

national union of south african students
nasionale unie van suid-afrikaanse studente

NUSAS

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JD/PS

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TO: Overseas Representatives
Executive

Dear Sir/Madam,

The purpose of this circular is to acquaint you with recent developments so that you will all have a fuller picture of the present situation in the student world. For a number of reasons, including the fact that I have been hospitalised for a month, after being involved in a motor accident on October 1, contact with the overseas reps has not been as good as it would have liked.

Mr. Ian Robertson left South Africa on September 6, and is now at the University College, Oxford. I shall continue to deputise for Mr. Robertson until after the December Executive meeting, at which time, the President-Elect, Miss Margaret Marshall will take over. The Vice-President-Elect, Mr. John Sprack, has been awarded an Abe Bailey travel bursary and will be in Britain from about December 20 until February 7. He will be contacting the various overseas representatives during this period. He will be accompanied by the President and immediate past President of the Wits SRC, Messrs Robin Margo and David Hirschmann respectively, and Mr. Glenn Cowley, immediate past President of the University of Natal, Durban SRC.

Miss Ros Traub retired on August 31, she was given a farewell dinner in Cape Town and at the NUSAS Congress in July was presented with a number of gifts in recognition of her 30 years of service as General Secretary. Overseas representatives will be glad to hear however, that she will be leading the 40th NUSAS tour overseas and Head Office would like to suggest that it would be an appropriate gesture if the numerous South African students overseas who have known Ros Traub give a dinner for her. If you can do this, please would be delighted to organise this on your behalf.

Miss Pat Schwartz is filling the position of General Secretary until December when she will be succeeded by Miss Sheila Barsel.

Attacks on NUSAS

There have been no serious attacks in recent months upon the National Union. The Minister of Justice was attacked on numerous occasions over the banning of the NUSAS President. The most important speeches dealing with the banning made during the session have been put out in circular form and you should be receiving a copy in the near future.

Reference was made in Parliament by Mr. J. F. Kruger, Mr. P. J. Prinsloo, and Mr. J. G. van der Merwe on the banning of NUSAS which was printed in the Parliamentary Debates. He stated that the "STUDENT" was the mouthpiece of the local NUSAS movement abroad and that the ISC envisaged a blood bath in South Africa and wanted to involve the whole world in it.



Speaking during the censure motion, Mrs C. D. Taylor, United Party member for Wynberg attacked both the Afrikaanse Studente Bond and NUSAS. She attacked NUSAS's decision not to fly the South African flag at NUSAS congresses.

There have been no further distributions of either smear or forged pamphlets since such pamphlets were distributed in March of this year.

Developments at Fort Hare

Overseas Representatives may recently have received a circular outlining the latest disturbances at Fort Hare. In that circular I reported that in June of this year, a number of students were molested at the Autumn Ball. The students requested permission to hold a meeting to discuss the police action but this was refused by the Rector. At a later meeting to discuss arrangements for the Spring Ball, students defied the Rector's orders and appointed a delegation to draft a letter to be sent to the Minister of Bantu Education complaining about the police action. At about this time a number of students were questioned by the police but none were detained for any length of time. No reply was received to the letter and there is a general state of insecurity existing at the college and students fear large-scale expulsions at the end of the year.

Universities Legislation

Overseas Representatives will be aware that amendments to the Universities Act of 1955 and Extension of University Education Act of 1959 were introduced during the last session of Parliament. The effect of these Bills would have been to prohibit all organised inter-racial contact outside of the lecture theatre and secondly to allow societies with racially discriminatory membership clauses to operate legally, over and above the objections of the SRCs and University Councils. The deputation consisting of the Principals of the Universities of Natal, Stellenbosch and South Africa, interviewed the Minister of Education and it is understood that the delegation reported that the Committee of University Principals was unanimously opposed to both bills. Neither of these bills was given a second reading but it is not yet known whether the Minister has decided to withdraw them.

A Bill, termed the Improper Interference Bill, was introduced in the latter stages of the session. This bill would have outlawed all non-racial organisations, political and otherwise. After tremendous outcry, the Prime Minister announced that agreement had been reached with the Leader of the Opposition and that the Bill would be referred to a select committee which must report back to Parliament by March 31. It is not expected that any significant changes will be made to the bill, I expect, it will only be made more intelligible.

Meeting with University Principals

In January of this year a successful meeting took place between the President and Vice-President of NUSAS, a number of SRC Presidents and Professors Hyslop and MacCrone. It was felt that that meeting was most fruitful and it was decided to hold such a meeting annually. A further meeting will be held in January 1967. Of the four university principals invited, only Dr. Duniny has refused.

It might also be of interest for overseas representatives to know that of all the principals invited to become Honorary Vice-Presidents of NUSAS, only Dr. Duniny of UCT and Professor Horwood of Natal have refused.

University Office Bearers

The deaths occurred in June of Dr. D. G. Shepstone, the Chancellor of the University of Natal, and in September of Mr. Justice Centlivres, Chancellor of the University of Cape Town. Dr. Shepstone has been succeeded by the former Chairman of the Natal University Council, Dr. George Campbell. It is understood that Dr. Campbell is likely to be succeeded as Chairman of the University Council, Justice F. N. Broono,

In addition, in August of this year, the Chairman of the UCT Council, Dr. Stephens died and has been succeeded by Mr. Clive Corder.

It is not yet known when the election of the new Chancellor of the University of Cape Town will take place.

It was also announced recently that Dr. J. P. Duminy, Principal of the University of Cape Town will retire at the end of 1967. He is to be succeeded by Sir Richard Luyt who has just retired as Governor General of the now-independent Guiana.

Banning orders lifted

Recently 45 restriction orders were lifted by the Minister of Justice. Among these were only three Whites, two of whom were Mr. Norman Bromberger and Mr. Terence Beard, both lecturers at Rhodes University. The Minister of Justice has stated that all banning orders are at present being reviewed.

Detentions and Trials

Two students, Messrs Dave Ernst and Vic Finkelstein, were recently sentenced to terms of imprisonment for offences under the Suppression of Communism Act. They were found guilty on one count and not guilty on two further counts. Mr. Ernst was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment and Mr. Finkelstein to 18 months, 15 months of which were suspended. The latter is a paraplegic. Four students who gave evidence in the trial were released from detention after giving their evidence. They were Messrs. Rudin, Barkham, Bransky and Friedlander. Mr. Albert Dhlomo refused to give evidence for the State and was sentenced to six months imprisonment.

A UN.NE student, Mr. Griffiths Nxenge will shortly face trial on a number of charges under the Suppression of Communism Act. Another UN.NE student, Mr. John Matseke who was detained in August gave evidence in the trial of Mr. N. D. Naidoo, a Durban Advocate and has been released.

Mr. John Aitchison will stand trial on December 6, for contravening his restriction order.

SRC Elections

The recent SRC elections reflected continued strong support for NUSAS. Of the 15 students returned at UCT 10 were strong supporters of NUSAS, two officers of the middle of the road Independent Students Union were returned and one candidate of the Conservative Student Association was elected. The first non-White to stand in the elections for a number of years, Mr. Kenal Casoojee was placed fourth in the polls. The new President is Mr. Ian Hume a 27 year old philosophy and economics student.

At Rhodes, only one of the 14 candidates returned stood on an anti-NUSAS ticket. The new President of the SRC is Mr. Peter Haxton, a history Honours student. Former NUSAS Executive member, Miss Ruth Prentice is Secretary of the SRC.

At the University of Natal, Non-European section all 10 candidates returned stood on a pro-NUSAS ticket. The new President is Mr. Rogers Ragaven, who is also Deputy Vice-President of NUSAS.

The new president of the SRC at the University of Natal, Durban, is Mr. Roger Hulley, last years Rag Chairman. Of the candidates returned, only one stood on an anti-NUSAS ticket. The election was significant for the defeat of Mr. Renier Schoeman, who had been a member of the SRC since 1964 and who is a member of the Nationalist Party. He finished last in the poll for the part-time elected candidate.

The SRC elections at the University of Natal, Maritzburg, reflected very strong support for NUSAS. Only one anti-NUSAS candidate was returned while the strongly pro-NUSAS candidates Messrs. Budke, Irwin, Stillwell and Tonkyn and Miss Lorimer, the Secretary General of WUS were placed near the top of the poll. The SRC President is Mr. Basil Budke, a 7th year Ph.D Student, while Mr. Pat Irwin is again Vice-President.

The Wits SRC elections reflected overwhelming support for NUSAS. The new President, Mr. Robin Margo topped the poll for the second successive year with a record vote of 1500 first votes. The SRC is an extremely experienced body with Messrs Margo and Philips being returned for a third term and a number of others for a second term. NUSAS Executive members, Messrs Steve Clarke and Percy Poplak and Miss Jill Schermbrucker were successful. Of the 12 Conservative Club candidates only two, Messrs Bester and Hewitt were elected.

Detailed results of the JCE elections are not at hand but it is known that Mr. Philip Cantin is the President Elect.

New affiliations

During the year, there have been two new affiliations to NUSAS. A branch was formed at the new Port Elizabeth University while a branch was formed of correspondence students of the University of South Africa. In May, the Pretoria Branch was refused recognition by the SRC and has been forced to operate off the campus. Despite this setback, the branch organised a successful two-hour protest stand in the city to mark the hundredth day of Ian Robertson's banning.

Research Officer

The Student Assembly again decided to appoint a Research Officer for 1967. A number of applications were received for this post but a final choice has not yet been made. Mr. Roger Omond retiring Secretary General of SANSPA has been commissioned to write a comprehensive history of NUSAS.

ASB, FCS, ISU

During August and September of this year, there were some interesting developments in the ASB. At their July Congress the ASB passed a unanimous motion praising the work done for Afrikanerdom by Mr. S. E. D. Brown, Editor of the South African Observer. At the beginning of the new term a Stellenbosch group known as the Students Union launched an intensive campaign aimed at censuring the ASB for passing this motion. 1400 Students signed a petition condemning the ASB and at a mass meeting the Stellenbosch student body censured the ASB and dissociated Stellenbosch from this motion. The President of the SRC and President of the ASB, Mr. Boy Geldenhuys, supported this move. The Pretoria SRC also dissociated themselves from this motion while the Potchefstroom and Free State SRCs reaffirmed their support for Mr. Brown. This move took place at the same time as attacks were being made on the S. A. Observer by the Burger, Transvaler and other Afrikaans newspapers.

Shortly afterwards the Students Union group launched a new student newspaper at Stellenbosch University known as Studente Forum. This newspaper is in opposition to Die Matie, the official organ of the SRC and though not opposed to the ASB itself, is opposed to certain aspects of its policy. It is affiliated to SANSIPA and aims at presenting a more tolerant and objective picture of the student scene. Two editions of this newspaper have appeared and sufficient finances have been guaranteed to enable it to appear in 1967.

It was at this stage that one of the figureheads of this movement, Mr. Willem van Drimmelen who had acted as host to Senator Kennedy on his visit to Stellenbosch was dismissed from his part-time post as an SABC announcer.

FCS

The Federation of Conservative Students appears to be moribund. The organisation has been completely inactive the whole of this year and its annual meeting scheduled for July 1966 did not take place.

ISU

The ISU is operative only at the university of Cape Town. It has been fairly active during the whole of this year although it appears to have been unsuccessful in its attempts to attract widespread support. Shortly prior to the SRC elections it launched a new newspaper on the campus "Student news" which appears to be backed financially by certain prominent persons in the United Party.

Scholarships

The Scholarships Department continues to be one of the most active in the country. Five Scholarship winners recently left South Africa for overseas and another is due to leave shortly pending receipt of travel documents. The department awarded two further medical scholarships in August this year and it hopes to award two further scholarships in February. It has now awarded a total of 63 scholarships in four years.

Conclusion

I hope that this circular will give you a clearer picture of current events in the student world. I hope that you have been receiving the circulars and newsletters which we have been sending to you at regular intervals. Copies of the booklet Robert Kennedy in South Africa are still available though present stocks of the long-playing record are exhausted.

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN DANIEL

Vice-President