

# contact



FOR UNITED NON-RACIAL ACTION

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Vol. 8 No 7 July, 1965

## Editorial

# 'CONTACT' EDITOR BANNED

ON WEDNESDAY 14th July Mr Michael Francis, editor of Contact, and also an executive committee member of the Cape Division of the Liberal Party, was served with banning orders by two members of the Security Police.

Mr Francis is fifth in Contact's ~~list of editors to be banned since its~~ inception in 1958 (the others were Patrick Duncan, Peter Hjul, Harold Head and Anne Tobias).

It was Hitler who employed the technique of maneuvering his intended victims into declaring war on him first, thus himself avoiding the label of "aggressor". His actions have not deceived the judgement of History.

It would be easier for this government to roneo one notice and print a one inch slab of type in the Government Gazette banning Contact, as was done with Fighting Talk and New Age, than to go to the far greater trouble of banning five of its editors and two correspondents, and throwing editor number ten, 23-year old Jill Jessop, into "90-days" solitary confinement inside the dungeons of Caledon Square during November, 1964.

Contact does not believe that this authoritarian subtlety, planned with an eye to the government's public image, fools many people either here or abroad. This discreet, less-publicised disembowelling of Contact's staff was the same method successfully used to crush Spark and Torch, both of which then "collapsed of their own accord".

Another method, favoured elsewhere by totalitarian regimes attempting to veil their actions with a mask of democratic legality, is the technique of persecution by harassment. Teams of government attorneys may sift and scour every conceivable legal technicality in efforts to bring strings of charges against the intended victim, so that it may slowly sink under.

In this way The New African's registration as a newspaper was prevented by requiring a deposit of R20,000, and Contact was charged with subverting the authority of the state and contravening the Prisons Act. The costs alone incurred in court cases suffice to cause collapse from bankruptcy.

We are still in terrible financial straits. Overheads have increased because we have had to print Contact ourselves (over thirty-five printers were too frightened to print Contact), while the circulation has dropped considerably (few agents dare sell Contact in South Africa 1965).

Nevertheless, the demise of all the other South African radical newspapers, such as Forward, leave Contact, however atrophied, the sole representative of the Freedom Press in South Africa.

No one can be more painfully aware than ourselves of how close this newspaper comes to being a travesty of journalism.

But, however emaciated a gesture of defiance we are, we cannot fail to discharge our duty towards the achievement of democracy and towards those who have been banned for trying to achieve it.

This is the least we can do. It is also all we can do.

## Many Radicals Banned

NAUSEATING ALLEGATIONS ABOUT prison conditions in South Africa were made in three articles published in the Rand Daily Mail recently. They were interviews given by Harold Strachan after being released from prison after serving three years for sabotage.

Brought before the court at the end of his sentence to face a second charge, Mr Strachan was unexpectedly acquitted and made use of his freedom to speak to a Rand Daily Mail reporter.

BANNED.

Several hours after his last article was published, Mr Strachan received banning orders prohibiting him from having anything published.

Mr Denis Brutus, the banned poet, was released from Robben island after serving his sentence.

Two days before his release he was served with a house-arrest order, also prohibiting him from publishing anything. Nbari Publications, Nigeria, recently published a book of poems by Mr Brutus entitled Sirens, Knuckles and Boots.

While on Robben Island Mr Brutus was temporarily transferred to hospital for a medical examination, and it was alleged that he had been the victim of maltreatment.

#### LIBERAL

Mr John Aitcheson, a prominent office-bearer in both the Liberal Party and NUSAS, was banned from attending gatherings for five years. He lives in Pietermaritzburg.

St.Leger Kerr Pillay, Godfrey Beck, and Richard Triegaardt, all of Johannesburg, also received restriction orders.

#### "CONTACT" EDITOR BANNED

Mr Michael Francis, Contact's eleventh editor, became the fifth editor to be banned.

Mr Francis is also an executive committee member of the Cape Division of the Liberal Party, and lives with his elderly father.

#### TREASON TRIALIST BANNED

A banning and house-arrest order was served on Mr Andrew Chamlie, an elderly treason trialist, "reported to have been offered a salary by the special branch in exchange for information about the Fund".

Mr Chamlie is under 12-hour house-arrest; 24-hour house-arrest at weekends and public holidays, and is forbidden to communicate with any office-bearers of Defence & Aid Fund.

On July 14 Mrs Laura Hitchins, the Defence and Aid secretary, was served with three banning orders.

#### DEPORTED

Earlier, Mr David Craighead and Mr Barney Zackon were banned, and Mr John Blundell was deported. All were leading office-bearers of Defence and Aid.

#### SACTU

Banning orders were also served on five executive committee members of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) on 1st June.

Miss Emily Muhoko, typist; Mr Sam Pholoto, organising secretary of the Metal Workers' Union; Mr David Magwaza Mazibuko, acting secretary of the Furniture Workers' Union; Mrs Pauline Kaba, organiser of the Textile Workers' Union; all of Johannesburg; and Miss Rahib Gift Molep, secretary of the African Textile Workers' Union, Benoni, all became the latest victims of banning orders.

Among their restrictions they are confined to their homes at weekends and may not leave their townships except to work or to seek work.

By March, 1964, over fifty office-bearers of SACTU had been banned, and many more since.

On 9th June, Security Police detectives swooped on the home of Miss Ethel London described by the Sunday Times as being a "leader in artistic, cultural and intellectual circles on the Reef".

Claiming they were searching for Abram Fischer, they searched for and looked at "books, paintings and play scenarios".

#### BLACKMAIL ALLEGED

Mr Charles Christopher "Peter" Oliver, a Rhodesian artist, and his family were deported from South Africa.

Mr Oliver alleged that the Rhodesian Police had threatened they would give their South African counterpart reports sufficient to ensure his deportation from South Africa unless he agreed to tell them about his "communist and liberal" acquaintances.

On 7th July the Security Police descended on the Athlone Advice Office, which is run jointly by the S.A. Institute of Race Relations and the Black Sash.

#### INTIMIDATION

They took the names and addresses of Africans seeking aid and many documents in a 2-hour raid.

Dr. Oscar Wollheim, a Progressive Party NPC, denounced the raid as "intimidation."

## The Long View

By ALAN PATON

# Beware of Melancholy

All the visitors ask me - the American, the British, the Scandinavian what is the future? They ask me as though I had some special knowledge. South Africans ask me too. Experience has taught me the answer, and the answer is. "I do not know". At the moment it is possible to believe that nothing will change, that Afrikaner Nationalism will never consent to any change that threatens its own position of power, however remote that threat may be. In its treatment of its enemies, it is becoming quite merciless. Those who openly oppose apartheid (or separate development, to give it its sweeter name) are going to suffer more, not less. It is plain to me that the only opposition that will be allowed to continue will be an opposition that differs only in respect of the way apartheid is implemented. It is plain to me that ex-members of the banned organisations are going to face punishment even if they meet together as friends to discuss the events of the times. It is plain to me that the Government, believing that it has crushed subversive action, is prepared to move more ruthlessly into the field of ideas. In the eyes of the Government, if you are a member of a political organisation, and that organisation is banned, it is your plain duty to stop thinking politically. It is your plain duty, in fact, to change your character and personality, and if you do not, you will be put in prison. I have no doubt whatever that if the Government were to bring in a Bill making it an offence to speak of separate development in a way considered by the Minister to be contrary to the public interest, it would be passed by a large majority. Helen Suzman and a few others opposing.

There is another thing that is plain to me, and it is not a pleasant thing either. Any person who, at the expiry of his or her ban, picks up public life where he or she left it off will be banned again immediately. This person too has to change his or her character and personality, or has to accept a life cut off from the life of society.

The full meaning of a ban and the full legal implications of a ban have not yet been clearly established, but there is the shocking possibility that judicial interpretations will become stricter and stricter, and that ultimately a ban will be interpreted as meaning a complete severance of all personal relations out-



side the immediate family, if the banned person has one.

These facts are shocking. Much more shocking than the facts of Stellenbosch sex and municipal corruption. In a way I hesitate to write them down, but write them down I must, and look at them we all must, for this is the immediate future that I see.

For how long will this future last? My answer is, "I do not know". To me there is another question: how long can I last? and there is still another question: is it worth trying to last?

People answer this question in different ways. Some leave the country. Some leave politics. Some stick to their course, even if they expect certain consequences. And even this last group is diverse, for some would face any consequences and some would not.

What is my own answer, to this question? I must give my own answer, because I would not dare to answer it for anyone else. I think it is worth trying to last. It is worth something to me, even if it apparently achieves little.

If someone were to ask me, "What would you and your wife do if you had young children?", I would answer - "We would have two choices, to stay here and to give our children a father and mother who put some things even above their own children's safety and happiness; or to leave, and give our children a father and mother who put their safety and happiness above all else." Which would I choose? They are both good courses, are they not? I hope I would choose the first.

To those who want to stay, whether out of love or duty or just plain cussedness, I direct these few words.

Stand firm by what you believe, do not tax yourself beyond endurance, yet calculate clearly and coldly how much endurance you have, don't waste your breath and corrupt your character by cursing your rulers and the S.A.B.C.. don't become obsessed by them, keep your friendships alive and warm, especially those with people of other races, beware of melancholy and resist it actively if it assails you, and give thanks for the courage of others in this fear-ridden country.

## HELP!

ONCE AGAIN WE ask whether we can survive. Our financial position remains desperate, and, while we wish to express our gratitude for support already received, we need a great deal more.

Please send your donation to the Manager, P.O. Box 1979, Cape Town.

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African Postal Union: R1.00 (10s.)

Airmail: R2.00 (£1)

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## Political Trials : Assaults Alleged

In the Eastern Cape over four hundred people are appearing, or are being held pending trial, on charges under the Suppression of Communism Act.

Describing them as "rank and file ANC suspects" a leading Johannesburg lawyer alleged that the awaiting trial prisoners were being held under conditions of unparalleled severity.

The destitute families of many had to queue up before sunrise to see their husbands or fathers.

Mr Andrew Mashaba, serving a 15-year sentence on Robben Island, was granted an application in Pretoria on July 6th, for his suit to be discussed in the Supreme Court.

#### ASSAULT

Mr Mashaba is suing Minister of Justice Balthazar Vorster and Security Police Detective Sgt. P. Ferreira for R1,500 plus costs for alleged assault while he was held under "90-Days" detention.

The defence attorney, Mr Joel Joffe, said his client had no funds to fight the case, which would cost over R500.

In Johannesburg, Mr Lancelot Matgothe, defended by Mr E. Wentzel, was acquitted by magistrate Mr R.D. Bax of contravening his banning order.

#### RELEASED

In Cape Town, charges under the Sabotage Act were withdrawn against Isak Vallie, 21, and Abdurahman Jattiem, 34, who were released on 15th June.

The charge against Suleiman Ismail Vallie 25, was altered to the unlawful possession of explosives and attempting to defeat the ends of justice.

#### 13 MONTHS

In Port Elizabeth, ten men and women, charged under the Suppression of Communism Act, have been held in jail for 9 to 13 months without trial, said a spokesman of the organization caring for the families deprived of their breadwinners.

The longest detained was Mr Gladman Bekwayo, arrested in July 1963 and sentenced in Addo in May 1964.

Miss Sylvia Neame, 27, already jailed in the Fischer trial, appeared in Humansdorp charged under the Suppression of Communism Act in that she was a member of, contributed to, or furthered the aims of the African National Congress.

#### HYSTERICAL

Her defence attorney, Mr D Soggot, revealed that Miss Neame was being held in solitary confinement pending trial. She was "hysterical, frantic and had dizzy spells and felt a sense of panic."

She had had to receive psychological treatment before the start of the trial.

He pleaded for the Regional Court to rule that Miss Neame be "held in a humane fashion." Mr J.C. Cilliers, on the bench, said that he had no power to do so.

The trial continued with the cross-examination of Miss Gillian Jewell, a defence witness, after Miss Neame had been treated by a doctor for an "anxiety condition dangerous to her mental health."

The trial was postponed to June 24, after the defence asked for three other witnesses to be flown from Robben Island; Goven Mbeki (Rivonia Trialist), Terence Makware and Winard Mati, to whose flying costs the defence had to pay R600.

Earlier the court had heard state witnesses allege that they had seen



Miss Neame attend an ANC meeting in the Eastern Province.

#### "90-DAYS" DETAINEE

Mountain Qumbella was sentenced to six months imprisonment suspended for failure to comply with his banning order on 29th June.

The defence attorney said Mr Qumbella was thrown into "90-days" detention after being banned in June 1963.

His banning order was confiscated and not returned.

After being released in December 1964 Mr Qumbella had written a letter to the Department of Justice, asking for a copy of his banning order, which he had not yet received.

#### CONTRAVENES BANNING

Rowley Israel Arenstein, 46, a Durban attorney, appeared before Mr J.A.C. Raubenheim under seven charges under the Suppression of Communism Act; charges 1 and 2 of being an office-bearer of the Communist Party of S.A. and furthering its aims and objects; charges 3-7 of contravening his banning order.

#### ADJOURNED

In Maseru, Basutoland, the trial of Pearce Qrobose and John Pokela, of the PAC, was adjourned till July 19th. They are charged with conspiring to commit acts of violence against South Africa.

Mr. T. Letlaka, a Transkeian lawyer, and Mr Elliot Mfana (a Treason Trialist from the Eastern Cape) were sentenced to two years imprisonment in Maseru for conspiring to commit acts of violence against South Africa.

They had run a "highly organised guerilla training camp" in Maseru, where lectures, physical training and weapons construction lessons were given.

## No Policy Change NUSAS CONGRESS

from a Special Correspondent

THE 1965 CONGRESS of NUSAS, the National Union of South African Students, - the list - has shown no big changes of policy. If the Union has not moved right it certainly has not moved left.

The congress had a good introduction: a cocktail party on the Sunday evening before the opening. This function was, said the Actuary of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk - Dr. J.D. Vorster - completely foreign to our beliefs, morals and traditions.

"If any further proof is needed to show that NUSAS is on the wrong path then it is this action", he said.

Also before the Congress, Mrs Verwoed, wife of the Prime Minister, told Afrikaans students, who were members of the Afrikaanse Studentebond (ASB), that her generation appreciated the firm stand taken by the ASB "against other student organizations."

It was in this atmosphere that the Congress began. On the day the Congress was officially opened by Rand Daily Mail editor Laurence Gandar, the pro-Government Burger commented: "NUSAS is controlled by a coterie of impudent politicians to whom great powers are given..."

#### NOT GETTING THROUGH

In his annual report the NUSAS President, Mr Maeder Osler, admitted that NUSAS was not getting through as it should to the average student. But the attacks on NUSAS had focussed attention on the organization.

Other interesting motions were: a motion condemning the ban on divinity student John Aitcheson. Mr Aitcheson was banned earlier this year by the Minister of Justice. He was the 33rd member of the Liberal Party to be banned; he was a member of NUSAS Executive and was chairman of the local NUSAS branch in Pietermaritzburg; a motion asking the South African Pharmaceutical Students' Association to reconsider its "Whites Only" membership.

Regret was voiced that non-White students had been unable to stay in the University residences for the duration of Congress. NUSAS President Osler asked the Students Representative Council of the University of Natal (Durban) to embarrass the University authorities into admitting non-white delegates into the residences for the duration of the 1966 Congress which will be held in Durban.

#### LEFTWICH AND RUBIN

Mr M. Ramgobin, head of the delegation from University of Natal (Non-European Section) commented on last year's decision to ask Adrian Leftwich to resign as an honorary vice-President of NUSAS (Last year Leftwich's State evidence resulted in the jailing of several of his fellow students who were convicted of sabotage.)

Mr Ramgobin said Leftwich "is an un-disciplined person" and continued: "we say he led these people and deserted them. According to his own evidence he did this because of threatened imprisonment and harm to himself."

But, felt Mr Ramgobin, his SRC wished to dissociate itself from the decision to accept Mr Neville Rubin's resignation. Mr Rubin was another vice-President. He felt Rubin should be retained. It was unfair to victimize Rubin on the evidence of Leftwich, an undisciplined man.

#### SHOCKS FOR NUSAS

Laurence Gandar, Rand Daily Mail editor, in opening the Congress said: "My own belief is that NUSAS should become more involved, not less in politics". He considered further shocks were coming for NUSAS.

An allegation by the pro-apartheid Afrikaanse Studentebond (ASB) that NUSAS was moving to the right was hotly denied. A resolution deploring ASB interference was adopted. The ASB had also criticised the NUSAS plan to invite Rev. Martin Luther King to open its 1966 Congress. The ASB Congress was taking place simultaneously with that of NUSAS.

#### WHITHER NUSAS ?

NUSAS has taken a firm and resolute stand against totalitarianism and apartheid at its 1965 Congress. It has not yielded to pro-apartheid pressure. However, it cannot be denied that delegates to the Congress were constantly making plain their concern for the NUSAS image.

The National Union of South African Students can be proud of its opposition to apartheid but, with that organization under ever-increasing pressure, it is extremely unlikely that NUSAS will risk alliance with anti-apartheid groups in general.

Further, although the leadership of NUSAS is democratic, there is a strong conservative rank and file on many campuses. These are the people likely to desert NUSAS should they find that support of it would demand more than lip-service to its aims.