

Subsequent campaigns became more adventurous. Yellow ribbons decked the streets of Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town. Thousands of pamphlets told white school pupils that 'apartheid is sending us to war'. At a public meeting, University of Cape Town lecturers declared their refusal to register for 'Dad's army'. ECC called on parents to buy Christmas toys for peace and not war. Children came together for a non-racial picnic at Archbishop Tutu's residence.

Through these campaigns, ECC regained the national presence it had enjoyed before June. Our mistake was to underestimate the seriousness of the Emergency. The national crackdown in December caught us off-guard. Executive members in Johannesburg were detained and others served with restriction orders. In Cape Town, nine activists involved in the 'War is no Solution' campaign were detained and later charged under the Emergency regulations.

So 1986 ended on a sober note. Yet, despite harassment, our organisation remained strong and committed.

Our first objective in 1987 is to continue to raise awareness of the effects of militarisation and to increase pressure on the government to recognise the internationally accepted right of freedom of conscience regarding military service. Secondly, we will continue putting effort into organ-

isational priorities such as cohesion and morale, democratic processes, tight security and training.

Our third objective is to develop lower-profile means of reaching people — housemeetings, letters to the press, building a mass membership and strengthening ECC as a coalition. Under the Emergency our member organisations, and the Black Sash in particular, provided invaluable support and often took forward ECC work when we were unable to do so. The long-term future of the campaign may depend on the

extent to which these organisations are able to take up the issues of militarisation independently of the ECC.

For as long as there is conscription into an army that defends apartheid, there will be a movement against conscription — no matter what the government has in store for us. By compelling white men to contain black dissent through the use of force, the government makes itself vulnerable to dissension in the white community and in its army. Harassing the ECC will not change this. □



sash women on trial

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susie power

On 5, 6 and 7 May 1986 the Black Sash held a stand outside East London's City Hall to protest about the detention of Duncan Village leaders. Three members went each day: one stood, while the other two sat on a bus-stop bench about 12m away. There was contact between members only when the poster changed hands.

The police watched and took photos — as usual, when Border stands. On 7 May a photo was taken of four women at the bus-stop before the stand itself began. A fourth member had come along to

tell the others of the threatening calls she had received, namely, that if the Sash kept up the protest somebody would be severely injured. The four were not wearing sashes at the time but the wording on the poster, 'Talk to the leaders — don't jail them', was clearly visible.

The four were charged with contravening a section of the Internal Security Act prohibiting gatherings between April 1986 and March 1987. On 19 December they were found guilty and received suspended sentences. □