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62 POVERTY-STRUCK CITIZENS IN LONELY EXILE

Banished Bantus 'Have Never Been Charged'

SIXTY-TWO South Africans who have never had a charge brought against them are still in banishment in remote places all over South Africa, and living in conditions of extreme poverty and near starvation.

These allegations have just been published by the South African Institute of Race Relations in *Race Relations News*.

The journal says that since 1948, 97 people have been banished without trial in South Africa.

Of these seven have died in banishment — John Lamolo, David Thlooyane Mabe, Piet Mabukela, Sibiya Tatlala, Ndhlovu Msutu, Frans Ramaro and Morris Ranoto.

24 RETURNED

Two have fled — Dan Anderson Ganyile and Elizabeth Mafekeng. Twenty-four have been allowed to return to their homes, either indefinitely or for fixed periods subject to good behaviour, and 62 are still in banishment.

Ten people were banished in 1960 alone, all but two or three of whom came from the Transkei. They included a chief and his mother, a number of headmen and a former Fort Hare student. One of the others was a Zulu chief.

The journal says that nearly half of the deportees are chiefs or headman, who were banished for opposing the Bantu Authorities system or other aspects of Government policy. The majority are rural people of prominence in local affairs.

GROUP CAMPS

"The exiles are sent to isolated farms on Native Trust land where they are usually given work as labourers. Some deportees are entirely alone, but others have been sent to camps built for groups of six or more.

"Four are at Frenchdale camp in the Mafeking area, six at Driefontein camp at Vryburg, six at Mandini in Zululand, and others are at Wesselsvlei, Glen Road, Kingwilliams Town, Pietersburg, Groblersdal, Eshowe and Gollel.

"The deportees themselves and people who have visited them speak of extreme poverty and near-starvation.

"When employed their wages are from R8 to R12 a month, from which they pay for food, clothing, bedding and furniture and the support of their families.

NEVER TOLD

"Those who are not given work are entitled to an allowance of R4 a month, but not all the unemployed receive it.

"Some of the deportees say they were never told why they were banished. The Minister refused to give reasons in particular cases in the Assembly this year on the ground that the MP who questioned him was not authorized by the deportees.

"It frequently happens that a man is arrested and sent away before he has time to inform his family, and in unawakened that he is to be banished.

Lonely Xmas for the Banned and Banished

As Christmas approaches and South Africans prepare to enjoy themselves, it is the custom for charitable people to give special thought to the sick, the poor and the lonely.

In various ways these unfortunates are helped to share in the festivities of the holiday season. Even those in jail are given better fare and some amusement to suit the occasion.

But what of South Africa's political prisoners?

What of the banished and the banned? What of the people recently placed under house arrest?

What sort of Christmas will they have?

We cannot even ask them, because if we reported what they have to say about the matter, we would be breaking the law.

THE BANISHED

On an inside page we tell of the magnificent Christmas effort of the Human Rights Welfare Committee. They have worked tirelessly for weeks collecting goods and packing parcels, which have been sent to brighten the Christmas of the banished people and their families in the remote corners of South Africa.

Theirs is a story of the true spirit of Christmas. The poor in the townships have taken from their own meagre possessions to give to their fellows. Truly, one must be poor to know the luxury of giving.

THE BANNED

How many South Africans know or care about other political prisoners who will spend a lonely, sad Christmas — the people who have been forced into loneliness by order of the Minister of Justice?

There are more than 100 South Africans who have been banned from attending gatherings. They have been forbidden to participate in social gatherings of all kinds. They cannot take part in happy parties and

picnics. They cannot join in the festivities. If they do, they will go to jail.

Even worse off are those who have been placed under house arrest. They cannot even have visitors. No one is allowed to drop in for a drink or a mince pie.

They cannot share their Christmas with friends and neighbours. Not even their relations can sit down to Christmas dinner with them.

Mrs. Helen Joseph lives alone in a house in the suburb of Norwood, Johannesburg. At Christmas, she has made a practise of keeping open house and her many friends have gathered there to share her Christmas with her.

Often, as many as forty people sat down to Christmas dinner. Her house on Christmas Day was a scene of happiness, filled with the sounds of enjoyment.

This year, Helen Joseph's home will be silent. The Minister of Justice has decreed that she shall spend it all alone, isolated from her fellow human beings.

This is the price she must pay because the Minister does not like her political beliefs.

Helen Joseph closes her gate to the outside world. Under House Arrest, she must spend her Xmas all alone.



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