

WORLD CAMPAIGN

FOR THE RELEASE OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS

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POLITICAL PRISONERS FIGHT FOR THEIR LIVES — HELP IS NEEDED NOW!

THREE political prisoners in South Africa will know by the time this is published if they are to be hanged for making the only protests South Africa's savage racial laws forced them to make.

The three men—Vuyisile Mini, Wilson Khayinga and Zinakile Kaba—were sentenced to death under the Sabotage Act months ago. Their appeals were due to be held this month. If these appeals have failed, it will be proof of the hardening and contemptuous attitude by the South African Government to civilised world opinion.

EITHER WAY A DREADFUL LEGACY WILL HAVE BEEN LEFT. IF THE THREE MEN SUCCEED, THERE WILL STILL BE 41 POLITICAL PRISONERS UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH IN SOUTH AFRICA. IF THEY FAIL, THERE WILL BE 44.

The three men's appeals were due to be heard on September 14, 15 and 16. Their arrest, trial and convictions were under conditions obtaining in no other civilised country. They were held in isolation before their trial and repeated efforts made to obtain "confessions" from them. Evidence against them was given by informers, many of whom had also been softened up by arrest and solitary confinement and whose statements would not be accepted in most courts as free and voluntary statements.

The trial itself was held in an isolated village, hundreds of miles from the men's homes and in conditions which made the actual preparation of an adequate defence most difficult.

The Guilty Men

The so-called sabotage law on which they were convicted is a political crime created by the South African Government to preserve the supremacy of the whites at all costs. It is only a crime in racial South Africa and those who were forced to this protest did so because after 16 years of racial rule by the present Government every reasonable and accepted method of protest has been closed.

The three condemned men are not the guilty ones. Nor are the 41 others wait-

ing in the death cells. Nor are eight Rivonia trialists now languishing in life imprisonment. Nor are the thousands of other South African political prisoners.

THE GUILTY MEN ARE THE SOUTH AFRICAN RACIALISTS WHO, WITH BRUTALITY AND OPPRESSION, HAVE FORCED FREEDOM LOVERS TO VIOLENCE AND DIRECT ACTION.

The World Campaign for the Release of South African political prisoners can-

not be allowed to flag now, because there are more arrests, not fewer. More "show" trials are promised and there will be more death sentences. The oppression not only continues but is being intensified.

The trade union movement all over the world can help at EVERY level to bring even greater and more urgent pressure on the South African Government until there is an end to political persecution, political imprisonment and political hangings.

PETITION SIGNATURES DOUBLED

NEARLY another hundred thousand signatures have been sent to U Thant, Secretary-General of the United Nations, to double the number of those who originally signed the petitions organised by the World Campaign for the Release of South African political prisoners.

The second batch of signatures, totalling 93,924, were made up as follows:

Great Britain	1,760	Italy	700
East Germany	5,460	Sweden	83,679
Hungary	1,208	Switzerland	188
		U.S.A.	929

These signatures, together with the 91,691 previously sent, represent individuals and organisations with some 259 million members.

The Headquarters of the World Campaign has also received a letter from the United Nations saying that a report from the honorary secretary, Mr. J. Thorpe M.P., showing where the support came from has now been officially circulated as a United Nations document.

MORE ARRESTED—AND BRUTAL TREATMENT IS ON THE INCREASE

THE tempo of oppression and intimidation in South Africa has increased tremendously in the past few months. Police swoops continue all over the country and nearly 100 more people have been rounded up at random and held in solitary confinement under the notorious 90-day laws.

These include men and women who are prominent in the fields of law, journalism and education as well as many students and university teachers. Many of those arrested were members of the Liberal Party which is recognised as a lawful parliamentary party.

Police officers can keep the detainees incommunicado and in solitary confinement. The law has been condemned by 60 of South Africa's leading psychiatrists and physicians as "inhuman and unjustifiable and no less abhorrent than physical torture."

During the past few weeks disturbing reports about the use of torture by the police in order to extract information from certain detainees has been received.

On August 11 Mrs. Lesley Schermbrucker brought an application to the Supreme Court in Johannesburg alleging the maltreatment of her husband, Ivan Schermbrucker, still in 90-day detention by the police. She received a message smuggled out of prison and sought an order declaring the methods of interrogation used against her husband unlawful. The message read:

"When I refused to make any statement, I was told to stand in one place and then the questioning started. I stood for 28 hours without moving an inch from 12 p.m. yesterday till 4 p.m. this afternoon. I fell twice, had cold water thrown over me and was pulled to my feet.

"It seems that most of the men detainees have been kept standing on their feet continuously for anything between 12 hours to 36 hours and that most have been broken at one stage.

"I nearly committed bloody suicide by jumping out of the window, but instead I have made a short statement. Questioning under these conditions is the most cruel and horrible form of torture. The language, the threats, the curses are too horrible.

"This is torture good and solid. They laugh and bump you when you complain. You must see what can be done. An almighty row should be kicked up—but how?"

Mrs. Schermbrucker lost her application. An appeal has been noted.

The recent arrests include a number of young women, many of whom are the mothers of families.

Locked away in a single cell is Mrs. Pixie Benjamin, who was detained on July 4 and when last heard from had been on hunger strike for 48 days. Her husband said during this time: "Her will to eat—or starve—is her only weapon against this monstrous injustice."

Besides Mrs. Benjamin at least four other young women have been on hunger strikes during their detentions in solitary confinement. One of them, Miss Sheila Weinberg, aged 18, has since been released but the others, Miss Ann Nicholson, aged 23, Miss Beverley Trewhela, aged 20, and Mrs. Ester Barsel, are still inside. Mrs. Barsel's husband is also detained. They have three young children.

Among the seven women detained in Pretoria, two suffering from ulcers are

accepting food parcels from outside. They are Miss Sylvia Neame and Miss Florence Duncan.

ONE OF THE 800 CHILDREN TO ESCAPE DEATH AT NAZI HANDS IN THE NOTORIOUS WARSAW GHETTO, MR. RAYMOND EISENSTEIN, WHO IS A JOURNALIST, IS AMONG THOSE DETAINED.

Between April, 1963, and July, 1964 more than 300 men, women and youths have been arrested in the Port Elizabeth African Townships. The latest arrests were made a few weeks ago in an early morning swoop by the police.

Heads of families were taken away, some in their underclothes and others carrying their trousers by their hands as they were hustled into waiting police cars. In nearby Graaf Reinet recently 74 people have been charged with anti-government activity and all have been refused bail.

WHO THE THREE MEN ARE

THESE are brief details of the three men whose appeals were due to be held this month.

VUYISILE MINI is a trade union leader from Port Elizabeth. He was secretary of the Dock Workers Union and also of the Sheet Metal Workers Union and a member of the South African Congress of Trade Unions. One of the accused in the abortive Treason Trial of 1966-61 and a leader of the banned African National Congress, Mini has served various terms of imprisonment in the fight for human freedom and dignity in South Africa.

Born in 1920 he has been active in the local and national campaigns since the age of 17. Mini has composed several freedom songs which continue to inspire his people.

He is married to 35-year-old Mrs. Ruth Mini, and has five children ranging in age from two to 14.

WILSON KHAYINGA aged 39, is married and has six children. He has been an Executive Member of the Zakhele Branch of the African National Congress in Port Elizabeth and has played a leading part in the freedom struggle. As a member of the South African Congress of Trade Unions, he championed the cause of the workers for better living conditions and higher wages.

His wife, Mrs. Elsie Khayinga, aged 38, has been "endorsed out" (forced by law to leave Port Elizabeth) and now lives in a shack in poverty in a rural area.

ZINAKILE KABA is married and was an active member of the African National Congress in Port Elizabeth. Like his colleagues he was active in the Trade union movement and has courageously striven for the rights of his people.

His wife is 26 and they have two children.

HUSBANDS AGAINST WIVES IS LATEST FORM OF CRUELTY

THE South African secret police have developed a refinement of cruelty that tries to set wives against husbands, sons against fathers and even sweethearts against each other.

The World Campaign headquarters has first-hand knowledge of a number of cases but further proof has come from two South African newspapers.

One case known to World Campaign headquarters concerns a married couple in their forties who have three children. Because they are still being held in solitary confinement their names are not being published to protect them from further brutality.

The husband was picked up first under the 90-day law, put into isolation and questioned. He stood firm and refused to be intimidated by his inquisitors. The secret police then picked up his wife and put her in jail in another town. To break the husband's will they then told him they were holding his wife "until he talked." Meanwhile, the wife herself was urged to "co-operate" with the secret police and give information about her husband "to make things easier for him."

This couple's courage and resolution continues in spite of these threats as they are both still inside.

SON HELD

While Walter Sisulu was in hiding his teenage son was picked up and efforts were made to persuade him to talk about his father. At the same time Mrs. Sisulu was also arrested and interrogated in solitary confinement.

While one young man was himself being held in solitary confinement, a woman friend of his was also picked up and put into isolation for questioning about him. He was told what was happening to her. She has collapsed in jail with a mental breakdown.

Two other detainees, who were in jail during the recent bomb explosion at the Johannesburg railway station and could not have had the remotest connection with it, were taken to the station by two special police and marched down the platform in full view of spectators and made to look at the damage. They were then taken back to their cell and questioned.

The Sunday Express, one of South Africa's largest newspapers, had this comment to make about this new development:

"One of the most disquieting features of the nasty 90-day business is the arrest, in a few instances, of the wives of men already detained.

"It has always been an axiom of South African law that a wife cannot be compelled to give evidence against her husband.

CONFLICT

"That being so, the interrogation of a wife under the 90-day law may be in

direct conflict with this accepted principle.

"The police may argue that a wife who is detained may be suspected of having information unrelated to her husband—or that she herself may have been directly involved in illegal activity.

"But who is to know whether this is so, or whether the wife is being compelled to give information about her husband?

"Ninety-day interrogations are never submitted to the scrutiny of court or public; the detainees are questioned in secret and what goes on is seldom known.

"The police may argue that if a wife makes a statement they would not use it in evidence in any subsequent court case (not that a court would allow them to do so).

"But compulsion on a wife to make a statement would be a means of achieving in secret what would not be permissible in an open court of law.

"Nor do police under this system have to stop at the arrest of wives—girl friends of unmarried detainees or wanted men can also be detained (as seems to have happened in one or two cases recently).

"There is, in fact, no end to the variety and number of people who could be arrested under the 90-day clause because of their special relationship with detainees or people for whom the police are searching.

"Only the lifting of the 90-day clause can bring South Africa back to the normal procedures of arrest—and justice in the open and at all times."

FRIGHTENED

A man wrote to the Rand Daily Mail, South Africa's largest morning newspaper and one of its most courageous, saying that he was frightened to sign his letter and frightened even to send it to the paper.

He wrote—agreeing with a statement that South Africans had become "a frightened people."

He went on:
"We no longer live in a democratic country. We live in a country where the majority of people are denied the opportunity to live as decent human beings.

"DAILY, PEOPLE ARE INTIMIDATED. THERE ARE RAIDS ON HOMES, VISITS FROM THE SECURITY BRANCH, PROPAGANDA FROM THE SOUTH AFRICAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION SECOND ONLY TO GOEBBELS DURING THE WAR IN NAZI GERMANY.

Lawyer Held In Open Court

A LAWYER, Mr. Louis Baker, was arrested while defending a client in open court in the mining town of Benoni.

The arrest, also under the 90-day law, was made during the actual hearing of the trial in which Mr. Baker was appearing.

It has also been revealed in the South African Press that when police raided the home of Mr. A. Fischer, Q.C., the senior defence counsel in the Rivonia trial, they seized confidential and privileged statements given to him.

Mr. Fischer was subsequently detained for three days afterwards. Leading members of the Johannesburg Bar met at Mr. Fischer's house to discuss the matter. They said the documents fell into the category of privileged matter between an advocate and his client.

"Today in South Africa if you believe that a man should be given an opportunity to prove himself, unequal or not, you are branded as a Communist.

"Press commissions and censorship, vicious legislation, arrests, raids, house-arrests, banning, banishment, detention without trial are normal events in our lives. Day by day we tramp nearer towards Nazi Germany. Day by day opposition to the Government becomes more stifled.

PRO-NAZI

"And who are these people governing our country? Men like John Vorster, who, while his country—South Africa—was fighting a war against Nazi Germany, was interned in a camp for his Nazi sympathies.

"Men like Hendrik Verwoerd, who, when as Editor of 'Die Transvaler' (the official Nationalist newspaper) was told by Justice Millin that not only was the newspaper used as a tool of the Nazis—but that the Editor was well aware of it.

"These then are the men who rule our land and who have vested in them power greater than that of the law courts.

"Scared? People aren't scared, they're petrified—and they have every reason to be. True democracy in South Africa is a pipe-dream that was extinguished many years ago."

KIDNAP GANG PART OF WIDE DRIVE AGAINST S.A. POLITICAL REFUGEES

THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT HAS MOUNTED A DIRECT CAMPAIGN OF KIDNAPPING, SABOTAGE AND THREATS AGAINST POLITICAL REFUGEES IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES. A SPECIAL TERROR GROUP, WORKING IN SECRET CONTACT WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN SECURITY POLICE, IS SAID TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CAMPAIGN.

This terror group is said to have received instructions from specially imported members of the French terrorist organisation in Algeria, the O.A.S. Senior South African police officers are known to have been seconded to the French to study their methods in Algeria. Officially, however, the South African Government tries to deny knowledge of this group.

Most of the incidents have taken place in the British Protectorates, but with the kidnapping of university lecturer Dennis Higgs in Northern Rhodesia at the end of August, active South African aggression has spread as far as Northern Rhodesia.

It is known that South African Government espionage and sabotage agents are active in many other African countries and in Britain and Europe. They may strike at any time—if world protest and relaxation does not put a stop to this form of international gangsterdom by the South African fascists.

The Record

Vorster, the South African Minister of Justice, said he wanted no part of the Higgs kidnapping, and agreed to hand Higgs back to Northern Rhodesia. But here is the record of South African agents over the last three years. Judge for yourself how far the South African Government is implicated:

August 26, 1961 :

The Pondo leader, Anderson Ganyile, who had been banished to a remote area in South Africa but escaped to Basutoland, was kidnapped by South African police, who claimed they had "lost their way" in the mist. After protests from Britain, he was released and returned to Basutoland.

August 11, 1963 :

Kenneth Abrahams, a 26-year-old coloured doctor from Cape Town, and three companions were kidnapped in Bechuanaland by a group which included members of the South African police. Abrahams was charged with sabotage and the others under the Suppression of Communism Act, but all four were released and returned to Bechuanaland after protests from Britain.

August 29, 1963 :

A chartered East African Airways Dakota

which was to have flown Arthur Goldreich and Harold Wolpe from Bechuanaland was destroyed by South African agents on the airfield at Francistown.

September 15, 1963 :

Dennis Brutus, 38-year old President of the South African Non-Racial Committee, entered Mozambique from Swaziland on his way to attend the meeting of the International Olympic Committee in Baden Baden. Bertayed by South African agents, he was arrested by the Portuguese secret police and handed over to the South African police at the border. He is now serving a prison sentence on Robben Island under the Suppression of Communism Act.

July 26, 1964 :

The new refugee centre known as the White House in Francistown, built by Amnesty International, was blown up by South African agents.

August 10, 1964 :

Mrs. Rosemary Wentzel, member of the South African Liberal Party who had taken refuge in Swaziland after the arrest of her husband, was kidnapped by South African police and is now being held under the 90-day no-trial law.

August 1964 :

Former N.U.S.A.S. President, Mr. Neville Rubin, now lecturing in Britain, who had been visiting Swaziland on a study tour, was betrayed by South African agents when he entered Mozambique on his way back to England. He was arrested by the Portuguese secret police, who planned to hand him over to the South African police but were forced to release him after representations by the British Government.

THE SECRET TERROR GROUP HAS PHONED SOUTH AFRICAN NEWSPAPERS TO WARN THEM THAT FROM

Death for Purely Political Crime

ANOTHER political prisoner under sentence of death in South Africa and awaiting the outcome of his appeal is Washington Bongco, African National Congress leader in East London, who was convicted of sabotage in Queenstown in March.

Unlike Mini and his companions, who were convicted of murder because they were alleged to be members of the High Command which ordered the killing of a police informer, Bongco was convicted of the purely political crime of sabotage and is the first and only A.N.C. man to have been sentenced to death for this offence.

The date of Bongco's appeal is not yet known, but urgent action on a world scale is necessary to save his life.

NOW ON THEY WILL NO LONGER KIDNAP POLITICAL REFUGEES BUT WILL SHOOT TO KILL.

World-wide Support

RESOLUTIONS, letters and petitions supporting the World Campaign for the release of South African Political Prisoners continue to arrive at campaign headquarters in London.

Among those who have been active are students and journalists organisations and trade unions all over the world. International bodies have also joined the world-wide protests.

In the next issue it is hoped to give greater details of this support.

AUSTRALIAN DOCKERS IN BIG PROTEST STRIKE

DOCK workers' leaders in Melbourne and Sydney, who implemented the resolution of their union instructing them not to load or unload goods to or from South Africa as a demonstration against apartheid were sacked by their employers. This intensified the feeling among the dock workers,

who came out solidly on strike in protest.

At the time of going to press, Melbourne port was tied up with 43 ships lying unattended in their berths. This is the 14th strike this year of Waterside workers against South African government policy.

On behalf of the struggling South African

people, we convey our heartfelt thanks and congratulations to the Australian workers for these magnificent acts of solidarity.

**Our new address is :
89 Charlotte Street, London, W.1.**