Publicise our R2S campaign.
2. Gain their support for this if possible.
3. Find out their point of view, as representative of Big Business, on conscription.
4. Explain the ECC point of view on conscription.

Elements of our approach.

1. Human rights, freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, freedom of choice.
2. The "brain drain" - disruptive, mitigates against the effective utilisation of personnel. Many people leave because of military service or because of the effects of the civil war. Proper recognition of CO and broader scope for alternative service could relieve the "brain drain".
3. Civil war - not just conflict "out there", but on the shop floor too because the tensions outside reproduce themselves inside. White workers being called up to fight blackworkers must surely cause tensions during worktime.
4. Resentment caused by the call up where whites get leave on full pay to go and fight the workers and their families and communities, whereas workers struggle to gain time off for union work.

Elements of their response.

1. Refer to their "Revised Policy Statement On Military Service, 21 March 1986". The most interesting element of this statement is their attitude to troops in the townships. They basically agree that this is not acceptable. Besides what is in the statement, they told us that the SAP should be in the townships, not the SADF. If it is "necessary" to use troops, they should be from another area.
2. They admitted that the notion of conscription is inconsistent with free enterprise, because free enterprise is based on voluntary association.
3. On the whole they felt conscription is necessary because of the threat to the stability of the country, and in order to defend free enterprise (while at the same time acknowledging that conscription is inconsistent with free enterprise!).

General Assessment.

They did not sign the petition, but the meeting was definitely worthwhile. We recommend other regions consider similar visits. ASSACOM is drafting a national policy statement on military service. Regions could approach local Chambers on the basis of finding out about that statement and offering to provide input for it.k

# DURBAN METROPOLITAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



COMMERCE HOUSE FIELD STREET DURBAN 4001

## REVISED POLICY STATEMENT ON MILITARY SERVICE, 21 MARCH 1986

The Durban Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce has given careful re-consideration to the present system of military service, having regard to the country's defence needs and to the possibly disruptive effect of military conscription on the effective use of manpower.

### MILITARY CONSCRIPTION

1. The Chamber accepts that for logistical and economic reasons it would not be practical at the present time to replace the existing system of military conscription of White males by a permanent standing army.
2. The present system of two years' compulsory military service, coupled with Citizen Force service for a fixed number of years thereafter (not necessarily the number of years prescribed at present), would seem to be the most practical and cost-effective way to maintain a trained and fully mobilised Defence Force in the numbers necessary to constitute an effective deterrent to any potential aggressor. However, the narrow manpower base of this system imposes a heavy burden on and disrupts the efficient use of the country's White skilled manpower, and it is essential that this base be broadened.
3. The Chamber does not believe that it would be feasible to impose compulsory military conscription on members of other population groups at present, but it suggests that an extension of the system of voluntary military service would broaden the present base and would represent the first step in a series of evolutionary changes to the system, with the ultimate aim of spreading the burden of military service evenly throughout all sectors of the population.
4. The Chamber recommends that consideration should be given to a broader extension of military service on a voluntary basis to Coloureds and Indians for an initial two year period, to be followed by Citizen Force service, including annual camps, for such volunteers.
5. With the extension over a period of time of such a system of voluntary service, the concept of a permanent force to replace the existing system of military conscription might prove to be more feasible.

UTILISATION OF MILITARY PERSONNEL(a) In Departments of the Public Service

6. The Chamber maintains that the employment of national servicemen in the offices of the Receiver of Revenue is an incorrect use of manpower. Government departments should, in normal conditions, be required to compete with the private sector for the recruitment of staff. Military service personnel should not be used to fill positions in the public service in roles in which they are not used either directly or indirectly in support of the country's military effort.

7. It is accepted that servicemen who are qualified as teachers and doctors and who serve in rural areas are fulfilling a strategic military role as part of Communications Operations, and that their tasks cannot be compared with work for the Receiver of Revenue or in the administration of any other Government department.

(b) To Combat Urban Unrest

8. The use of Citizen Force personnel to combat urban unrest is a contentious matter, of deep concern to many White males liable for Citizen Force service. The system could result (and the Chamber believes that in the Port Elizabeth area it has in fact resulted) in a White commercial manager finding himself dealing in the township areas with members of his own staff.

9. The Chamber recognises that circumstances may arise in which military involvement may become unavoidable, in order to restore law and order, but it believes that the use of the Citizen Force in Black townships or elsewhere to combat urban unrest should be avoided wherever possible.

21 March 1986

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