

# LAWYER'S PASSPORT: AN APPEAL TO THE MINISTER

By PATRICK WEECH

**MR. JOEL CARLSON**, the Johannesburg attorney whose passport police seized this week, has asked Mrs. Helen Suzman to protest on his behalf to the Minister of the Interior.

Mr. Carlson is presently acting for the widows of two men who died in political detention recently. He is also official observer at the Prisons Trial for the International Commission of Jurists and the International Press Institute.

In Johannesburg yesterday, Mr. Carlson said: "I think the type of cases I have handled have not made me popular with the Government."

But, he stressed, "I have never made any political comment."

Referring to the "exposures" revealed in several cases, he said: "All the information received by me has been in my professional capacity. Where grave injustice has become apparent, I have written to the authorities advising them of the complaints."

On Friday night, Mr. Carlson sent a telegram to his Member of Parliament, Mrs. Suzman, asking her to "make representation on my behalf immediately to the Minister, protesting against this interference with my rights as a South African citizen."

## NOT LEAVING

"I have no intention of leaving the country, of visiting anywhere. My family is here. I have four children. My house and practice are here. I am a born, bred, educated and practise in Johannesburg which is my only home," the telegram said.

"I want to know the purpose and reason for removal of my South African passport, which was issued in December, 1965, and is valid for five years, until December, 1970."

Mr. Carlson said that about 10

days before his passport was seized, he received a telephone call "from some clerk in the passport office, asking me to bring my passport in to rectify an error."

"I examined my passport and as I found no error, I did not take it to them."

During the past 13 years, Mr. Carlson has often acted in matters where clients have alleged brutality while in custody. The allegations were brought to court in habeas corpus and other applications, and at inquest proceedings.

## LABOUR SCANDAL

Mr. Carlson was largely responsible for the exposure of abuses in the farm labour scandal in the late 1950s involving allegations of brutality and ill-treatment. He acted in the case of Looksmart Solwandle Ngudie, who in 1964 was the first 90-day detainee to hang himself.

He also acted in the case of Gabriel Mbindi, the 68-year-old detainee whose ear-drums were perforated, and who was paid R3,000 by the State in settlement. Mr. Carlson acted for the accused in the Pretoria terrorism trial. He has campaigned for inquiries into conditions of political detainees, following allegations of brutality.

Mr. Carlson represents the widow of Mr. Nicodemus Kgoathe who died in custody. He is also instructing attorney for the widow of Mr. James Lenkoe, the Terrorism Act detainee whose body was found hanging in his cell in Pretoria Local Prison after interrogation by Security Police.

● Mr. Joel Carlson with the widows of the two men who died in State detention. In the centre is Mrs. Julia Lenkoe, widow of Mr. James Lenkoe, and on the right is Mrs. Annetjie Kgoathe, widow of Mr. Nicodemus Kgoathe.

