

INCITEMENT TRIAL IN PRETORIA

DENIAL OF ORDER TO BURN PASSES

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

PRETORIA, JUNE 15

214
The president of the outlawed Pan-Africanist Congress, Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, stood in the witness box at the magistrates' court today in prison garb of red shirt and khaki shorts to give evidence for the defence in a case in which six Africans, one of whom is Elias Lincoln Ntloedibe, the African novelist, are charged with incitement.

Sobukwe, who was sentenced early in May to three years' imprisonment for incitement and has since appealed, said in evidence today that he had been lecturer in Bantu studies at Witwatersrand University.

He told the court that he was appointed president of the Pan-Africanist Congress when the organization was formed in April, 1959. At a meeting of the Congress in December last it was decided that positive action must be taken against the pass laws, and plans for a campaign against them were made.

But he denied that any plan was made or instructions given that passes were to be destroyed or burnt. "We considered that destroying them was a foolish action. After all, it was not the passes as such that we were demonstrating against but the laws involving them. The attitude of the Congress towards pass laws is that they are aimed at canalizing cheap African labour to South African farms and thus are preventing Africans from advancing economically", he said.

He knew of no other organization which advocated burning passes, although he heard rumours when in gaol but was not allowed to read newspapers.

The case is still proceeding.

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