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COVER PICTURE (taken on Bill Hoffenberg's departure from South Africa in 1969) — The Cape Argus.

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EDITORIALS

1. BILL HOFFENBERG

Sixteen years ago Bill Hoffenberg was a lecturer in the University of Cape Town's Medical School. Today he is the President of the Royal College of Physicians. Few people can have been so dramatically assisted to the highest office in their profession by a government they so detested.

Besides being a lecturer at UCT Bill Hoffenberg was a member or supporter of the Defence and Aid Fund, the Liberal Party and the National Union of Students. None of these was particularly radical in the sense that the world understands that term, but they were anathema to the Nationalists. They banned the Defence and Aid Fund, forced the Liberal Party to close because of its non-racial membership, and continue to persecute NUSAS to this day. They also banned Bill Hoffenberg, making it impossible for him to continue with his teaching, and eventually forcing him to leave the country for the United

Kingdom, where his great talents as doctor and person have now received their just reward.

His honour has delighted all Bill Hoffenberg's old friends at home but it has reminded them of the great damage the banning system has done to our country. Bill's ban shattered his life, and when he rebuilt it, it was to serve the United Kingdom, not South Africa. Nobody even knows how many thousand other lives bans have shattered. And who can estimate what all those lives, lived out fully and freely here, might not have done to help resolve our problems? The waste of time and human potential has been incalculable.

We suspect that the new President of the Royal College of Physicians would gladly swop that distinguished post for almost any teaching job in a medical school in South Africa. It would be nice to be able to hope that, before he relinquishes it, we would be able to welcome him back to the kind of South Africa in which he would like to teach. □