

# Sobukwe has his first visitors in new jail

From Our Correspondent

Cape Town, Thursday.

**ROBERT SOBUKWE**, former leader of the Pan-African Congress, is officially still a normal prisoner. His prison term expires tomorrow, but under the new powers in the General Law Amendment Act, enabling the Minister of Justice to continue to detain indefinitely prisoners who have served jail sentences for crimes held to be against the public safety, he is being held.

His new life begins tomorrow in a 21-foot by 18-foot bungalow on Robben Island, across Table Bay from Cape Town. Though no longer serving a sentence, he will be confined to this bungalow and a fenced-in stretch surrounding it until it is considered safe to free him.

He will have privileges denied him in jail—normal clothes, a bed to sleep in, better food, books

previously not allowed him, permission to have money, visitors once a week (in privacy), cigarettes and, eventually, company.

As Sobukwe lighted a cigarette in the company of newspapermen and M.P.s who visited him today, he was asked: "Is this your first cigarette for three years?"

"Officially, yes."

## "NOT GROUSING"

How did Sobukwe feel about his new life?

The first thing that sprang to his mind when asked this question was: "No more cement floors." He has a wooden floor now.

Obviously he was confused. Free, yet not free.

"I am not grouching; I can take it," he said.

No less confused are the prison authorities who have a completely new situation to deal with.

Mr M. L. Mitchell, a United Party M.P., said: "Obviously they are in a difficult position. It is unique. They are clearly trying to adjust to the situation and I think they are doing it well."

"Given the existence of this law and the circumstances I cannot think of a better way to house him."

Sobukwe agreed to see a few journalists and two M.P.s (the other was Mr. J. J. Fouché). He preferred to see them in a little office rather than in his new quarters. He took his visitors there later.

## REST OF HIS LIFE

He waited about 10 minutes before leaving his bungalow to see his visitors, and was clearly ill at ease.

Dressed in an oldish sports jacket, flannel trousers, collar and faded reddish tie, the 38-year-old

former Wits University lecturer and lay Methodist teacher, walked into the room with slight hesitancy.

What did he feel about the new life? He did not really know. He still had to think about it.

"I came here as a convict. My new life starts tomorrow," he said.

Had he been told anything about the new conditions under which he would live? Yes, there had been an official to see him yesterday.

"What I do know is that I may stay here for the rest of my life."

A prisons official: "That is not quite accurate."

Sobukwe: "Well, that was my impression."

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