



The Sash Protests Against Banning

A PROTEST against the action of the Government in continuing to ban citizens without trial has been made by the Black Sash in a statement to the Press.

"There exists no state of emergency in the country that might be claimed to make such action necessary, and in peace time an open trial is the right of an accused and in the public interest," said the statement.

"Yet the banning of citizens continues. A large number of leaders of the African National Congress from ex-Chief Luthuli and Mr. Oliver Tambo down have been banned since the economic boycott campaign was mooted; and Mr. Ronald Segal, who recently advocated boycott, has been banned under the Suppression of Communism Act, despite the fact that he has publicly stated his opposition to Communism.

"Owing to the fact that, politically, there is little contact — and therefore less understanding — between Whites and non-Whites, the average white South African has assumed that the banning of non-White leaders was the result of some undisclosed subversive activity contemplated by them. But the spate of bannings that has overtaken so many people associated with the economic boycott campaign can obviously not be regarded as a coincidence. Whatever the arguments for and against it, an economic boycott is not illegal. The Black Sash does not support an economic boycott, but at the same time it recog-

nises that it is one of the only legal and non-violent methods of protest left to non-Whites.

"When some years ago various people predicted that this Government would suppress opposition if it looked like being effective, they were called gloomy pessimists. Does this banning of people who advocate a legal form of protest not suggest that their prophesies were justified?

"It is a fundamental principle of both Roman-Dutch and English law, in fact of civilised 'Western' law, that both sides have the right to be heard. If there is any suspicion that those who are banned have committed any crime, there should be a judicial hearing of their case. The failure to have such tried by a non-partisan court is a flagrant disregard of the rule of civilised law."

[Cartoon by courtesy of Cape Times.]

Later Than We Think

"We are gradually becoming habituated to our servitude. Our rulers have a powerful ally in the timidity, the self-seeking and the lack of moral fibre and moral conviction of too many — individuals and authorities — who are not Nationalists. We still enjoy — in the Press, for example — a good deal of freedom. But these are ominous signs, even here. It is probably later than we think."

—The Johannesburg *Sunday Times*.