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52 REMANDED ON TREASON ALLEGATIONS

“Africa Come Back” Sing Prisoners in Court Cells

“R.D.M.” CORRESPONDENT

A GROUP of 140 men and women arrested on allegations of high treason in a nation-wide police swoop before dawn yesterday sang the lilting African National Congress song, “Africa Come Back to Us,” while they were held in the cells below the Johannesburg Magistrate’s Court yesterday afternoon.

Shortly afterwards, 52 people—including five European men and two European women—appeared before the Assistant Chief Magistrate, Mr. M. R. Hartogh, for formal remand before the opening of an inquiry into the allegations.

They were remanded in custody until December 19.

The rest of the 140, who were arrested in areas outside Johannesburg, are being brought to the Rand.

The nine-foot-by-seven-foot dock in “Q” Court in Johannesburg was too small to hold the 50 people who were brought into the courtroom, so they were brought up in four different groups.

The first man to step into the dock at the head of a group of five Europeans and four Indians was Dr. Ronald Press, national secretary of the Textile Workers’ Industrial Union. He was wearing a blazer embellished with a Witwatersrand University badge.

THUMBS-UP SIGN

He stumbled over the top step and, as he regained his balance, turned to the crowded non-European public gallery and gave the thumbs-up sign of the African National Congress. He smiled as the spectators murmured excitedly.

Still smiling, Press turned to

When the court rose after rewards the magistrate.

“Listen,” the magistrate said, “you are in a court of law now, do you understand? I will not permit you to do anything like that.”

“Sorry, your honour,” replied Press, looking serious.

EUROPEAN PRISONERS

The others came up the steps after him into the dock. One of the European women, Mrs. Helen Joseph, secretary of the Federation of South African Women, who was arrested in her Johannesburg flat early yesterday morning, sat in the well of the court beside a woman wardress while the others were being called.

When Mrs. Joseph’s name was called the wardress told her to stand in front of the dock.

The other Europeans who appeared in the dock were: Pieter Beyleveld, chairman of the South African Congress of Democrats; Sydney Shall, a medical student; and Norman Levy, a teacher.

When the court rose after remanding 50 people, a European man and woman were found wandering in the cells below the

more trouble like that, I will clear the court and you will all go outside”

But after that, as each party of prisoners turned away from the magistrate to walk down the steps to the cells, they gave the thumbs-up sign to the gallery. But the magistrate could not see this.

When they had all gone the court granted a defence application for permission to interview the 52 people in the court cells, in connection with a bail application which is to be made in the Supreme Court.

(Bail for people held on treason allegations can only be granted by the Supreme Court.)

Mr. J. C. van Niekerk, senior professional assistant to the Attorney-General, and Mr. J. H. Liebenberg, appeared for the Crown; Mr. J. Slovo, instructed by Mr. J. Levitan, for ten of the people before the court; and Mr. Z. Gamiel, Mrs. S. Muller and Mr. D. Lukele for the others.