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## THE PETER MOLL CASE

Soon after Mr Peter Moll was sentenced to eighteen months detention for refusing to respond to his army call-up on conscientious grounds, a public statement was issued by leading churchmen of several denominations. The concluding paragraph of the statement read:

"We plead with the government at the earliest possible opportunity to regularise the position of conscientious objectors through the provision of alternative non-military forms of national service and in the meantime to exercise in regard to Mr Peter Moll and all other conscientious objectors the humanity and clemency that should be characteristic of a Christian society."

Although it was almost certainly not in response to this appeal the military authorities have shown "humanity and clemency" to the extent that Mr Moll's sentence has been reduced from eighteen months to a year's detention.

There has not, however, been much evidence of either of these qualities in the treatment Mr Moll has received from his employers, the Old Mutual, South Africa's biggest insurance company. They have sacked him. They have also demanded that he repay the R5,500 bursary he received from them, in monthly instalments, commencing in May, when he will still be in detention, and with most of his sentence to run.

Mr Moll was sacked, we understand, because it was said that he had broken a company regulation which says that its employees may not "attract attention to themselves by engaging in high profile religious or political activities."

We are not sure what "high profile religious activities" might be. "Low profile religious activities", we suppose, might be bowing down to Caesar.

Or maybe Mammon. □

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## JUDGES

In two apparently unconnected, and certainly unprecedented, steps, two young Judges have resigned from the South African Bench. But nobody knows why they did it.

It is speculated that they could no longer bring themselves to apply some of the laws they were required to apply; or that they objected to the nature of some recent judicial appointments; or that they could no longer stomach the fact of judicial discretion being circumscribed by certain statutes.

The truth of the matter is that we just don't know what the reasons for their resignations were. Any of the above would, in our view, be good reasons. But to resign for a good reason and not say what it is, seems quite pointless. □