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EDITORIAL

Ordinary recourse to the courts of law is probably the most fundamental principle upon which society orders itself and allows people to get on with the business of living. There is absolutely no justification whatever for any system of government to do away with this fundamental principle of fair play.

In South Africa lives the myth that "we're alright Jack" — freedom in the true meaning of the word is still with us. The reasoning is clear: there are five black men in this country to every white man and it is the responsibility of the white man to lead those who have yet to learn how a modern state should be run. Communism is a force that can wrest the white man's leadership away from him to the multiple miseries of the whole population, both white and black. We must therefore, we reason, safeguard our leadership. Fair enough.

But the method of safeguard when it came was at once a deviation from the principles which guarantee individual liberty. Suppression of Communism became manifestly illegal in terms of the Rule of Law. Mockery was made of such tenets as fair play, giving a man a break, and allowing him his dignity and what respect he deserves. At Rhodes it has taken the banning of the President of NUSAS for students to see these truths.

Right, Left and Centre the banning of Mr. Robertson must surely cause concern because the order served on him infringes such general principles.

Protest, for we are not free as we should be and as we deserve — any banning under the Suppression of Communism Act effects us all — Right, Left and Centre.

Special Edition

WE MUST PROTEST

THE biggest student body meeting in five years condemned the ban on NUSAS President Ian Robertson on Thursday evening.

More than 1,000 students — two-thirds of the student body — crowded the Great Hall to demand that the Minister of Justice lift the banning order under the Suppression of Communism Act.

After debate lasting an hour and a half, only 62 students voted against the motion and 68 abstained. Nearly 1,000, therefore, voted in favour, and amidst loud applause, the motion was declared carried by an overwhelming majority.

The motion, proposed by Mr. Reinier Lock and seconded by Mr. Dave Wanless,

- condemned the arbitrary action of the Minister of Justice,
- demanded that the ban be lifted by midnight on Sunday, and
- failing this, instructed the S.R.C. to call a student body meeting today.

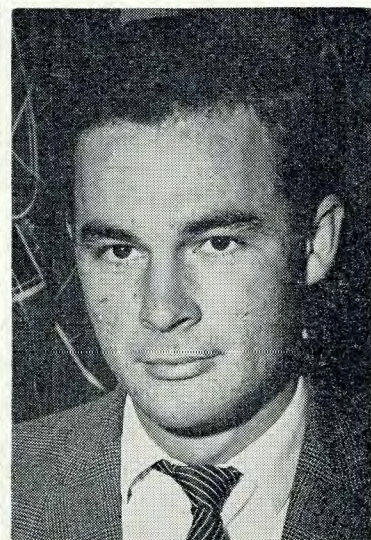
LIVING DEATH

"We must protest," said Mr. Lock, proposing the motion. "Mr. Robertson has been condemned to a living death," he said.

"He is as loyal a South African as I have ever met. There can be no justification for the ban."

The government had made vicious attempts to smash NUSAS, he said. "All these attempts have failed, and they have failed dismally. Now they perpetrated this cowardly action to discredit our organisation."

"Mr. Vorster thinks he can intimidate us, but this action will sharpen our conviction," concluded Mr. Lock.



"We must protest against this action, not sit back and be condemned by our silence," said Mr. Wanless. "Mr. Robertson has been sentenced to an unbiased judgement of a court of law."

FRONTAL ATTACK

"This is the first step in a complete frontal attack on NUSAS and an attack on the English universities. Eventually anybody who dares to criticise the government will be automatically banned."

"We must voice our disgust and abhorrence of this threat before it is too late," he said.

Speaking from the floor, Mr. Rob Steven, said: "Are we prepared to sit back in the reflected glory of our parents who fought an died for democracy against the Nazis?"

Another speaker, Mr. Tim Woods said if a man was a communist, he should be charged in a court of law. "Abraham Fischer was not banned—he was charged and jailed."

RHODESIAN

Mr. Ivan Schaeffer said as Rhodesian students were guests in South Africa, they should abstain from voting.

Replying to this point, Mr. Conrad Cubitt, said in a speech frequently interrupted by applause, that twenty years ago Mr. Ian Smith had fought for the principles of the rule of law and Western democracy.

Hecklers at first threatened to turn the meeting into chaos, but after three or four speakers had supported the motion, they quietened down. When the last speaker, Mr. Cubitt, got up to speak, only one interjection was heard.

The result of the meeting is seen as a clear indication that Rhodes students abhor banning orders. Many students felt that although they were not always supporters of NUSAS, they did not like the arbitrary action of the Minister of Justice.

The Order

President of the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS), Ian Robertson, is banned in terms of Sect. 9 of the Suppression of Communism Act (Act No. 44 of 1950).

This banning order —

- Requires him to report once a week to the nearest police station.

- Makes it illegal for him to be quoted in any form.

- Makes it illegal for him to participate in any activity connected with NUSAS.

- Bars him from entry to any premises connected with NUSAS.

- Bars him from entry to any African area.

- Makes it illegal for him to communicate with any other banned person.

- Bars him from entry to any premises where printed matter is compiled.

- Prevents him from compiling, writing, printing, publishing or disseminating in any way documents, pamphlets, or any printed matter.

- Restricts him to residence for five years in the magisterial districts of Wynberg and Cape Town.

- Prevents him from attending any social gathering.

This means Mr. Robertson:

- must suffer the indignity of reporting to the police that he is still in Cape Town.

- cannot carry out his elected position as President of NUSAS, as the head of more than 20,000 students.

- cannot leave the magisterial districts of Cape Town and Wynberg — he cannot, except with special permission, return to his home town of Durban to visit his parents.

- attend any party.

This banning order is for five years — until May 11, 1971.

BECAUSE WE HOLD SOM



THE TRUTHS SELF-EVIDENT

Students Say

● **Mr. Anthony Kaschula, Chairman of EPCSA:** "I was very surprised to hear of the banning as I knew Mr. Robertson personally. I don't think he is a person who would lead subversion, or that he is a communist. Politically I regard him as a right-wing Progressive. I think he was banned as head of NUSAS and not because of personal reasons."

"I am not in favour of his banning. We, the EPCSA, regard NUSAS and Robertson as opposition, on a student political level. We regard student politics as being separate from government politics, and we do not want government interference."

"But we are in favour of banning in cases of national security."

● **Mr. Korky du Plessis:** "In the past people have been banned with good reason. But unless some reason is given in this case we cannot be certain that there is one. If Mr. Robertson has done anything illegal, it is the Minister's duty to let us know about it because Mr. Robertson was in a responsible position as leader of NUSAS."

● **Mr. Pete Harris:** "Mr. Robertson was probably the most moderate president NUSAS has had in the last decade. His banning can only suggest that the government is opposed

to the voicing of all student opinion no matter what form it may take."

● **Mr. Dave Novitz:** "For once our moral fibre is being tested. It is up to every one of us to uphold the fundamental principles of Western civilization by registering our protest against this violation of the Rule of Law."

● **Mr. John Davidson:** "Our personal lives are not our own any more."

● **Miss Noreen McLaughlan:** "I was shocked to hear of the banning. I disapprove of arbitrary banning, and especially that of Mr. Robertson, the elected head of more than 20,000 students."

● **Mr. Colin Kruger:** "I was shocked at the banning. This is a government outrage. The government is trying to hop into student affairs."

● **Mr. Murray Sutherland:** "This seems to be the beginning of a pattern. I think the government is going to ban all senior members of NUSAS one by one."

● **Mr. Les Boardman:** "The news aroused no reaction in me at first and I find this frightening. It just shows how we have become used to this type of thing."



Staff Say..

A large majority of the academic staff have openly condemned the banning order which was served on Mr. Ian Robertson.

A staff petition which started doing the rounds early on Thursday morning already shows many signatures.

Many staff members are expected to attend the meeting tonight.

Dr. T. R. H. Davenport, Associate Professor of the History Department: "I am shocked at this banning. It alarms me how out of touch the Minister of Justice is with the universities.

"Banning is an unwarranted short cut that is not even patriotic in the true sense of the word. The type of action makes South Africa's name stink in the world.

"I think banning is a type of confidence trick. But one day it will be overplayed."

Professor D. S. C. Oosthuisen, head of the Department of Philosophy: "Banning is not according to the Western traditions, to the Rule of Law. It is our duty as members of a university to uphold these Western traditions.

"I only hope that this is not the beginning of a pattern of similar bannings."

Professor J. A. Gledhill, head of the Physics Department: "I think this banning a very bad thing. I do not approve of any kind of arbitrary banning."

Professor B. C. Dietrich of the Department of Classics: "I have strong feelings about bannings. This banning is probably connected with Senator Robert Kennedy's forthcoming visit to South Africa.

"I was shocked by the banning, but not surprised."

All political comment in this issue by H. Leggatt, S.R.C., Rhodes University, Grahamstown.

This man Robertson: Who is he?

By A Student

I FIRST MET Ian Robertson at the 1964 NUSAS Congress, when he was a member of the Durban delegation.

When all else has faded, the one impression I shall keep of him is standing slightly hunched over a desk, when he was making a speech on the witch-hunting tactics of the Volkskongress on Communism. But he was an anti-Communist.

His sense of humour was never far from the surface: he could always see the funny side of life. When he was involved in a crisis, he always had a light word to relieve the tension.

I hope he managed to smile when the banning order was served on him. But I doubt it.

MODERATE

Politically he was a moderate.

For many people in NUSAS he was too moderate. But in the six months he was NUSAS President, his moderation paid off. He was able, by the strength of his personality alone, to unite both Left and Right. Both sides disagreed with his political views, but nobody disliked him.

He never shirked responsibility. Twice he took on positions which demanded a lot of work,

personal sacrifice, and a great deal of responsibility. As President of the University of Natal (Durban) S.R.C., he pulled the campus together — from being a generally apathetic campus, he made it into one of the most intellectually stimulating universities in South Africa.

FRIENDS

As President of NUSAS he led the Union through a time of trial and crisis without faltering. He made friends when he was at Rhodes only a few weeks ago; students who were not NUSAS supporters, but who liked him. And he started these students thinking — if Robertson is like that, maybe NUSAS isn't too bad after all.

Ian never blustered, he was never a demagogue, but he always gently persuaded, and eventually convinced. He is one of the most effective speakers I have heard. A man who could convince, not by banging on the table and shouting, but by cold logic and a warm personality.

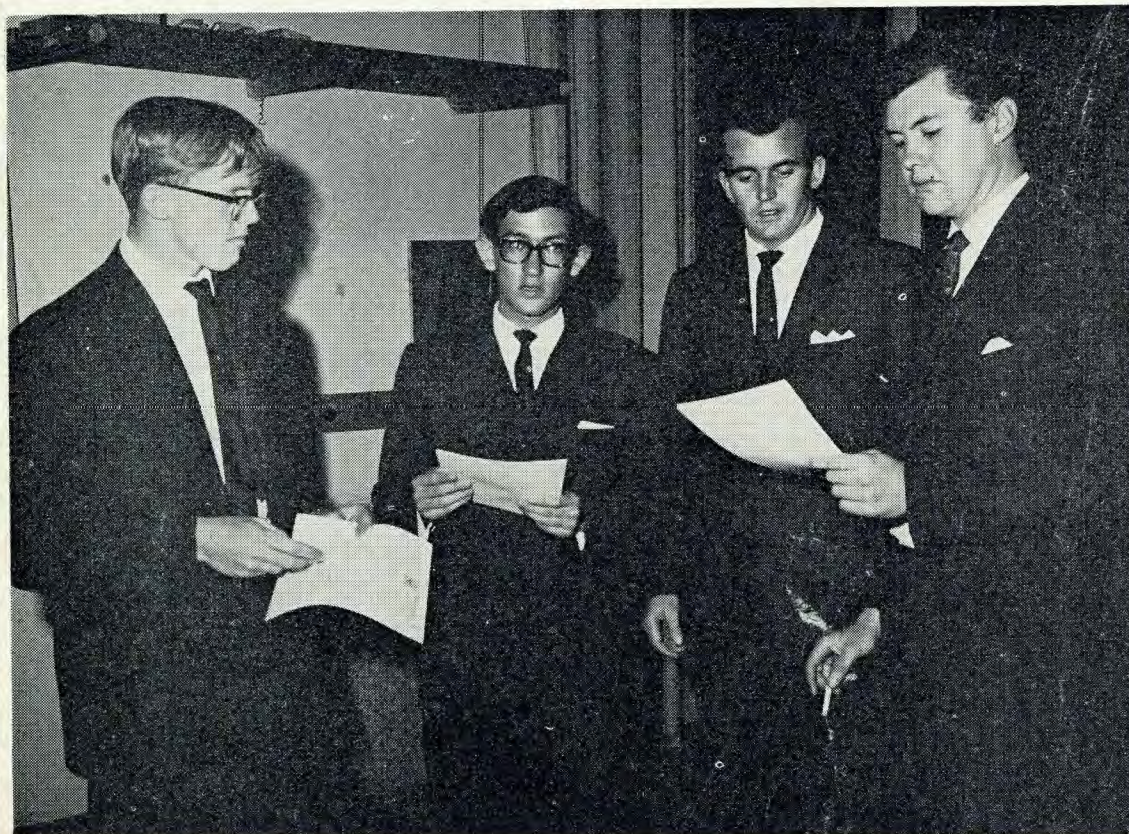
This sounds like an obituary, and perhaps it is. For Ian has, in the words of S.R.C. President John Sprack, been consigned to a "living death".

The Motion

That this Student Body: CONDEMNS the arbitrary Minister of Justice in banning Mr. Ian Robertson, President of NUSAS,

DEMANDS that the Minister of Justice lifts this ban by midnight of Sunday, May 15, 1966, or bring Mr. Robertson to trial before the courts of the land. Failing this,

INSTRUCTS the S.R.C. to call a Student Body meeting on Monday, May 16, 1966, to consider further action.



With faces reflecting the gravity of the situation, S.R.C. members Lock, Prozeky, Wanless and S.R.C. President Sprack get together before the student body meeting last Thursday evening.

THE TEXT

Text of Sect. 9 of Act No. 44 of 1950 (Suppression of Communism Act) in terms of which Mr. Robertson was banned:

"Whenever in the opinion of the Minister there is reason to believe that the achievement of any of the objects of communism would be furthered . . . if a particular person were to attend any gathering in any place . . . the Minister may, in the manner provided in sub-section (1) of section one of the Riotous Assemblies and Criminal Law Amendment Act 1914 (Act No. 27 of 1914) . . . by notice under his hand addressed and delivered or tendered to that particular person, prohibit him from attending any gathering in any place within an area and during a period specified in such notice."

For the purposes of the Act "communism" is defined as follows:

"Communism" means the doctrine of Marxian socialism as expounded by Lenin and Trotsky, the third Communist International (the Comintern) or the Communist Information Bureau (the Cominform) or any related form of that doctrine expounded or advocated in the Republic for the promotion of the fundamental principles of that doctrine and includes in particular:

"Which aims at the establishment of a despotic system of government based on the dictatorship of the proletariat under which one political organisation only is recognised and all other political organisations are suppressed or eliminated . . .

"Which aims at bringing about any political, industrial, social or economic change within the Republic by the promotion of disturbance or disorder."