



No Bread for Mandela: Memoirs of Ahmed Kathrada, Prisoner No. 468/64

Ahmed Kathrada

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When Ahmed Kathrada was released from prison in 1989 together with Walter Sisulu and Raymond Mhlaba after serving twenty-six years of a life sentence, more than 5,000 people came to Soweto to give him and his colleagues a hero's welcome. A veteran of the anti-apartheid movement who was imprisoned with Nelson Mandela and other African leaders, Kathrada had been one of the famous Rivonia trial defendants and incarcerated as a political prisoner on Robben Island and at Pollsmoor prison.

No Bread for Mandela is the gripping story of Kathrada's lifelong battle for justice in South Africa. At age seventeen, Kathrada left school to become a youth organizer for the Transvaal Passive Resistance Council and assisted with uniting various opposition groups under the leadership of the African National Congress. Arrested in 1963 at the age of thirty-four on charges of sabotage and conspiracy against the South African government, Kathrada was sentenced to life in prison. Although he, Nelson Mandela, and other African prisoners were serving the same sentence, under prison regulations of the apartheid regime, Kathrada, who is of Indian descent, received better treatment. Outraged at the inequities of apartheid and unwilling to concede defeat even in prison, Kathrada and his fellow prisoners continued the struggle for equality and justice. In prison, the most extreme form of protest and struggle was hunger strikes. Kathrada also was instrumental in organizing a covert communication network between prisoners in different sections of the prison and with the outside world.

This riveting memoir, spanning the history of modern South Africa, sheds new light on the struggle against apartheid. *No Bread for Mandela* is the moving and insightful account of a man who served among a loyal cadre of the African National Congress and helped in shaping his country's history. Kathrada's life is an inspiration and a model for everyone who seeks peace, justice, and reconciliation.

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