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Stop the Call Up

End Conscription Campaign

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**STOP THE
CALL UP**



End Conscription Campaign

ECC's path to peace

In 1979, South African Defence Minister General Magnus Malan said: "The (South African) Defence Force supports government policy and is responsible for peace, law and order in this country. This policy is the same as that laid down by Dr H F Verwoerd, namely multi-nationalism and self-determination of nations." (Cape Times 28/10/79)

Government policy has since changed to entrench apartheid in the new tri-racial constitution. Malan's assertion of South African Defence Force (SADF) support for government policy remains. This political nature of the SADF has been a cause for concern in the white community for many years. Opposition to the role of the military is not new. Church groupings have made repeated calls on the government to provide an alternative non-military form of national service. The late 1970s and early 1980s saw a rapid increase in the number of young men conscientiously objecting to serve in the SADF on religious, moral and political grounds. This objection to conscription is, however, confined to individuals and was severely curtailed by the Defence Amendment Act of 1983. (This Act increased the sentence for conscientious objectors from a maximum of two years to a mandatory six).

The first more generalised opposition to the role of the military came from the Black Sash when at its annual conference in 1983, a motion was passed calling for an end to conscription. Subsequently, in July that year, at the fourth annual conference of the Conscientious Objectors Support Group, a decision was taken to launch the End Conscription Campaign.

Many organisations responded to this decision and came together to establish End Conscription Committees in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban by the end of the year. The first national ECC meeting took place at Wilgespruit near Johannesburg in July 1984. It was decided to draw up the ECC Declaration calling for a just peace in SA. The Declaration was endorsed by many organisations and individuals over the next few months. In October and November the Declaration was launched in Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg with extensive support for the campaign and widespread publicity of the Declaration endorsers.

TOWARDS A JUST PEACE IN OUR LAND

A Declaration to End Conscription

We live in an unjust society where basic human rights are denied to the majority of the people.

We live in an unequal society where the land and wealth are owned by the minority.

We live in a society in a state of civil war, where brother is called on to fight brother.

We call for an end to conscription.

Young men are conscripted to maintain the illegal occupation of Namibia, and to wage unjust war against foreign countries.

Young men are conscripted to assist in the implementation and defence of apartheid policies.

Young men who refuse to serve are faced with the choice of a life of exile or a possible six years in prison.

We call for an end to conscription.

We believe that the financial cost of the war increases the poverty of our country, and that money should rather be used in the interests of peace.

We believe that the extension of conscription to coloured and Indian youths will increase conflict and further divide our country.

WE BELIEVE THAT IT IS THE MORAL RIGHT OF SOUTH AFRICANS TO EXERCISE FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE AND TO CHOOSE NOT TO SERVE IN THE SADF.

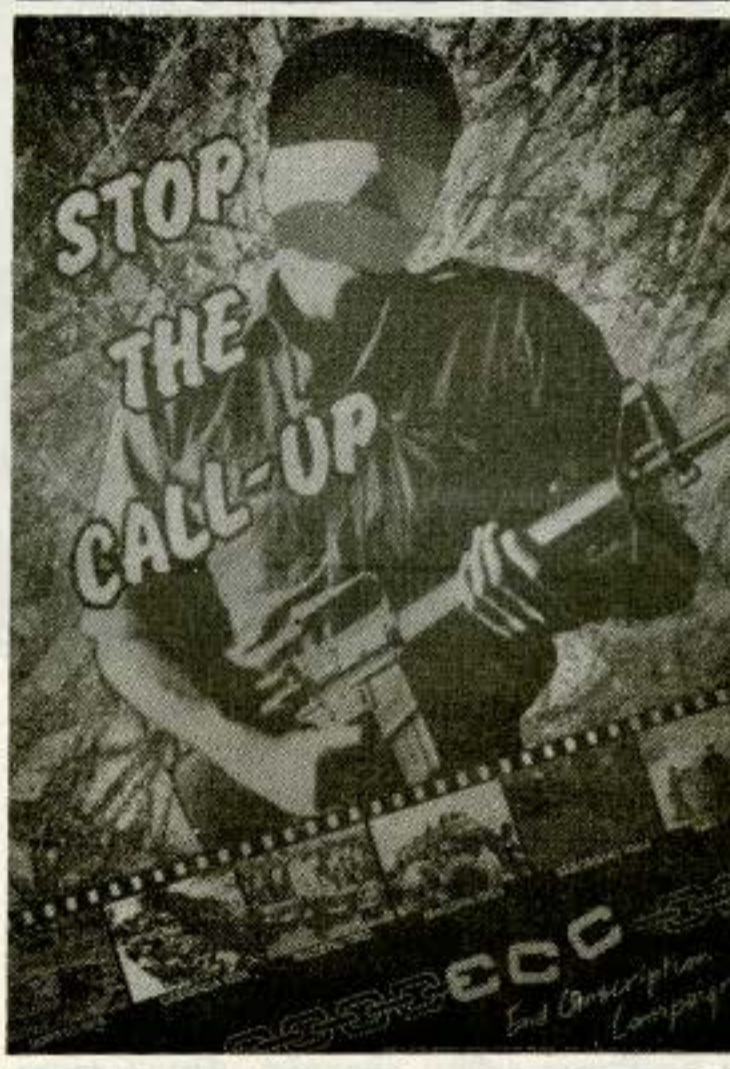
WE CALL FOR AN END TO CONSCRIPTION

WE CALL FOR A JUST PEACE IN OUR LAND

The ECC held its first national conference in January 1985 where its constitution was drafted and a national organiser appointed. Here the idea to convene a national festival for peace was raised. Over the next months, amidst frenetic planning for the festival, ECCs were established in Port Elizabeth and Pietermaritzburg. Five End Conscription Committees (JHB, PE, PMB, CT, DBN), in which over 40 organisations have participated nationally have been set up in less than two years.

This rapid growth of the ECC has occurred with organisations uniting around a number of areas of opposition to conscription. These have been expressed as follows :

- 1) Conscription intensifies the violent conflict in South Africa. This is engendered by a political system which denies most South Africans basic human rights;
- 2) Conscription prolongs the war in Namibia. Forcing young men to fight in Namibia inhibits the implementation of United Nation's Resolution 435 and the demand of many church and human rights groups that SA troops withdraw from Namibia to allow UN supervised elections to take place.
- 3) Conscription is a cornerstone in the militarisation of South Africa. Conscription conditions society to accept the intrusion of the military into schools, townships and the highest levels of political decision-making, and the SADF's ongoing destabilisation of Southern African states.
- 4) Conscription violates the right of the individual to refuse in conscience to render military service and be granted instead a non-military alternative.
- 5) Conscription forces South African youth to work hand in hand with the South African Police in the implementation of oppressive apartheid laws.
- 6) Conscription is antithetical to the



concept of a just peace in our land, a peace that can only be realised in a non-racial, democratic South Africa.

With the basis of opposition to conscription so defined, the End Conscription Committees have set themselves a number of tasks. Firstly, the ECCs are attempting to create a coherent and educated voice of opposition to the role of the military and to conscription. Secondly, the ECCs provide a supportive and stimulative environment for their member organisations to take up this opposition. And thirdly, the ECCs endeavour to propagate non-racialism and build support for the non-racial organisations representing the majority of South Africa's people, in order to work towards the goal of a just peace in our land.

WE LIVE IN AN UNJUST SOCIETY WHERE BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS ARE DENIED TO THE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE



Violence is present wherever people are forced to live in such a way that their human potential and needs can never be realised. Needs can only be adequately met by a system of government that is answerable to the people it governs. 73 per cent of South Africa's people have no say in the government of their country – a government that since 1948 has entrenched the system of apartheid in the laws of this land.

Influx control and migrant labour

Africans are forced to suffer the humiliation and degradation of the 'dompas'. There are over 200 000 arrests for pass law offences each year and 3,5 million people have been forcibly relocated. Family life has been destroyed for millions through the policy of migrant labour.

Bantustans

The homeland policy has deprived more than 8 million South Africans of their citizenship. The impoverished Bantustans are unable to provide even the bare essentials of an adequate existence. Of every 1000 children born, 130 in the Transkei and 240 in the Ciskei will die from malnutrition before the age of one.

Racial classification

Access to health, housing, education and employment is based on colour. There is one doctor for every 400 whites in South Africa, and one doctor to every 90 000 blacks. While R129 million is spent on forced removals, only R8 million is allocated for housing in the latest budget.

Detention and security legislation

70 people have to date died whilst in the custody of the South African police, and torture by the security police is widely alleged. The accepted leaders of the black population have been imprisoned. So far this year, 55 people are facing charges of treason for their active opposition to the system of apartheid and the hardships it imposes on the majority of South Africa's people.

The violence of apartheid is thus structured into every facet of South African society. With the new tri-racial parliament, apartheid has been incorporated into South Africa's constitution. Until apartheid has been eradicated, there can be no peace.

WE LIVE IN AN UNEQUAL SOCIETY WHERE THE LAND AND WEALTH ARE OWNED BY THE MINORITY

To provide adequate meals for a family, parents need to have either land and the means to grow food, or the purchasing power to obtain food.

Land and the means to grow food

The Land Acts of 1913 and 1936 allocated 13 per cent of South Africa's land to 70 per cent of the total population. In the overcrowded Bantustans poverty, malnutrition and disease are rife. In Kwazulu, the population density in 1980 was 99 people/square km. The Buthelezi Commission found that even with a 500 per cent increase in agricultural productivity, Kwazulu could only support 1,5 million people. Already, the population is more than double this.

Purchasing power

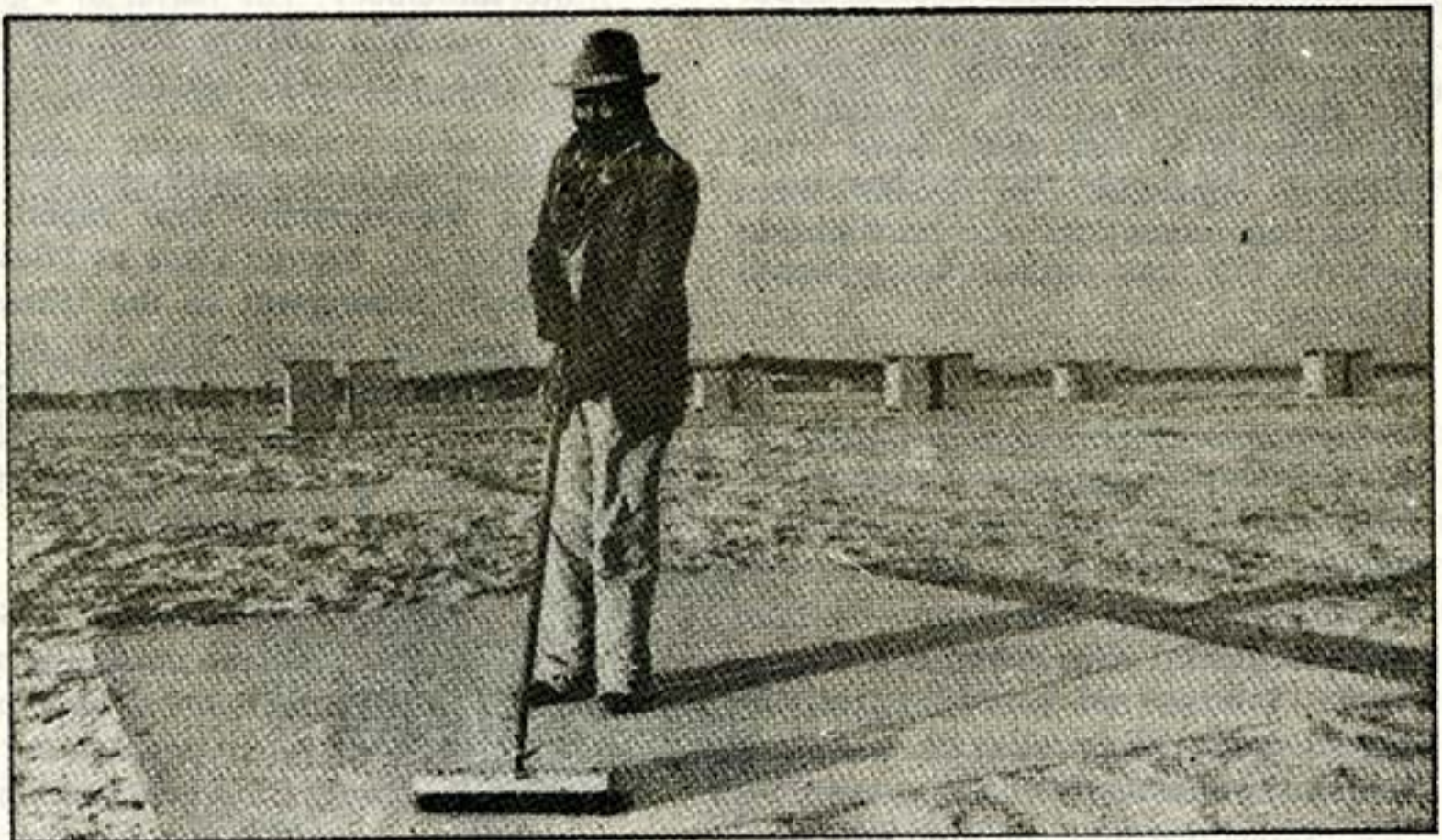
In 1984, white wage earners received an average of R1380 per month, while African wage earners received an average of R204 per month. Household income is an effective indicator of poverty. The monthly household subsistence level

is calculated to be about R250. Over 50 per cent of African households have an income of less than R150 p/m and over 70 per cent have less than R250.

Money shortages are severely exacerbated by price rises of essential foodstuffs. In 1975 the bread price was 13 cents and 15 cents for brown and white bread respectively. Now it stands at 40 cents for brown and 60 cents for white bread. A further 50 per cent price rise has recently been announced.

GST was introduced in 1979 at 4 per cent. It now stands at 12 per cent. GST most severely effects those with low purchasing power.

While economic power in South Africa becomes increasingly centralised – 80 percent of the companies in the Johannesburg Stock Exchange are controlled by 7 corporations – life for most South Africans under apartheid is a battle for survival against the combined forces of poverty and the laws of the government.



WE LIVE IN A SOCIETY IN A STATE OF CIVIL WAR WHERE BROTHER IS CALLED ON TO FIGHT BROTHER



Throughout South Africa's history people have struggled to create a just society. Strenuous efforts to bring about democratic change by peaceful means have consistently been made. In response the state has repeatedly demonstrated its readiness to use violence to crush peaceful opposition. In recent times it has been conscripts who have had to perform this task against fellow South Africans.

The current situation was recently described by a speaker at a Civil Rights League VE Day meeting as follows : "Across the country, the townships are in a turmoil. The army occupies the 'hotspots', patrols them, searches them – saracens and rats dominate the streets – at every exit, a roadblock. Behind the rifle a white kid's eyes stare... Hey, soldier for what are you fighting –

if not for a twisted government ideology and the unjustifiable preservation of white supremacy. The barrel of a gun – this is the final meeting place, for black and white, decreed by apartheid."

Professor John Dugard, a University of the Witwatersrand legal expert, has described the Eastern Cape as "Gestapo country". Subsequent to the Uitenhage shootings on March 21st Mr Adriaan Vlok, simultaneously Deputy Minister of Law and Order and of Defence, referred on SATV to the people of the Eastern Cape as "the enemy."

The increasing polarization of South African society and the escalating spiral of violence will continue as long as the root causes exist. A just peace in our land can only be realised when apartheid is replaced by non-racialism and democracy.

YOUNG MEN ARE CONSCRIPTED TO MAINTAIN THE ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF NAMIBIA AND TO WAGE UNJUST WAR AGAINST FOREIGN COUNTRIES

It is 14 years since the International Court of Justice declared the South African occupation of Namibia illegal. This 1971 ruling is no less valid today.

South Africa has openly defied the consensus of the international community by increasing the number of troops in Namibia and by bringing into existence successive regimes not supported by the majority of Namibians (for example, the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance and the present Multi-Party Conference.)

The escalating conflict in Namibia which has been described as 'unwinnable' by Lieutenant General Jannie Geldenhuys is daily exacting a heavy cost in lives and finance.

In 1980 P W Botha announced that South Africa had spent R3000 million on "infrastructure and defense" in Namibia. Annually the war is costing R600 million, over 1 million per day, with more being spent bolstering Namibia's apartheid society.

The suffering of the Namibian people in their war-torn country is immense, particularly in northern Kavango and Ovamboland where the war is most intense. Intimidation, torture and brutalization of innocent people by South African armed forces is widespread. Andreas Kapitingo was spit-roasted by Koevoet members resulting in the amputation of his right arm. The offenders were fined R50 each. It is estimated that over 10 000 Namibians, 1 per cent of the total population, have died in the 19 year war.

South Africa has repeatedly conducted acts of military aggression against neighbouring countries. Since the 1975 invasion of Angola there have been numerous attacks. Examples are : 1978 Cassinga (Angola), 1982 Maseru (Lesotho) and 1983 Maputo (Mozambique). The latest of these is the shocking raid into Gaborone, Botswana, where 14 people were killed including a six year old child. Many were injured including a pregnant woman who is still in a critical condition.



It is widely believed that South Africa follows a generalised policy of destabilization, providing support for the MNR in Mocambique, UNITA in Angola, super-ZAPU (dissidents) in Zimbabwe and the LLA in Lesotho. Pik Botha, Minister of Foreign Affairs, has recently admitted that South Africa has assisted the MNR (Renamo) in the past and would assist them in the future if necessary.

YOUNG MEN ARE CONSCRIPTED TO ASSIST IN THE IMPLEMENTATION AND DEFENCE OF APARTHEID POLICIES

The SADF is increasingly being used to carry out government policy. Such activities have ranged from assisting in forced removals, arresting people for pass offences, patrolling townships and manning roadblocks around the country. Some of the more recent examples follow:

Forced removals

One of the most publicised removals was in 1983 when the people of Magopa were forcibly removed to Pachsdraai by the SADF. Magopa was declared an operational area for the duration of the removals.

The SADF has also been involved in removals in the following areas :

- * The Zimbabwe and Venda border area.
- * St Lucia, where a SADF missile base was to be built. The whole area was sealed off and declared an operational area.
- * Mafeking to Zeerust, relocating people in Bophutatswana.
- * Ditakwaneng in the Northern Cape.
- * Riemvasmaak near Augrabies Falls.
- * Maremane area – now Lohatla – the site of operation thunderchariot.
- * Kosi Bay to Ingwavuma.

Pass arrests

Many of these have occurred in the last year during the seal and search operations conducted by the SADF and the SAP (largely in Tembisa, Sebokeng, Sharpeville, Boipatong and Thokoza). Most offenders in these arrests have been pass offenders. (Information : Star – 23/10; 24/10; 14/11; 16/11 1984)

Migrant workers

In 1981, during the municipal workers' strike, prior to any settlement, the SADF sealed off the workers' compounds and forced workers onto trucks returning to the homelands.

Roadblocks, cordons, sweep and search operations

1982 – SADF aids SAP in 633 roadblocks, 22 cordon operations, 10 sweep and search operations. (RDM 23/10/83 as quoted from Dr Philip Frankel in 'Pretoria's Praetorians')

1983/84 – 27000 SADF troops involved in manning roadblocks in SA from April '83 to March '84. (Cape Times 18/5/84)

1984/85 – Since October 23 1984, when 7000 troops sealed off and searched the townships of Sebokeng, Sharpeville and Boipatong there has been a continuous presence of SADF troops in the Transvaal and Eastern Cape townships. Over twenty townships across the country have been occupied by the SADF.

Involvement in townships

The SADF have become permanently garrisoned in many townships. They have been involved in the tear-gassing of mourners at funerals and in breaking up peaceful rent protests. They have made numerous arrests and according to the Minister of Law and Order Mr Louis Le Grange, replying to a question in parliament, have been responsible for 5 deaths in the townships since the Uitenhage shootings this year. (C. Times 13/6/85)

YOUNG MEN WHO REFUSE TO SERVE ARE FACED WITH THE CHOICE OF A LIFE OF EXILE OR A POSSIBLE SIX YEARS IN PRISON



The only grounds on which alternative service to the military is made available are those of universal religious pacifism. Such cases are heard by the Board for Religious Objection headed by Judge Steyn. This definition excludes most potential objectors : provision is not made for those objecting to military service on religious grounds in terms of the Just War theory or on moral and political grounds. The present sentence for such objectors is a mandatory six years in a civilian prison.

Several people such as Peter Moll, Billy Paddock, Peter Hathorn and Paul Dobson have served time for their beliefs under the previous legislation, which carried a 2 year maximum sentence. For the majority who feel that they are unable to render service in the SADF on grounds of individual conscience, the options are extremely limited. Young men who are not prepared to fight in the SADF but who would like to serve their country in a constructive and peaceful manner, are faced a choice of a life in exile or six years in prison.

Increasing numbers of young men are refusing to serve in the SADF on moral, religious and political grounds. The number of men who failed to report for national service this January (1985) alone was 7589, as compared with 1956 for the whole of last year.



WE BELIEVE THAT THE FINANCIAL COST OF THE WAR INCREASES THE POVERTY OF OUR COUNTRY, AND THAT MONEY SHOULD RATHER BE USED IN THE INTERESTS OF PEACE



Defence spending has increased markedly over the last few decades, and consumes a significant proportion of the budget. In 1960 the defence budget was R44 million. The 1984/5 defence budget is R4,2 billion, 15,4 per cent of the total budget. This in itself could be a conservative estimate, given that money can be channelled to defence through other state departments. A Special Defence Account exists, and during the fiscal years of 1979/80 and 1980/81, amounts were allegedly drawn from this account equal to more than half again of the regular budget. "If the same proportions apply today, another R2150 million could be added to the latest defence budget of R4274 million" (Sun. Star 14/4/85). Much military related expenditure is the responsibility of other government departments, for example housing for personnel and construction of bases is not reflected in the defence budget itself.

While state expenditure on education has increased, budget allocations for fundamental necessities such as health and housing remain alarmingly low. Infant mortality rates, squatter camps and gross over-crowding are merely an aspect of this.

The cost of the war in Namibia alone is estimated to be some R600 million annually, while the total daily defence budget is estimated at R12 million. Although R12 could build one hospital, Mitchell's Plain with a population the size of Bloemfontein's, is denied a general hospital allegedly due to lack of funds. This is but one isolated example. Basic human rights such as health and housing are suffering at the expense of the escalating and on-going war.

In the most recent Defence White Paper, Minister of Defence Magnus Malan has indicated that defence spending will remain a top priority. Defence spending undoubtedly adds a severe strain to an already strained economy. This was one of the motivations for raising of GST made by the Minister of Finance, who said that the military had overspent its budget by R300 million.

The End Conscription Committee believes that a direct correlation exists between defence spending and the increasingly depressed living standards of the majority of our people. No amount of military spending will provide the solution to political problems.

WE BELIEVE THAT THE EXTENSION OF CONSCRIPTION TO COLOURED AND INDIAN YOUTH WILL INCREASE CONFLICT AND FURTHER DIVIDE OUR COUNTRY

"You can't ask a man to fight for his country if he can't vote."

F W de Klerk, leader of Tvl NP '82

"When they have the vote, gradually we will extend their service too, naturally as we did with the whites."

P W Botha, Cape Times 4/11/83

With the new constitution, extension of conscription to coloured and Indian South Africans has become imminent. It has frequently been made clear that extension of "rights" implies the obligation to defend those "rights."

It has been speculated that one of the motivations for the new constitution was to increase the number of eligible conscripts, as the currently conscripted white community becomes more strained in combatting internal unrest. Extension of conscription will result in militarism and military ideology being more effectively extended to a wider community.

Opposition to these initiatives has begun amongst many youth, student and other democratic organisations. Both

the UDF and National Forum have started conscription activities.

There are already substantial numbers of coloured and Indian youth in the SADF. One of the main reasons for this is the high unemployment experienced by these groups. In the words of a Cape Corps recruit : "There are many people living around us who have sent their sons to the army because they do not have work and are no longer schooling. Sometimes the police come and frighten you, and the best way to stay out of trouble is to go to the army - where else can you go? We get a lot of money there. I would not get such money in a job."

The extension of conscription will give the South African conflict a non-racial appearance reinforcing the idea that the conflict is between South African and a foreign aggressor, and is not a result of apartheid policies. As Comdt. M Swanepoel of 21 batallion (a black unit said: "With blacks in SA army uniforms you can say, 'heck, this proves that this is not a white man's struggle any more.'"



**KATLEHONG SQUATTERS
PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION
DON'T SHOOT**



WE BELIEVE THAT IT IS THE MORAL RIGHT OF SOUTH AFRICANS TO EXERCISE FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE AND TO CHOOSE NOT TO SERVE IN THE SADF

**WE CALL FOR AN END TO CONSCRIPTION
WE CALL FOR A JUST PEACE IN OUR LAND**