

Free Peoples Concert in apartheid trouble

The multiracial Free People's Concert planned for Orientation Week has been postponed until further notice following police warnings that the concert would contravene the Group Areas Act.

The annual concert, the only one of its kind in South Africa, offering the country's top black and white musicians, has in the past aroused public ire with its uninhibited race mingling, and mini Woodstock atmosphere.

The University Administration has been reprimanded by the National Education Board for permitting last year's concert at which a group of armed white youths beat up other spectators.

Police have investigated this year's concert and warned that it may not be held without a permit allowing for multi-racial audiences.

Wits was declared a White area in 1959, but Free People's Concert organisers have always believed that if the concert is declared a private university function, no permits are required.

Staff members in the Law Faculty have told the University Administration that the legal position on this question is uncertain and it is possible that under certain conditions a permit would not be required.

Admin officials and SRC

President Georgiades have, however, decided not to risk holding the concert without a permit. This decision has antagonized concert organizers who believe that a permit would be unnecessary. They are continuing with their plans to hold the concert despite the postponement.

Concert organizers say that the postponement decision will destroy folk music in South Africa. The concert provides the only opportunity for top black and white folk musicians in the country to play together.

According to one student official, the Free Peoples Concert has always been the highlight of Orientation week in that it has always been a truly *free people's* concert. If less had been worried about unnecessary permits and more about organisation, the concert might have gone on as it has in the past. This year's concert was expected to be the biggest ever, and it attracted a large number of sponsors. There were also plans to film the event.

Student Social Action groups on campus will be the ultimate losers — proceeds of a collection to be held at the concert were to go to them.

Black and white at last year's concert—scenes which give police the jitters

