

## Clergyman... an Oppressive Society

The following is a condensation of an article  
which appeared in the Nov. 6, 1971 issue of  
the *Manchester Guardian*.

While world attention focuses on such prominent international problems such as Vietnam, Amchitka, and the Middle East, we are comparatively ignorant of the terror that is South Africa. One of the last bastions of white supremacy, South Africa proved recently that it is running second to no one in the miscarriage of justice.

A five year prison sentence for giving money, clothing, and food to the wives and families of political prisoners—the extent of the repression now practiced in South Africa's police state could not be better illustrated than by that stark fact. The savage verdict passed on the Dean of Johannesburg in the "terrorist" trail was the *minimum* available sentence under the Terrorism Act.

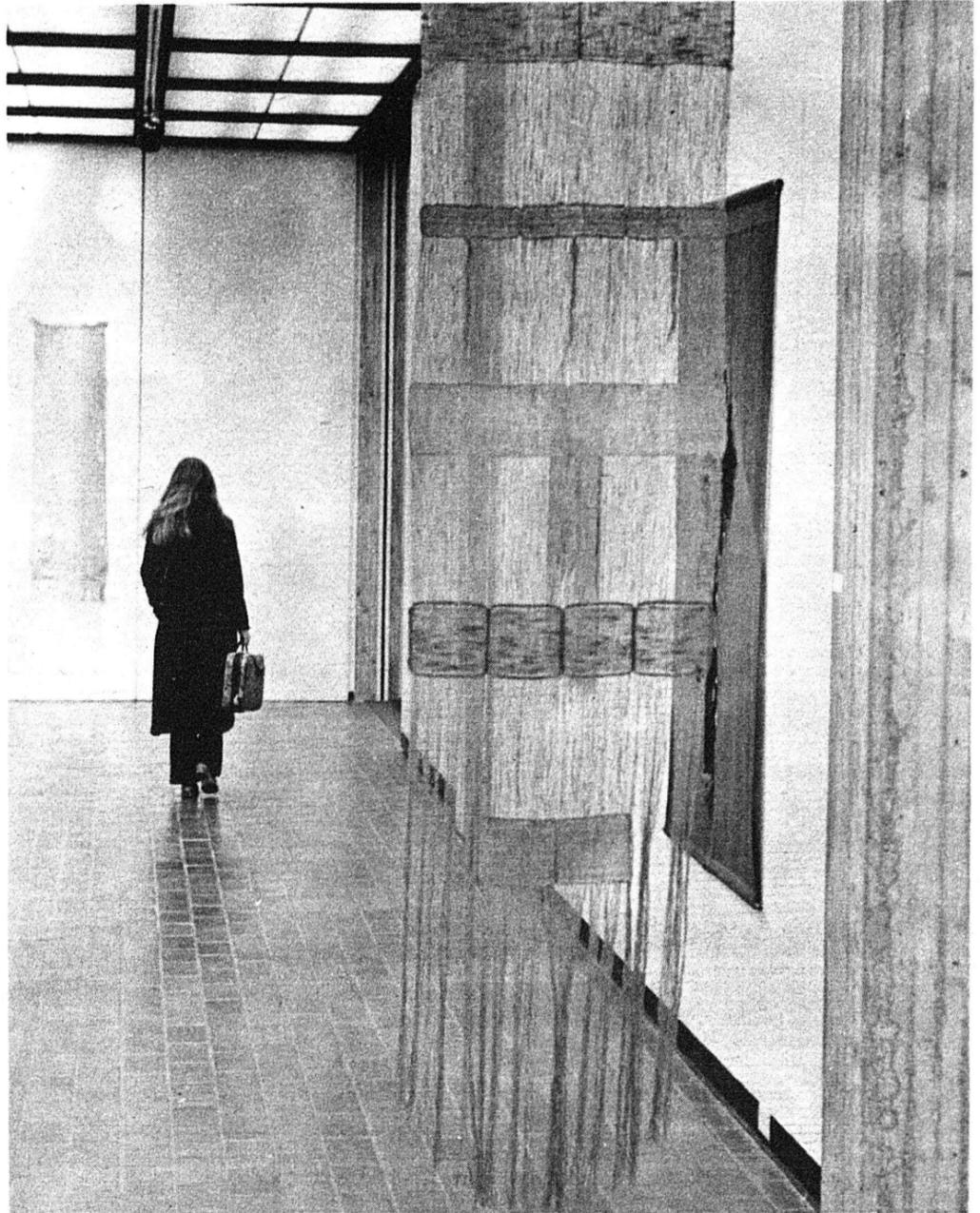
The Dean has been convicted of offences and on evidence which in any other context would seem absurd or insignificant. He gave humanitarian aid to political prisoners' families. Is charitable work of this kind the Dean performed "terrorism"? Surely it should be part of the normal work of a clergyman in an oppressed society!

But now we come to the key point. Over the past two decades, the South African government has stifled all normal channels for contact with Africans, and all legitimate forms of active dissent. Now the net is tightening on the Church which is the last white organization left with regular access to Africans and—equally important—access to the world outside South Africa. This seems a very plausible motive for the State's action.

The case has shown how extensively the South African regime is prepared to use *agents provocateurs* and police spies inside South Africa.

It is interesting to observe the relative silence by vested business interests in South Africa. British business is dependent on white supremacy in South Africa. The South African Government may in the interests of a better image abroad, allow a few employers to take on a limited amount of black help; it may allow the Bantustan leaders to say mildly irritating things.

What the government will *not* do is to allow Africans the normal industrial and political rights of trade union and party activity. For even suggesting it in a theoretical discussion with a white audience, a mild-mannered, elderly, and religious white man can become a terrorist. What hope is there then for dialogue? Police swoops, mass arrests are becoming routine; so is the South African Government's decision to constantly refuse proper judicial inquiries. There is enough happening in South Africa to warrant something more than an occasional skeptical glance.



Ken Bird photo

SUB Art Gallery may look deserted here but it should be crowded once word of the fantastic Whymana Yates hangings gets around. The display is in the gallery until November 26.

### SU workers disappointed

### Ness foresees no difficulty

## Re-interpretation of contract forces reconsideration

By Winston Gereluk

Negotiations between the newly-formed CUPE Local 1368 and Students' Union Building management that were proceeding so cheerily a week ago appear to have hit a snag, one that seems to indicate that labour and management were not really achieving the partnership that they appeared to be progressing towards.

The disillusionment came last week, when SUB workers learned that Darrel Ness, Students' Union General Manager, had managed to attach an interpretation to an agreement they had ratified which would result in contract conditions not at all in accordance with those they had been led to believe were contained.

When preliminary negotiations

concluded Oct. 29, management and CUPE negotiating teams appeared to be in fundamental agreement. Management, it seemed, was granting fairly liberal salary schedule concessions to the SUB workers, and CUPE, for its part, had agreed to forfeit certain important contract demands, such as parity on the selection committee that decides on SUB area and general managers.

CUPE Local members were so happy with the terms of the agreement that they ratified it unanimously at their meeting on Nov. 1. Besides granting general salary increases, the terms of the contract seemed to indicate a closing of the gap between the workers at the top and the bottom of the grid.

Trouble began to brew a

couple of days after the meeting, however, when a worker learned from Mr. Ness that he would be earning considerably less under the terms of the contract than he had been led to believe. When word of this disparity spread, concern amongst the staff became so pronounced that Percy Wickman, President of the Local, sought a meeting with Mr. Ness Thursday, Nov. 4. In this meeting it was learned that an important difference in interpretation did exist.

Mr. Wickman contacted Leo Lancaster, national CUPE negotiator that weekend, and a meeting between the two of them and Mr. Ness took place Tuesday. At that meeting, reportedly punctuated with a great deal of shouting, it was decided that clarification of the two conflicting interpretations was necessary. Mr. Ness and Mr.

Lancaster agreed to accomplish this for early next week.

As near as can be ascertained at this point, CUPE workers are unhappy with two terms in Mr. Ness's interpretation of the agreement. The first concerns his reference to job descriptions that reads "number of years experience required" which finds workers getting docked for these years of experience with SUB. The second major interpretational difficulty would require that all workers who had been with the SUB before April 1 be cut back one step in the agreed salary grid.

Most of the workers contacted by the Gateway expressed deep regret at the impasse in negotiations; most of them have not seen a pay raise for well over a year. It appears that about 90 per cent of them will be getting less than they had expected, if

the contract, as presently interpreted by management goes through.

Mr. Wickman had this to say, "What really annoys me is that we dropped some good clauses, like participation on the selection committee, in order to obtain Ness's revised proposal, and that most of the workers were overjoyed that things were going so well, and that the contract seemed to have been settled so quickly. Leo Lancaster says that he's never seen anything like this before."

Darrel Ness offered this comment when contacted, "All that it is is a matter of interpretation. I don't think at this point that there is a disagreement...we don't know how far we are apart, if we are apart at all. I don't foresee a difficulty."