

Unverified

Fort Hare,
Alice C.P.
16th September 1952.

B2482

My Dear Papa,

There is so much to tell you that I do not quite know where to start. But it would probably be a good idea to give you the home news first. We received a letter from mama to say that she had arrived in England. She was quite annoyed to find that the booking made for the sixth had been cancelled. She was looking forward to being in America soon and was not reckoning on a long stay in the land of mists. I hope by now things have been arranged. Meantime we are in a soup about money here. I think we have reached the limit to the overdraft. C.P.D. had to put in a hundred to even x up things. How this happened will become quite clear to papa when you look through the papers mama is carrying. When papa left I imagine there was an overdraft already and the mama's grant wiped it out. And then we had the July salary and an advance of sixty on mama's salary next year. By the time we had paid the 120 for the return ticket to England and placed a credit of 130 with the bank in England plus all the numerous accounts we had eaten heavily into the overdraft range allowed. Owing to certain factors in connection with the campaign I had to pay Cooper an extraordinarily big cheque this month. Any our commitments with him are reduced to very little now. I received an account from Padayachy the other day of £19. 1. I am forgetting about it until further notice. Otherwise papa the gang is extremely happy. The swotting season is on with Lesego the most consistent worker in the family. She is doing the September test just now. Maspie and Brag have prac tests today. The ~~xxxxxx~~ usual bioscope craze still characterizes Pulanes weekly Life. Routine is a good thing. It enables people to maintain a discipline without great difficulty. This has helped to make unnecessary the imposition of any restraints by our new home regime. By the time the financial tangles are resolved we should be having a grand time. The car is wonderful. Our new handle arrived and papa will be pleased to hear that we have had three retreats without our having to spend a penny. A chance remark to Njongwe last time he was here got that fixed up and saved us 12 pounds eighteen bob.

We were all very sorry to lose old Badenhorst here the other day. He got a heart attack and died. Well with all his faults he was a good Afrikaner. Dr. Lauckner has left for Nigeria. I hope he will be happy there. Being a South African he might find things hot. The press has only to hear he is from S.A. and they will have a lot to say. The hospital is in a pretty mess now that he is gone. I understand some patients are even speaking of leaving the hospital.

As far as the Defiance campaign is concerned we have every reason to feel gratified at the success achieved so far. Up to now over four thousand volunteers have been arrested in the campaign.. The area of operation has been considerably widened and in future will be extended to cover even more areas. Alice has so far sent in 43 men and women, among whom is Aunt Sheila. Kingwilliamstown has sent in sixty; Queenstown fifty; Fort Beaufort 79. In other words the rural ~~xxx~~ have come into the picture and they have come to stay. It has been my belief that when aroused the rural areas will provide the bed-rock on which a solid movement will be based. For a passive resistance we do need people whose way of life is peculiarly suited to this form of struggle... the African rural man is excellent material and he has reasons for disliking the present system. Natal is in action and promises to be in the vanguard of the movement very soon. But so far we here in the Cape have been in the forefront both as regards political tactics and action and tenacity in the face of prison persecution. In the Cape the movement has become one in which the masses themselves are participating and they are producing their own leadership.

Last week on Wednesday the government made a swoop on the Cape leaders. I was the first to be arrested early in the morning at 6 a.m. by a member of political staff in Grahamstown. The other chaps were collected on Thursday morning. I was detained in Jail for twenty-seven hours and appeared before the Alice magistrate and the case was remanded to P.E. for the twenty-fifth of this month. Bail was fixed at £100. The charge is based on the Suppression of Communism act; the same as the other Congress leaders in the Transvaal. The others arrested include- Dr. Njongwe, G.X.Tshume (P.E. executive A.N.C. and E.Cape regional secretary) R.Matji, Florence Matomela (executive A.N.C. P.E.) R. Mhlaba (chairman A.N.C. P.E.) Nkosinkulu (vice-chairman) A.Gwentshe (East London president) D.Lengisi (Secretary A.N.C. E.L.)

Fazzie-- Secretary Cape Youth League) . All of us are to appear at P.E. on the twenty-fifth for a preparatory examination. The alternative charge is incitement to commit public violence. Our arrest was celebrated by the going into action of 350 volunteers. It is interesting that those volunteers went into action with all the leaders in jail. In other the new commands took over efficiently in a few hours. That should serve as a warning to the government. They must realise that here they are not dealing with an artificial protest organised by a few Communists as they would like all of us to believe but is a mass movement based on real grievances of the people. The ridiculous situation in which I am accused of acts aimed at achieving the objects of Communism-- Ridiculous nonsense! But of course oppressive governments have no scruples about such things.

Needless to say we are not in the least perturbed. The campaign will unfold itself as planned. Surely, efficiently without excitement, without sensations. From a legal point of view the government has't got a case at all, but this a political case and one can expect anything. We have decided to engage a number of senior counsel- among them Berrange and Lowen. Over the week-end ten thousand has been collected for the case, here in the Cape. We are of course not placing much reliance on the legal battle. Our safety lies in the people and we have complete confidence in them. Especially our masses in the Cape- both rural and urban. We have plenty of reserves and whilst we have a healthy respect for the resources at the disposal of the government we have a feeling that they have a herrenvolk contempt for ours-- they are in for a surprise. I am always thankful for papa's advice that we should build the campaign on a basis of full recognition of the consequences and to explain carefully to the people the issues involved. The Whites are under the mistaken impression that the Africans are tools in the hands of agitators and that they will soon return to normal. In my reports I always endeavour to give papa some idea of the situation in the country, but papa would actually have to be present here to realise what is happening. The most tremendous thing that has happened is not that any definite advantages have already been gained i.e. material advantages, but that there has been a transformation in the way of thinking of the Africans - a revolutionary transformation that cannot be experienced by anyone not actually present in the country. The Africans are on the March and whatever the result of the present Defiance campaign even if it ends in total defeat at the hands of the government the country will never be the same again. The government has no solution to the crisis presented by the defiance ~~campaign~~ campaign. In the last week four ministers have made statements about the Defiance. Strydom, Donges, Verwoerd and Schoeman. These men all had the same attitude. Their line is that there are two alternatives. One is negotiation and the other is to fight the campaign to the bitter end. Negotiation they say is impossible because the leaders of the defiance campaign are demanding unconditional surrender by the Whites and complete equality.. This is unthinkable therefore the other alternative is the only way. ~~xx~~ Papa can see here the Afrikaner tendency towards over-simplification at work. To present two alternatives one of which can not be tolerated. They have chosen to ignore completely the correspondence between Dr. Moroka and Dr. Malan. They would not like it to be known that the A.N.C. demands the repeal of five acts especially the notorious pass laws which are merely a liability on the progress of the whole country. At any rate the Nats have a policy towards the Defiance campaign-- to smash it or be smashed by it. The Opposition ideas about this are pitiful. Strauss is apologetic about opposition to the Nats and he " deploras the Defiance campaign. With a naive that can only be matched by an infant-politician he tells the Africans that the laws they do not want were passed by parliament and thatb they can only be repealed constitutionally. Therefore the Defiance campaign must be called off . He promises that if elected he will meet African leaders-- (he does not say which African leaders-- I think he would like to sidestep Congress and manufacture some good-boys outside the A.N.C.). At least the Nats recognize Congress politically although they would be the last to admit it. By they cannot run away from the Malan reply to Moroka. Donges says there can be no negotiation because there is no representative group among the Africans. The Torch Commando National Executive has passed a ~~xxxxxx~~ resolution asking the government to meet the A.N.C. before it is too late.. The opposition is in a state of utter confusion. A great deal of what the Nats say about the U.P. is true . It has no leader and no policy. At the beginning of this campaign I predicted that the country would gradually divide up into reactionaries behind the Nats and progressives of all shades behind the A.N.C. That is now reality or almost reality. The Whites will have to form a party that is prepared to make definite changes or join Congress.

Coming back to more personal news. Papa must not bother about

our arrest at all. Here at home I will have to complete arrangements before telling you the position. C.P.D. as you can imagine has already moved. As far as the home is concerned he regards himself as being ~~an~~ loco parentis. But of course he is far from the political aspects -- to my joy and relief. I am typing out all the manner of business for accounts etc. I will sign the gang plenty of cheques to be kept in a safe place. Anything extraordinary will be seen to in co-operation with C.P.D. ~~xx~~ Omp Gqira and if he is not there Aunt Rene. Power of attorney has already been made out ~~xxx~~ to Aunt Rene. As regards my exams I am certain that by the time the case reaches appellate division we will have written all the papers. What happens afterwards belongs to history. The gang has been so thoroughly indoctrinated that my arrest was regarded as quite commonplace. In fact Pulane and Lesego laughed at me until I felt that there was nothing to worry about. Well we are prepared for anything from the government and I am glad that papa is on that side. It would have been bad for both of us to be making the sacrifice. Other details will follow later. The twenty leaders have been committed for trial after the examination which lasted a week. The date of the trial has not yet been announced. Well papa hows the going with dough. We need plenty as you can see. I hope those chaps will send a great deal. Our buget is becoming bigger every month. The action of the Asian nations will have tremendous effects. The West has to make up its mind on the question of race. I hope papa will be a position to give expert advice to these fellows. Dr. Donges ~~is~~ going to represent White South Africa. Papa had better represent South Africa!

Well papa that is all for the present. Would papa like to know how many police there were to arrest me. Over two hundred-- re-inforcement from Grahamstown and East London! Utter nonsense.

Love from all the gang,

Your loving Son,

Babwe.

P.S. Hurry! We are a H.C. now.