A fortnight has passed since June 12th when you departed from the country and it struck me that it might be a good idea to give some digest of the political situation from our point of view every week. This time the review will cover two weeks but hereafter a page will receive a commentary every week.

During the first week from June 12th to 19th the machinery for the running of the campaign for the defiance of unjust laws was put in order. The National Action Committee took offices in Johannesburg at Chancellor house and the National, Volunteer chief and his deputy visited various parts of the country --- S.W. Cape, East London and Natal to smooth out organisation. On June 22nd mass prayer meetings were held for the volunteers who were going into action on June 26th. By this date there were far more than ten thousand volunteers registered with the National Action Committee. The campaign received a spur with the report of the fighting between the police and African women at Cendelakkerst as a result of the attempt of the municipality there to force African women to register the fact that they were in bona fide employment. This was of course the pass system applied to women. Also the incidents at Waga in which there was some shooting although no one was killed. This was caused by the attempt of officials to erect fences in the location. In both these actions Congressmen have hurried to assist the people and to attempt to show them how through the Defiance of Unjust Laws we can win the battle without violence.

On the parliamentary front the usual shadow boxing continued between the two white parties. The minister of Native Affairs was determined to pass his bill. He has been at great pains to show how much better the Africans will be with the new pass. Unfortunately for him the bill is now thoroughly discredited and not even the reactionary groups can pretend any longer that this is anything but a more restrictive pass law. The attack on the U.P. Torch Commando etc. continues and there was open talk by cabinet ministers of a coup which is being planned by the Commando. As far as the opposition is concerned they are retreating even more under the propaganda onslaught of the Nationalist machinery. Even the Torch Commando for all its bravado has lost the political advantage and they are on the run. I do not know how they will recapture the initiative. Politically they have lost the battle and there is also noticeable a certain disappointment among them at the fact the non-Europeans have just had no confidence in the Commando's ability to lead the country out of its troubles. To crown it all the Nationalists won the bye-election at Wakkerstroom with an absolutely crushing majority. They increased their majority by 850. All the money spent by the U.P., all the aeroplanes etc. of the Torch Commando did not help at all. In other words the parliamentary battle goes to the Nats. They will not be put out of power through inter-parliamentary struggle. There are rumours now of the possibility of a new party being formed in South Africa - A "Democratic Party".

In the defiance of Unjust Laws campaign the first operations passed off smoothly, efficiently and without violence. At Port Elizabeth 30 volunteers were arrested including Mr. Mhlabo and 4, Secretary (Womens section of the National Action Committee). Also arrested was Mrs. Matomela (Secretary of the Womens section of the A.N.C.). In Johannesburg 164 were arrested. First a group of fifty-two which had defied the law by entering a location without a permit. This group was led by Nana Sita, President of the Transvaal Indian Congress and by W. Simu. In the evening a further group led by the Reverend Tantsi broke the curfew laws in the evening. At the same time Mr. Mandela and Yusuf Cachalia were arrested for aiding and abetting this second group to commit a crime. This was not according to plan. It was caused by the habit they have in Johannesburg of escorting those who are to be arrested to the police. However the whole matter is under maxim control. The feeling in the country is so high that it is difficult to maxim restrain the people. On the morning of the twenty sixth the courts were jammed with excited crowds and instead of public hearings the authorities set up courts in the cells attached to the courts and remanded the prisoners in custody till July tenth. I do not know what the intention of the government is. In the jail which I visited myself it was clear that prison officials were dead scared of the political prisoners. R. Mhlabo is kept away from the others and also from the other prisoner s in the jail. The rest are together but they are kept away from the rest of the prisoners. The jail is full of cries of Afrikaner and the spirit of the first volunteers is excellent. In the evening of the 26th a hasty meeting of the youth League was called. It was a huge meeting and four hundred people volunteered. There was no speech delivered. We just told the people that all those who wanted to volunteer must come forward.
I have not yet got reports from Johannesburg about the effect of the arrests on the masses but I have no doubt that they are electrifying. We will be sending in a further batch on Sunday 29th. Much bigger groups will be going in next week. The biggest of next weeks groups will be led by M Katjiu.

The biggest need as before is money. We must have more and more of this commodity. We have formed welfare associations throughout the country to look after the dependants of volunteers. To start with we are only sending in those people who will require no assistance. We have also got panels of lawyers and doctors who will give services free of charge to dependants of volunteers. There will be no difficulty whatsoever about volunteers. All we need is money and more money to help make our machinery more efficient and also to ensure that dependants of volunteers will be well looked after. This is essential to retain the confidence of the masses. Stage three of mass defiance has already been decided upon. It will be set off by the actions of the government in certain circumstances. This has been prepared for in case all the leaders are suddenly arrested etc. Those who will look after the planning of the third stage are already appointed. We hope this will not be necessary at this stage. It is clear that a call of that sort now will lead to violence which will not help us. We must have time to educate the masses more on the need for discipline and non-violence. This is my personal opinion. I am worried by the present heat which is showing itself in numerous incidents in the big centres such as Africans getting into cafes and sitting down and demanding to be served just as Europeans are with meals etc. So far this has not led to trouble. In P.E. some of the managers have given instructions for Non-Europeans to be served even where normally they are not served except at the counter. The lesson has not been lost on the people and they are beginning to see the value of the campaign in terms of definite and immediate benefits.

East London, Durban and Capetown will also join in next week. I did not report that Ngwevela had previously joined the others in defying the ban of the minister. Also I Shoola, secretary of the Indian Youth Congress. Mr. Sam Kahn was arrested this week for defying an order that had been handed to him in the morning. Unlike the Defiance groups he accepted bail of fifty pounds and was released.

P.S. The total number of incidents in the Cape is few thousand odd. In the whole country I do not know. We are sticking to the number the ten thousand. We must make use of this propaganda that we got for more than we wanted. We do not want a cheap way of propaganda that this army be increased. Work hard. Do not need for this. The plan of special conference appears to create an atmosphere for the 'national organization'. Doing certain things by lawyers who are on our side & for military movement.

J. G. M.