

May 12th 1964

Mr Simon Cox
PO Box 85
Umkomaas
Natal,

Union Of South Africa

Dear Mr Cox:

Your letter requesting contributions, on the growth of the SRC, has just reached me, having been forwarded from Ghana. It may well be too late for you to include anything from one, but I shall send you a few paragraphs in case you are able to incorporate them in your report.

When I look back to my membership of the 1946 SRC, I remember most clearly two major problems --- the relations between Rhodes and Fort Hare students and the treatment of "Inks".

It was concern with the relations with African students which prompted me to stand for election for the SRC. At this time a small group of ex-servicemen including Murray Carlin (he edited the "Rhodes Outlook"), Hamish Dickie-Clark and I were fairly active in various attempts to have some of the graduate students from Fort Hare admitted to Rhodes. The Senate had stated that the students were opposed to the admission of African students and all our efforts for several months were spent in organising a vote on this issue: when eventually it was held, the students overwhelmingly supported the admission of African students.

It may be of interest that at that time, when I was secretary of the SRC, Ian Smith was chairman: he is now, of course, Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, and has apparently not changed his political views in the intervening years.

The treatment of freshmen was by comparison a minor issue, but having been subjected to what I regarded as ridiculous and humiliating initiation procedures, I was very firmly opposed to their continuing. Fortunately I was also at this time Sub Warden of Botha Hall and was able to exercise some authority, at least within that one hall, to stop the initiation. Jeffrey Butler, who had been a contemporary of mine when I first went to Rhodes in 1940, at first opposed, but later joined me in my efforts to improve the lot of the Inks. He, like the other two men I mentioned, is also a university teacher.

I learned that neither reform lasted very long but thought you might be interested in this footnote to what some of us regarded as an exciting and challenging period for Rhodes University

Sincerely,

David W. Brokensha,