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MUSAS

PRESS DIGEST

NUUSBRIEF

Number 1 1969

Press reports and comments on events at Fort Hare University College during 1968, and an historical background of the College from 1916 to 1948



PRESS REVIEW OF EVENTS AT FORT HARE IN 1968

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INTRODUCTION

1968, particularly the latter half of the year, will probably be remembered as a year of protest, student protest. There were the protests on the cancellation of the appointment to a senior lectureship in social anthropology at the University of Cape Town of an African, Archie Mafeje. And there were protests about the harsh treatment given to some 300 Fort Hare students.

But amongst those who took part in these protests none displayed more courage than those Fort Hare students. There are some who might think that their actions were not, in the circumstances, the most sensible; or that their actions were irresponsible. But no-one can deny the courage of these students. They put their university careers, and indeed, their future in South Africa, at stake by doing what they believed to be right. And some of them had to make those sacrifices.

When General J. C. Smuts said in 1938: "Fort Hare is the small beginning of something which is bound to be very big in South Africa", he probably did not realise the form this would take in 1968. And as a National Union of South African Students circular, sent out on September 3, 1968, said: "It is apparent from the recent happening at Fort Hare that the spirit which prevailed in 1959 is not yet dead."

Although this is primarily a press review of the events at the University College of Fort Hare in 1968, I have taken the opportunity to include a brief - and inadequate - review of the history of the college, as all too often this is not known, or is even forgotten; and it does help to explain what happened there in 1968.

PRESS REVIEW OF EVENTS AT FORT HARE IN 1968

Rector

At the end of July, 1968, the first Rector of Fort Hare since the Department of Bantu Education took over the college, Professor J.J. Ross, who was before then a professor at the University of the Orange Free State, retired. Professor J. M. de Wet, who was previously a professor at Potchefstroom University, was appointed to succeed him. It soon became clear that the students did not favour Professor de Wet's appointment.

Rhodeo (in its issue of August 29) reported that during the night of Saturday August 17, a number of slogans appeared on the walls of the campus buildings. "Administrative authorities acted swiftly to erase the slogans, while attempting to prevent students from seeing slogans on their way to church. Slogans read "Worstir - Hitler", "Mafefe for UCT", "No ind... Verwoerd remains cursed". They also attacked their new Rector, Prof. de Wet, recently from Potchefstroom." (Rhodeo of September 9th later reported that two other slogans read "This is not a rubbish bin", and "Fort Hare is for Africans, not Afrikaners".) "Only about ten students attended Professor de Wet's induction recently. The rest of the students stood outside as the academic procession passed, shouting "BIAARRRR", as Mr Blaar Coetzee, then Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration, was conducting the induction." (Another of the slogans of 17 August read "Blaar se kraal" (Rhodeo, 5 September)).

In the Daily Dispatch account of the opening ceremony which appeared on 12 August, Mr Blaar Coetzee, then Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, was reported to have said that the African university colleges would be granted full academic independence next year. "Mr Coetzee said an important step such as academic independence was a new challenge to the institution to fulfill its task. It was also important at this stage to consider what lay ahead especially in the light of the recent student riots at universities overseas. 'Although these activities were the work of Leftist and even communist elements, it must be remembered that reforms are essential in a university,' Mr Coetzee said."

The new Rector, Professor J. M. de Wet, called for post-graduate facilities at Fort Hare in his opening speech. He went on to say: "When Fort Hare gains its autonomy and academic freedom in 1970, it will be able to design curricula specially suited to the needs of the Xhosa people whilst maintaining its high standards. I serve and love my country - the Republic of South Africa -" concluded Prof. de Wet, "and through my work at Fort Hare I wish to serve and help the people of the Transkei and Ciskei - people I expect and believe have the same devotion towards their people and country."

Why the students chose the induction of Prof. de Wet to make their feelings known, is not clear. There does not seem to be any single incident that precipitated the protest, but a National Union of South African Students circular (SR/7/68-69, dated 3 September) draws attention to a number of rules that are enforced at Fort Hare.

Unusual Rules

"Some of the rules for students at Fort Hare are common to most institutions of higher learning in South Africa; some, however, are less usual, for example:

- 1) Students may not leave the College precincts without permission from the Head of Department or a representative duly authorised by the Rector.
- 2) Any student or organisational work in which students are concerned is subject to the prior approval of the Rector.

- 3) No meetings may be held in the grounds of the College without permission from the Rector. Approved student committees may meet in accordance with the rules of the constitution of the body concerned.
- 4) No magazine, publication or pamphlet for which students are wholly or partly responsible may be circulated without the permission of the Rector in consultation with the Advisory Senate and the Senate.
- 5) No statement may be given to the press by or on behalf of the students without the Rector's permission.
- 6) After consultation with the Advisory Senate and the Senate, the Rector may suspend or dismiss a student, who, in his opinion, infringes these regulations or any particular regulations or is guilty of misconduct.

"In cases of serious irregularity which in the opinion of the Rector justifies immediate action the Rector may in his discretion take such an action and thereafter report to the Council.

These regulations are in force at all 'tribal' colleges. It is apparent that all student activities and organisations are "at the discretion of the Rector". The Rector is appointed by and is accountable to the Minister of Bantu Administration.

Special Rules

"In addition, there are special rules in force only at Fort Hare. These include the following:-

- 1) If in the opinion of the Minister, it is not in the interests of the institution to register a candidate, he may refuse registration even if the candidate complies with all other conditions of registration.
- 2) No student or person not under the jurisdiction of the college grounds as a visitor, and no Fort Hare student or group of students may visit any other institution without the permission of the Rector, and then only on such conditions as may be determined.

"NUSAS is banned at Fort Hare.

Completely at the discretion of the Minister are the following:-

- i) Appointment of members of the College Council
- ii) Designation of the Chairman of Council
- iii) Appointment of the Principal and other members of the Senate
- iv) Appointment of all members of staff
- v) Regulation of all aspects of staff working conditions including remunerations, promotions, transfer, discipline, conduct and the occupation of official quarters
- vi) Regulation of the cause of instruction
- vii) Regulation of the function and constitution of the Board of faculties
- viii) Powers to refuse to admit students if the Minister decides that this is in the interests of the College
- ix) Places of residence of students and entry into particular classes
- x) Dismissal of any employee publicly commenting adversely on the administration of any department of the Government or any Province or the territory of South West Africa, or if he identifies himself with any propaganda or activity or acted in a manner calculated to promote antagonism against any section of the department, or impeded the activities of any Government department."

Dissatisfaction

Whether these rules were the main cause of dissatisfaction or whether it was the internal administration of the college that caused the

dissatisfaction, is not clear. What was clear was that there was considerable dissatisfaction. The course adopted by the authorities after the painting of the slogans merely sparked off open evidence of this dissatisfaction.

After the slogans appeared, according to Rhodes (5 September), "eighteen campus leaders were summoned to appear before the Rector. Seventeen arrived. The eighteenth was a man called Methodist. Methodist also brought a tape recorder to the recent U.C.M. (University Christian Movement) Congress. The rest were warned by the Rector that they would be expelled if the campus unrest continued. Over the next few days all 17 were taken, one by one, for questioning by the Special Branch.

Students were generally incensed by these attitudes and actions. A deputation was sent to complain to the Rector. The interview was refused. Four-fifths of the college then went on strike.

They sat outside the Rector's office to await a statement from him, but he had left for Pretoria. The remaining authority threatened to close down the college if the students did not disperse. Next day the vac. started. Lecturers asked, seemed uncertain about the causes of discontent. Various conflicting opinions were proffered. Some threatened to leave out the lectures missed and let the students battle."

A National Union of South African Students circular (SR/9/66-69, dated September 10) has a more detailed version of what took place after the 17 were interviewed. "It is not known how the 17 names were selected. They were accused of being either directly or indirectly responsible for the paintings on the walls, and when they denied all knowledge of who was responsible, they were told that they were known to be student leaders, and therefore must be implicated.

"They were warned that should there be any further student disturbances on the campus they would be held responsible and sent down. Thus without having any administrative, disciplinary or legislative power, they were made responsible for maintaining student order at the cost of their careers. Subsequently the Security Police were called in and most of the 17 were taken to the charge office for interrogation and their rooms were searched. It was this action on the part of the Rector and the Police against students whose guilt of any offence had not been established that led to the reaction of the student body.

"Two requests to hold a student body meeting to discuss the matter were refused by the Rector and his approval to hold such a meeting on the evening of August 27 was given later the same afternoon. At this meeting, a resolution outlining the student grievances and requesting the Rector to address the student body on the matter was passed. They decided to gather the next day outside the Administration buildings and to remain sitting until the Rector did address them."

Vacation

The short vacation began on Friday August 30 after the sit-in had lasted two days. The sit-in began on Wednesday 28 August. On 29 August, the Daily Dispatch reported that the students had asked that Professor J. M. de Wet speak to them. In his absence the Vice-Chairman of the Senate, Professor A. Coetzee, spoke to the students briefly. "I advised them to return to their classes, but they refused," Professor Coetzee said. He spoke to them again that morning with the same result. At five in the afternoon the students dispersed, only to resume the sit-in on the next day.

The newspaper suggested in its report that the sit-in was being held as a protest against the appointment of Prof. de Wet as Rector. On Thursday 29 August, a notice by the Rector was put up on all the college noticeboards. It read (according to the Daily Dispatch of 31 August): "Students are instructed to discontinue their actions of demonstration immediately. If continued on Friday, August 30, the authorities will have to consider action, which may include the closing of the college." The students sat on August 30 before going on vacation.

On 4 September - the day before the vacation ended - the East London Daily Dispatch carried a report that the students intended to continue with the sit-in when the college reopened. "The students, who asked to remain anonymous, said the protest would be resumed despite the warning of the Rector, Prof. J. M. de Wet, that if the students did not call off the strike the Senate might consider closing the college. 'We are determined to sit-down until we speak to the Rector. We are not perturbed by his threat to close the college if we do not call off the protest. Why doesn't he speak to us?' he asked." The report outlined some of the causes of the sit-in, particularly the attempt by the college authorities to hold 17 student leaders responsible for any future trouble at the college.

"They (the 17) denied all knowledge of them (the slogans), but the Rector said they would be held responsible for any further disturbances at the college.

"That is what we want to see the Rector about", said the student. The Rector has been criticised by students for being "arbitrary and treating students like young schoolboys." All social activities were banned after the strike began last Wednesday.

Banned

The University Christian Movement was later banned from the Fort Hare campus. Planned trips to Port Elizabeth by the English Dramatic Society, and to the Transkei by the Xhosa Dramatic Society were cancelled by the authorities."

The Daily Dispatch (6 September) said that the students had resumed the sit-in after the vacation. There was an exchange of messages with the Rector but by the night of Thursday 5 September the situation was unchanged. "Some of the students who returned to the college yesterday attended classes but the majority boycotted lectures and resumed their sit-down outside the Administration block.

A message from the Rector, Professor J. M. de Wet, was read to the sitting students by the assistant registrar, Mr E. Redelinguys. It said: "The University College of Fort Hare reopened at 8 am today, September 5, 1968. The Rector notices that you are not attending lectures and that you are creating conditions which may directly or indirectly prevent students from attending lectures. This constitutes serious contravention of regulations and the Rector, as chief disciplinary officer of the university college, insists that you return to lectures. If you have anything particular to discuss with him, he will be prepared to meet a delegation from the students."

Leaderless

The students told Mr Redelinguys they were a leaderless group and were not prepared to send a delegation. They insisted the Rector address them immediately. Shortly afterwards this message from the Rector was read to them: "The Rector is not prepared to appear before a mass meeting of students. The Rector is, however, most anxious to settle any differences in a friendly and democratic way. He repeats that he would welcome a meeting with a delegation of

students to discuss the situation. He allows them until 3 pm Thursday, 5 September, to enable them to decide on their procedure and to elect or nominate a delegation. The Rector will be available up to 3 pm today."

The students again declined to send a delegation to see Prof. de Wet. They did not want until 3 pm, they said, because they had already said they wanted the Rector to meet them as a body. They added they did not want to listen to a delegate from the Rector. They wanted the Rector himself to meet them."

Police Action

On Friday 6 September (as reported in the Daily Dispatch and Rand Daily Mail main lead on the front page on 7 September), more than half the students at Fort Hare were suspended and sent home, "after police with dogs had been called in to break up a sit-down strike. The students were rounded up by the police, their names were taken, and they were removed in small groups to their hostels. There they were ordered to pack their belongings and later taken to South African Railway buses and then to convenient railway points to return to their homes. Authorities said there were no incidents and that the whole procedure of breaking up the strike and dispersing the suspended students was carried out quietly and in an orderly manner."

In a front page report in the Daily Dispatch (9 September), a correspondent reported a conversation with two of the railway bus drivers at Cookhouse. He wrote: "They said there had been no trouble when the students boarded the buses at Fort Hare, but that there would have been if the police had not been there. The only incident they saw was when an African policeman hit a student with a baton when the student refused to board the bus. The drivers said there had been five African policemen on the bus with the students."

Trespass

A National Union of South African Students circular (SR/9/68-69, dated September 10) said: "At 3.00 pm over 300 students were still gathered in front of the Administrative Block. At 3.05 pm large numbers of police, who had been in Alice from mid-morning, arrived at Fort Hare. At least 10 police vans and an estimate of at least 30 policemen arrived. The vans were used to block entrances and roads. The police, with 6 dogs, and equipped with teargas bombs and gas bombs and gas masks, surrounded the demonstrating students. The students were then addressed by the Commandant, who stated that they were under arrest for trespassing, and that they had only two options open to them, either to be imprisoned in the local cells, or to pack their belongings and return to their homes under 'protective police custody'."

They were advised that the matter would be referred to the Attorney General for his decision on further action."

After being taken to the residences to pack, "they were not permitted to go into town to withdraw any money for the journey, nor were they allowed to collect articles of clothing from the laundries. Fort Hare students resident at the Federal Theological Seminary were sent back to the Seminary after representation by the Seminary principals, but were warned that if they set foot on the Fort Hare campus they would be arrested for trespassing.

No Resistance

Under frightening circumstances, which some students felt could easily have led to panic and drastic police reprisals - especially with the dogs present - the students remained calm and orderly and at no stage resisted the police. The students sang 'Nkosi Sikelele' and 'I Afrika' and 'We shall overcome' before moving off to their residences.

When some of the students, who had not been in the sit-in at 3.00 pm saw the police action, they joined with their fellows and accepted suspension and removal. The students never really believed that the Rector would take such drastic action against them for their simple request for orderly demonstration."

Statement

The police action followed a statement by Prof. de Wet issued at midday on Friday 6 September. It read (according to Daily Dispatch of 7 September): "All students still in front of the administration block must please note that they have been suspended as students of this university and are contravening regulations by their presence here. This is a final warning and if students are still there at 3 pm steps will be taken against them."

The report continued: "Before the Rector's noon statement most of the students had signed lists placed in their hostels by the university officials agreeing to continue lectures and to end the sit-down strike. A statement by Prof. de Wet attached to the lists, read: "Seeing that students of the University College of Fort Hare have contravened regulations by staying away from lectures for three days and have persevered in doing this even after their attention was drawn to the contravention and seeing that students have normal channels of communication that existed and will always exist and have turned down the invitation to make known their problems through a deputation, I feel myself compelled after a full and serious discussion with the Advisory Council to restore normal conditions by taking the following steps:

Students who are desirous of continuing their work for the year and who undertake to submit to the discipline of the university college must in the course of the morning cease their participation in the sit-down strike or any other form of demonstration and must indicate their intention of doing so by signing the lists which will be available for this purpose at their respective hostels before 12 noon today. The admission of students who have not ceased their participation in the sit-down strike or any other form of demonstration and who have not signed the mentioned list at their respective hostels before 12 noon will be cancelled forthwith and such students will have to leave the hostels and the campus of the university college before 4.30 pm in the vehicles which will be available for the purpose. Students who have signed the undertaking at their respective hostels and who, at any stage during the rest of this year, stay away from lectures without the permission of the warden or head of the relevant department, shall be considered to have broken the agreement and shall be subjected to the same measures as are mentioned above."

Sent Away

The NUSAS circular, quoted above, carried on: "By 7.00 pm all the suspended students have been put on the railway buses, provided for the purpose, and sent to both Amavele junction and Cookhouse station to await trains. They were not given tickets, and they were not given the opportunity to make arrangements to get from the terminus

to their respective homes. They were provided with neither food nor money for the journey and some had to wait on the stations for a considerable length of time before being able to get connections or seats on the available trains."

A report in The Star and the Natal Daily News on 7 September read: "I took a picture of a group of students and was approached by a plain clothes policeman who told me I could not take photographs without the Rector's permission. I walked towards the Rector's office, but on the way was accosted by two senior police officers who asked me to leave the campus until 'all this is over'. The police continued taking names and I photographed several groups being marched from the gates. Two policemen later approached me outside the gates, took my name and address and the name of my newspaper and warned me that I could not use any of the pictures as the students were prisoners. Under the Prisons Act they said one could not publish such pictures."

A report in the Port Elizabeth Evening Post of 7 September said that five Rhodes students and a newspaperman had been refused permission by railway police to speak with the suspended Fort Hare students at Cookhouse station. "The Rhodes students were told to leave the station - they would be in trouble if they remained. The newspaperman, representing an East London newspaper, was told by police that no-one was to speak to the Fort Hare students. The police indicated they had strict instructions to allow no-one on the station without a ticket.

"We have had enough trouble already," a policeman is reported to have said".

79 Students

The correspondent, writing in the Daily Dispatch of 9 September, said there were 79 students on the platform of the Cookhouse station. A railway policeman allegedly told him "I have had strict instructions not to allow any Pressmen onto the platform." The report continued: "Earlier, when it was thought the students were arriving by train, a group of Rhodes University students and myself waited on the platform. As soon as contact was made with the students, a railway policeman ordered us off the platform

On the Cookhouse station there were a number of uniformed railway police watching over the students. It seemed that they were not allowed to leave the station. Their luggage was piled on the platform and the students were standing quietly next to it. I understand two other Rhodes students who went to Cookhouse to give money and food to the students were refused permission to go onto the station."

And the NCCAS circular, quoted above, said: "At Amabele, after contact had been established with a few students, the police intervened."

Iron Rule

The Evening Post of 7 September carried an interview with some of the suspended students: "Students interviewed in Port Elizabeth today said Prof. J.M. de Wet had come with an "iron rule" administration. They felt they had legitimate grievances against changes made by Prof. de Wet within a month of his appointment as Rector. The sit-down strike was intended to make the authorities realise that there was much discontent among the students about new administrative measures taken by Prof. de Wet."

The Daily Dispatch of 9 September carried another interview: "One Fort Hare student who was suspended but who does not wish his name to be mentioned as this might jeopardise his chances of readmission, said the students could not understand why the Rector used his authority in this manner, and why he had caused such discontent amongst the students. 'And when the police came to move us with a car, five vans and a truck, they adopted a nasty attitude and even refused us a drink of water before escorting us to the station,' the student said".

A report in the Rand Daily Mail of 9 September carried two interviews with suspended Fort Hare students:

"One source told me the science faculty, the library department and the anthropology department, and the agricultural department and some departments in the arts faculty at the university had closed down. I was told:

'We were not protesting for fun or aping other students' protest but we were showing our loyalty to some principles which we hold dear. These principles are academic freedom - which the Government is encroaching - and the freedom to protest against infringements on our rights by authorities'

Another student said the authorities at Fort Hare seemed to adopt the attitude that the students were small boys and did not know what they were doing.

Many students were bitter because they were at a tribal college.

'At Fort Hare we are living a quaint life in a quaint place, our professors and lecturers being strange people with whom we have no contact at all except in the classroom. It is as though we did not have the same ideals in the pursuit of knowledge and truth,' the student said."

In a front page lead over the protest plans at the various universities, the Rand Daily Mail of 10 September, carried another interview with a suspended student. He told the Mail that there was absolutely nothing political in the protest. "There was no question of us refusing to accept the new Rector as such. All we wanted to do was to tell him how resentful we are of the restrictions he has imposed on our ability to organise student social activity." He is reported to have said the relations with the new Rector first became strained when the Rector was unsympathetic to a student plea to organise a "hunger week" to help the poor children of Alice.

It was reported that weekend in both the Evening Post and the Daily Dispatch that the Fort Hare Senate was to meet on Monday 9 September to decide whether to readmit some students on application.

Reaction

On Saturday 7 September, the Evening Post and the Johannesburg Star in front page stories reported: "SRC presidents from all South Africa's English universities are flying to Durban for an urgent meeting tomorrow to formulate nation-wide protest action against expulsion of half the student body of Fort Hare. Emergency calls were sent to the student leaders today after the officials of the Durban Students' Representative Council conferred with Mr Duncan Innes, President of NUSAS. Mr Innes was in Durban for a NUSAS "mini-congress" scheduled for today when news of the mass expulsion was received.

"Mr Innes made immediate plans to fly to Grahamstown later today. 'I want to see for myself what is happening,' he said. Mr Anthony Williams-Jones, outgoing President of the Durban SRC, said in a statement issued shortly afterwards that 'Durban students will protest as they have never protested before.' Mr Peter Behr, the incoming President of the Durban SRC said he gave Mr Williams-Jones's statement his full support.

Mr Innes said later: 'As far as I know the students' protest was legitimate. It would seem that the Rector is not prepared to acknowledge either their right to protest or their protest itself. I think it is disgusting that the Rector should adopt the intolerant stand of resorting to expulsion. I cannot accept this as fair treatment as one would expect to find in a university.'

United Action

In a call for united action he said: 'This action of his must be met with the strongest opposition possible. It is the most blatant example of authoritarianism I have seen within a university for many years. I expect strong action from students at other universities.'

Die Transvaaler of 9 September commented editorially: "Niens het wel kan verwag dat, nadat daar onder die studente van sekere liberalistiese universiteite allerlei moeilikhede ontstaan het, dit weldra ook by die een of ander nie-blanke intigting van hoër onderwys sou uitslaan. Die verlede het immers al aangeloor dat aanhangers van die liberalistiese nie skoor om ook moeilikhede onder nie-blanke studente te verwek nie.

"Verlede Donderdag en Vrydag het dan ook gebeur wat verwag kon word. Getrou na die voorbeeld van blanke studente hulle gestel het, het die nie-blankes van Fort Hare tot 'n sogenaande staking voorgegaan. Die rektor, prof. dr. J. M. de Wet, het net soos sy voorganger, prof. J. J. Ross, geweet hoe om die toestand te hanteer. Nadat hy 'n ultimatum aan die studente gestel het om binne 'n bepaalde tyd die staking te beëindig, het hy diegene wat nie daaraan gehoor gegee het nie, met die hulp van die polisie laat verwyder en hulle weggestuur. Hulle is nou die reg om voorlesings by te woon oitsê. Daarmee is orde herstel. Die bakwane wyse is vir die liberalistiese blanke universiteite waarlik 'n voorbeeld.

'n Mens stil dit beslis nie te sterk nie wanneer beweer word dat die stappe wyse waarop die onlangse stakings aan sommige van hierdie universiteite gehanteer is, somer 'n baie swak indruk gewek het. Dit het gelyk of daar aan hierdie rigtings nouliks enige dissipline vestaan is daar met dieselfde mate van fermheid opgetree, wat tans in Fort Hare toegepas is, sou dit nie vir die Eerste Minister nodig gewees het om hom met die saak te benoei nie. Skording van klie belhamels wat die moeilikhede begin het, sou die orde en dissipline onmiddelik herstel het."

Ruthless Action

The newly-elected president of the University of the Witwatersrand SRC, Mr Mark Orkin, told the Sunday Times (10 September): "It is hard to believe that 200 students can be suspended for peaceful and orderly protests. The action is incredible and ruthless. Not only were their demands as reported, reasonable, but the size of their protest shows how deep-seated their grievance must be. Nearly half the university was prepared to take part, realising the possibility of harsh consequences. The presence of police and dogs on campus is ugly. The whole incident could have been averted by the Rector's speaking to the students - a perfectly normal thing for him to have done," Mr Orkin said. Mr Orkin said the students were angry and alarmed, and that increased interference in the universities would mean increased student protest. "Our reaction will be sharp," he said.

In the front page lead story the Daily Dispatch of 9 September, it was reported that only 70 of the 450 students were expected to report to lectures on that Monday morning. Mr Williams-Jones was quoted as saying: "This act does not surprise me at all. Our tribal colleges have never been semblances of a university and this, surely, is the proof of it. These tribal colleges are nothing more than little Black junior schools, in which the principal adopts the mantle of headmaster and the students are cast in the role of school children whose smallest criticism of the authorities is taken as mutiny, for which the punishment is suspension. I regard the action at Fort Hare, and the various statements and actions by the Prime Minister as the final inroad into academic freedom. The question which now remains is how long will it be before the other universities in this country are reduce to the same stage."

Rhodes Statement

The President of the Rhodes SRC, Mr Peter Harris, said before he left for Durban: "I feel that students shock at this contemptible state of affairs will be translated into action of one sort or another after the meeting on Monday." The Daily Dispatch report on the proposed action at Rhodes continued: "The Deputy Vice-President of MUSAS and a member of the Rhodes University SRC, Mr Andy Murray, said: 'The repressive manner in which the authorities treat the students at Fort Hare, the known presence of informers, the known and quite serious Special Branch activity at Fort Hare, are all to be condemned. They give cause for grave concern to all the peoples of South Africa.

'When a man is Black his treatment is vastly different from that of a White man.

'This we condemn. It is immoral. Peaceful protest is a right. The authorities should rather look at those things which have provoked protests.'

Higher Number of Students

"One further point is that it is clear that the number of students who have left Fort Hare is considerably higher than the original number - 200 - given by the Fort Hare authorities. One report from Alice yesterday indicated that there will be only 100 students left at the college. This would mean that 400 students have either been suspended or have left of their own accord."

An editorial in the Daily Dispatch on 9 September commented on the Fort Hare developments: "There has been nothing comparable to the Fort Hare sackings in the history of higher education in South Africa. Half the entire student body has been suspended.... More than 200 potential candidates could be lost to a section of the population struggling for identification and for trained leaders.

Was there no other way than the iron fist of settling the dispute at Fort Hare?

Was it really necessary to issue a suspension ultimatum to demonstrating students and then call in the police to enforce it? Was there no way of reasoning with the pupils?" The editorial then called for a full statement of the facts from the Fort Hare authorities.

It continued: "We do not presume for one moment that there was not blame on the students' side. There has obviously been some very irresponsible behaviour by rebellious elements at the university college. The slogans painted on the walls were indicative of this... The damage to Fort Hare's image is now complet. International

attention has been focused once more on South Africa's seeming inability to conduct its internal affairs without racial friction. The fact that there could have been some thoroughly bad eggs behind all the provocations will be overlooked because of the larger evidence of extreme action within the limits of the political ideology which dictates educational processes in South Africa, the University College of Fort Hare has been doing a good job. It is now going to take a supreme effort to restore confidence in its purpose."

The Rand Daily Mail also commented in an editorial on 9 September: "Events at Fort Hare over the past few days give a pretty good indication of how the Government considers a university ought to be run. No shilly-shallying when the students get uppity and start airing of their views or painting slogans or organising a sit-in demonstration: you simply deliver an ultimatum and if they still do not obey you expel them en masse, after which you call in the police with their batons and dogs to herd them on to trains. It is little wonder that student leaders at the English language universities fresh from their own disquieting brush with authority over the Mafeje affair, feel a renewed sense of alarm and are preparing to protest again.

"Fort Hare is a tragedy.

"It used to be a fine institution with a proud tradition for Non-Whites on this continent whose alumni hold positions of eminence and responsibility in a dozen countries. Yet today Fort Hare has been reduced to a tribal college strictly state-controlled and run with about as much student freedom as a reformatory. With a recent change of rector it was widely hoped that something of the old Fort Hare tradition might perhaps be revived. But the latest events show that to have been a vain hope indeed; instead they reveal a spirit of intolerance and authoritarianism which if anything is worse than before.....

Open Minds

"Education - any education - opens the minds and the action of the Fort Hare students this past week has shown you cannot open minds and control them at the same time. In spite of the way Fort Hare is run, these students have not been turned into quiescent Uncle Toms; they have in fact risen to protest against the very authorities who are supposed to be inducing that quiescence. It is a fact that must be causing shudders of anxiety in Nationalist quarters which no doubt accounts for the harshness of their reaction."

On Tuesday 10 September both the Daily Dispatch and the Port Elizabeth, Eastern Province Herald made main front page leads out of the fact that Rhodes University students had overwhelmingly voted to go on a symbolic protest to Fort Hare on the coming Saturday if the students from the college had not reinstated the students by then. The SRC president, Mr Peter Harris, also revealed that the standing committee of SRC presidents planned to ask the Rector of Fort Hare to see them to discuss the situation. The motion passed at the meeting requested the principals of all South African universities "to protest most strongly against the summary mass suspension of the Fort Hare students and the resultant infringement of academic freedom." It also called on students of all other campuses to participate in the convoy.

The proposer of the motion, the SRC vice-president, Mr Ian Kirby, said (Daily Dispatch 10 September): "When action is taken against fellow students we must react. It was understandable that the students at Fort Hare found the situation intolerable."

Right of Protest

Referring to the threats made by the Prime Minister at Heilbron recently, Mr Kirby said: "I would like to ask the Prime Minister if he is the one who makes the laws. It is a serious situation when the Prime Minister threatens the legitimate right of protest. I believe they are designed to stop any protest on the campuses. It is possible that a large number of students will make up this symbolic protest on Saturday. Even if the deputation has no success, we will show that the students of South Africa will not be intimidated. It will be a symbol that we can still stand up when things are wrong in South Africa," he said.

Non-Violent Action

One student, Mr Tony Bates, said: "Never let us be compared to the students in Germany in the 1930s." Another student, the Rev James Polley, said he would consider whether the time had not been reached in South Africa for non-violent action. He felt he would not turn back if the police stopped the convoy on Saturday. "In almost every case token action has not been enough," Mr Polley said. The motion was passed by 243 votes to 12 with 112 abstentions. The Eastern Province Herald reported: "Nearly 600 students and staff members attended the meeting but many left shortly before the vote."

Meanwhile, the standing committee of SRC presidents deplored the actions taken at Fort Hare (as related in NUSAS circular P/100/68, dated September 20). They called on university principals to protest, for the campuses to protest with "vigour and determination", proposed a deputation of SRC presidents to try to see Prof. de Wet, and supported the idea of a protest convoy.

Mass Meeting

Also on Monday, September 9, a mass meeting was held at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg. The NUSAS circular quoted above says: "The NUSAS President addressed the meeting which was attended by over half the students on the campus (approx. 800). In his speech, he said "I would like to comment very briefly on the situation at Fort Hare. I think that the request put forward by the student body that the Rector should address them was a reasonable one. And the fact that they chose to follow up this request with a sit-in is, I think, indicative of the whole system at Fort Hare. It is a system where the authority of the Rector is used to suppress the opinions of students, not, as at other universities, to encourage them to express opinions. It is a system which bans organisations such as NUSAS and the University Christian Movement which encourage freedom of thought. It is a system which forbids elementary fund-raising schemes from operating on the campus. This system can only lead to the frustration of those who subject themselves to it. This system is a disgrace to the name of education in South Africa." At the end of the meeting a petition was circulated amongst students calling for the suspension of the Fort Hare students to be lifted immediately. The petition received over 1,000 signatures."

On September 9, under the headline of "PARENTS SOB: TAKE BACK OUR CHILDREN", the Daily Dispatch report continued: "Sobbing African couples - the parents of children who were removed from the Fort Hare University College campus last Friday - begged the Rector of the university college to allow their children to continue their studies."

The Rector, Prof. J. M. de Wet, said the parents had been given a hearing but he could not give the assurance that their children could continue their studies. Final decision on this matter would be taken at a special meeting of the full Senate of the university college today. Meanwhile, all was calm at the university college yesterday and no classes were cancelled. There were, however, only a few students attending each class. Only 171 of the 461 students at the college were still on the campus.

Friendly Reaction

Prof. and Mrs de Wet visited the men's and women's hostels after the suspensions. "I addressed the men students. The reaction was very friendly and I was thanked for the visit," Prof. de Wet said. Yesterday about 20 students, accompanied by their parents, arrived at Prof. de Wet's office to apologise and make application for re-entry into the college. "The parents were disappointed and sad over the unpleasantness," Prof. de Wet said. A senior police officer from King William's Town said yesterday no students were being held by the police. The campus, he said, was now forbidden territory for the students who had been removed by the police."

Overseas Influence

On Tuesday 10 September the Daily Dispatch commented editorially over a statement by the Commissioner-General of the Xhosa people, Mr J.H. Abraham, that the trouble at Fort Hare which led to the suspension of half its students was due to influence from overseas. This, the editorial said, appeared "to be further evidence of how out of touch our leaders are with the situation. Apart from other considerations, on the face of things alone one needn't look farther than Fort Hare itself for the probable cause of the trouble.

This is an institution constituted along lines foreign to the preferences of most African students, and one has to add to this basic bone of contention a lack of relationship of sympathy and respect between lecturers and students, use of student informers by the Special Branch, and the banning of a students' representative council for a complete picture of legitimate grievances. Many might have wondered why the students wanted the Rector to address them as a body rather than through a deputation but it is understandable when one bears in mind that the students are not allowed an SRC and fear that members of a deputation might be victimised."

Also on Tuesday 10 September Grocott's Mail of Grahamstown carried a report by an observer of the situation at Fort Hare; most of the information has been covered earlier but it does add other incidents.

"A practical joke arranged by three or four students on their own. (This was shortly after the slogans appeared on the walls of the college, but before they were called to the Rector). "These students reported that a certain student had died from an overdose of sleeping tablets. The 'death' was announced in the cafeterias. The local hospital was alerted, and a doctor and ambulance were promptly despatched to the scene. Prayers were offered by some local ministers and students. The Registrar, wardens and students crowded round. A ladder was fetched to enable students who were assisting to break through the second floor window to get to the 'dead' man who was said to have locked himself inside. The authorities reacted angrily when it was discovered that the whole hullabaloo was a hoax."

The Grocott's reported that after the 17 had been seen by the Rector, they arranged for an interview with the Liaison Committee, to which they put their grievances. They complained that being singled out

like that implied victimisation and possible exclusion from the college the following year, as had been the case with students who had led anti-police interference protest of August 1966.

The Liaison Committee recorded the students' complaints and promised to consult the Rector as soon as possible. Up to now the Liaison Committee has not reported back to the students.

Security Branch interrogation of some of the 17 students followed soon afterwards." The report concludes: "More than 400 out of a total of nearly 500 students were taking part in the 'sit-down'. A notable feature is that the 17 students singled out have divorced themselves from leadership in the demonstration; a fact which makes nonsense of the claim that they are the leaders. The Rector has adopted a ridiculous position: he would rather close down the college than address or confer with the students."

Witwatersrand Protest

The NUSACircular (P/100/68, dated 20 September) continues: "On Tuesday, September 10, a mass meeting of students was held at Witwatersrand University. The meeting was attended by about 1200 students. The students resolved to hold a picket protest on the pavement in Jan Smuts Avenue, that same afternoon between 4.30 and 6.30. The protest was held that afternoon and at about 5.00 pm a group of policemen arrived and began taking names of students who held posters and demanded of the SRC president, Mr Mark Orkin, that he move the students back off the pavement. Mr Orkin attempted to do this as he was not aware of his legal position but the students were reluctant to move and began chanting and shouting.

At about 5.30 pm a riot van containing about 20 policemen arrived on the scene and formed up across the road from the protesters. They marched across the road towards the protesters who began shouting "Sieg Heil Sieg Heil". They then proceeded to take posters away from students and to take down the names of students who had been holding posters. The students still refused to move back and stood their ground demanding the names and addresses of the policemen. During the incident a number of policemen were jostled, their caps knocked off their heads, and abuse hurled at them by the students at the picket. No arrests were made.

The Rand Daily Mail of 11 September quoted the SRC Vice-President, Mr N. Curtis, as saying to the police officer in charge, Col. J. de W. Brandt: "I respectfully submit that we are within our rights. Under what law are you ordering us to move?" He asked permission to get legal advice. Col. Brandt: "I can't wait for that". A section of the report read: "Some of the police were good humoured. One accepted a flower from a girl student."

It soon became evident that the police could not get hold of all the posters as many students refused to give them and a number merely ran away and stood holding the poster somewhere else. At about 6.15 pm the police left and at 6.30 pm the poster demonstration was broken up.

Further Protest

A student body meeting was held at Wits the next day at which the Wits students voted to hold a picket protest on the same place from 2.00 to 3.00 that afternoon. All held blank posters and there were no incidents.

Die Transvaler front-page headline of the Witwatersrand student protest (and photograph) read: WITS TART: POLISIE TREE OP.

The Star (of 11 September) carried a photograph on the front page of a protester with a poster labelled: "Truth is mightier than the truncheon."

At lunchtime on the same day a student body meeting was held at the Johannesburg College of Education and was addressed by the NUSAS President. The meeting resolved to hold a picket protest on the College grounds from 4.30 pm to 6.30 pm that evening. At 4 o'clock the Rector, Dr Holmes, requested the SRC president, Mr Ken Jubber, not to hold the picket protest on the campus but to move it off campus grounds. The SRC president agreed to this and students who wished to hold their posters were told to do so off College grounds. About 30 students stood in the road outside the College holding their posters spaced ten yards apart.

Names Taken

At 5 o'clock two riot vans, each containing 20 policemen, plus five motorbikes and a few police cars arrived on the scene. The names of all students holding posters were taken and their posters confiscated. Three students were almost arrested, but were released after the NUSAS President had spoken to the Colonel in charge of the operation. The students remained until 6.30 pm without posters."

The Cape Argus (of Cape Town) commented in an editorial on 10 September: "A community dedicated - as a university must be - to fostering vigorous and healthy minds, cannot function in an atmosphere of restraint, suspicion or fear.... Now perhaps more than ever before there is a need for mutual tolerance and something of the spirit which induced Oliver Cromwell to say to the army of the Kirk on the eve of the battle of Dunbar: "I beseech you in the bowels of Christ consider that you may possibly be wrong."'

"This is an extract from the report of the Committee of Inquiry into student affairs at the University of Natal which sat under the chairmanship of Mr Justice Harcourt. It is a report which has relevance to student affairs in all South African universities. Right now its recommendations could well be helpful to those in authority at the University College of Fort Hare.

"The grievances seem to be mainly due to a breakdown in relations between the students and the new Rector. He comes to Fort Hare from the University of Potchefstroom and they allege that he has restricted social activities on the campus. They claim to be operating in an atmosphere of restraint. In the circumstances the need for tolerance is manifest. On all these points the Harcourt Committee has laid down useful guidelines.

"It makes a special point of the temptation university principals must feel at times to give military kind of order to someone but it comes down firmly on the side of discussion and persuasion. It points to the need in the words of the report 'for the old generation to show tolerance and a measure of understanding and charity for youth in an anxiety-ridden age of unprecedented change.' Fort Hare's difficulties could be resolved if communications were free and frequent and if both the authorities and students were to ask themselves: could we possibly be wrong?"

In an editorial headed ONWERDRAAGSAME STUDENTE, Die Oosterlig commented on 10 September: "Die studente aan die Universiteitskollege Fort Hare op Alice was deeglik bewus van die moontlikheid dat hulle die voorreg om te studeer ontsê kan word as hulle sou volhou met hul koppige sitstaking. Trouens, dit is nie die eerste keer dat die kollege se owerheid 'n sterk standpunt teenoor moedswilligheid

inneem nie en die les kon uit die verlede wel deeglik geleer gewees het. Maar die rektor van die kollege het dit ook duidelik aan die studente laat deurskemer dat die gevolge van staking ernstig kan wees. Hy het sy bes gedoen om vas te stel wat die studente wil hê en homself bereid verklaar om 'n afvaardigieng te woord te staan. Die antwoord op sy bereidwilligheid was eise waaraan nie voldoen kon word nie.

"Hierna is die studente ernstig gewaarsku om met hul staking op te hou en lesings by te woon en uiteindelik het die ultimatum gevolg waaraan 'n groep gehoor gegee het. Die res van die stakers is huis toe gestuur en ontbeer nou die reg om met hul studies voort te gaan. As hulle terugkeer, sal dit in alle opsigte 'n toegewing van die kant van die kollege-owerheid wees.

Wat veral interessant is, is dat diegene wat die meeste bekommerd is oor die outonomie van universiteite en die reg van universiteite om oor hul eie sake te besluit, die grootste opgewondenheid openbaar oor die dissiplinêre stappe waarop Fort Hare besluit het - en waartoe die rektor en die Senaat krugtens die statute van die kollege geregtig was om op te besluit. Wie rang nou in by die interne sake van 'n opvoedkundige inrigting?

Linkesgesinde Studente

Dit is nie die Regering nie, maar 'n klomp linkesgesinde studente van Rhodes wat, na hul vergadering gisteraand, wil "opdruk" om hul ontevredenheid te gaan uitspreek oor 'n saak wat hulle nie raak nie. Hierdie besluit is nie onverwags nie, want dit is maar by herhaling 'n manifestasie van die onverdraagsameheid, voorbarigheid en eie-geregtigheid van die liberalistiese voorstanders van gelykstelling. Hul vermetelheid lê daarin dat hulle dink hul die enigste mense is wat reg is; dat hulle, omdat hulle dan reg sou wees, nie gekritiseer mag word deur diegene wat nie met hulle saamstem nie.

Dat hulle, omdat hulle dan reg sou wees, die reg het om andere met wie hulle nie saamstem nie, te kritiseer en om teen hulle protestbetogings te hou. Voorwaar die openbering van 'n gesindheid wat niks anders veragting verdien nie."

Warning

On Wednesday 11 September the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development and Bantu Education, Mr M. C. Botha, issued a statement to SAPA warning that "the affairs of Fort Hare did not concern White students and their organisations and the Department of Bantu Education and the authorities would not tolerate interference in the affairs of the university college and its student body. The Minister said the authorities at Fort Hare would consider on their merits, applications by suspended students who wished to return to continue their studies in a bona fide manner. From Press reports it had been noticed that all kinds of intentions existed in White student circles to interfere in the affairs of the university college of Fort Hare by way of protests or otherwise.

"I hereby warn that individuals who wish to interfere in such a way will not be allowed on the campus of Fort Hare and such persons who find themselves on the campus without permission will be removed." Also in Pretoria yesterday, the Minister of Police and of the Interior, Mr S. L. Muller, said the country-wide protest planned by the English universities as a result of the Fort Hare incident would not be tolerated by the Government. Mr Muller repeated the warning of the Prime Minister, Mr Vorster, that 'the necessary steps will be taken if deemed necessary.'"

Referring to Mr M. C. Botha's warning to the students, the Diamond Fields Advertiser of Kimberley commented on 12 September: "If he means that the affairs of the university are of no concern to the students of another, the structure should be applied generally including those Government-supporting students from other universities who certainly did not remain aloof from the affairs of Cape Town and Witwatersrand students recently."

Commission of Inquiry

On the same day, Dr Jan Steytler, leader of the Progressive Party, called for a commission of inquiry into the affairs of the college. According to a SAPA report, "Dr Steytler said recent events at Fort Hare were 'a slap in the face for the Nationalist Government. They show quite clearly that thinking Africans reject separate development and its machinery. We feel the time has come to hold an impartial committee of inquiry into the affairs at Fort Hare, similar to the one which recently investigated problems at the University of Natal. By its clumsy actions, the Government is building up frustration and bitter non-White intelligensia which, in years to come, may well turn against the White man in South Africa.'"

Also on 11 September, the Daily Dispatch reported that the Fort Hare Senate had met for four hours to discuss the question of re-admitting suspended students, without coming to any decision. "It was said afterwards no statement could be issued as the discussions had not yet been completed. The Senate will meet again today."

Later in the report it was said that the following message had been received from a group of Port Elizabeth Fort Hare students at the Rhodes University SRC offices: "We, as a group of suspended Fort Hare students in Port Elizabeth, wish to state that we support the action taken and to be taken by the Rhodes SRC and the SRCs throughout the country in protest against our suspension. Discussions will be held tomorrow morning to decide on what action to take should half of us be readmitted and the other half not. We hope to contact suspended students in other parts of the country before a decision is made on this. It is hoped that some Fort Hare students will be able to attend the protest on Saturday."

On 11 September, Die Transvaler commented in an editorial headed 'KOM DAAR BOETSING?': "Volgens berigte wat in die pers verskyn het, wil dit lyk of studente aan die Engels universiteite - hoofsaaklike diegene wat aktief in NUSAS is - hulle gereed maak om ondermal die gesag van die owerheid uit te daag. Hierdie keer wil hulle protes- teer en betoog teen die skorsing van 'n aantal nie-blanke studente by die Universiteitskollege van Fort Hare.

Die Rektor van die inrigting, prof. dr. J. M. de Wet, moes tot die stap oorgaan om die dissipline onder die studente te handhaaf. Nou wil die lede van NUSAS hulle met die saak handhaaf. Hulle sou o.m. van plan wees om 'n afvaardiging na prof. de Wet te stuur. Uit wat al tevore gebeur het, kan hy voorbaat aanvaar word dat dit nie die doel met die afvaardiging sal wees om 'n ligting by prof. de Wet te verkry nie. In hul aстранtheid sal die lede van die afvaardiging aan hom wil voorskryf wat hy mag doen en wat hy nie mag doen nie. Dit spreek vanself dat so iets in geen omstandigheid geduld mag word nie. Met die oog opal die moeilikhede wat haas beardelose studente wil verwerk, sal die grootste deel van die publiek dit gewis van harte verwelkom dat die Regering nie van plan is om dit lydelik te aanvaar dat sy gesag uitgedaag word nie.

Twee stappe wat reeds gedoen is, getuig baie duidelik daarvan. Die eerste is die benoeming van 'n kommissie van ondersoek na sekere aangeleenthede by die Suid-Afrikaanse universiteite - o.m. die gedrag en optrede van die studente. Die tweede is die aankondiging van die Minister van Binnelandse Sake en Polisie, mnr. S. L. Muller, dat studentebetogings nie geduld sal word nie. Dit volg op die verklaring van die Eerste Minister, mnr. B. J. Vorster, enkele weke gelede dat hy sal optree teen sodanige gedrag van kante van die studente.

Indien die lede van NUSAS wil doen wat in sommige persberigte voorgespieël word, bestaan die moeilikheid due dat daar in naaste toe, ons botsings tussen die owerheid en die studente van sekere universiteite kan plaasvind. Die Transvaler was in sy bestaan van byne nog nooit 'n vriend van NUSAS nie, omdat hy die liberalistiese beginsels van hierdie liggaam verfoei. Nogtans ag hy dit sy plig om die lede van NUSAS ernstig te waarsku dat 'n botsing met die owerheid hom baie suur sal bekom.

Dit is 'n ydele hoop om te dink dat hulle die Regering kan uitdaag. Dit het daarom ook tyd geword om 'n beroep te doen op die ouers van studente wat tot NUSAS behoort. Onder hulle is daar ook Afrikaners van wie sommige waarskynlik deur omstandighede gedwing is om hul kinders na 'n Engelse universiteitsinrigting te stuur. Hierdie Afrikaanse ouers moet tans baie deeglik besef dat hul kinders gevaar loop om deur NUSAS met sy liberalisme op 'n verkeerde weg gevoer te word. Dit behoort in die mag van die ouers te wees om dit te verhinder. Laat hulle dus sorg dat hul kinders nie in onnodige moeilikhede betrokke raak nie".

Grave Concern

On Thursday 12 September the Daily Dispatch reported that the Rhodes University Council was "gravely concerned about a proposed convoy of Rhodes University students to Fort Hare." A special meeting of the Council unanimously adopted the following resolutions: "That the Council noted with grave concern the formal protest which certain students at the university intended to make at Alice following the recent events at the University College of Fort Hare. That the Council was of the opinion that the nature of the proposed demonstration or actions could result in incidents having the most serious consequences.

That Council considers any demonstration or actions which constitute interference in the affairs of another university institution to be a negation of the concept of university autonomy, indefensible and inimical to good relations between university institutions."

The same report said that Pietermaritzburg students had called off a planned protest convoy to Fort Hare at weekend on learning that the Rector would not see a deputation of SRC presidents. And that the University of Cape Town S&C had sent a telegram to the Rector expressing concern at the suspensions, and asking him his viewpoint on events at the college. The SRC at the Federal Theological Seminary deplored the expulsion of the Fort Hare students in a motion passed at a meeting.

The motion read: (Daily Dispatch, 12 September) "We shall be unfair to our convictions and dishonest to our calling if we fail to express our concern for the unfortunate and somewhat unnecessary event at the University College of Fort Hare which resulted in the suspension of approximately 300 students; the intervention of the police when no violence was exhibited; the unwarranted waste of money and time which such action incurs. It is our considered opinion that there were, and still are, more effective means of reaching a settlement." The motion was signed by all ten members of the SRC. The newspaper also reported that no statement had been issued by the Senate yet but that the issues had to be considered by the Fort Hare Advisory Council and the executive Council before any statement would be issued.

Torch Light Procession

In the Evening Post of 12 September and in the main lead front page of the Natal Witness of Pietermaritzburg, it was reported that more than 100 students at Pietermaritzburg had staged a torch-light procession from the SRC building to the main hall at the University of Natal campus there. "The procession followed a teach-in held at the university at which Senator H.B. Klopper, representing the National Party, addressed students on non-White university colleges, with particular reference to the happenings at Fort Hare.

"The president of the SRC at the university, Mr Pat Stillwell, said the procession was staged to protest for "the immediate and unconditional readmission of the students at Fort Hare." The procession was orderly. When the students carrying the torches arrived at the main hall they stood in silence.

"Referring to Fort Hare University College, Senator Klopper said he knew as a fact that 'other forces' were involved, including NUSAS and the University Christian Movement. He said the non-White university colleges had been said by some people to be 'bush universities'. This was not true; they were playing their part in training the Bantu to serve their own people. They would in time become autonomous." The same newspaper also reported that the Prime Minister, when opening the Transvaal Congress of the National Party, said that the government would not allow them to disrupt the peace and create disorder anywhere in South Africa.

Empty Promises

An editorial in Rhodesia on September 12 said that "recent government actions have made politics a university issue. The summing of Prof. de Wet, Principal of Fort Hare, to Pretoria and the subsequent suspension of three quarters of the students amply demonstrates this. The operation was carried out with unnecessary military force... The signs are Khosa opinion is demanding more than empty promises. The unrest at Fort Hare is one manifestation of this growing demand for justice. White South African students could well take heed of the courageous stand of their African colleagues. They too are under pressure - they too should resist. A concerted stand from all the universities is needed. The Prime Minister has made his attitude clear. If we have not been intimidated let us make our stand clear too."

The NUSAS circular quoted earlier goes on: "A student body meeting was held at the University of Cape Town and attended by 1200 students. The students held a picket protest until 6.30 in the evening on the de Waal Drive. Although police were evident they did not attempt to break up the picket. The picketing students caused a large traffic jam which held up cars for quite some time. On Friday the students held a picket protest on the steps of the St Georges Cathedral and this protest was broken up by about 50 naval trainees who ripped posters away from students and hurled abuse at the students. Although police were in the vicinity they did not intervene."

On Friday 13 September the Daily Dispatch reported that the Minister of Roads and Works in the Transkei Bantustan, Mr Z. M. Mabandla, had attacked the mass suspension of the Fort Hare students. The report went on: "In a hard-hitting statement he challenged the sincerity of the mentors and protagonists of the policy of separate development.

"Although the African has been acclimatised to anaesthetic numbness in matters affecting his well-being in the past through domination, the stage has now been reached when we can no longer accept the bitter pill lying down," he said. "The time has come when the opinion of the people concerned must be heard. It is true that silence is synonymous

with consent but not with the Fort Hare suspensions.' Mr Mabandla said it was significant that the sit-in episode had a universal outlook transcending continents like the "proverbial winds of change."

Not Communistic Inspiration

The theme of the protest was reform of chronic archaic methods in universities and colleges. It was not due to communistic inspirations as some people thought, but to the fact that human endurance had its limits beyond which any attempt to suppress free expression resulted in nothing short of a hot-bed for sowing the seeds of chaos and revolution, he said. Mr Mabandla said the analytical background of the incident at Fort Hare had been given prominence by the Press and the man in the street had been given an opportunity to draw a dividing line between the administration and the students.

"It would be wrong, however, to pass an opinion at this stage as the whole question is being handled by responsible people. Nevertheless one cannot easily dismiss fears and anxieties that when grave situations of this nature affecting Africans arises, the dominant fact is that his case is seen through White eyes. Unpalatable though this expression is, the fact that the college is run by a White governing council cannot be challenged. We agree there is an all-Black advisory council - but its functions are indeed limited. So limited in fact its purpose is questionable except as a franking device. It would relieve consciences of many people to be honest and sincere in their dealings with other people.

The illusion Transkeians had that they have a stake at Fort Hare has been shown to be nothing but empty bubbles.

Hypocrisy and Mockery

The lesson has been repeated so often only a fool has not taken it to heart. We have watched these developments with great interest, particularly when responsible talk of separate institutions. To me institutions do not mean only structures but the whole system - material as well as spiritual. Nobody has any right to talk of separate institutions and separate racial groups because it becomes sheer hypocrisy and a mockery when honesty is not observed, Mr Mabandla said. Mr Mabandla's two sons at the college have both been suspended. One of them was doing his final year for a bachelor's degree. It is believed the Bantustan government will make representations at high level on behalf of suspended Transkeian students. Among the expelled students are those who had been granted bursaries by the government."

The Daily News of Durban of 13 September reported that 300 students at the University of Natal, Durban, had attended a protest meeting on the Fort Hare situation. One of the speakers was Dr Edgar Brooks: "Dr Brookes said White students had a duty to look after the interests of Black students as they were part of the academic community. 'I beg of you who stand here defending academic freedom and fair play that whatever happens you will keep loyal to this in years to come and dedicate your whole lives to the cause of freedom'. Mr Alan Paton, the South African author and former leader of the now defunct Liberal Party, told students Fort Hare was under the control of the Special Branch. He said it was a deperate thing for the Fort Hare students to realise that unless they conformed there was no future for them and if they did conform they would cease to be men and women. 'Do I say what you think is right because ultimately this is the only way to render service to your community.' The students, holding torches, protested on the steps until 10 pm. Two Special Branch detectives sat in a car taking notes during the speeches and left just before the demonstration ended."

Police Intervention

On Friday 13 September it became apparent that there were fears of police intervention in the running of the proposed convoy. The issue of Grocott's Mail of that date said that in the course of an interview the NUSAS President, Mr Duncan Innes, had said "he was afraid for the safety of the students who might take part in the proposed convoy to Alice. He said: 'The interference of police in our protests is something which I had not considered could happen. However, the Prime Minister's threats have now become a reality and I fear for the safety of many students who may wish to exercise their right to protest.'"

The newspaper revealed that the Rhodes students were to have another student body meeting to consider a motion, proposed by the NUSAS deputy vice-president, Andy Murray, that the convoy be called off and that one car, with a wreath, go to the Stewart Memorial in Alice. Mr Murray was quoted as saying: "We are doing this because legal council and university authorities have indicated that they are afraid that a disturbance might be staged against which would lead to the injury of students." It also revealed that Rhodes students were to hold a protest march in Grahamstown on Monday and that permission had been obtained for this from the Grahamstown City Council. This story was carried in Die Oosterlig of Port Elizabeth as well.

Convoy Called Off

On Saturday 14 September in a front page lead story the Daily Dispatch revealed that the students at a Rhodes University student body meeting had called off the proposed convoy and that student leaders from Witwatersrand, Cape Town and Rhodes Universities would lay a wreath at the foot of the Stewart Memorial. "The monument commemorates Dr James Stewart, pioneer of African education in South Africa. It stands on a hilltop about two miles from Fort Hare University. The wreath will be laid to symbolise White student protest against the expulsion from Fort Hare University last week of nearly 300 students."

The paper said the convoy had been called off because the situation could lead to violence. "Last night the Nusas councillor on the SRC at Rhodes and deputy vice-president of Nusas, Mr Andy Murray, appealed to students who might decide to go to Alice individually today to keep away from the car carrying the student leaders.

"We do not want anything which looks like a staged demonstration because this may provoke a situation leading to unfortunate results," he said..... Mr Murray said he had information from people at Alice and at Rhodes that if the students were to go in a convoy they might be harmed if there was a confrontation with any authorities.

"If there was an incident the Government might turn to the public and say: 'You see what student violence is.'"

"If that happened student leaders might be banned or deported and Nusas and UCM could be banned. The students decided at last night's meeting to start a fund to help the suspended Fort Hare students with their education." It was also reported that Mr Peter Harris, president of the Rhodes SRC, had been told by the Grahamstown Town Clerk that permission for Monday's protest march had been withdrawn. "The Town Clerk said he could not give the reason for this decision."

On Saturday September 14 a statement was issued by about 100 students from all four English-speaking universities. This statement was reprinted in the Port Elizabeth Evening Post of September 14. The full statement issued by these students reads:

Statement issued by students going to Alice
on Saturday September 14

"About 100 students representative of the four English-speaking universities have decided to convene at James Stewart's Memorial at 3.30 pm this afternoon. They will be leaving at different times of the day and will be going in their private capacity. They are not going in an organised convoy.

"At a meeting last night they took the decision to go for three reasons:

"First, because they want to demonstrate their full support for the 290 suspended Fort Hare students. They want to urge, by their action, that the students be readmitted unconditionally, the Rector address them and consult with them about their grievances.

"Second, because they are horrified and appalled by the serious limitations placed on students' freedom at Fort Hare by the entire structure of tribal college administration and direct government control with subsequent interference.

"Third, because they are horrified and appalled by the pressure put on students of English-speaking universities by: the threats and insults of the Prime Minister; the warnings of the Minister of Police; the ruthless action taken against students by the Special Branch and police; the arbitrary withdrawal of the permit to march in Grahamstown on Monday; above all - the extensive troop and police movements in Grahamstown and Alice in preparation for this perfectly legal symbolic protest. It has been verified that army convoys, Saracens and police have moved into the area and that the lives of the students are at stake.

The students see this as South Africa's domestic version of Czechoslovakia.

It is incredible that such steps should be taken to intimidate and possibly prevent an orderly legal protest. By this journey this afternoon the students wish to communicate to all concerned that:

- a) they will not be intimidated by military and police pressure in their own country
- b) they have confidence in their basic right to protest legally and without provocation. They will maintain that right to the end and at any cost, because they will not submit to totalitarianism in their fatherland. They will stand for democracy to the end; and only the horror of military violence can destroy that.
- c) they have enough confidence in the leadership of the country to believe that they will not cause another Sharpsville.

The students are going to Stewart's Memorial because it was he who laid down the blue-print for Fort Hare as a non-tribal national university with full autonomy and religious freedom. The action taken by our Government has ripped that foundation and destroyed that vision and we go today to mourn and yet to affirm that we stand with Stewart and not with Mr B. Coetzee on this issue."

Teach-In

On the morning of the 14th of September, the first ever teach-in was held at Rhodes University (a fact highlighted in the next issue of the student newspaper, Rhodeo). An Evening Post report of the teach-in gave this account: "About 250 students from all the English-speaking universities attended the teach-in held at Rhodes this morning. Speakers included a suspended Fort Hare student; Mr Athol Fugard, reknowned playwright; Duncan Innes, NUSAS president; and the Rev James Moulder, national president of UCM. The suspended Fort Hare student outlined the background to the Fort Hare crisis. Discussing the future of the suspended students he said:

"Students will have to decide soon whether they will accept exit permits."

"He believed students should go to Fort Hare today as it would encourage those left to continue with their stand. 'I doubt if anything will happen with the authorities if you obey their orders,' he said. Today's protest was an admission of defeat and the death of the right to protest in South Africa, Mr Philip van der Merwe, SRC president at UCT, said. 'But in this admission of defeat there is also a re-dedication,' he added. 'Although the wreath-laying is symbolic, one day it will be real.' Mr Andy Murray, NUSAS Deputy Vice-President, said things had now come to the stage where the legality of protests was not the issue. 'In the eyes of the Government anyone who objects to anything outside the traditional way of life is acting 'illegally''. Permission had to be obtained for every little protest demonstration held.

Tragedy

"But the worst tragedy is that this attitude is reflected by the university authorities. They must comply with the regulations but they need not accept them. Today they do not come out and say they disagree with these inroads on legitimate protest although they must comply with them. The public is also accepting this attitude, and it is now spreading to the university campuses. Students have become apathetic and afraid to act because of what has happened in the past and what might happen if they protest in the future. But to accept that the Government can suppress legitimate protest is to accept also their policies.

"Mr Peter Harris, Rhodes SRC president, said more tragic than the restrictions on legitimate student protest was the rift which had arisen between university authorities and students. 'In the Fort Hare issue we had hoped the authorities of just one of the so-called liberal universities would speak out about the injustice done and support South African student reaction. They kept silent. Only one spoke out - Rhodes - and there they spoke out against the students' protest, on the grounds that these were interfering with the university autonomy of Fort Hare. I would like to take issue with the Rhodes authorities,' said Mr Harris. 'Autonomy is granted not to the University Council but to the body of students and staff who together form the corporate spirit of the university. At Fort Hare this was not the case. The students had no say and the authorities used their say to stifle thought. They abrogated their right to claim university autonomy and cannot use the cry of autonomy as a shield to hide behind.'

Protest Not Tolerated

"Mr Duncan Innes, President of NUSAS, said it had become clear that student demonstrations were no longer tolerated in South Africa. The Improper Interference Bill protest, the Mafeje protest and the Fort Hare protest were instances where White students had demonstrated for the rights of non-Whites. 'Protests over the banning of Dr Hoffenberg and Ian Robertson where White students protested for the rights of White men were not disturbed by police intervention. But the protests of White on behalf of non-White produce riot vans, police, dogs, beating and unruly conduct.

"The government fears more than anything else protests that smash through the apartheid system.

"They will bring in more policemen, more police vans and more police dogs, and when the armed might of White South Africa is poised above us, let the Black student and the White student simply join hands, for this is our defiance!"

Rhodes (on September 19) reported that at the end of the teach-in, "a fiery UCT student leapt up and lashed Rhodes students. 'I did not intend to speak,' he said, 'but I felt so overwhelmed I had to. Perhaps we are more experienced in these things at UCT but we really expected more support from Rhodes students. We came up here to protest and we find people talking about death. We are not dead; we are not even sick; we are alive. And so we should do something to protest.

"We should have the courage to take some action. It is our shame that after ten days we were intimidated into leaving the Mafeje sit-in. Let us not have the same shame here!"

Road Blockades

Die Volksblad of Bloemfontein in a front page report on 14 September, headlined "NUWE SPANNING TAAI OP: Polisie Gereed vir Studente", reported:

"Ons hou ons oë oop. Ons is slaggereed as daar moeilikheid kom, het kol. D.W. Mildenhall, distrikskommandant vandag telefonies aan Die Volksblad gesê. Kol. Mildenhall sê daar was verlede nag pad blokkades op die paaie tussen Grahamstad en Port Elisabeth, Port Alfred, Fort Beaufort en Cradock. Die dreef was enersyds die gewone misdaad bekampig andersyds, in die lig van die studente se oorspronklike plan om met konvoie motors te ry, was die doel om die paaie skoon te hou en konvoie op te breek."

Wreath-Laying Ceremony

The wreath-laying ceremony at the Stewart Memorial was highlighted as the main front page lead on the Saturday edition of the Evening Post (14 September) and the Daily Dispatch (16 September); and the back page lead of the Sunday Express (17 September). The Evening Post report said that the films of three press photographers who took pictures of the wreath-laying and protest at the Stewart Memorial were confiscated in terms of the Official Secrets Act of 1956. "The photographers' names were taken and they were told the film would be returned at "some future date". The student leaders who travelled to Alice to lay the wreath were Mr Duncan Innes, NUSAS President; Mr Peter Harris, President of the Rhodes SRC; Mr Phil van der Merwe, President of the ICT SRC; and Mr Andy Murray, NUSAS Deputy Vice-President from Rhodes. The car was stopped two miles outside Grahamstown at a routine police checkpoint.

Special Branch

"The head of the Grahamstown Special Branch, Captain F.G. Sauerman, and another member of the Special Branch, were sitting in a police van nearby. There were no further checkpoints on the way. In Alice when the students' car passed the University College, a car containing four Special Branch men pulled out and followed them to the monument. A police van and seven Special Branch men with cameras waited inside the grounds of the memorial. The student leaders were told that the approach to the memorial belonged to the Lovedale Trust. Permission for entrance had to be obtained from the magistrate. An alternative route was found and permission readily obtained from the head of the Federal Seminary, Mr E. Campbell.

Photographs

"When the students, accompanied by several theological students from the Seminary, arrived at the memorial, four Special Branch men, two with cameras, awaited them. They took photographs of everyone present. A wreath was laid by Mr Innes and a petition signed by students against the summary suspension of Fort Hare students was laid beside the wreath by Mr van der Merwe.

"Before he laid the wreath, Mr Innes said: 'We stand to remember a man who had a dream of Fort Hare. We express our regret Sir James Stewart's dream has not been realised. Today intolerable conditions of oppression prevail on the Fort Hare campus. Students walk in fear.' About 100 students from universities all over the country arrived at the memorial at ten minute intervals to pay tribute. Col. J. Mildenhall, District Commandant of Police in Grahamstown confirmed today that police blocks were set up on all roads surrounding Grahamstown last night. He denied, however, that these blocks were in any way related to the Fort Hare ceremony."

The Daily Dispatch report on 16 September, headed "WARNINGS DEFIED AS STUDENTS PROTEST", gave a more detailed account of the wreath-laying ceremony. It contained a report saying that the film belonging to the Daily Dispatch chief photographer, Mr Don Watson, had been returned to him as long as he did not publish any pictures of the police, as this was an offence under the Official Secrets Act of 1956. The report quoted Mr Innes as saying: "We stand here today in remembrance of a great man and a great humanitarian." He then discussed Dr Stewart's role in the establishment of Fort Hare and the conditions on the campus, outlined above.

He went on to say: "Students walk in fear amidst informers and unsympathetic staff. The pursuit of truth is hampered and strangled by bans on free discussion and inter-varsity contact. The right of protest is dead. We stand here to pray that Fort Hare will know university life in its true sense and that its campus will live in a spirit of tolerance, fellowship and the dignity of man."

Another section of the report revealed that the protesters did not cross Federal Seminary land, as reported earlier, but land belonging to the Church of Scotland. The report also had these paragraphs:

"A mystery wreath puzzled Special Branch men who watched students laying a wreath at Stewart Memorial. Noticed after the official student party had left, it bore the unsigned inscription: 'In memory of the days when students came to a university to study.' The Security Branch photographed the wreath and card."

Hunger Week

The Evening Post edition contained two separate reports on Fort Hare, one of them outlining the reasons for the sit-in. It said that the Rector in the second term gave permission for two concerts to be held. After R70 damage was done to the hall after the first concert he refused to allow the second one. "Relations first became strained when Hunger Week was organised by African students to help feed hungry children in Alice. The Rector told them: "Go and study. You'll help your people when you have graduated."

"The same answer was given to YMCA students who asked permission to organise a variety show charity. However, soon afterwards the all-White Rhodes Chamber Choir was allowed to perform at Fort Hare to raise funds for SANTA. The students felt this situation would not have arisen under the previous Rector, Prof. Johannes Ross. Student opinion at the time of the sit-in was that the action of the Rector was dictatorial.....

"The authorities are said to describe the nearby Federal Theological Seminary as a camp for "political refugees". This week a written statement was sent to the Senate by some remaining women students who alleged they were intimidated by protesting students who told them they would be murdered if they did not give support. The women asked that the intimidators should not be allowed back. The intimidators, they said, were armed and September 7 was to be a "day of mayhem". These allegations have been denied by Seminary staff and students and expelled students, who said the sit-in was orderly and peaceful. No evidence of a violent attitude was shown. It was rumoured that a bottle of inflammable material was found in a residence and a case containing pangas and knives in a cupboard in the administration buildings.

"The authenticity of this report is doubted.

"Students say that if pangas were stored by violent members the surrounding bush would offer a better hiding place. No student holds any keys to the cupboard in question. They feel the weapons could have been planted there to intimidate the sit-down students."

As If a Curfew....

Perhaps the most graphic account of the situation at Fort Hare was contained in the second report in that edition of the Evening Post. It was written by a staff reporter. "COLLEGE WHERE SIRENS WAIL. Driving through the main gates at Fort Hare College a visitor is confronted by a large signboard which reads: "No unauthorised person may enter the College grounds. By order." A siren wails, as if announcing a curfew. Sirens are sounded, apparently, to signal the start of lecture periods. Situated in the picturesque Alice hills, about 80 miles from East London, Fort Hare is described by students and many locals as "The Fort". A stranger, seeing its complex of modern clean buildings and driveways in their serene setting could easily mistake it for an asylum of some sort.

"On Friday last week more than 200 students sat outside the main administration building in protest; that day they were suspended by the Rector, Prof J.M. de Wet, and sent home. When a reporter visited Fort Hare yesterday all was quiet on the campus. The only activity was that of some builders working on two new three-storey buildings, one a library and the other a new women's residence. 'Professor de Wet has nothing to say to the Press today. He is very busy with appointments. If you want to see him you can come back on Monday.' This was the response by a woman in the Administration building to an inquiry.

'Yes, you can look around the college. But under no circumstances may you talk to any of the students', the Assistant Registrar said."

Later an official showed the reporter round some of the Fort Hare buildings. "A few students passed us quietly and quickly in the corridors. Most of their faces were quite expressionless."

Unfortunate Spirit

The Evening Post commented editorially on September 14: "Nothing reveals the unfortunate administration spirit at Fort Hare more starkly than what happened to nearly 100 students who are not officially regarded as strikers. These students were bundled out with the others by armed police who had dogs. Surely in the circumstances the administration might have been expected to keep as many students as possible at Fort Hare and demonstrate its concern for those students who it did not regard as offenders? The official explanation is that the non-strikers were sent home in error, but this is not good enough.

"The fact that they were herded with the rest and brusquely escorted to the railway station indicates an impatient administrative spirit, lacking in judicial discrimination.

Authoritarianism

"The background reports published tonight give further evidence that a rigid and intolerant authoritarianism is a major factor in the crisis. The threatened punishment for some 200 students is extremely severe: no opportunity to continue their studies or write their examinations. No large group of White students has ever been treated so harshly. The punishment is made all the more severe because these African parents and students have made immense efforts and sacrifices for their education. Let us hope the punishment will be modified. The fact that the Senate meetings of the College have lasted so long encourages the hope that some professors and lecturers have been urging moderation and caution. This would be in the interests not only of the College's survival but also of the Government's long-term relations with African leaders, inside as well as outside South Africa."

On September 15, the Sunday Express reported that the University of Natal SRCs withdrew from the Fort Hare protests. "The president of the SRC at Durban, Mr Peter Behr, said that he and the Maritzburg SRC president, Mr Pat Stilwell, had been invited to go but neither could attend because of 'an important prior arrangement'. The NUSAS president reported that telegrams of support had been received from the Natal campuses, and that a number of Pietermaritzburg students participated in the teach-in and Stewart Memorial protest."

Not Interested

The Daily Dispatch of September 16 alleged that the chairman of the Advisory Council of the University College of Fort Hare, Mr S.S. Guzana, of Zwelitsha, near King William's Town, was not interested in discussion of the suspension of 200 Fort Hare students. "Mr Guzana it was stated had not attended two meetings of his council. The last was on Friday". Only three members attended that meeting. The six other members did not attend. The report suggested that the boycott by the three Transkeian members "was interpreted as a sign the Transkei Government did not want to have the issue discussed by the Advisory Council, but wanted it to be taken up at a higher level."

University Christian Movement

The apparent link between the UCM and the sit-in - the 17 were alleged to have attended the UCM conference at Stutterheim in July - was denied by a Fort Hare student in an interview with the Daily Dispatch of the same issue. The student cited the non-interference by Rectors at other African colleges as proof. "To say we were responsible for the signs was just an indirect attack on UCM. There has been a lot of spying at Fort Hare and the Rector was given wrong information. We know of instances where the father of one student was fetched from his home and his son was asked in his presence to be a Special Branch informer on the campus. He was offered a scholarship. He declined," the student said.

The report continued: "King William's Town students who have been suspended were quizzed by the Special Branch last week. A leading educationalist, who preferred his name not to be disclosed, said the trouble at Fort Hare stemmed from the misunderstanding which existed between two house wardens and their charges. 'Whereas Fort Hare is supposed to be run on ethnic lines, the two wardens are not Xhosa-speaking and there has been friction between them at the hostels,' he said."

Wise Action

In an editorial on September 16 the Daily Dispatch commented: "Student leaders acted wisely this weekend in deciding against a mass visit to the campus of Fort Hare University for the purpose of protesting to the Rector against the expulsion of a large number of African students... This was dictated in part by the knowledge that the police had made extensive preparations on the strength of the original plan for a mass descent on the Fort Hare campus. And perhaps they realised that the original intention went beyond what could be regarded as reasonable limits for a student protest. Those limits have traditionally been demonstrations on the home campus and orderly processions or vigils in the streets of the university's home town.

In view of the diminished nature of the protest, it is regrettable - but not surprising in the light of the Government's intimidatory tactics against students generally - that the security police went out of their way to intimidate a handful of students who laid a wreath and also went so far as to confiscate films from Press photographers. In the defused situation brought about by the good sense of the students, the police could reasonably have been expected to let the students lay their wreath without hindrance, merely standing by to see that nothing untoward happened. Instead they used their notebooks and cameras as implements of intimidation."

Follow-Up: Students Detained

In a follow-up story in the Evening Post of September 16, it was reported that five University of Natal students were detained by seven uniformed police and four members of the Special Branch at the Fort Hare protest. "The five students entered the access road to the memorial not knowing that the access road was on land owned by the Bantu Trust and that the other students had used an access through land of the Federal Seminary. They were immediately stopped by the police for trespassing and had their names taken. They complained that they did not know that they were on private property and were told earlier that the general public often use the access road without permission to get to the memorial.

"The police eventually let them go after confiscating a private letter written by a girl to her sister overseas. A receipt for the letter was given on request. On arrival at the site of the monument, Colonel Steyn, Chief of Police in East London, asked one of the students if the protest would be orderly. He was assured that it would be so.... The students then made their way back to Grahamstown. On the way through town one Rhodes student stopped at the gates of the University College of Fort Hare where he laid a spray of flowers in front of the entrance gate. He was immediately stopped by uniformed police who emerged from behind a hedge. His name was taken as he was alleged to have trespassed on private property. He was then allowed to return to Grahamstown."

Acting Principal's Action

Another report paid tribute to the Acting Principal of Rhodes University, Prof R.K.J. Antonissen, saying that he avoided serious trouble by prompt and effective action. After the official convoy was called off "it became evident that a considerable group of dissenters, composed largely of students who had come to Rhodes from other centres, were determined to proceed with plans of their own. After a discussion with the president of the Rhodes SRC, Mr Peter Harris, Prof Antonissen issued a statement which was circulated to students on the campus at 11.30 pm. on Friday evening.

"It read as follows: 'It has come to my notice that tension is mounting and feelings are running high in connection with the student protest over the Fort Hare issue. I appreciate the decision taken at a meeting of the student body of Rhodes University tonight to cancel the motorcade to Alice which was planned for Saturday morning. It would be deplorable if the effect of this wise decision were to be undermined through irresponsible action by individuals, either students or members of the public. I therefore call on the common sense of all not to indulge in any unlawful act or to provoke in any, nor to retaliate to provocation, whatever its source.'"

Call for End to Protest

Also in the same issue of the newspaper, the NUSAS President, Duncan Innes, called for an end to protests on the Fort Hare issue. He said:

"The students' week-long protest has achieved its purpose. We have voiced our indignation against a shocking system of education and against a shocking action. We have shown the general public what is happening within universities in South Africa today. I would advise all campuses to cease their present form of protest. Our protests have been opposed by the Government and broken up by the police, but despite this intolerance students have continued to make their voices heard and their courage here cannot be disputed. While I would call on students to cease their protests I do not want them to cease their efforts to assist those students suspended from Fort Hare.

"It seems likely that some students may not be allowed back to study at the college. If this is so then I feel it is the responsibility of students throughout South Africa to see that they are not denied the proper education they deserve. A fund will be organised among students so that these suspended students may continue their education. The sacrifice of those who were suspended will not be forgotten and I feel sure the campuses will respond willingly to this scheme. If any suspended student is denied re-entry to Fort Hare could they please contact NUSAS Head Office giving all relevant particulars and every effort will be made to assist them."

"Mr Andrew Murray, Deputy Vice-President of NUSAS, saw Saturday's protest as follows: 'That an incident did not happen does not mean it could not have happened. The change in tactics was wise and I believe that in terms of achievement that a dignified and simple ceremony showed the level to which legitimate democratic student protest has been pushed. The presence of so many police with cameras is their usual reaction to student disagreement with a particular section of ideology', the report concluded.

Deputation to Education Department

The Star reported on September 16: "The African people of South Africa can ill afford to have their future leaders and the cream of their youth suspended as has happened at Fort Hare University College," said Dr D.P.P. Maroten, a founder and executive member of the Association for the Educational and Cultural Advancement of Africans." A deputation from the Association had just been to the Bantu Education Department Secretary, Dr H.J. van Zyl, when Dr Maroten said this. The deputation asked for the readmission of the students. Dr Maroten went on: "It is obvious the students have grievances and the root causes of these grievances should be arrived at constitutionally not through the use of police and dogs. It is a matter for educationalists not politicians."

Dr Maroten said the ASSECO deputation was very impressed with the helpfulness of Dr van Zyl who promised to telephone Fort Hare and try to have the students reinstated immediately, the report said. The deputation also asked for a commission of inquiry at the college.

Dr Maroten said: "This should have been done immediately. The normal work of the university should not be stopped by either students or staff. The eyes and hopes of all South Africa's African people are on these students."

Students and Readmission

On Monday September 16, the Rector of Fort Hare issued this statement: "After due consultation with all the authoritative bodies concerned the council of the University College of Fort Hare resolved to issue the following statement: 'All students who wish to return to Fort Hare may apply for readmission immediately. Students must not return to the university college until they have been personally informed by the registrar of the procedure to be followed. Applications already received will be considered without delay. Those who have not yet applied are advised to do so telegraphically. No applications for readmission received after the 26th September will be considered', the statement concluded.

The NUSAS President replied to this statement in the Daily Dispatch and Rand Daily Mail of September 17. His reply read: "I was very pleased to hear the news that all suspended students could apply for readmission to Fort Hare. This solution to an ugly problem seems to me to be a reasonable one and I am pleased to see that the Fort Hare authorities are attempting to enrol the students without delay. I feel it is vital that students should be allowed to return to their studies as soon as possible. It is now essential that all student protests at the other universities cease.

We protested in an attempt to gain the readmission of the suspended students and it seems likely that our aim will be realised. Any further protest against the Fort Hare authorities would seem to be unfair as I think they are making every effort to rectify the situation. I hope that all applications will be favourably considered, so that then this unfortunate issue may be closed. I am prepared to offer assistance to any students who are not re-admitted but I feel this may not be necessary.

Editorial Comment

The Rand Daily Mail commented editorially on September 17: "It still pays to speak up against injustice - even in South Africa under a government singularly ill-disposed towards protest in any form. Certainly the dissenting academics of the English-speaking universities are entitled to feel that their demonstrations against mass suspension of African students at Fort Hare have achieved their purpose in focusing public attention on the harsh action taken." The editorial discussed the protests and why they were called. It went on: "Instead they will concentrate on helping any African students refused readmission to continue with their education. This is surely a constructive and humanitarian approach which may undo some of the harm done by the suspensions. The lifting of the Fort Hare suspensions may have come anyway but it is some reward for their efforts."

An editorial in the Cape Argus on September 17 concluded: "It does not follow that all who seek readmission will gain it, but this is a realistic attempt to solve a difficult problem."

On the same date an editorial in the Cape Times (also of Cape Town) commented: "The suspension of 200 out of a total of 461 looks uncommonly like a total breakdown in confidence and communication. This in an institution as important as Fort Hare is an extremely serious thing for the country. Fort Hare is educating the future leaders of South African African population, not only those who will live and work in the Republic, but those who will serve and lead the Transkei.

"The current ferment among students all over the world has probably communicated itself to the African students as well. The ferment does create exasperations for university and college authorities all over the world. On the whole it has, we think, been found that student restlessness is better controlled with the snaffle than the curb. We hope we are right in interpreting the latest reports from Alice as indicating a desire to get the trouble sorted out so that studies can restart."

Official View: de Wet's Statement

The official view of the circumstances which led to the sit-in was published in the Daily Dispatch of September 20. It is necessary to print their statement in its entirety to contrast it with the views of students and others quoted before.

Prof de Wet said: "So many misrepresentations either by reporters or by students have appeared in the daily press in connection with the recent events at the University College of Fort Hare that the university college authorities consider it to be in the interests of truth and of a well-informed public to put the factual events in proper perspective.

"It must be made clear at the outset that demonstrations actually started during the night of August 9, 1968, only three weeks after commencement of the second semester when slogans were painted on the walls of the Great Hall. Demonstrations were continued on August 10 when the investiture of the Rector, Professor J.M. de Wet, who had assumed duty on July 1, was boycotted by all but a very few students.

"On this occasion a group of students which had assembled near the hall greeted the visitors, the guest speaker and other dignitaries with hissing. Up to this stage the authorities were not aware of anything which might have given rise to this kind of behaviour by the students. All the complaints which have been brought by students can be refuted. The so-called 'Hunger Week' was indeed allowed. A great number of interviews between individual students and the Rector were allowed and took place.

"The members of the YMCA were advised not to stage a concert to raise funds because the college itself would provide the necessary funds, besides which it has been the accepted policy for some years to limit social functions during the second half of the year to a minimum.

"The notice that participation in the UCM is not allowed at Fort Hare only appeared after the strike had already commenced.

Channels of Communication

"Allegations regarding the lack of channels of communication between the Rector and the students can be refuted as follows:

- "1) Although in the nature of things it is not always possible for the Rector of an institution of this sort who is constantly busy with administrative work to have unlimited direct and immediate contact with students and while the desirability of such direct contact in a university is problematic, the students at the University College of Fort Hare have easier access to the Rector than is possible at most other universities. Appointments with the Rector can be made at any time and since the present Rector assumed duty many students have availed themselves of the privilege.

Victimised

- "2) Although the University College authorities have for many years expressed the wish that the students select a Students' Representative Council, the students prefer not to do so since such chosen members would allegedly be victimised. Where disciplinary steps have been taken such persons in the past it was never taken against them in their personal capacity as individuals who had contravened the regulations of the college. The authorities are still very anxious that such a council should exist.

Liaison Committee

- "3) Apart from this there is in existence at the University College a Liaison Committee composed of five senior members of staff. The function of this committee is to establish contact with students, to listen to whatever problems the latter may have, and to bring these to the attention of the authorities. This particular channel of communication has in the past been made use of in a satisfactory manner. Even during the recent events the students who had been called in by the Rector on August 19, 1968, reported their case to the Liaison Committee and after lengthy discussion and negotiations they declared that they were completely satisfied. As far as the Liaison Committee was concerned the matter was therefore closed, especially since these students gave the assurance that they did not intend to lodge further complaints or to take any further action in this regard.

Committees

- "4) The committees of the various societies regularly approach the Rector with requests relating to the organisation and needs of their respective societies. Such deputations have always been received with the greatest sympathy and in a spirit of co-operation. In actual fact committees of the Science Society, the English Dramatic Society, the Xhosa Dramatic Society and Soccer Club and others have over the last two months established contact with the Rector and been given funds and assistance.

Allegations of Students

- "5) The allegation by students that communication channels do not exist is also contradicted by the fact that whenever a specific need has arisen they have always been able to find a channel or a body through which the desired contact could be made. On August 27 this year the joint hostel committees organised themselves into a delegation to request the Rector to give them permission to hold a mass meeting to make arrangements for the Spring Ball. Permission was duly granted by the Rector.

"Afterwards it appeared that the main item of discussion at this mass meeting was the organisation of the sit-down strike of September 5. When the students were invited to send a delegation to him to discuss their problems they declared they were a 'leaderless group' and that it was therefore impossible for them to send a delegation. On September 6, when the time given for the sending of a deputation had already expired, the students suddenly found it possible to elect a deputation which requested that the Rector give them a hearing.

Breach of Faith

"A matter which has thus far either been kept quiet by the Press or soft-pedalled is the flagrant breach of faith committed by the suspended students. Shortly before the time set in the ultimatum expired at 12 noon all the striking students went to their residences and signed a pledge whereby they undertook to cease all forms of demonstration, to resume their academic work, to adhere strictly to the discipline of the university college.

"Immediately after confirming this pledge with their signatures the students broke it by continuing with the strike. Fort Hare authorities are loth to regiment students.

So Much Money

"On the other hand so much is being done for the students and so much money is being spent on the institution that the defeat of the primary aim and object of the college cannot be allowed. In this connection it may be mentioned that the expenditure per student is R1,490.00, that bursaries amounting to R4,891,260 are available for 2799 students and that R19,434 of this amount is granted by the State."

Press Misrepresentation

The Daily Dispatch replied in an editorial on the same day: "If there have been any misrepresentations by reporters, the blame rests squarely on the university authorities. Repeated attempts were made by representatives of this newspaper to get the official view of what happened.

"The Rector and others in charge at the University were communicative up to a point. But they chose not to say as much as they could have said and should have said. So the reporters were left to ferret out what they could and to report as accurately as they could on the scanty facts available to them. It is well recognised in newspaper work that a reporter cannot hope to present all facets of a situation if he cannot get all the facts. It is also an axiom that if nothing is published until officialdom chooses to reveal the facts, the likelihood is that nothing will ever be published and the public will be left in the dark.

"Hence the Press, as a matter of public interest, published such facts as could be obtained in the belief that as far as they went, they were correct. If the Rector feels that the publicity which arose from the events at Fort Hare has had a damaging effect, we can only say it could have been avoided to a large degree if he had made yesterday's statement at the time of the occurrences."

21 Students Not Accepted Back

On October 5, the Rector of Fort Hare announced (according to the Daily Dispatch of that date) that all but 21 of the suspended students had been accepted for readmission to the college. With the exception of those 21 all the remaining suspended students were back at the college. The report added that altogether 296 students had been suspended.

Bishop's Statement: "I Can No Longer Keep Silent..."

On October 8, the Bishop of Grahamstown, the Right Reverend Gordon Tindall, personally delivered a letter to Professor de Wet protesting against the treatment of the 21. The open letter was published in full in the Daily Dispatch of October 8.

Miscarriage of Justice

The letter says: "Now that it has become clear that at least more than 20 students have been permanently excluded, I can no longer keep silence and as a Church leader of a large number of people (including many Africans) in the Eastern Cape and Border, I protest what seems to me to be a miscarriage of justice, by which hundreds of people have suffered, families have been divided, and the careers of some young men and women of promise have been permanently blighted. Every institution must have rules, and discipline must be maintained. But it is not true that the events of September 6 would not have happened if you had been willing at any time since you became Rector in July to meet the student body and address them and listen to them.

"You may reply that you would not meet the student body while they were disobeying College rules by refusing to attend lectures: but is it not true that this mass protest arose because of the way in which certain of them had been treated? Many at Fort Hare are convinced that the students neither had or have any personal animus against you, as Rector. They wished merely to meet you and be heard. After daubing of slogans on the walls of the college - an action which I deplore - 17 of them were called before you. You warned them that they would be held responsible for any future trouble that might occur in the College.

Discipline Committee

"They asked to be brought before a discipline committee and have formal charges laid against them. But this was not done. They saw the Liaison Committee, the only organ of communication between staff and students in the College. They were assured, on your authority, that there would be no victimisation. Shortly afterwards four of them were taken for interrogation by the Security Branch. Is it not the case that the mass student protest arose out of these facts, and that the sole purpose of the sit-in was to persuade you, by peaceful and dignified means, to meet the student body and listen to their grievances?"

Christian Ethic

"Did not some of your own staff advise you to do this? In the event you decided to enforce discipline on your terms. The students had to sign a document requiring them to return to their studies immediately and obey the College rules: those who did not sign would be suspended. Faced by a threatened split in their solidarity the students decided that all would sign and all resume the sit-in. Judged by an abstract standard of Christian ethic this was wrong: I must maintain that no one should sign a document if one intends not to abide by its provisions, however much I may understand why the students took this line. But there was no opportunity for a dispassionate discussion of the course of action they should follow."

Informers in Their Midst

"They knew that informers were in their midst, and they were faced by a demand for unconditional surrender with no hope suggested that, if they returned to their studies, their grievances would be listened to and themselves treated with fairness. The outcome we know: the arrival of the police with dogs and tear-gas equipment: the calm and quiet behaviour of the students in terrifying circumstances; their removal under police escort to their hostels, thence in buses away to railway stations far from Alice, and so, under conditions of hardship, without food or money, by train to their homes - there to wait while their future was decided. After nearly a fortnight of agonising uncertainty, the majority of them received telegrams instructing them to apply for readmission and to return accompanied by their parent or guardian."

Financial Burden

"No doubt you considered the financial burden this imposed on their families, and also the humiliation of young men and women being treated this way. Now the majority of the students are back but I learn that more than twenty are not to be readmitted."

"No reason has been given to those students for their expulsion."

"No chance has been given to them to defend themselves against formal charges before a discipline committee of the College."

"In fact, precisely what the students most feared and guarded against has happened - the victimisation of a small minority who are labelled and condemned as agitators."

"Is not this why the students refused to send a delegation - because of what happened to the seventeen earlier, because of what they feared would happen to such a delegation?"

Precisely because of this the student body refused to allow Christian student volunteers to form a delegation although the Chaplains, in their efforts to negotiate a reconciliation, had persuaded some of the Christian students to make this offer.

Apparent Victimization

"Will not the readmitted students feel unhappy (to say the least) by this apparent victimization of their fellows? I cannot imagine that the present atmosphere at Fort Hare is conducive to study, in these circumstances.

"Sir, I appeal to you to do what only you can do to heal these hurts.

"It must still be possible for you to recall the excluded students, and bring them before a disciplinary committee. Failing that, may they not be allowed to write their examinations under the University of South Africa in February?

"As for those now at College, will you not meet them at all, address them and listen to them?

"Can you not assure them of your protection against arbitrary interrogation by the police?

"Will you not tell them that you will not countenance any system of informers because it destroys community spirit, and makes it impossible for your College to function as a true University?

"I understand that you have drawn attention to the large amounts of money the Government has spent upon the College, to the fine new buildings and the increased facilities for study. We can all be glad about this.

Spirit of Free Inquiry

"But a university does not depend only on adequate buildings and a competent staff. The basis of a true university lies in a spirit of free inquiry in an atmosphere in which the value of each member of it, as a human being, is respected and safeguarded. By its very nature a university is concerned with human relationships.

"Some of your students have sacrificed their future in what is essentially a protest on behalf of human dignity. I appeal to you, sir, because I know you will recognise the spirit in which this letter is framed, in the name of Christ, to find a way of understanding and reconciliation. If you will do this you will win more than mere respect: you will win the loyalty of all whom you have been appointed to serve."

Reliable Source

Rhodes on October 10 claimed that "a reliable source" had informed them that 15 of the 21 students refused readmission "were some of the students who were originally cited by the Rector as being leaders of the sit-in. This means that the Rector has more or less succeeded in his original aim of eliminating the leaders by intimidation. A number of the 21 students refused readmission are in their final year."

Rector's Assurance

On October 9, the Daily Dispatch reported that the 21 would be allowed to write exams. "This assurance was given yesterday by the Rector of the college, Prof J.M. de Wet, and the Secretary for Bantu Education, Dr H.J. van Zyl, to a group of African leaders and parents at a meeting at the offices of the Johannesburg Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner.

"The assurance came after Mr T.M. Moerane and Mr P.Q. Vundla had urged, on behalf of the African community and parents, the 21 students be readmitted and a commission of inquiry be appointed to look into the root cause of student dissatisfaction at Fort Hare.

"Prof de Wet said he was prepared to allow the students to sit for their end-of-year examinations. He feared there might be trouble at the University College if they were readmitted this year. He also rejected the idea of a commission of inquiry, saying such a step could be undertaken by his university. He was, however, to have a parents' advisory body formed to act as a link between parents and the college."

Reasons for Not Writing

The Evening Post of November 1 carried a report giving the reasons why some of the 21 students were not writing their exams as arranged by the college. They were refused permission to write their examinations in February. "The Registrar of Fort Hare, Mr J.H. du Preez, said in an interview recently the University of South Africa under which Fort Hare candidates wrote their examinations, granted such permission only to students who had taken ill at examination time.

"A New Brighton student who is not writing his examinations said they wrote to the Registrar as follows:

"We appreciate the gesture but regret to inform you that we find it impossible to write because: we have been absent from college for a lengthy period and have lost valuable time; we miss essential end-of-year revision with the assistance of lecturers; our notes are incomplete because we left before the end of the academic year and did not complete the syllabus; we do not have all the prescribed books and adequate library facilities; the decision to allow us to write came too late. We received notices on October 17, timetables on October 19 and examinations were scheduled to start on October 22; if we write now, we are bound to fail. We shall therefore be excluded on academic grounds and we will have to forfeit our bursaries," said the letter. The request was turned down", the report concludes.

System Not Workable

On October 9 SAPA reported (printed in Daily Dispatch of the same date) that the United Party M.P. for Kensington, Mr P.A. Moore, described the Fort Hare system as not workable. The report said that Mr Moore had felt that:

"Non-White students should have been given a much better share in the control of the non-White colleges. The system of a European senate and a non-European advisory committee was simply 'not a workable system.' This had been pointed out to the Government by the investigating commission at the time of founding of the colleges.

"If they were considered capable of governing the Transkei unaided, then surely they were capable of having a joint say in the affairs of their own colleges."

Church Rejects Motion

On October 25, the Daily Dispatch reported that the conference of the Methodist Church of South Africa, meeting in Bloemfontein, had rejected the motion that "this conference...views with alarm the suspension of more than 200 students and subsequent dismissal of 21 students from the University College of Fort Hare - for what was obviously a trivial offence - had hardly merited such drastic action."

A delegate to the conference, Dr D.W. Bandy, head of the Federal Theological Seminary at Alice, said that the suggestion that there was any real danger was a "complete fabrication." He said that "he was in the thick of things and noticed no bad treatment by anybody and anyone. He was most impressed by the fact that students stood still and were well behaved while the police carried out their routine duties. The conference decided that the president and Dr Bandy would try to see the Rector of the University to discuss the matter as they fully appreciated his problems."

Second Stage/More Slogans Appear

On October 22, the Daily Dispatch reported: "With Fort Hare students in the middle of their end-of-year examinations, slogans have again been scrawled on the walls of the college buildings. Starting at the administration block and extending the full length of the library building slogans read "We want 21", "Away with Potchefstroom scum", "Stamp out police informers or else", and "Academic freedom".

"Authorities say it is not certain whether Fort Hare students or outside agitators are responsible for the slogans. Last week a delegation of students met Professor de Wet, Rector of Fort Hare, with a petition requesting the readmission of the 21 expelled students after an hour-long discussion conducted in a friendly atmosphere. Professor de Wet stressed this matter had received full consideration by all the authorities concerned, and the decision of the governing council not to readmit the students was final."

Students Removed

Nothing more was heard until a dramatic front page lead report in the Daily Dispatch headed STUDENTS TAKEN FROM FORT HARE, on November 6. It read: "The Bishop of Grahamstown, the Right Rev. Gordon Tindall, yesterday called for an explanation of the whereabouts of a group of Fort Hare students who, he said, had been removed from the college by the police. In a signed statement handed to a representative of the Daily Dispatch here yesterday afternoon, the Bishop said:

"On Saturday last or Sunday morning at perhaps 1 am, two or three am, some students at Fort Hare University College were apprehended by police and taken to unknown destinations. Some were released, and some were rearrested. The picture is confused, but it seems that there are Fort Hare students, perhaps six, maybe more than that, who are in the hands of the police.

"Nobody knows where they are

"Nobody knows why they have been taken.

'It may be they are suspected men, but what is the reason for the secrecy? One of them has students who live in Kemberley, who travelled to Alice to find out the charge against their son and to find his whereabouts. They were given no information and told to return to their homes.

Wickedness

'Students from Fort Hare were told by the police if they asked questions about those detained they themselves might be detained.

'On what grounds? There is a Supreme Court!

'Is there a Supreme Police Station?

'I do not condone wickedness.

'If the men are guilty of crimes against the State they must be apprehended and punished.

'What crimes are these men to be charged with, and will they come before the courts?

'If I were the father of one of these boys, I should want to know his whereabouts and the charge against him. I am the father of one (at least) of these students.

Father in God

'One of them, I am told, is Hope Jamnda, and as his father-in-God I confirmed him a few weeks ago, when he promised seriously to renounce evil, to believe in Jesus Christ and to keep God's Commandments.

'I cannot believe he did not keep his promise, and that is why I have the right to ask where he is and what the police are doing with him. I have lost Hope, and I want to know where to find him. Signed: Gordon Grahamstown.'

'According to information received in Grahamstown, the following incidents have happened at Fort Hare over the week-end. The trouble apparently stems from the slogans painted on the walls of the University College about two weeks ago, but this is by no means clear. The slogans appeared on October 21. These read: 'We want 21. Address us or resign. Away with Nazi tactics, lecturers or Jeugbond.'

"At this stage the Rector, Professor J.M. de Wet, made no response to these slogans in his official capacity.

"No student meetings were called, no statements were made concerning the slogans and he took no overt action.

Police on Campus

"On ~~Saturday~~ Saturday, November 2 at 3.00 am three police cars - two with CB registrations and one with a CE registration - entered the campus and took three students away. They were Tshepo Lekhela of Beda Hall, Victor Bambani of Wesley Hall and Winston Amos of Wesley Hall.

"Mr Amos was brought back between 6.00 am to 7.00 am as he had to write an examination at 9.00 am. He reported he had been held at the local charge office.

"Victor Bambani was also due to write an examination but was not allowed to do so. At 10.30 pm Mr Bambani's parents arrived from Kimberley to see their son. This was a normal visit. They were told that he had been taken away by the police during the night. The warden advised them to see the Rector as he could give them no further information.

"They telephoned the Rector who reported the matter was no longer in his hands, telling them the police were now in charge. He advised them to see the police.

"At midnight that night, Mr Bambani's father saw the police but was given no further information. The police allegedly began to question him and advised him to go home. They accompanied him to his car.

Detained Again

"At this stage Mr Amos was taken into detention again. He had been waiting in the car. At 1.00 am the police arrived on the campus and took two more students into detention. They were Mr M. Tena and Mr J. Ntsebenza.

"At 1.00 am on Monday the police arrived again and detained Mr Hope Jamnda.

"On Monday morning police detained Mr Simon Babusela.

"On Monday at 4.00 pm three police cars arrived again with Mr Bambani and entered Wesley Hall, where they appeared to search his room. They returned again with each of the other students singly, entered their respective residences and appeared to search their rooms. They did this with the exception of Mr Tshepo.

"He has not been seen since his detention.

"At 6.15 pm, the police arrived with Mr Bambani again and entered the science department for a while. During the weekend following, students went to the police station to inquire about the seven who had been detained. On Saturday at midday one group of three students were told no one at the police station knew anything about the seven or where they were.

Negative Information

"The same negative information was offered to other groups who inquired. However, as that group of three left the station they inquired again about the seven from some African constables and an African plain clothes policeman. The latter reported they also knew nothing but had instructions to detain any fellow students who came to inquire. He encouraged them to leave as soon as possible. Some of these students have been detained for more than 80 hours and no one knows on what legal basis - whether they have been arrested or are detained under 180 days or the Terrorism Act."

Refused to Comment

On November 6 the Evening Post reported that Professor de Wet had refused to comment on the detention of the seven students. "The matter is in the hands of the police. It is sub judice. I have no comment to make," Prof de Wet said. Asked if he could reveal

the number of students detained by the police, he said: 'I know, but I am not going to tell you.'

"Asked what the chances are of the students writing their examination should they be released by the police within the next day or two, Prof de Wet replied: 'I could not say. I have not given the matter any thought.'

"When asked if it was feasible for them to write later he repeated his previous answer.

"Police in East London refused to comment and a spokesman said: 'It is out of our hands. Any information on this matter must come from Pretoria.'

"The Head of the Security Branch, Brigadier Venter, was not available for comment today. The Press Liaison Officer, Col. Kriek, said the police were not prepared to say anything about Fort Hare students at the moment."

Editorial Comment

The Daily Dispatch on November 8 commented editorially: "This week when the Rector of Fort Hare was asked about the seizing of several students, he said he could make no comment as the matter was sub judice. What is this country coming to? Matters are only sub judice (under judgement) when they are before the courts - at least after a charge has been made. A matter is not sub judice simply because a politician or a policeman decided to 'take someone in' or even simply because an arrest has been made. So until a charge has been made, anyone is entitled to say anything to find out or comment on why a person or persons should suddenly be missing, believed arrested."

On November 7 the Daily Dispatch reported that the police had not revealed the whereabouts of the students. The report quoted the Head of the Security Police in East London, Major J.A. Kruger, as saying: 'Can say nothing about the arrest and suggest you contact Brigadier Venter in Pretoria for any information you require.'

Police Secrecy

On November 8 the Daily Dispatch reported again on the police secrecy. It concluded: "Although the students were detained four days ago, none of them has appeared in court for a formal remand. In terms of the laws of the country, any person who has been arrested by the police must be charged in a court of law within 48 hours of his arrest, unless he is being held under the 180-day Detention Act."

Six days later on November 14 the Daily Dispatch carried a report of an interview with the Commissioner of Police, General J.P. Gous. There was no further information on the detention of the students. General Gous said they were being kept in custody while "certain allegations against them are being investigated."

The report went on: "It was against police policy to divulge the whereabouts of people in custody. Charges against the students would be formulated by the public prosecutor concerned as soon as investigations were completed.

Attacks Press

General Gous attacked recent Press reports on the students' arrest and said the impression had been created that they had disappeared without trace. "Some people may even interpret Press reports as

insinuation that the students are dead," he said. "I can assure everyone concerned they are well, and are being kept in safe custody." A spokesman for the police here said yesterday he could give no further information on the students."

In the same issue of the Daily Dispatch it was reported that the president of NUBAS had appealed to the Minister of Police, Mr S.L. Muller, and the authorities at the University College of Fort Hare "to see to it that the seven detained students were either released or brought to trial.

"Mr Innes said: 'I think it is absurd that a country which claims to live by the rule of law can allow such a blatant disregard of human rights to pass unquestioned. If the police feel they have reason to believe these students guilty of crime, then they must be charged. To allow this sort of action, where people can be held indefinitely by the police is to allow the country to become a police state.'"

Charged in Court

Then on November 19 the Daily Dispatch reported: "Seven Fort Hare students were charged in the Magistrate's Court here yesterday with malicious injury to property.

"All pleaded guilty.

"The state led evidence of damage done to the University College of Fort Hare property and photographs were handed in. Evidence by the students, who were undefended, was that they were sorry and regretted their action. They had not realised the seriousness of the action.

"The Alice magistrate, Mr G. Reynolds, in summing the case and passing sentence, took into consideration the evidence of the accused and said he felt they had been misguided.

Fine and Suspended Sentence

Each student was sentenced to a fine of R60 or 60 days' imprisonment, of which R50 or 50 days' imprisonment was suspended for three years on condition they were not convicted of similar offences during that time.

"The magistrate also ordered the students to pay Fort Hare for damage amounting to R82, or to undergo a further 40 days' imprisonment. The damage was described as slogans painted on the walls of the university."

The Evening Post of the same date reported that the students had said in court that "they thought it would go no further than the college." The students, the paper reported, were Tfepho Winston Lekhela (26), Lincoln Mzamo Tena (21), Victor Arthurstone Bambari (24), Simon Ramanganeng Mabusela (19), Hope Thema Jamnda (21), and Winston Tamsanga Amos (24).

Detained for 14 Days

"Lekhela said it was only after their arrest that the full gravity of the situation hit them. He asked the court to note they had been detained for 14 days. Tena said he wished to point out that they had been very co-operative with people who had arrested them. Twelve photographs were handed in showing slogans which included "Why turn Fort Hare into a police camp", "Away with Nazis", "Stamp out police and informers or else...." and "Human dignity. Away with Potch, scum, lecturers and Jeugbond."

"The Magistrate said the accused had seen fit to deface not only one but a number of buildings at the college. On the face of it, action of this nature called for a strict sentence. On the other hand, the statement by the spokesman of the students, Lekhela, had not been challenged in any way on behalf of the State. Accordingly, in imposing a reasonably heavy sentence, he had seen fit to suspend a considerable part of it."

On November 20 the Daily Dispatch reported that the Magistrate had told the students that they were "misguided".

Raise Money for Fines

Also on November 20 the Daily Dispatch said: "Efforts were being made by Fort Hare University College students to raise R153 to pay the fines of seven students convicted of malicious injury to property. Up to 4.30 pm yesterday, when the offices of the Magistrate closed, no fines had been paid.

"It is understood the students have been removed to the Fort Beaufort jail.

"Professor J.M. de Wet, Rector of Fort Hare, said yesterday the students would have to apply for readmission to the university next year if they wished to continue their studies. But all students, he said, were required to do this every year. A university spokesman said it was believed some of the convicted students had written some of their end-of-year examinations by the time they were arrested and others had written most of them."

Church Deplores Action

On November 22 the Daily Dispatch reported: "The method and timing of police action at Fort Hare, which had greatly unsettled the student body during the vital examination period, were deplored at the last meeting of the Border Council of Churches, a spokesman for the Council said here yesterday. He said subsequent events had confirmed the misgivings of the Council. Seven students had been convicted of painting slogans on the walls of university buildings. It was a childish offence and they deserved their punishment.

"But was it necessary to hold them incommunicado for a fortnight and to cast a veil of secrecy over their place of detention, he asked.

"Would the security of the State be undermined if the charge had been made known immediately and the accused appeared in court for remand immediately after their arrest?"

Emergency Legislation

The use of emergency legislation in a case such as this gave point to the claim that South Africa had become a police state and served only to bring it into disrepute, said the spokesman. The blame for this affair seemed to rest squarely on the police and it was regrettable the Rector of Fort Hare had been placed in such an awkward situation."

Editorial: "Principle of Fear"

An editorial in the same issue of the Daily Dispatch commented: "The Fort Hare University College slogan-writing episode is now closed - at least as far as the law is concerned - but the treatment of the

seven students involved raises a serious question about the administration of the college. These students were so ill-advised as to write slogans - some of them highly offensive - on the walls of buildings on the campus. It is a crime to write slogans on walls in public places in South Africa. The students thus committed a crime.

"What was the result?"

"These young men were carted away in the dead of night by the police.

"They were held incommunicado for something like a fortnight.

"They were taken to court and convicted, and each now has a criminal record.

"The police presumably acted at the request of the University authorities, who do not seem to have disapproved of what followed. And that provokes the question about the way in which this institution is being administered.

"Is Fort Hare University College being run on the principle of inculcating fear into the students who attend it?"

Deputation from Johannesburg

On November 29, the Daily Dispatch reported that four representatives of the Association for Education and Cultural Advancement of the African People, had travelled to see the Rector of Fort Hare at Alice. The four representatives were: Mr M.T. Moerane, the vice-chairman of the Association and Editor of the only African daily newspaper, The World; Mr L.M. Nehlomakulu, a bank manager from Johannesburg; Mr M. Kumalo, principal of a secondary school in Germiston; and Mr L.M. Mathabathe, principal of a Johannesburg High School. The delegation reportedly discussed means of communication with the college and expressed their gratitude that the 21 expelled students had been allowed to write their examinations.

Professors Leave

At the end of the year a number of professors at Fort Hare retired or left the College.

Whether this has anything to do with the events at the college over the year is certainly not proved or even likely but there did seem to be a large number leaving although there is usually some turnover of staff at the end of each year.

The Eastern Province Herald on December 3 reported that Professor O. F. Raum, Professor of Social Anthropology for 20 years at Fort Hare, was returning to Germany. Prof Malcolm Giffen, Professor of Botany, who came to Fort Hare to start the Botany Department in 1934, was retiring in Alice although he was to stay on as a research fellow.

Professor A.J.D. Meiring, who had been professor of zoology since 1938 and the first Afrikaans-speaking mayor of Alice, was retiring in Alice.

On December 5 the Daily Dispatch reported that Professor W.D. Maxwell, who during the Fort Hare protests had attacked students' protests and in particular that he had

On December 6 the Daily Dispatch reported that Prof J.G.O. Smal, D.Comm., Professor of Business Economics at Fort Hare, had resigned to go farming. "For some years he has been interested in the intensive rearing of pigs for pork and bacon production."

Prof C. A. Crause, Professor of Political Science and Dr Jur, Professor of Public Administration, had resigned - Prof Crause to go to the new Rand Afrikaanseuniversiteit (RAU). The report said two other lecturers had resigned - one to do medicine at UCT and another to join a Kroonstad co-operative.

On November 9, one of the most popular professors with the students at Fort Hare, the Reverend Professor Gerhardus Oosthuizen, was reported in the Daily Dispatch to have resigned as Head of the Department of Ecclesiastical History and Missiology at Fort Hare to take up the Chair of Theology at the Indian University College in Durban.

This meant that the total of professors resigning or retiring was six.

EARLY HISTORY OF FORT HARE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE (1916 - 1948)

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EARLY HISTORY OF FORT HARE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE (1916 - 1948)

Towards the end of October, 1915, a thirty-year-old Scottish M.A. graduate of Edinburgh University and his wife, arrived at a small, dusty town in the Ciskei to start a university for the African peoples in Southern Africa. Although a number of missionaries, including Dr James Stewart at whose memorial a number of students were to lay wreaths and take part in a ceremony in 1968 as a protest against the action taken against more than half the students at the college, had long called for the establishment of the college and although a committee had been formed to raise money for the project, it was this young Scot, Alexander Kerr, who became principal and who was to remain so for the next 32 years.

When he arrived at the site of Fort Hare, where British troops had fought Xhosa tribesmen in 1846, Dr Kerr (he is an honorary doctor of Rhodes, South Africa and St Andrews Universities) started the enterprise in four or five bungalows - one was to serve as a hostel for the students, another as a classroom and a third to house the principal. Although he had been rejected by the British Army because of defective eyesight, Dr Kerr was to display the same courage as those soldiers in the building up of Fort Hare against many - and sometimes, overwhelming - odds.

The story of Fort Hare in these early days has been graphically described in Dr Kerr's book, "Fort Hare 1915 - 1948, The Evolution of an African College," Schuster and Shooter, Pietermaritzburg, 1968. This book gives a detailed history of Fort Hare, but for the purpose of this review, only brief extracts will be referred to in order to illustrate the tradition of the college in the light of recent events.

Multi-Racial

The South African Native College was officially opened by General Louis Botha, then Prime Minister of the Union, in February, 1916. In that first year, there were eighteen students: sixteen African men, two African women and two White men. One of these was Victor Poto Ndamase, who is the Paramount Chief of the Western Pondo and who was the first leader of the opposition Democratic Party in the Transkei Bantustan. It is of interest to note that from the very beginning Fort Hare was multi-racial in character. Although the College was primarily to fill the need for higher education for African people, there were students of other races. Later Coloured and Indian students attended the college, although the numbers were restricted, internally, by a quota system and there were very few White students. The only other member of the staff at first was an African, Mr (later Professor) D.D.T. Jabavu. In the early days there was no racial exclusiveness, as was legislated later in the college's history.

Independent Thinking

Then, too, there was early evidence of independent thinking amongst the students. Wrote Dr Kerr (page 61): "Problems of adjustment, however, sometimes did arise, as when a student studying South African history remarked that it seemed a curious coincidence that the 'Kaffirs' started each and every one of the whole series of 'Kaffir' wars. In dealing with the French Revolution also, which seemed to be the staple of the matriculation syllabus in history, in the days before superior and contemporary examples of revolutionary phenomena were available, it was not impossible for the sympathies of the teacher and the student to be ranged on opposite sides, and the same was also true in regard to those sections of the history of India which were included in the syllabus as part of the history of the British Empire."

Another indication of the tradition that developed at the college was the first degreed graduate, one Mr Z.K. Matthews, who was to lecture at the College, leave the country on an exit permit and die in exile in Washington as an ambassador for Botswana. But Mr Matthew's life story is another story. What is relevant is that he obtained his B.A. degree at Fort Hare in 1924.

Merit

Dr Kerr also makes it clear in his book (e.g. page 152) that at the college the academic staff was appointed on the basis of merit without distinction of race. This led to problems when inter-university committees, particularly between Fort Hare and the University of South Africa, were established. But, in this respect, the college seems to have set an early example of one of the basic tenets of academic freedom, the power to decide who can teach.

Then, there were the graduation speeches, which Dr Kerr quotes in his book. This again gives an indication of the Fort Hare tradition that was being developed. In 1936 Professor Edgar Brookes spoke; in 1937 the Hon. J.H. Hofmeyr; in 1938 General J.C. Smuts; and in 1941 Mrs Margaret Balliger opened a women's residence. It was not a deliberate plan, but it did happen.

Politics

Meanwhile, the students were moving to a more active participation in national student life. Dr Edgar Brookes, reviewing Dr Kerr's book in the December 1968 issue of the South African Outlook, wrote: "In 1930 Fort Hare was the centre of that great Conference called by the Students' Christian Association which only just failed to alter the course of South African history. But for the fact that the Headquarters of the Student Christian Association panicked at the measure of integration achieved at this Conference, South Africa might have been spared some of its sorrows in subsequent years." Dr Kerr says that 300 delegates attended the conference. He writes (on page 162): "More than local interest was taken by the Press, not so much in the subjects discussed, as in the fact that European students and guests had been accommodated in the College hostels and all meals had been served in the College without segregation of the races. In retrospect, this was an early exhibition of the climate of opinion which foreshadowed a policy that was to become much more prominent politically in later years." And in 1968, the University Christian Movement (UCM) was banned from the Fort Hare campus.

One further extract on student life from Dr Kerr shows the direction in which student unrest was moving (page 240): "Frequent national or regional conferences were organised, sometimes in co-operation with similar associations in other colleges for European students. Occasions were also not wanting in African student life where disputes similar to those that disrupt European student organisations were repeated at the College, with additional ones peculiar to their own community life. But many recognised leaders of opinion learned the arts of debate and discussion in such student meetings. As in White society, also, social and political topics were vigorously debated, with the usual student propensity to advocate radical opinions."

Like most centres of higher learning, Fort Hare did have its disciplinary problems. The first incident was in 1921 over freshers' initiations when those being inducted did not appreciate the methods of initiation and decided to respond. This led to a clash - and initiation was apparently forbidden.

The second incident occurred in September, 1941. The students - there were over 200 by this stage - demanded the dismissal of the boarding master because he had "assaulted" an African woman servant in the kitchen. They demanded immediate action by the Acting Principal. When this was not forthcoming, over 75% of the students boycotted lectures for three days. The college authorities refused to listen to the students until they had returned to lectures. Two students obeyed and one of these subsequently left the college. When he applied for readmission this was refused. The remaining striking students were fined one pound each "for breach of discipline" and they had to send a letter of apology to the senate. This was done and the fines were donated to charity. The Council executive found (Kerr, page 242) "that a young girl who was under notice of dismissal had carelessly, or wantonly, broken crockery in the kitchen in the boarding master's presence and that he had given her a slap, of which she had complained to some students, magnifying it into a serious assault. The uncle of the girl, who is also employed at the dining hall, testified to the correctness of the boarding master's account of the triviality of the incident." The boarding master was exonerated - but he nevertheless resigned at the end of that year.

Rebellion

The third incident has an ominous ring about it. During 1942 the students of the Anglican Bede Hall remade a tennis court which had fallen into disuse. They applied to the hall warden for permission to play on the court on Sundays. The warden, after consultation, refused permission on the grounds that it would implicate the other hostels and that, for this reason, it would not be "in the interests of harmony and good order." The students refused to accept his decision. And a "rebellion" against the warden and the hall rules began. Eventually the disciplinary committee of the senate decided to suspend those students who did not comply with the hall regulations. The majority of the students refused to obey and 45 out of 66 students were sent home. After correspondence with the SRC by the authorities, the remaining hostels and students did nothing. Finally all but ten of the students were readmitted. These ten were, however, permitted to write their exams in 1943.

An official report, quoted by Dr Kerr (on page 245/6) reads: "There were several disquieting features about these disturbances which call for observation. It is disconcerting to find senior students, some of whom are preparing for the teaching profession, averse to accepting the discipline of an educational institution and refusing to heed to experienced counsel. It is disconcerting to find that members of a hostel which has been erected by a Church in order to bring higher education within their reach should be so oblivious of the benefit received that they are prepared to acquiesce in conduct designed to make its working impossible simply because a proposed innovation was disallowed. It is disconcerting to find that of the 25 students suspended for the term, 16 were in receipt of bursaries awarded, some of these to the full extent of tuition and maintenance. (The other suspended students were readmitted after shorter periods of time.) Other unsatisfactory features of both occurrences were the attempts to achieve decisions by forcible means; the attempts to rouse public opinion against the authorities by sending exaggerated and inflammatory accounts to the Press, not accepted, fortunately in the majority of the cases; the attempts on the part of some to enlist the support of political and trade-union bodies in a matter of simple, internal discipline; the attempts to misrepresent the issue in public meetings as being one of religious freedom instead of a matter of simple obedience."

NUSAS

Meanwhile, the role of Fort Hare students in national student affairs was having a profound effect upon the direction of the National Union of South African Students, which was founded in Bloemfontein in 1924. The centres affiliated to NUSAS then were the University of Cape Town, University of the Witwatersrand, Natal University College, Rhodes University College, University of Stellenbosch, University of Pretoria, Grey University College (now University of the Orange Free State) and Potchefstroom University College.

Section 3.311 of the constitution of the National Union read:

"Individual membership is open to all post-Matriculation students, irrespective of race, colour or creed at Universities, University Colleges, Teachers' Training Colleges and other such Colleges and organised bodies as the Student Assembly may from time to time admit to membership." The objects of the National Union were contained in section two of the constitution: "2.1 -- To represent the students of South Africa nationally and internationally and to maintain their co-operation with the students of other countries; 2.2 - To defend democracy in student affairs in the universities; 2.3 - To maintain and further genuine co-operation, in a spirit of tolerance, goodwill and mutual respect, among all students; 2.4 - To uphold the right of all students to meet, assemble and study together on a basis of academic equality; 2.5 - To promote the educational and general in interests of the students."

Negrophilism

The Union flourished until the question of the admittance of Fort Hare was raised, although after only five years some of the Afrikaans speaking students started talking about separate racial cultural organisations. And they started propounding this view, but what probably finally caused the break was the possible admission of Fort Hare. In August 1933, Grey University College disaffiliated from NUSAS. Amongst the reasons listed in a statement by the then SRC President, Mr P.J. Neimaber, was this: "The spirit and character which has emerged at its annual meetings during the past nine years has been overwhelmingly negrophilistic, imperialistic and liberalistic in colour. We interpret the spirit of negrophilism and give as an example of it the negative native policy which was followed at the recent sitting of the NUSAS Council. The admission of native students of Fort Hare was simply shelved by saying that the time was not yet ripe for this (a negative proposition which rests on a positive, hidden basis), and that it was not practical or constitutional at the moment. Thus by tactical means NUSAS avoids giving any lead through policy in order to achieve its ideal and its attitude to the native question. As soon as the admission of native students becomes practical and constitutional, something which NUSAS in the nature of things can easily bring about, as the Witwatersrand suggested - what then?" (History of Relations between NUSAS, the Afrikaanse Studentebond and the Afrikaans University Centres, Published by the National Union of South African Students, Cape Town, 1960, page 3).

The next centre to follow was Potchefstroom University College but in the same month. Amongst the reasons listed (on page 5) were: "On account of its colourlessness, it is impossible for NUSAS to give leadership in urgent national questions, as appears from the procedure in connection with the attempt to incorporate native students." And then, in September, Pretoria University disaffiliated, presumably for the same reasons as the other centres.

Commission

At about this time a commission into the possible admission of Fort Hare was set up by NUSAS, after the July 1933 Congress at which Rhodes had proposed that Fort Hare should be admitted. This Commission decided against the admission of Fort Hare on the grounds that:

- "a) Constitutionally Fort Hare College is not eligible for membership in terms of the present constitution of NUSAS; and
- b) That the general opinion among South African students is that it will be impracticable to admit Fort Hare College to membership of NUSAS." (Page 9)

For some years the decision on Fort Hare's admission was shelved in the hope that the Afrikaans centres would rejoin NUSAS. But in 1936 Stellenbosch disaffiliated for the same reasons as the other Afrikaans centres. Still NUSAS stalled on Fort Hare, but in 1945 the College was finally admitted to NUSAS.

Spirit

So, within this early period of Fort Hare's history a tradition of academic freedom was built within the university. At the same time, Fort Hare played a distinct role in the move of NUSAS towards non-racialism, practically, within the organisation. This role was not played at NUSAS congresses but the mere fact that these students were being excluded on the ground of colour meant that the universities affiliated to NUSAS had to think out their beliefs fully, and then act upon them. A solid base for the Fort Hare "spirit" had been built.

ACHIEVEMENTS AT FORT HARE SINCE THE GOVERNMENT TAKE-OVER IN 1960

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ACHIEVEMENTS AT FORT HARE SINCE THE GOVERNMENT TAKE-OVER IN 1960

In physical terms there has been some considerable progress at Fort Hare University College since the passing of the Transfer of Fort Hare Act in 1959. The purpose of this section is to outline these developments, as there has been considerable development at Fort Hare and the other university colleges established for the different racial and ethnic groups, as outlined in the Extension of the University Education Act, also passed in 1959. Although the aim of these university colleges can be questioned, it is important to note that they have developed considerably since then, and to record that development.

Until 1960, Fort Hare was open to all non-White students, but particularly African students. The aim of the Transfer of Fort Hare Act was to make the college solely for Africans of the Xhosa ethnic group. This meant that there was an inevitable drop in the enrolment of students. Two other possible reasons for this drop were firstly, because the college authorities sometimes refused admission to some students who they thought were of doubtful political flavour, and secondly, because some students did not want to have anything to do with the Bantu Education system, and preferred to do correspondence degrees. It is impossible to estimate how many students were involved in either of these causes, but they certainly exist.

The enrolment figures over these years read:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>
1951	390
1952	399
1953	384
1954	
1955	
1956	368
1957	378
1958	438
1959	498
1960	360
1961	344
1962	242
1963	239
1964	272
1965	317
1966	402
1967	436
1968	451

(Figures from Bantu Education, Oppression or Opportunity, SABRA, 1955, page 30; Journal of Racial Affairs, SABRA, September 1962, page 179; Bantu Education Journal of October 1966, and November 1968.)

The total number of African students at the three African University Colleges - Fort Hare, Turfloop, and Ngoye - in 1968, was 1,430.

The courses of these students in 1966 and 1968 were:

<u>Course of Study</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>Total at African Colleges in 1968</u>
Commerce and Public Administration	33	25	62
Agriculture	7	5	5
Arts	156	161	652
Education	83	85	345
Law	13	50	105
Theology	8	8	12
Sciences	102	117	249
Total	402	451	1,430

(Figures from Bantu Education Journal of October 1966, and November 1968.)

Those students at Fort Hare had the following qualifications in 1968:
 First class matriculation with exemption: 16 (out of 49 in all 3 colleges)
 Second and third class with exemption: 309 (out of 917)
 Without exemption: : 126 (out of 464)

(Figures from Bantu Education Journal of November 1968)

The regional distribution of the students at Fort Hare in 1968 was:

Cape Province:	317
Orange Free State:	10
Natal:	13
Transvaal:	108
South West Africa:	3

(Figures from Bantu Education Journal of November 1968.)

The academic staff figures were:

1960:	50
1966:	39
1967:	97
1968:	97

(Figures from Bantu Education Journal of November 1968)

According to the 1967 Survey of Race Relations, published by the Institute of Race Relations, the ratio of student to staff at Fort Hare was 5:1 in 1967 (page 289). In the 1965 Survey it was reported that there were 24 White professors, 2 non-White professors, 30 White lecturers and 9 non-White lecturers at Fort Hare (page 276).

The running costs of Fort Hare, and the cost of development over the years has been:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Running Costs</u>	<u>Development</u>
1960		
1966		
1967		
1968		

<u>Year</u>	<u>Maintenance</u>	<u>Development</u>
1960	R392,000	
1961	R489,900	
1962		
1963	R555,600	R162,000 (March 1963- March 1964; R158,700 up to 31 March 1963)
1964	R630,000	(The cost of training per student was R2,118)
1965	R784,930	(Cost per student was R2,135)
1966	R800,000	R291,000 (Expenditure since Government take over was R4,178,697)
1967	R850,000	(Cost per student was R1,756)

(Figures from Survey of Race Relations; 1961, page 256; 1963, page 243; 1964, page 269, 293; 1965, page 276; 1966, page 232, 270; 1967, page 230, 289.)

Tribal Colleges

Since the government take-over of Fort Hare, Professor J.J. Ross was Rector of Fort Hare until July, 1968, which was before most of the "trouble" at the college. In two articles he has outlined much of the development at the college since the government take-over. The first of these was in September, 1962, issue of the Journal of Racial Affairs, published by the South African Bureau of Racial Affairs. The second, to which most of the reference will be made, appeared in the Bantu Education Journal of September, 1967, published by the Department of Bantu Education.

After the Extension of University Education and Transfer of Fort Hare Acts were passed by the South African Parliament all the ethnic university colleges, commonly referred to as the "tribal colleges", were placed under the academic aegis of the University of South Africa. This procedure was followed at Fort Hare. Professor Ross writes in the Bantu Education Journal (on page 10): "This means that for all degree and diploma courses for which the University of South Africa provides, the syllabuses followed by the university colleges and degrees awarded are those of the University, The University of South Africa, through study committees and a liaison committee, keeps closely in touch with the colleges and for examination purposes the professors and lecturers of the colleges are appointed as co-examiners with their counterparts at the University. In this manner the closest co-operation has been established between the colleges and the University of South Africa, and the colleges have the singular privilege of sharing in the wide and rich academic experience and tradition of the University. The increasing measure of freedom allowed in most cases to set their own examination papers as co-examiners with the examiners from the University, and that colleges may now also submit college syllabuses in the different subjects for approval by the University, is undoubtedly providing sound, healthy and thorough experience towards ultimate complete academic autonomy. One can hardly imagine a more comprehensive and convincing reply to those sceptics and timid souls who expected inferior standards in university education to come from separate university colleges for the non-European."

Debatable

Professor Ross discusses the increase in the enrolment of African students since the government take-over. He attributes this, amongst other reasons, to the suitability of the university colleges in meeting the needs of the non-White communities and to the cheaper education for the students. The first reason is debatable, but the

second reason is hardly satisfactory, for as Dr E.G. Malherbe pointed out, in the Natal Mercury on 8 March 1966, the numbers of African students at the "White" universities could have increased considerably if the money used on the new colleges had been used, instead, for increased subsidies to the universities.

In 1967 there were seven full faculties at Fort Hare, namely Arts, Science, Education, Commerce, and Administration, Divinity, Law and Agriculture. The number of graduates from 1960 to 1966 were 230 B.A. and B.Sc. graduates; 39 B.A. and B.Sc. Honours graduates; one M.A. or M.Sc.; 10 B.Ed.; 2 M.Ed.; 64 U.E.D. (post grad.); 9 UED (under grad.); 58 S.A.T.D.; 23 Dip. Agric; 12 Dip. Theology; 8 Dip. Com.; 1 Dip. Social Work; and one Public Service Law.

Research

On research, Professor Ross (on page 16) says that the African university college "has a very special, and specialised, assignment....It has the task of leading a community in the inevitable process of acculturation towards greater independence and viability in a manner which will be satisfying to both the individual and the community, both within itself, and in its inter-relations with all the other communities in the body politic of the State as a whole. The need for both intensive and extensive research into the religious, educational, social, economic and political needs and demands of the Bantu are fully realised and various research projects in these related fields are already being carried out at the university colleges.

"It is not possible to refer in this article to all the different research projects which are being conducted at the three of the university colleges.. I shall, therefore, refer only to a few which are being conducted at Fort Hare by way of examples. One of the major projects is an extensive comprehensive socio-economic survey of the Ciskei. This project includes problems of acculturation, study of which is being undertaken by the Department of Anthropology. Several other departments co-operate in this project and the data and conclusions promise to be invaluable. The Faculty of Education is busy doing research in learning and teaching problems in the schools. Under the Faculty of Arts, particularly with the co-operation of the Department of Bantu Languages, the compilation of a new Xhosa-English-Afrikaans dictionary is being undertaken. In the Faculty of Divinity extensive research into the separatist movement has been concluded. The results which have been published thus far are internationally recognised and the research is continuing. In the Faculty of Commerce and Administration research is being done into Bantu co-operative movements. The results of this research should prove invaluable in the promotion of co-operative societies and should provide strong impetus in promoting agricultural production. The Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture has completed an extensive investigation into the agricultural potential of the soil in the Transkei. The head of the Department of Geography has recently completed a most comprehensive demographic survey of the Transkei.

Vital

"The above examples should suffice to indicate the extent to which the university colleges are measuring up to their task in fields of research. These fields are fundamental and vital in the development of the communities which the university colleges are intended to serve."

Professor Ross goes on to discuss the academic standards of the staff at the colleges. There is no reason to dispute his view that the staff at the colleges are academically high.

Conclusion

His conclusion is interesting (page 18); "I am confident that the above evidence has proved conclusively that the provision of separate universities for the Bantu was a wise and sound development. Whereas grave misgivings, mistrust, and also a great deal of mischiefmaking against the university colleges were not unknown, confidence in the university colleges has grown and is continuing to grow. The few exceptions who still maintain that these university colleges are not justified are voices crying in the wilderness. They constitute an anachronism in so far as modern universal trends in the development of university education and the true function of the university is concerned. Furthermore, such criticism cannot be taken seriously as it does not give sufficient consideration to the delicacy, the complexity and the actuality of the South African existential situation. The genuine, sincere and positive measures taken by the State in realising for the different national and cultural communities their legitimate claims and aspirations and at the same time assuring their peaceful co-existence, do not receive the credit that they merit. The university colleges are on the march and nothing and nobody can stop their development and progress. They are destined to play an ever-increasing role in the development not only of the Bantu Homelands but of the Republic of South Africa as a whole."

It is important to remember that there has been considerable development at Fort Hare since the government took over - as the above tables show. It is also important to remember that the staff of these colleges are sincere and dedicated men. But I would suggest that unless there is some change of attitude towards academic freedom there will be more trouble, more unrest, at Fort Hare. All this development means very little if the students cannot speak out on issues of the day; if organisations like UCM and NUSAS have to be banned from the campus; if the students fear the Special Branch and its informers... all these facts destroy the concept of a university which Professor J.J. de Wet hopes Fort Hare will be granted in 1970. All this development is meaningless if the very essence of a university - free discussion, free thought, free religion, free politics, free action - is forbidden or, at the very least, hampered. After being founded in this tradition of relative academic freedom, Fort Hare has been turned back. One day it will move forward again. In the meantime there will be more trouble. And the tragedy of 'the Fort' will continue. But not forever.