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THE CHILDREN'S DEMONSTRATION

On the Saturday that we began our hunger-strike, our children held a demonstration on the Johannesburg City Hall steps. There were about twenty children of different races taking part, aged between five and seventeen. They were rounded up by the police, and taken to Police Headquarters at Marshall Square.

They arrived at the steps of the City Hall by themselves at about 11 in the morning. They held placards saying "Give us back our parents", "I want my Daddy home," "While they starve, we starve," "Why are you keeping my Mom?", "Please let them come home."

While the little ones stood silently with their placards, a deputation of four older children took a petition to the Mayor. On the deputation were Toni, Mark Weinberg (both of whose parents were detained), Ilse Fischer, (whose mother was detained), and Zuneid Pahad, (whose father was detained). They told a press reporter they had organised the demonstration because they felt "so helpless."

"We could not just stand by and do nothing. We felt that the best thing we could do would be to appeal to the most important man in the city, the Mayor, to intercede on our behalf."

The deputation had to wait some time to see the Mayor, who was at a farewell function for a singer, but he listened sympathetically to them when he eventually sat round a table with him. While the interview was on, Toni and the others felt restless about having left the younger children for so long, and continually went to the window to see how they were getting on. There were a number of police outside.

As they finished their interview, and the deputation reached the outside entrance, they were told that all the children standing outside had been taken away by the police.

"We must go to them," they said, and started running through the Saturday midday traffic towards Marshall Square. Toni said they didn't know the way, but asked someone, and ran all the way, breathless and worried.

They arrived panting, and simply rushed inside. To each uniformed official they met they repeated the question "Where are the children?"

Police officials gaped in astonishment as the children ran from office to office, repeating the question.

Eventually they were directed to room No. 13. Still panting, they burst inside.

Along the walls, the children were lined up. They were quiet, and did not appear to be upset by what had happened to them. There were about six policemen with them in the small room.

When Toni and the others burst in, they were told they could not enter, but they kept repeating "But we belong with the others, we belong, we belong . . . "

They were then allowed to remain.

The police then questioned all the children. They were asked their names and addresses and those of their parents. They were asked who organised the demonstration. The children, in unison, said they had all planned it together.

A reporter asked the officer in charge if the children were under arrest, and if so, under what charge.

He said they had not been arrested.

"This was done for their own good," he said. "These children were contravening the Emergency Regulations by holding a demonstration. Standing around like that they also appear to be in need of care.

"That is why we are questioning them about their parents because if we find they are not adequately cared for, they will have to be sent to a home."

When they heard this, some of the smaller children, for the first time, became perturbed. But despite this, they remained calm and cheerful. The older ones kept the little ones occupied

When one of the smaller children complained of being hungry, the reporter asked if she could go across the street to buy some buns for them.

The police officer replied: "If these children can stand on the City Hall steps without being hungry, they can go on waiting here without being hungry," and told the ~~reporter~~ reporter she must leave.

A little later a legal representative arrived, and the children were all released. They had been told they would be questioned further at home.

Later, Colonel J. C. Lemmer, Deputy-Commissioner of Police for the Witwatersrand, stated: "The children were taken into custody under the Children's Act for their own protection. They had advertised that they were starving and it is the duty of the police to take care of people in want.

"They were taken away so this could be done."

"We would act in the same manner if any child is left on the streets without care or attention," commented the officer who had "arrested" them.

When we heard about these events, we were naturally worried about the children. But seeing Toni on Monday was re-assuring. She was in good spirits.

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DAYS OF CRISES (2) Habeas Corpus

As these few arrested people were called away, the men and women at Marshall Square in Johannesburg knew that friends outside were working for their release. The news filtered around the various segregated sections of prisoners, each sex and each race being held separately.

There were four white women at Marshall Square. In addition to Rica there was Phillipa Levy and Violet Weinberg, both of whom had a son and a daughter and were members of the Congress of Democrats.

The fourth woman was Helen Joseph. Helen came from a Conservative English home, and spent some years teaching in India before coming to South Africa. She had come to politics via the path of social welfare work. Starting with a warm desire to help those in need, she went on to find the suffering she sought to alleviate only partially due to poverty and ignorance. She found it intolerable that a person's position in society was determined by the colour of their skin. She threw her tremendous capacity for work and organising experience into political work in the Congress of Democrats and the Federation of South African women, a non-colour bar women's organisation supported by the Congress organisations.

For three and a half years Helen had continued to hold an exacting post in the Medical Aid Society of the Clothing Industry, while spending most of her time sitting in Court as one of the only two women left at this stage of the Treason Trial.

Her tall, erect figure, grey hair and handsome face never lost its dignified look. Life had taught Helen to cope with many strange situations, but she handled them all with the impeccable manners and refinement of a well brought-up English girl.

When morning came, the women were taken to a yard for exercise, where they found a sunny corner to relax and paint their fingernails. Only Rica, ^uHelen remarked, could be taken by the Special Branch at 2 a.m., and remember to bring her nail varnish! In the yard they found they could communicate with other people who had been detained, White men, Indian men and African women, by shouting at various cell windows in different corners. Throughout the afternoon, news was flashed around among the detainees. The first to be released were two members of the Liberal Party, Ernest Wentzel and John Lang, both lawyers who had been working with the Bishop of Johannes-

burg on the Sharpeville shootings. Both were re-arrested, Lang at his home, and Wentzel when he walked into Marshall Square the next morning and surrendered himself.

Phillipa was called away, and the women glad, as her baby was only 14 months old. Julius and Vic went from among the men. Phillipa and Julius immediately left the country and spent the rest of the emergency months in Swaziland. Vic was re-arrested at his home the next morning. The choice to go or stay was a personal one. Some spent the whole emergency in hiding, others in the Protectorates, while some preferred to face gaol.

In the late afternoon, when the women were again locked in their cell, they found that by climbing on the bedrail and fixing their fingers in the wire grating of the window, they could just reach high enough to see through an inch of dusty window into the street below.

There were friends outside. "We've come to take you home!"

"When?"

"Spengler has been sent for - the order for your release has been served on him." (Colonel At. Spengler is chief of Johannesburg's Security Branch.)

They were wildly excited, and ignored someone's warning shout: "But you may be re-arrested!" It didn't matter - they were going home!

They dressed and packed, between climbing up on the rail to hear more news. "Spengler has left his house . . . he is on the way here . . . he has arrived!"

Keys clanged, the heavy door was unlocked, and with cases in hands, smiling broadly, they were taken to the Charge Office, fully convinced at that stage that they would soon be home.

All the arrested men and women were brought together in the Charge Office, and after the first greetings the truth began to sink in: they were going to be released - and immediately re-arrested.

The lawyers were racing against time, as the gazette declaring the State of Emergency was expected every minute. At 2 that afternoon when a lawyer had phoned Colonel Spenger, he had been informed that the gazette had already arrived. Legal men stood over their typists in a frustration of waiting, while the most expert typists seemed to take hours to get each document done.

BOND

PRETORIA LOCAL PRISON

There are prisoners who are awaiting classification, serving a very short time.

Now these people (convicts) who are awaiting classification, falling under observation, are not entitled to a visit, letter, shoes, socks, sandals, they sit on the cement during the day, they did not have any mats in the cells. Most of the people who died here in observation, others suffer from rheumatism, they use to get cold food in winter. Since this Major arrived here in this prison things are gradually improving, today convicts even get exercise through him, before there was no such. He himself informs the convicts who are under observation that they are not entitled to anything, ~~they~~ until they are classed and sent to other prisons, then they can get their privileges

Convicts are starving here, no fat in the food, no vegetables, especially to those that eat F diet, meaning non-Europeans. Coloureds, D diet, they get vegetables sometimes in their food. Even the dishes are very dirty, full of rust, when you report the matter to a warder he tells you to remain outside and you must not come to jail, and if you can go any further, he will lock you up, and you will lose your ~~x~~three meals off. We don't know whether is it the New law.

When visitors come and visit prisons, with the Commissioner of Prisons, those visitors are being bluffed, and told that convicts work without a warder in the span, when the warder sees the visitors, he hides himself from the visitors, but not far away from the span. Other warders hide their rifles, 303's and guns from the visitors, especially visitors from oversease. They know that convicts in South Afruca work without warders - that is only bluff. That happens in Leeukop prison and Witbank prisons.

You see friends, there is a Major and Chief who have recently arrived here in this prison, they are trying to fix everyting straight, especially food, they themselves say that those who are under observation are not entitled to any privilege, the man who was bad, who did not seem to care for anything, has left with his Major as well. Now these two men are new here, they are trying to fix everything, but I don't want to discriminate these officers who have just recently arrived. They are all Boere - Dutch. That is all I can say, friends.

My name must not be exposed. If you still want any information, let me know. Please don't be afraid, we are brothers, friends, and I like school books, but please don't worry yourselves, friends. I have wrote down the operation of these bad cannibals in prison, we too are the victims of these Monkeys.

- 1) When a man comes in prison, he mixes with bad people, especially in Baviaanspoort prison, where convicts assault each other.
- 2) Baviaanspoort prison has no protection at all. Why! Because they are not strict on their work, if they were strict enough they could separate these convicts who call themselves Vetslaaners, meaning "law breakers" from the others, knowing that they are the bad people amongst the good. Law breakers are the prison gangsters who stab other convicts.
- 3) In that prison, convicts don't issue any soap to wash themselves, they use soft soap, clothes are very dirty, every day when a convict goes to work he wears a different dirty kit, clothes are not washed well, and you find most of the whole convicts suffer from skin disease, through filthiness.
- 4) When a convict is sick, he does not get a good treatment. When a convict reports to the Medical Officer, informing him that he is sick, the medical officer says that he is making means to remain in the yard because he is lazy to work, you, an ordinary man, can see that the man with his appearance he is sick, the same applies to the patients, they are given discharge before time, without the doctor's instructions.
- 5) When a convict is transferred from one cell to the other, he refuses to go and informs the warder that he will be assaulted by these laybreakers, and the warder forces the convict to go in that particular cell where he is transferred to, he is bound to go in there. That is why there is no protection.
- 6) When you yell for help at night the warders do not come at that time. That is why the convicts are badly assaulted, that shows that they take nothing into consideration.

NAMES OF THE GANGSTERS OF BAVIAANSPOORT PRISON.

26 gangsters in prison are Robbers, they rob other convicts of their tobacco and money off, if at all there is such things. They also assault other convicts in Baviaanspoort prison. Otherwise without assault they like to rob other convicts, no matter who it is. You are ~~supposed~~ not supposed to smoke in front of them, if they have no tobacco or money.

The ranks of 26 gangsters from Mountain. This Mountain hires other convicts as soldiers, Sergeant No. 1 and 2, Major, Captain No. 1 and 2, Fighting General governor, Lord, Government, Inspector, Doctor No. 1, Doctor No. 2, Judges, Lawyers, Magistrate, Secretary. That is the ranks of the 26 gangsters in prison.

27 is called Scotland Gangsters, are the real murderers. Because their gang are a gang of blood, they believe in shedding blood, even to warders who are bad, black and white. They don't like informers, this 27 gangsters, and their ranks are the same like 26 gangsters.

28 is called a gang of Ninevah. This gang believes in assaulting people. They are homosexuals there are Millanders as well, they love other men in prison, if you say anything that wrong, good too, that is just the same, they stab you and if you refuse to go and sleep with one of them, one of the gang will be informed to go and hurt you, assault you. Now if you refuse to join they

don't do anything bad to you, but if you have joined, you are one of the men, and you run away, they will hurt and assault you, they say that is the only way to bring you back home and become a gangster again.

They assault convicts in front of warders, if a sentence is already passed of death, they will kill you, but it is not easy, as you know that a human being is not easy to die.

They don't sentence you during your presence, they do that at their own will ~~xxx~~ you can't be present.

Now the 28 gangster, they sleep with little boys, and if they call a boy who sleeps near you, and refuses to go to them, they will say that you are a scout meaning a bad person, you don't sleep at night, you guard other people. now meaning stopping them from facking other men, then they assault you, that happens frequently, theyn they will say you are using their flag, raising Flag of 28.

Officials punish them, but they continue doing wrong things. They themselves, these gangsters, say that they like a donkey, meaning you can do anything wrong, but they will get you, though it can be ten years, probably in other prisons.

BIG FIVE GANGSTERS.

Big Five Gangsters, that is a gang of freedom, they don't like what these other gansters do, they go and tell the warders if there is something wrong, they look after these gangsters not to make knives with some irons and bucket rims or the handles of the cups or mugs.

These fellows want unity amongst we other convicts, ~~that~~ is why is called freedom gangsters, are convicts, are ordinary people.

Now these people, if you have done something wring, ar are against their law, the judges and the Magistrates will try your case, and find that whether you are guilty or not, afterthat they will pass the sentence. Then the doctors have to examine the knife thatthey are going to use to that particular person who has done wrong, then after all that, the solider ought to obey the command from his elders, to go and stab that particular prison, that is how 27, 28, 26, gansters that stab people. Now this 28 gang are homosexuals and they don't want other gangsters to love other men, they must sleep with other men only, otherwise if one of the men is found sleeping with a little boy, he will be assaulted, and if at all that is done by one of 26 or 27, he will be found guilty, then are the superior of the particular gang will either send this man who has done wrong to go and stab the particular boy he has slep with, now is called washing poison. 28 Gangsters are the only homo-sexual gang

RANKS IN 26 Gang: Sergeant 1 and 2, Captain 1 and 2, Judge, Lawyer, Prosecuto Secretary, Doctor, Lord, Colonel, General, Inspector, Governor, Nozala - this means the King of them all, of all ranks in 28.

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