

# Conscientious Objector Support Group

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15 June 1992

The Chairman  
The Management Committee  
CODESA

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Dear Mr Gordhan

re: Legislation introduced into Parliament this session.

As a group concerned with Conscientious Objection to military service, we have recently made representations on the Defence Amendment Bill (112-92) to the appropriate Parliamentary committee. This Bill was tabled in Parliament towards the end of May, and is a major piece of legislation. Not only are the changes proposed for Conscientious Objectors both too little and too late, but the introduction of the Bill shows a flagrant disregard by the government for the negotiation process. It seems that the Defence Amendment Bill is only one example of attempts to push far-reaching legislation through Parliament at the end of the session and after the "breakdown" of CODESA 2.

We wish to express to you and your committee our concern about the Government's arrogant disregard of negotiations at CODESA, as well as our concern about the apparent disregard of negotiations in other forums about the future of the Defence Force and also the control of the security forces in the near future.

We quote the relevant passages from our submission to the Parliamentary Committee on Security Services:

## "2. The Bill and the Negotiations Process.

2.1 One of the tasks of CODESA is to establish a climate conducive to free political activity and the holding of free and fair elections. The Bill undermines CODESA in the following ways:

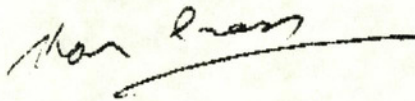
2.1.1. Co-ercing members of the Citizen Force and the Commandos into the Police Reserve is likely to lead to further militarisation of the Police. In order to gain the trust of all sections of the community, however, the Police service needs to be de-militarised;

2.1.2. The Bill makes no provision for training conscripts who are allotted to the Police Reserve, in the practice of law enforcement. In the light of the present situation in this country this can only be described as alarming.....

2.3 Negotiations are seeking to place a future defence force under effective civilian control. This Bill, on the other hand, makes no attempt to strengthen civilian control over the defence force."

You at CODESA are no doubt aware of all the contentious Bills currently in the Parliamentary pipeline. We wish to urge that this issue be placed on the CODESA agenda, with a proposal that there be a moratorium on new legislation until we have an Interim Government acceptable to CODESA.

Yours sincerely,



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