

which is not satisfied with tacit collaboration. This group is prepared to see to it that any progressive element on the campus must be stifled. These are the government spies. Some of these spies are so enthusiastic that even the world beyond the precincts of the campus knows them. However, others are quite inactive from fear of exposure. Indeed, about 20 per cent of the students "down at Bush" are spies.

The progressive students are all opposed to the idea of apartheid with all its monstrous accompaniments. Among the progressive students we find those who are obviously oriented by some outside political group. The influence of one particular political group which has since died a natural death is evident in these students. This political group was doggedly sold to the policy of non-collaboration, which bordered on indoctrination, irrespective of the facts pertaining to the matter on hand.

Their stand is perhaps justifiable in that in this country we are faced with a government committed to principle; and like all fascist rulers, our rulers are not prepared to compromise, because compromise on any issue would either mean creating an undesirable precedent or abandonment of their cherished principles.

At this point we can mention, by way of dispelling certain misgivings as regards the degrees and diplomas obtained down at Bush, the fact that this college is a constituent college of the University of South Africa. This means that it only prepares the student to sit for the University of South Africa examinations; and therefore its degrees are, as a matter of fact, the degrees of the University of South Africa.

Part II will deal with staff and student organizations.

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The Suspects

A Story

JACOB MOKGOLO

SEVEN O'CLOCK. The last truck wound its way round the corner of the main street. A hotch-potch of pale pink faces stacked the lorry, presenting an unusual sight on the traffic line. Behind this trailed the story of that morning's early hours, of which story a few residents of the township were lucky not to have been forced into the scene. Snatches of the night's happenings were evidenced in the rifles poised at chest level by the young men in the lorry, in the tunics, in the front-tilt police caps that struggled in vain to muffle the pinkish uniformity of facial line.

The village had been stirring in the night, and you receive a sudden shock at this realisation. That is the time you begin to wonder that someone could have spent a nightmareless night while the heart of the village had throbbed with the tread of angry feet, had trembled with the ravaged beat of frightened bosoms.

And all this stir because the village women had dared to question a law they deemed unjust; because they had organised a protest meeting against passes for women in the Community Hall two days back; because they had refused to disperse when Special Branch Chief Pieterse ordered them to call off the meeting instead of meeting their wishes; because a hot encounter had ensued between the people and the law, the law being forced to run away.

The Chief had given a lengthy, heated report at headquarters. Agitators; communist influences, it was solemnly declared. The report had elicited this response. A raid in the small hours of the Sunday morning while they lingered over thoughts of a day's rest, while ruminating over the last whiffs of week-end alcoholic taint on the breath. Twelve patrol vans, four trooper lorries were called forth and threw a strong cordon around Lady Selborne. Then the raid began.

IT MIGHT BE EXPECTED to raise a sudden, wild alarm, but the African township, accustomed to more embarrassing situations at odd hours, is not easily taken by surprise.

The African boy dashed through a paneless window, sneaked through a backdoor, cunning and intrigue were

JACOB MOKGOLO, a freelance writer who lives in the Pietersburg district of the Northern Transvaal, used to contribute under the pseudonym Carl Mafoko.

brought into play, and ultimately the man found an outlet to the dark fastnesses of the mountain. One was caught in the act and, after the scheduled beating, was hauled by stalwart arms into the yawning back van reinforced on the sides with trellised iron rails.

Police steps woke a child from the passage. The child screamed. There was a shout back: "Open! Vula!" The door flew with an unkind wave while the man inside staggered back at the impact of the push, one hand still at the doorknob, another missing and taking up a clutch at the unhoisted braces, the leg withdrawing with a jerk and a clap, intuitively perceptible under the baggy pants unguarded by underwear. It assails his moral hold—one revered member exposed to shame?

Doors closed and banged wildly behind the booted men. They had to cover a wide area before dawn or the people would be up and who knew one throaty alarm call would not organise the whole village against them? A rifle is nothing, shivers in the hands of a policeman when Africa is enraged. The doors banged furiously, the boots pattered from door to door. Perhaps there would have been softer, stealthy treads and less noise but for the hurry. But for the villagers it was a good, friendly warning.

Open! Vula! Pass!

Obed jumps out of a dream about a sales job and crawls naked on his belly in a furrow among mealie stems. For he is yet without work and has had no time to register as a work-seeker. But at least he does not think of going, even if there is time. How often must he have his book plastered? So also feels Abey. Abey graduated from Normal College the previous year and he is still waiting for a call: a teaching post, secretarial work. So he joins Obed in this act and together they lie low in the mealie garden, thanking their stars their skins are dark and almost one with the earth in the night. A police torch flashes a wide beam, sends patches of beam and vine leaf shadow over their bronze, searches up and down. They press down with bated breathing, silent as two corpses.

THEY HAVE GOT another one. They push him into the lorry. The spring of the chain he holds on to as he climbs throws him stumbling into the half-undressed bodies he cannot see well because the mist of sleep is still in his eyes. He yanks his forehead into the broad nose of a boot. He is cuffed on all sides and propelled thus roughly to the inner part of the lorry. He wipes a tear and keeps alert. He knows it will be the same from then on through the whole affair: roughing and jolting into every form of reception.

Kenny's unlocked door yielded to the push of a rifle butt and before he could jump from bed a rifle point poked in his nose, in his chest, while the torch light searched for his eyes. That was rather unceremonious greeting, he thought as he applied the back of his hand to the blinking eyes.

"Pass!"

He motioned at his wife with his eyes. At least he should be treated with more respect in the presence of his wife!

"Pass!"

"It's in the kitchen," he lied.

"Come on, hurry up, then!" The gun point poked his behind to urge him on.

"I'm undressed. Just step out and I'll follow."

The White policeman looked at the window, looked back at the man. "Pull him out," he said to two African constables.

Kenny tried to reach for his pants as he tottered out of bed with that unbalance one knows when dragged ungainly. The gun point pushed from behind with a rude brush. In the passage he said to the two constables dragging him: "My pass is back in here. Let me go back to fetch it."

That was enough for the rifleman giving orders. "To the van. We take him along."

As they climbed the steps on to Phefeni's verandah S.B. Chief Pieterse said to the African constable: "Is this the place?"

"Yes, I think so." There was a veiled hesitation in the voice, as if the man was chary of the information he had to give—as a duty.

Pieterse turned to his S.B. colleague: "We are picking our man today."

AN INSISTENT KNOCK rattled the door. Two fat patches of light swallowed the darkness out of the passage. Phefeni met the men in the blinding glow of the torches. And he knew even before he saw the helmet behind the two that it was the law. He made to speak to the men at the door but they stalwartly brushed with soldierly quick strides into the passage. They guessed the open door to be the bedroom, so they filed in, ignoring the man's protests.

Ma Phefeni, curled in the blankets, wriggled there, for she could not be still with the knowledge that the introducing light was there to light her and her husband's bed, to pick her body line that shaped the blanket to its delicate course. Two children in their bed shrieked with night-marish fright.

"You are Phefeni?" Pieterse asked.

"Yes."

"You were at the meeting?" But it came out more as a statement than a question.

"Yes. What of that?"

"You addressed the meeting and you are influential with your people. You saw the van stoned?"

"Mm."

"We have been ordered to search your house" (producing a search warrant), "and thereafter we take you along to headquarters. You are Suspect No. 1."

"Who are the other suspects?"

"Our vans are full of them already."

But he knew what had happened. Once a well-conducted organisation of his people had put up a legitimate stand. A police raid had been official response. And, as if it was an organisation of the lawless, the raid went searching for pass, liquor offences. That had scared many people.

The house search was thorough, even woke the wife from her shaky concealment in the bed. It fed a huge suitcase with various specimens of that dreaded silent carrier of ideas, the paper.

Phefeni in the back seat, Pieterse turned the car back just as dawn was beginning.