

national crisis. We all now know what the provisions of that Bill were — its definitions so wide and vague that publishing almost anything could have been an offence, its penalties in the best Nationalist tradition. Newspapers could be closed down for a while; newspapermen could be heavily fined, or gaoled, if they were held to have broken its provisions; the right of appeal to the courts was removed.

Not surprisingly the terms of the Bill created an uproar amongst opponents of the Government and in the newspaper world. The Government responded by doing nothing for a while.

It let anxiety build up. It then announced that if the NPU didn't like the Bill it could make an appointment with the Prime Minister to discuss it. This the NPU did. But the Bill was not withdrawn. Its second reading was instead set down to take place two days after the NPU's meeting with the Prime Minister. In this way it was ensured that when the meeting took place the full weight of the threat to the Press was hanging over the head of every NPU man at it.

What went on at that meeting we don't know. What we do know is that the NPU has now produced a new Press Code which seems to us to include, almost word for word, all the restrictions the Nationalist Government's Bill contained. All that is missing is the Newspaper Bill's penalties. There is really no need for them if the NPU accepts the restrictions. Won't brave journalists and editors who ignore them just find themselves out of a job?

Right now it looks as if the NPU has given to the Government what it wanted. Instead of censorship we are to have self-censorship. The Government will be able to continue to propagate the myth that a free Press still functions here and those who want to will believe it.

REALITY is neither big enough nor important enough to belong to the NPU. Even if we were we hope that our policy would be the same as it is now, to continue to report what we see, and say what we think until we either go broke or are closed down. •

2

ANOTHER NAIL IN EVERYONE'S COFFIN ?

In the aftermath of last year's student revolt a mass of prosecutions for "terrorism", "sabotage", arson, public violence and other offences is taking place all over South Africa.

One of these trials, which started in early February, involves 20 students from the Zulu University at Ngoye. They are charged with "sabotage" and arson. Most of them were detained in June or July last year and kept in solitary confinement until December, when they were first allowed access to lawyers.

There is another group of students, whose number is unknown, many of whom have been detained for as long as the accused. The members of this group have not been charged with anything nor have they had access to their lawyers, although some of them have been allowed visits from relatives in recent weeks. Presumably they are still in custody because, having had them in solitary confinement and at its mercy for all these months, the State now intends

calling them as witnesses against their fellows.

It is a fairly safe assumption that every student against whom the Security Police had any evidence at all, real or imaginary, of involvement in last year's outbreak of violence at the university, has either been charged or is still being detained by them, either as a potential witness, or for some other purpose. It would be quite out of character for the Security Police to let go anyone they felt they had the slightest chance of associating with those events. Yet there is still another, much larger group of students, who were presumably not implicated at all, or who did not know enough to warrant detention, whom the university itself has decided to punish with quite drastic severity. There are said to be over 500 of them, who, having committed no offence sufficiently serious to fall within the ambit of our mass of security legislation, the university authorities have refused to allow back at Ngoye. This decision seems to have been taken as a result of some kind of internal inquiry conducted at the university at which the students concerned were neither present nor represented.

What are these students to do? Earlier this year the Principal of Natal's White university offered to take in Black students who couldn't get into Ngoye this year because of lack of accommodation. Whether he would have been prepared to take these students who have been refused readmission we don't know. In any case the question is academic because his offer was turned down by the Department of Bantu Administration on the grounds that "such a deviation would be contrary to government policy".

Some of the expelled Ngoye students have apparently succeeded in getting into the other Black universities at Turfloop and Fort Hare, but a large number (said to be 264) are said to have been refused admission there too. So where do they turn now? To the University of South Africa (UNISA), South Africa's only correspondence university? But UNISA has a regulation which lays down that it may not accept any past student from another university who

does not bring with him a "good conduct" certificate from that university. If past experience is any guide this is something the 264 Ngoye students are not likely to get.

Does this mean that the university authorities at Ngoye, supported by the Government, have put an effective end to the university careers of over two hundred students for offences which do not warrant their being charged in court, which are unspecified, which may be based on gossip, or false information, and of which the students have had no opportunity to prove themselves innocent?

That is how it looks.

If this is so one can imagine no act more calculated to turn these young people into even more bitter and intransigent opponents of the present regime than they were before. Anti-Whiteism will have been given an understandable boost and the prospects for peaceful change yet another blow. •

MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOLS ON THE MOVE

By Jonathan Paton

I was very fortunate indeed in being able to spend four months of my sabbatical leave in the United States (September to December 1976). Most of the four months was spent in Massachusetts. I was also fortunate in being appointed an Associate of the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University (HGSE). At the latter I spoke to several educationists who were researching into ways of solving school integration problems in the United States, and particularly in the Boston area, I shall be discussing their views on these problems later in this article. I also visited many schools, both private and public, and was a teacher and observer for fairly extended periods in two of these schools.

Greater Boston- Boston, Cambridge, Waltham, Brookline, Somerville, Milton — must surely contain the highest percentage of brainpower in the United States, perhaps in the world. In Greater Boston are situated Harvard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston University, University of Massachusetts and Brandeis University, to mention only a few of the universities. In addition Greater Boston also contains many colleges, teaching hospitals and several outstanding schools, both private and public.

Ironically, it is also Boston that has provided educationists with one of America's most serious educational headaches — how to integrate successfully schools in poorer areas like South Boston and Roxbury.

I shall deal first with my favourable impressions of school education in Massachusetts. Two points in particular impressed me. The first was the degree of freedom that exists in many of the leading schools in the state. The second was the emphasis on administration by *local* authorities in the public schools rather than by some narrow-minded bureaucrats in some distant, verkrampste state capital. After the South African experience one is astonished after spending only a few minutes in many of these schools. Pupils are free to dress as they wish and no one is concerned about the length of boys' hair. American teachers were astonished when I told them that at several South African schools pupils were punished if their hair was longer than the length stipulated by the school authorities. The teachers were also shocked when I told them that corporal punishment was administered at a high percentage of South African schools. In the classes I visited there was, on the