

T5.4.2

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The dawn swoop of the S.A. treason trial.

When the minister of Justice of the South African post Government told the country of the investigation the police were making for Hug's treason, South Africans of all shades and beliefs must have panicked and an idea that a gang of renegades were out to bomb and use all methods unknown to overthrow the State. It was an announce news that baffled the the most intelligent minds of the land. South Africans and indeed people of the world gained an impression that there were forces of treason at work, and the only person who knew was the minister and his investigating officers. Now and again the minister announced the progress made by his investigating officers. To the extend that at some time the minister made it known to the country that investigations are nearly completed and that about 200 arrests will be made.

The great dawn swoop took place on the 5th Dec, 1956 at the early hours of the morning, each one of the accused was arrested by some numbers of police armed to the teeth with stern guns, truncheons, etc.

These arrests though unusual, had some significance and that is they the trial has taken so long and the accused have undergone a long drawn suffering which has broken the homes of some of our colleagues. Again, it has highlighted the suffering our people are undergoing under the apartheid laws.

With a big family of 10 children, some due for
lodging, a mother and mother in law all depending
on me and my wife. This taxed our mental and
physical strength. As the Provincial ~~ad~~ Secretary of the
African National Congress then, things were not good,
I was faced with an uphill struggle. And these arrests
brought much distress on the whole family. Now,
the trial has dragged on for too long where as there is
no hope or sight of it coming to an end. One has
reached a stage where a trouser, jacket, or shoes give in,
and no money to replace same. This and that, short,
accounts accumulating, the end of each month is really one
of those sad moments if you are one of the accused in
the South African treason trial.

Thanks goes the world has great men, men who still
maintain that a man is not guilty until he is proved
so by the court of the land. My appreciation and
that of my family also I am sure that of my
co-accused goes to the great figures who launched the
S.A. treason trial defence fund. Also, we extend this
appreciation to the public of Great Britain for the
magnificent role they played in making our
families happy, to know Collins & say "Carry on this
great work of retrieving humanity from man inflicted
sufferings." Were it not for the fund, many of us
would be a total wreck. Let the people of Britain
know this one thing, and that is their act is creating
good race relationship in our S.A.

Your ever truly
P. Matile

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