

LETTER TO FARZANAH



omar badsha

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FARZANAH**

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with an introduction by

andrew verster

published by the **institute for
black research**

to commemorate the international year of the child 1979

FIRST EDITION

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ISBN 0 620 04049 1

Book designed by Andrew Verster
Lithographic reproductions — Printed and bound
Colorgraphic, 489A Umgeni Road, Durban 4001.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**I want to thank all the people who participated in this book:
the many children and their parents who allowed me into their lives.
For my parents who sacrificed so much to make me understand my world.
To Hassim Seedat for his friendship and encouragement over the years.
I am deeply indebted to Andrew Verster for his introduction and design of this book.
To the management of The Daily News, The Post, The Nation, The Voice, the
The Rand Daily Mail and The Muslim News for their kind permission to use their material.
To the Institute for Black Research and more especially its founder, Mrs Fatima Meer, for their faith
in the youth. Without it this book would never have been published.
To the management and staff of Colorgraphic for their patience and friendship.
To my wife, Nasima, and my daughter, I owe everything.**

FOREWORD

It is said that children learn what they live.

If a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight.

If a child lives with shame, he learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with tolerance, he learns patience.

If a child lives with fairness, he learns justice.

If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, he learns to find love in the world.

If we want love, peace and justice to have any meaning for us as South Africans and, especially for those who belong to the ruling classes, then we must as a people act now.

Our country is fast reaching the stage where the chances of our children surviving their first year is the same as that of working class children in Victorian England.

But what of those who survive? It is being said of them that starvation would leave them not only physically disabled but also mentally abnormal.

The future of our country and civilization will be determined by our attitude and treatment towards our children.

**Adv. T.L. Skweyiya
(Chairman I.B.R.)**

INTRODUCTION

Childhood is a time that we only begin to appreciate when it is past. To watch a child trace endless patterns in the sand with his fingers is to unlock memories of days that were lived in a perpetual present, where yesterdays were quickly forgotten and the future impossibly distant. We all remember childhood in different ways, and age makes the memory sharper as it filters away the unimportant and concentrates on what really mattered.

Childhood is our only time of true freedom because other people are there to make our decisions. It is a time of inquisitiveness and curiosity, and of miraculous invention as imagination and reality swap places.

Omar Badsha's pictures have a special quality, that of straightforward honesty, a matter-of-fact ordinariness if you like, a naturalness, an apparent artlessness that is refreshing. They neither moralise nor dramatise, but simply give us the facts as he sees them. He leaves it to us to make of them what we will.

One can see on the faces of the children that he is not, as some photographers are, an intruder into their lives, but is welcome and at home with them, sharing their play, their idleness, their dreaming and their thoughts.

These are images where the incidental seems as important as the rest because each detail tells us

something more. It is in this discovery of things that we didn't already know that their quality lies.

One of the problems of living here is that it is impossible to get to know how people of a different colour from one own's live and work and think, and by that I mean, through actual first hand, personal experience. Our compartmentalised society is effective in keeping us in ignorance — that is as dangerous as it is spiritually and mentally impoverishing. As a black photographer, Omar Badsha has a natural entrée into a world that has been over-documented from the outside, (generally superficially and in cliched terms), but which has yet to be documented from within. His contribution is valuable.

Two things are immediately clear: the commonplace affirmation that people are simply people despite the imagined differences, and secondly, that to talk of separate but equal is nonsense. To be white in South Africa at the present time is an advantage, to be black a disadvantage, the one crucial the other all but insuperable. With white earnings on an average twelve and a half times per head those of blacks, a white child inherits an advantage at birth which will stay with him until the grave, and the black child a handicap that every living moment will underline.

The inequalities in our system are traditional and have been used to keep some people on top and others below.

A black child, secure in the love of its mother, will know nothing of this, yet his mother will be all too aware that her infant will have less chance of surviving than the child of the woman who employs her. And should that child get through those first fragile years, what then? She will know that the choices and opportunities will be limited by factors over which, she as a mother has no control and about which she was never consulted.

In this Year of the Child, we focus particularly on the black child in this book. The sixty-seven photographs tell part of the story; Omar Badsha's letter to his small daughter tells a little more. There are too, twenty-six recent stories about children selected from the papers. They are as they appeared in the press. They tell yet another part of the story.

ANDREW VERSTER

Durban: July 1979

“Percy Qoboza said to the Ikageng Women’s Association:

‘How many times have we heard the anguished cry of fathers and mothers who daily tell us their sons or daughters are only 15 years of age but the political views they express are frightening.’

‘Your child shares in your sense of indignity when you are stopped outside your yard and asked to produce your reference book. Your child shares in your sense of outrage and anger when people arrive in your house in the middle of the night and take you away, throw you into jail without trial, and for weeks, even months, refuse your wife the right to see you.’

‘As their cars drive off into the night with you, they leave behind seeds of hatred in the hearts of your small kids.’

‘This is the cruelty under which the child has to be brought up in Soweto. On the other side of

Johannesburg, a far more devastating problem is faced by the child there. A process where children are brought up to lose their sensitivity and humanity, where they are literally taught in the class room that all Blacks are labourers and criminals while all whites are doctors and accountants.’

BUT LIFE GOES ON

The child. . . helpless, innocent, ignorant of the meaning, the ultimate victim. The Wrab cops have gone, her parents’ meagre belongings turned out of their equally meagre shelter. And the night is not far off. This little girl waits patiently for someone to do something, if, indeed, there is anything that can be done. For somewhere beyond her fragile mind a decision was made that her family, and 99 others, were “illegally” living in the area known as Soweto Crossroads.

So they came, the cops with their guns, and

they removed the furniture and belongings and ordered the families out. A Wrab spokesman denied there was any intention to remove the families from the area. He described it as "interrogation". Whatever it was, this little girl's family were forced to put up this makeshift shelter to keep out the night. The next day (last Saturday) they started rebuilding their humble homes. And they are still there. They wait, mostly in ignorance, for the next decision of the authorities.

Some people say the area does not fall under the jurisdiction of Wrab because it is a "white" area. Only the South African Police, they say, has the right to remove anyone from the area. But to the little girl, this is a distinction beyond her understanding. All she knows is that they came, the cops, and wrenched her from her home. But she is still there, at Soweto Crossroads, and she waits for the next "interrogation". (Sunday POST, April 8, 1979)

Watching a mother wait for her son to die is an emotional experience.

And seeing scores of young students, some of them no more than 13 years old, stay with that mother the whole night comforting her was enough to fill one's eyes with tears.

This was the scene at that H2445 home in Mamelodi where Mrs Martha Mahlangu waited with the world for the decision whether her son would die or not.

She fell asleep while waiting and neighbours sat next to her, some hardly able to hide their tears.

Most of the students at the vigil had accepted the fate of their colleague, Solomon (23). They have come to expect the worst from the system.

When they spent the night with Mrs Mahlangu, some had defied instructions that they stay away.

And many of the students today face inquisi-

tions because they attended the "not on" funeral on Friday. They had been threatened with "tough action" by a local principal.

But they were with her, and what companions they made, ever brave and spirited when gloom seemed to be everywhere.

To them, the situation was not unreal: it could have been any one of them.

On arrival at the Mahlangu home on Thursday about 10pm, a whole crowd of these students were in the yard, in the house and out in the street.

The tent in the yard was filled with their singing, slogans and speeches.

Mrs Mahlangu was in the house surrounded by neighbours. She waited for the next morning, when Solomon would either die or be allowed to live.

But emotions reached fever pitch on Friday about 6am when the feeling swept through the house that no power on earth at this point and time could prevent the sentence from being carried out.

This feeling was underlined by a more than emotional singing of songs. The song that struck out was, Malibongwe Igama laka Solomon, Malibongwe, malibongwe (Let the name of Solomon be praised).

As about 100 young souls raised their voices in song, all in the house broke down and wept.

It was too much for us. Those young students in the tent had passed their verdict on Mahlangu — he is a hero.

When Mrs Mahlangu stood up from her bed, all rushed to her. She coolly wrapped herself with her shawl and went out into the backyard.

The singing stopped and a hush fell.

The students raised their heads expectantly at

Mrs Mahlangu. She smiled weakly. They started singing again. She went out to the street where a taxi was waiting.

The people had glued their ears to the 6.30am news for an announcement that the execution had been stayed.

The news came. No reprieve. And the students immediately formed a guard of honour for the car as it made ready to leave for Pretoria Central Prison.

Fists clenched and held high they started singing again. The car left and the strains of Igora lama gora (he is a hero among heroes) followed it.

At the prison, Mrs Mahlangu entered. When she came out, it was known that her son was dead.

At the cemetery, the students had swelled in numbers. Adults had also braved the situation and attended. Now, more than 500 people waited with Mrs Mahlangu for her son's body.

But the wait was in vain.

One could understand the anguished expressions on the faces of all. A mother would be denied an age-old custom — she would not be allowed to bury her son.

(Thami Mazwai — POST, 9 April, 1979)

New Born Baby Evicted

A young East Rand mother is on the stoep of her closed down home, recuperating after the birth of her child.

The Boxburg Town Council has evicted the family because of failure to pay the rent.

The family was given a reprieve — but only until the child was born. Thereafter the family had to leave the house. (POST, 13 March, 1979)

Policemen and Children

'A twelve year old defence witness told the Pietermaritzburg Regional Court this week that some white policemen had threatened to shoot him if he told the Court about assaults on prisoners.

'The youth was originally charged with two men but charges against him were withdrawn.

'He told the Court that he saw Mr Maila being assaulted and kicked by the police. He said at Zoekmekaar Maila was also hit with a long iron rod on the head and bled. The youth said he was also assaulted by both Black and white policemen.

'Under cross-examination the youth said what he was saying was what he saw. He said some white policemen at Zoekmekaar police station had said they would shoot him if he told the Court about the assault. He said he was not afraid because he was telling the truth. (Sunday POST — 4 March, 1979 — Mathata Tsedu).

Appearing before Mr Justice Kriek in Pietermaritzburg Supreme Court:

'A 16 year old accused told the same Court that Sgt. Ncoko had placed a rubber tube over his face so he could not breathe. The policeman had then allegedly hit him with his fists in order to make him write a statement. When he refused, Lt. Mostert pointed a gun at him and told him he would follow Steve Biko'. (January 1979).

Pupil Dies in Riot

A youth died and another was wounded when police opened fire on a crowd of riotous pupils at the troubled KwaMa Khuta High School near Amanzimtoti yesterday.

Two Security Branch detectives drove past a supermarket near the school when a crowd of

about 50 youths pelted their police car with stones.

The car was damaged and the two policemen opened fire. One youth was wounded in the head and died in hospital a short while later. Another was slightly wounded. (POST — 2 March, 1979).

“MY FATHER IS SO STRONG — HE IS LIKE A FORTRESS BUT THE ADULTS HAVE FAILED TO PROVIDE A WORLD. THE CHILDREN ARE FORCED TO TAKE OVER”. (Sunday Post — 18 April, 1979).

This is the International Year of the Child. But it appears not to have bothered a Cape Town magistrate, Mr W. Fourie.

He was on the bench when a migrant labourer in the Western Cape, Mr Dickson Kohlakala, appeared on charges of harbouring his sick child, Lungisane, who apparently is suffering from tuberculosis, and his wife, Mrs Alice Kohlakal, who had brought the child to his father so that better treatment could be obtained. Mr Fourie threw the book at Mr Kohlakala. He was fined R50 or 50 days for harbouring them. The boy is 11 months old and his Mom had been to several Transkei doctors without avail. Mr Fourie said since Lungisane had now been hospitalised in Cape Town he did not need his Mom's personal attention. ('Voice' — 1 July, 1979)

More than 120 families living in Missionvale, a squatter area outside Port Elizabeth, are to be moved.

Some will go to the Eastern Cape's black controversial resettlement area of Glenmore, 160 kilometres away.

Their opposition to being moved to Glenmore has heightened since living conditions there were exposed recently in 'Sunday Post'.

Mr Hennie Swanepoel, acting chief director of the East Cape Administration Board, said there are 126 squatter families and his board was now busy with a survey to establish "illegal" residents in the area, assisted by the Department of Community Development.

Mr Swanepoel said 20 houses were immediately available at Glenmore.

But people would not be forced to go to areas they disapproved of. They had to give their consent.

Missionvale is to be utilised as a coloured residential area. It is presently populated by black and coloureds and the blacks who are the responsibility of the board, must now be removed.

'Sunday Post' visited the area this week and found the families in fear after visits by officials.

The fear uppermost was that they would be taken to Glenmore.

Some families also complained of high rents in Zwide, a new township in Port Elizabeth, where they may be given houses.

Families who move to Glenmore will automatically be forced to leave their jobs in Port Elizabeth and join a hungry community. (Jimmy Matyu — 'Sunday Post', July 22, 1979).

Homeless family must pay for being uprooted

The Nxumalo family with 14 children, who were uprooted from the Transvaal and evicted twice in one week without proper accommodation arranged, now faces R120 transport costs.

Mr Luke Nxumalo and his wife Elizabeth, both in their fifties, their five children and nine grandchildren were evicted from their Delmas home near Witbank last week after having lived there for 29 years, and dumped on open ground

in Wembezi township.

They were then evicted from Wembezi township three days later after being told there was no official accommodation for them. Arrangements were made for them to move to Nthaba Mhlope location about 15km away where they will have to build their own house.

Mr Nxumalo was told he would have to make his own transportation arrangements and pay his own costs in the move to Nthaba Mhlope. He had to move in three days.

An eviction notice was served on Mr Nxumalo in Delmas when the Government appropriated land from Mr A. Howard of Delmas for whom Mr Nxumalo had worked since 1950.

Mr Nxumalo was told by Government officials that he had to return to Estcourt since he had been born there. His eviction was in accordance with the influx control laws.

When he arrived at Wembezi township, the authorities said no official accommodation had been arranged for him. The family was allowed to sleep the night in a single room in the local magistrate's court normally used by prisoners awaiting trial, while their possessions were left out in the open.

After being dumped at Nthaba Mhlope, Mr Nxumalo erected a crude shelter from corrugated iron sheets. He has now started work on a permanent home.

He was unable to pay the transport costs of R120 but a donation of R20 from two local white Anglican priests made to Mr Nxumalo has been contributed towards the bill. (Daily News — 23 July, 1979).

Schools Jam Up

At Thuthuka, school population 1,500, some children have their classes in the open air. A teacher uses the caretaker's house wall as a

blackboard.

At Tembisa, hundreds of kids were jammed in a yard and two garages. (Post — 27 February, 1979)

No Placements in Schools

There is panic among Soweto students as three months have gone by and thousands of children have still not been placed in schools.

The Department of Education and Training this year, for the first time, took over the placing of students.

Tens of inspectors, headed by Mr Jaap Strydom, the Director of Education and Training, have been screening students according to where they stay, their ethnic grouping, their subjects and their qualifications before they place them. (Post — 2 March, 1979).

About 40 children in the Kliptown area, whose ages range from 7 to 14, have been denied the right to attend school because officially they are neither black nor coloured.

They were born and brought up in a mixed community of coloured and black parents and their births were not registered anywhere and they do not have birth certificates.

Hence, their existence is officially unknown.

Other children lucky enough to have their names in the population register, classified coloured and accepted in coloured government schools, reject them and will not play with them.

“Teachers”, Ms Rhoda Muller and Ms Bertha Jacobs, neither trained for the job, started a “school” in Kliptown last year and they teach the racially unclassified children how to read and write.

“There could be hundreds and hundreds of

others like them who roam the streets because they cannot be accepted at any school. Their only sin is that they have never had any official document which can tell whether they are coloured or black", said Ms Muller.

The children, who started "school" in April last year, are plain black, or coffee-coloured and some very light in complexion. They all speak the language of many coloureds — Afrikaans.

"Attendance fluctuates. Sometimes we have over 20, like today, and on other days, up to 40. But some are serious and they come almost every day", Ms Muller said.

Nelly Cuine is 14, the oldest of the twilight children and is in Grade Two. Youngest is Sydney Erasmus (7) in Grade One.

Nuns first began teaching the twilight children about 7 years ago using a garage for a classroom.

The welfare organisation, Good Shepherd Community Services, sent two letters to a local school recommending the admission of Susan Losper (9) and Ellen Losper (12), neither of whom has a birth certificate but, said Ms Muller, they could not be admitted.

Asked by 'Sunday Post' why they started their "school", Ms Muller said: "We used to meet the children everywhere roaming during school hours and we got worried about it.

"We visited their parents and introduced our idea of starting a school and they agreed to send them here".

Ms Jacobs said: "They could neither read nor write when they came here, but they are now able to write their names and do a little reading.

"We just teach them what we can because we are ourselves not qualified teachers, although we do seek help from qualified friends when we encounter problems".

Mr C.D. Beukes, Chief School Inspector for the Transvaal, said he knew nothing about the twilight school. Schools have been instructed to demand a birth certificate before admitting any child, he said.

But those who could not produce such certificates immediately could be provisionally accommodated if they had proof that they had applied for certificates.

The birth certificates, he said, were needed to establish the official dates of birth of the children and not their race.

(Sunday Post — 22 July, 1979).

Desertion

Themba Malindi, fourteen, seems to have a bleak future. He says his father deserted him, his mother has left him in the care of an aged grandfather. He cannot go back to school because his grandfather can't provide him with the necessary books and fees.

When schools closed last year, Themba had passed standard two. But after attending classes for seven days, he had to leave school and started roaming the streets of Soweto. (Post — 13 March, 1979).

Sacked worker had no money to save baby

Three year old Francis Sokupha, died last week because her father, Mr Matthews Sokupha, did not have money to get to a hospital where his daughter's life could have been saved.

The grief stricken Mr Sokupha has been unemployed and without money ever since the 88 Fattis and Monis workers left their jobs in sympathy with dismissed workers.

Mr Sokupha worked for Fattis and Monis for eight years. His wife is also unemployed.

'I feel very bad about Francis's death, but I

hope that she did not die for nothing', Mr Sokupha said.

Mr Sokupha and his wife battled in vain to save the life of their baby who was coughing badly and had a heavy cold.

'Times are bad. We had no money to buy food and we could not get Francis to a doctor or to a hospital because of this', he said.

Francis Sokupha is the second baby of a striking Fattis and Monis worker to have died since the workers refused to go back to work.

The first baby who died was 16-month-old Joseph Sokupha.

The organiser for the Food and Canning Workers' Union, Mrs Virginia Engel, said the workers were still in high spirits and as determined as ever to stand by each other.

'All of them attended the funeral last week and this certainly has strengthened their solidarity', she said. (Cape Herald — 14 July, 1979).

Haroon Dada is only five. He was born normal, but after his first birthday, things went wrong.

The little Laudium lad is a victim of cerebral palsy.

Rashida Dada is desperate. She's tried all the cerebral palsy schools in the country.

The Black schools have a waiting list. The White schools are trapped in their apartheid thinking.

And a little child must suffer . . . all this is SA's Year of the Child in 1979. (Voice — 3 January, 1979).

Retarded Children

30,000 children lack specialised training.

The mentally retarded children's training Act

makes no provision for Black children. It states specifically that 'person' as referred to in the Act, means 'a white child'. The Black mentally retarded child is, by the stroke of a pen, swept under the proverbial carpet.

There are an estimated 8-19,000 mentally retarded Coloured people. Five hundred children are cared for by the state at Westlake and approximately 300 are cared for in private institutions.

A probe has revealed that in Johannesburg the lack of education and training is imposing great hardship on Black teachers and making their already difficult jobs twice as hard. Some Soweto teachers have from 6 to 10 retarded children in their classes. (Muslim News — 27 October, 1978).

'There are over 50,000 Black retarded children in South Africa. Some of the children are tied to table legs while their mothers go out to work. Many roam the streets. Many have been abandoned and have ended up in dismal "children's homes". Several hundred are in privately run state subsidised institutions where the care leaves much to be desired. A few hundred are catered for at six day care centres scattered throughout South Africa'.

There is an Act concerned with the training of mentally retarded children, but it applies only to the white child.

Following a Johannesburg symposium on the Black retarded child, the Department of Education and Training has said it wants the community, particularly private enterprise, to step into the breach and get the ball rolling by establishing suitable centres, whereafter, if they meet with official approval, they will be subsidised. (The Nation — November, 1978).

Baby found near railway

A newborn baby wrapped in a dirty blanket and

put into an old "Checkers" packet was found abandoned in the shade of a tree, close to the railway line in Lenasia.

8 years' jail for 'no remorse' baby basher

PRETORIA: A 22-year-old man who battered his baby to death was yesterday sentenced in the Pretoria Regional Court to eight years' imprisonment for culpable homicide.

Christoo Loots (22) of 43 Lawson Avenue, Waverley, Pretoria, pleaded not guilty. His 11-month-old baby died following an assault on September 5 last year.

In passing sentence, the magistrate, Mr W.J. van der Bergh, said that Loots had shown no remorse for his deed.

Loots, who laughed and joked during court recesses, said he had reacted automatically and could not remember what had happened.

Medical evidence was that the baby died as a result of a skull fracture, injuries to the liver and pancreas and internal bleeding.

Loots told the Court that on September 5 he had a day off work and went to fetch his wife. They argued because he had been at the house of friends and had not looked after their child.

He told his wife he was going to go out with the friends but had not done so because one of the servants was not at home. When he returned home, Loots said, he found the other servant had left.

Loots said he remembered finding the baby on the floor, and then he picked him up and shook him.

Later on he found himself giving the baby a bath, he said. He could not remember hitting the baby at all.

Dr P.H. Henning, a consulting doctor at Weskoppies Hospital, said it was possible that

Loots could not remember what had happened, but it was just as probable that he had killed the child in a bad mood and could remember.

The Court accepted that Loots was in a healthy mental condition, Mr van der Bergh said. (Daily News — 26 July, 1979).

Citizenship

'Consider. . .the case of Thabo Mokoena who was born in the South African town of Thaba Nchu in 1971. He thought he was South African until the town "miraculously" moved from South Africa to Mangopeland.

After 1972 he ceased to be a South African and this in spite of the fact that his great great grandfathers were born and bred here.

On the other hand Jose Mario da Silva whose forebearers came from Portugal. . .can become a naturalized citizen of South Africa virtually overnight.

The letter to Jose is couched in warm welcoming tones — "You have this day received a precious gift from South Africa — her citizenship. On behalf of the Government and the people of South Africa, I welcome you as a member of the South African community.

It is my sincere wish that you will avail yourself wisely of the privilege of South African citizenship and that it will bring you and your descendants peace, happiness and prosperity" — message from the State President.

Now the temporary permit which will be issued to Thabo who was born in South Africa will inform him that he has ceased to be a South African citizen.

Not only that but it will be a terse permit. . .with his pass number in brackets alongside.

"This permit is granted to above-mentioned

holder to enter and reside in the districts described in the Province mentioned for the purpose of undertaking unskilled or domestic labour and is issued subject to the following conditions. . . .”

Then follows a host of “Thou shall nots” which Thabo will break on pain of jail’. (Obed Musi — ‘Voice’ — 24-30 June, 1979).

Malnutrition

Rev. Ron Brauteseth, executive director of World Vision Children’s Fund in South Africa said ‘We must have thousands of hungry children who will never reach their God-given potential, because, during those all important formative years, their bodies have not received proper nourishment. . . . But what about the starved brains — damaged beyond repair, are we breeding a generation of idiots in this land of plenty?’

He says it is frightening to think that 20% of those admitted to hospital for curative medicine actually die as a result of malnutrition. ‘Hunger and malnutrition are viewed as the biggest enemy attacking our society at the southern tip of Africa today’.

At Murchison Hospital outside Port Shepstone a Sister Mfeka told him “That child will never recover and will always be referred to as lazy and lacking initiative. The cause? Permanent brain damage because of malnourishment”.

In Katatura township in Windhoek he came across 600 vagrant children who have ‘often been seen fighting off the baboons to glean scraps from the municipal dump’.

In Bloemfontein, the local hospital examined almost 2,000 children a month in 1978 and found that 1 in 4 were suffering from diseases related to malnutrition.

At King Edward VIII Hospital, in Durban, nearly 50% of the African and Indian children

admitted between 1970 and 1975 were seriously malnourished, and that over 25% of these children had died.

The mortality rates for both Coloured and African children 1 — 4 years of age were 13 times as high as those for white children. (Molhobi Mutloatse — ‘Voice’, — 8-15 July, 1979).

Destitute Children

The ‘Orlando Home’, run by Maggie Nkwe is the only one of its kind catering for needy Black children, those abandoned or orphaned.

‘It is completely independent and survives only on contributions from the public and industry. The home gets no subsidy from the South African Government, the Johannesburg City Council or the West Rand Administration Board’.

The children age ranges from day-old babies to children of 12 year old. But once the children turn 12 they are moved to a reformatory, where they spend their next few years in prison cells, purely because no provision is made by the Government’s welfare department for their care. The result is that, exposed to the brutalities of jail conditions and to company of young, offenders, these children ‘are a nation of criminals in the making’.

Meanwhile white children ‘are provided with all the basic needs in their luxurious orphanages’.

After some years in the prison cells, the children are given reference books and, when considered able to fend for themselves, are set free to search for work. Where they are to live or how they are to survive while looking for work is nobody’s concern. (‘The Nation’ — November, 1978).

Ritual Murder

‘More than a dozen innocent Black girls have been killed by ritual murderers in Pretoria’s

townships and still no one has been brought to account for the killings. Suspects have been taken in for questioning and later released after the police had satisfied themselves they were innocent'. ('The Nation' — December, 1978).

Police raid horror for girl, 12

A weekend hunt for trespassers in Berea, Johannesburg, had a horror ending when a terrified schoolgirl fell four floors trying to evade police.

Horrified onlookers saw her clinging to a balcony ledge by her fingertips. Then 12-year-old Valencia Dineka plunged screaming to the pavement below.

A General Hospital spokesman said last night she was suffering from a swelling in the brain and four injuries.

The spokesman said she would recover.

Police are looking into the circumstances that led to her fall, a spokesman for the Hillbrow CID said last night.

Valencia is a Standard One pupil from Rustenburg.

Yesterday her stepfather, Mr Napoleon Ntuli, said Valencia had gone to a flat in Medelin Court, Mitchell Street, Berea, to look after her baby sister.

"She was terrified when police came to the flat on Friday night.

Her mother was ordered out of the room and she thought Valencia was still hiding under the bed.

"Apparently, though, seconds later she jumped out of the window in fear. She fell onto the balcony edge and was clinging to it, screaming for help".

Valencia's fingers slipped off before anyone

could reach her.

From her hospital bed yesterday, Valencia said she recalled climbing out of the window and dropping from the balcony.

But then she covered her head with blankets and refused to say more about the incident.

Brigadier T. Swanepoel, District Commandant for Johannesburg North, said last night that according to his report, police were not aware the girl had climbed through the window.

They only realised something was wrong when they heard her scream, he said. (Rand Daily Mail — 3 July, 1979).

Three small sisters in hunt for their mother

Three small Transkeian children, who have allegedly been abandoned and left destitute in South Africa by their guardian, are searching Natal for their real mother whom they believe came here several years ago.

The three sisters, Thandasiwe (6), Magangane (8) and Nongulunga Moshezi (11), from Lusikisiki, were brought to Durban by train last week by their aunt who had been looking after them for the past few years.

Their aunt, Mrs Nomabanjwe Moshezi, told the children they were being taken to look after the children of another relative in Umlazi.

The three youngsters were put on a bus to Umlazi and the aunt then disappeared. They were eventually put off the bus when their fares expired.

They then decided to try and find their real mother whom they had heard was living in Verulam.

Without any idea where they were, they managed to find their way to Durban station, and with virtually the last of their money, bought tickets

to Verulam.

There they spent a chilly night at the station, still with no clue about how to start their search.

The next day the toddlers approached the wife of a farm worker, Mrs Elizabeth Ngobo, and asked if they were really in Verulam.

“I eventually got the whole story from them — that they were destitute and took them home where we fed them and gave them some fresh clothes”, she said. (Daily News — 15 August, 1979).

The misfits — children with no place in society

The Natal University of Natal's Legal Aid Clinic in Durban is, at present, assisting an African woman, married for 17 years to a Coloured man who died five years ago. The Department of Coloured Affairs has been paying her a grant of R64 a month for her two children since her husband died. They have since discovered that she is classified “Bantu” and, as a result, have reduced the grant to R20 a month.

The only solution to these problems is to have the woman reclassified Coloured, says Mr Hendrickse. This is a long and involved process requiring, amongst other things, sworn affidavits by leaders in the community where she has lived that she is accepted in the Coloured community and that she has lived in the Coloured community for some time.

“South Africa is the only country in the world where an administrative decision must be taken before a mother is allowed to live, legally, with her children”, said a social worker. (Daily News — 8 August, 1979).

He's the result of a mother's love gone mad

The boy in the blue cot is only seven months

old. He can't talk yet but he knows and he is terrified. His eyes are wide with fear. He lies there with eyes like a bush baby. They follow every movement the doctor makes. Otherwise he is still.

He has what doctors call a frozen face. He's a child who has been beaten and suffered more pain in his first seven months than most adults do in their entire lives — and his mum and dad did it to him.

Now he doesn't mind the needle. Whether its a sedative or a sample of blood. Pain is part of living and if he could talk he'd tell you he wished he'd never been born.

The pain started with a bash against the wall in the dead of night. And a second one to shut him up when the neighbours complained about the noise.

Then it was a cigarette burn under the foot, a pinch with the pliers, boiling water on his hand, a scalding bath, hot candlewax on his tummy. A 24-hour living nightmare of hitting, slapping, gouging torture.

From his mum whose love had gone mad.

And in South Africa today, one in every three children under three who turns up injured at a hospital is there because of a “non-accidental injury”.

In plain language a mother or father baby basher at work. A parent who is ill and doesn't know it.

Someone who is beating the living daylight out of their baby, torturing and tormenting it until, if it's lucky — like the baby in the blue cot — it will end up in Johannesburg General or Ad-dington or Groote Schuur. (Sunday Express — 19 August, 1979). ”



Darling Farzanah,

Until you came along I had a reasonable idea of what made me tick. Now I am not sure. A great deal has happened too quickly to me and I have not adjusted myself to the new situation. Everything now seems to revolve around you. Please do not for one moment think that your mother and I regret having you. We love you a lot.

There is one problem which I find myself mulling over a great deal. I somehow feel that there isn't enough time in which to teach you all that I know about our society. What is more disturbing is my growing obsession with the idea that you would grow up rejecting all that I believe in. There is nothing wrong with us wanting you to grow up sensitive to your country and it's problems. But I keep asking myself: why should this become an obsession? Is there something the matter with me? Why am I beginning to falter in my beliefs? Wouldn't you grow up to distinguish naturally between right and wrong?

You see we live in a society in which not a day goes by when we are not called upon to make decisions which tax our commitment and our principles. If we profess to live by our ideals then there is no escape from our situation. Either we follow the dictates of our conscience and remain free, or see ourselves being continuously stripped of our self-respect and dignity.

The other day while photographing Uncle J's children he stood looking at them framed in the doorway of his humble home, made out of packing-cases and mud. "Omar" he said, "You know our task is in many ways a simple one compared to what these little ones would have to face. It is easy to dismantel but to build a new world requires much more than courage".

I felt humble and ashamed in the presence of this man. His children stand proud like their father. He never allowed himself to become disillusioned or bitter with what he considered his duty even after spending ten years on the Island for his beliefs.

When we were young my father used to say to us:

"They can take away your home, your job, but what they cannot take away is what you have learnt". It is this that they fear most, for knowledge is the key to freedom. I can never forget the simple life that we lived; sometimes it was so simple that it hurt but no matter how difficult the going my father never lost his dignity and he continued his search for knowledge.

When I began to put together these pictures for you, I knew right from the outset that I must learn to look beyond "the corrugated walls" of the ghettq and discover the real people who live there. It is among the people that the source of our strength in the future lies, remember this advice and you would be able to face the future with confidence.

If these photographs do not go far enough to explore the strength and dignity of our people or relate them to their environment then at least they might tell you a bit about me and how I view my world and more especially, the children.

With love,

OMAR

June 26th 1979

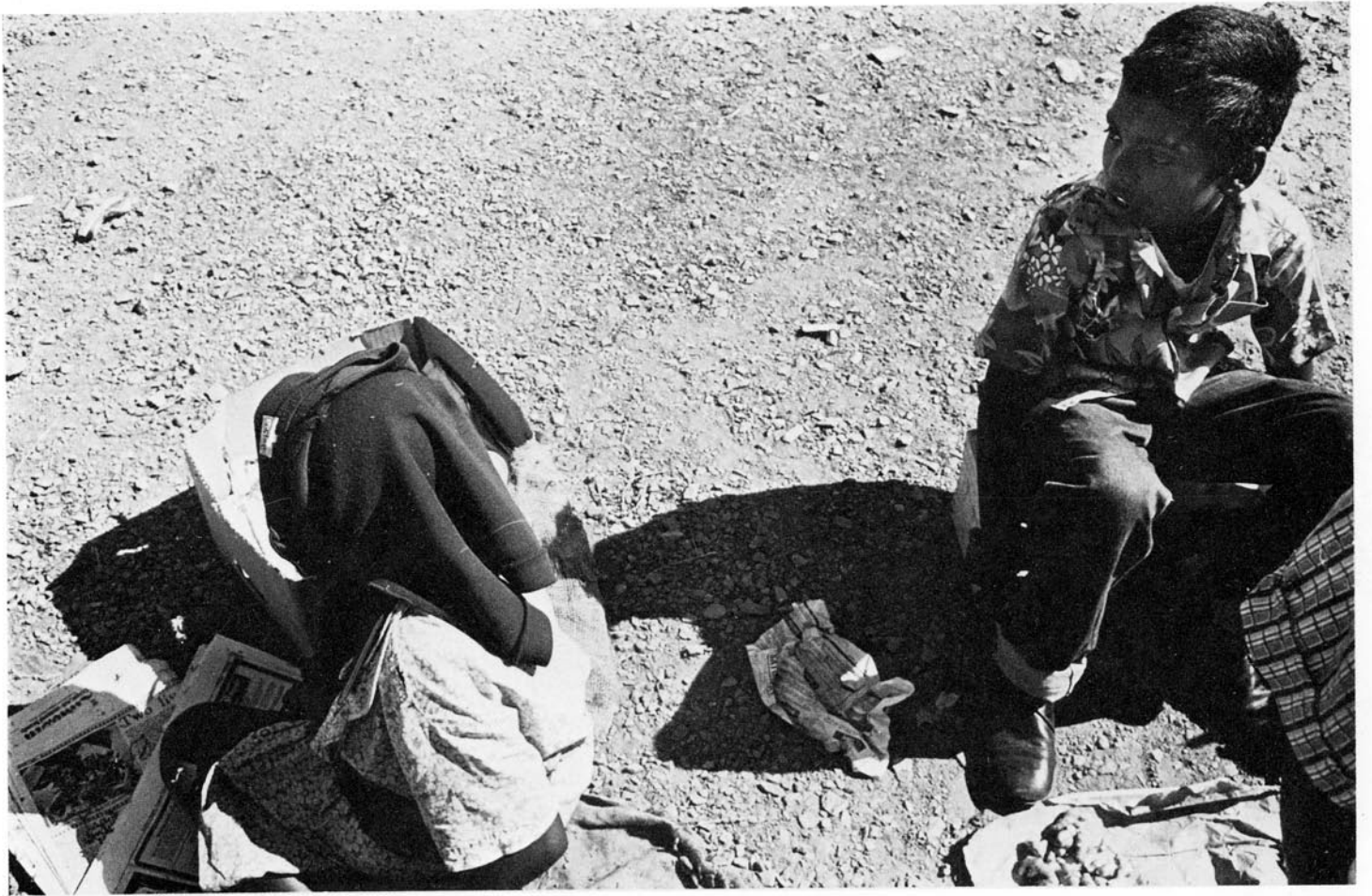
**TO FARZANAH
AND THE CHILDREN
WHO MARCH THROUGH
THIS BROKEN LANDSCAPE**



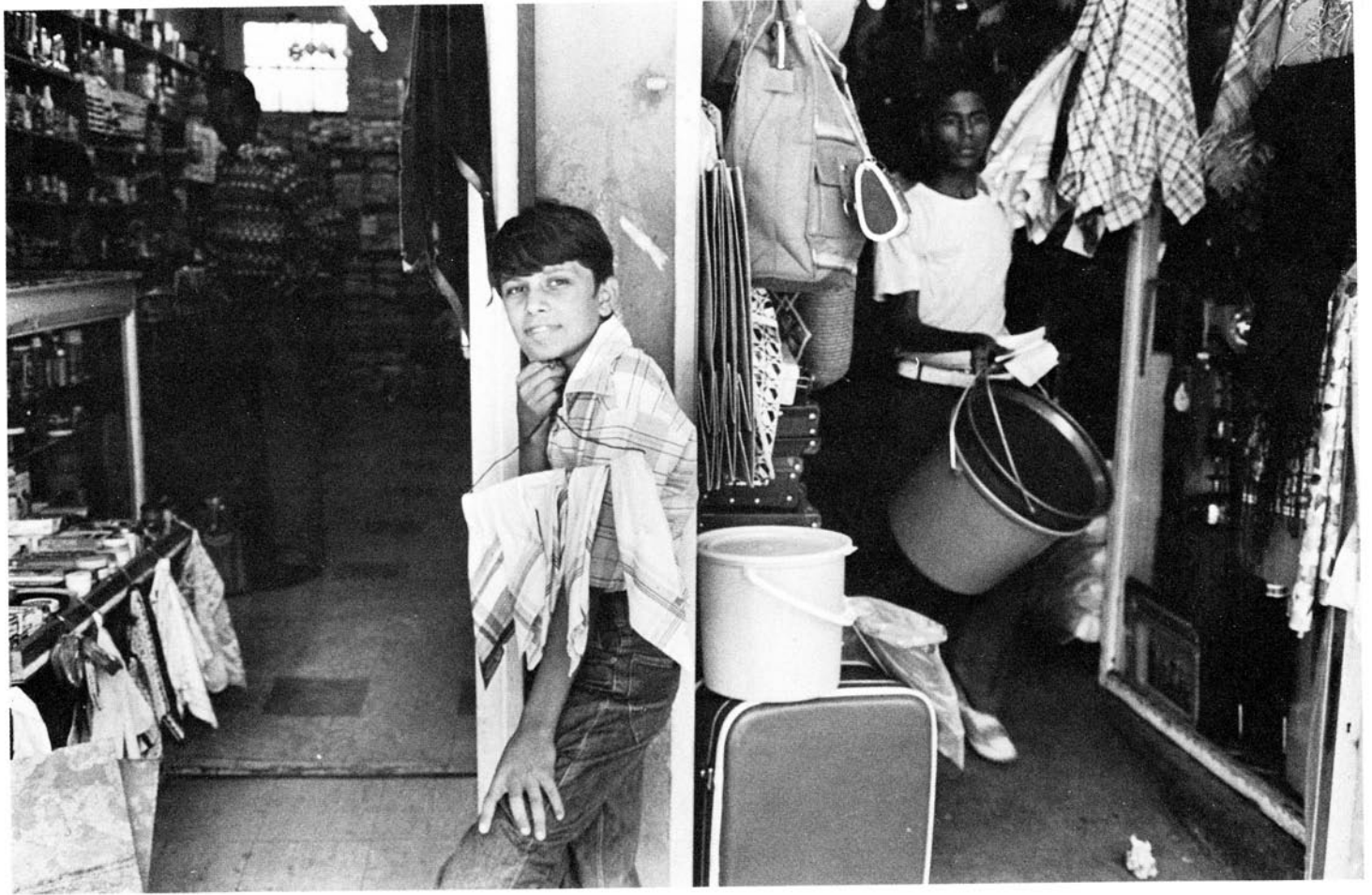
Vendor
Victoria Street



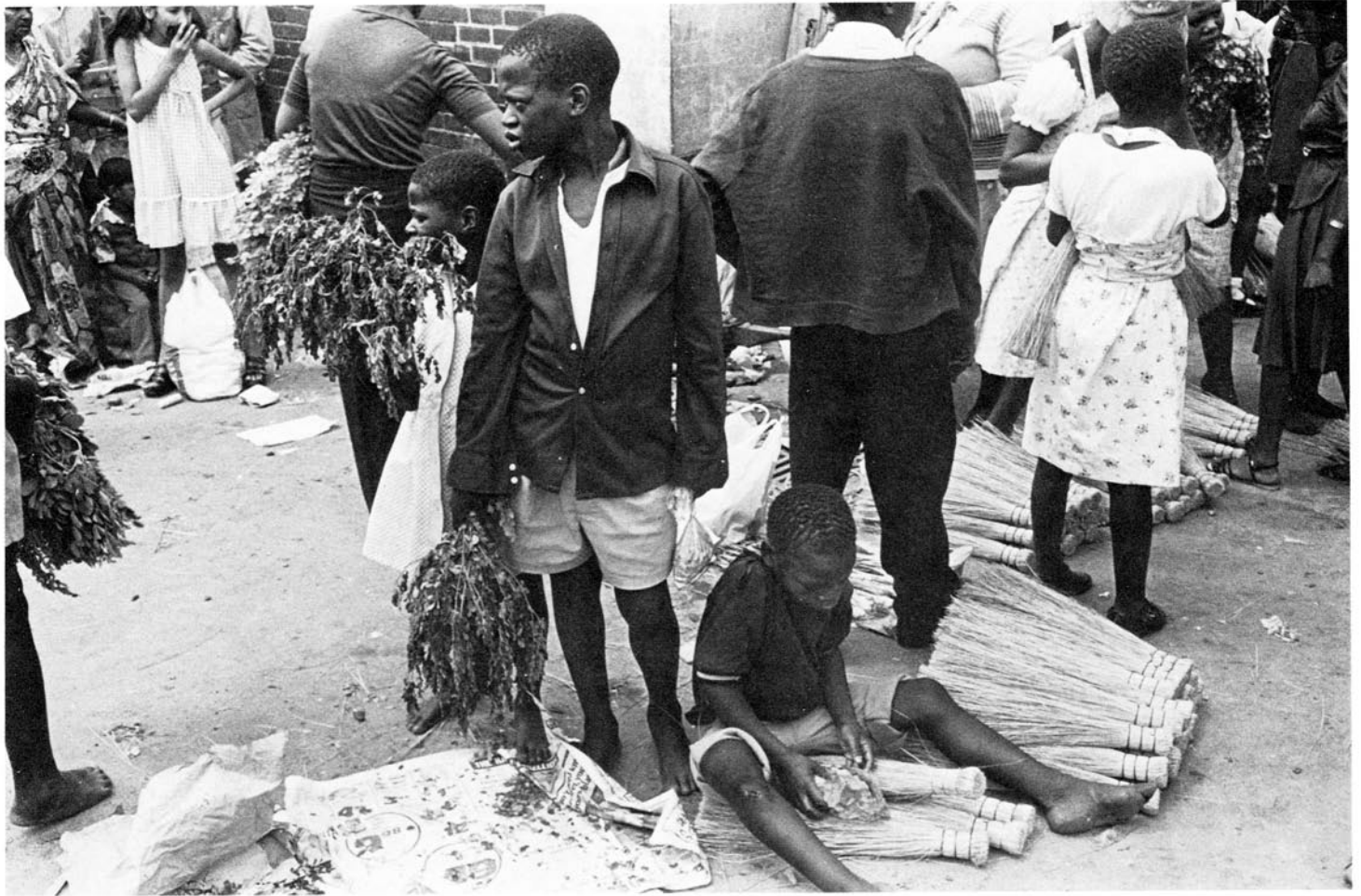
**Tourist Stall
Umgababa**



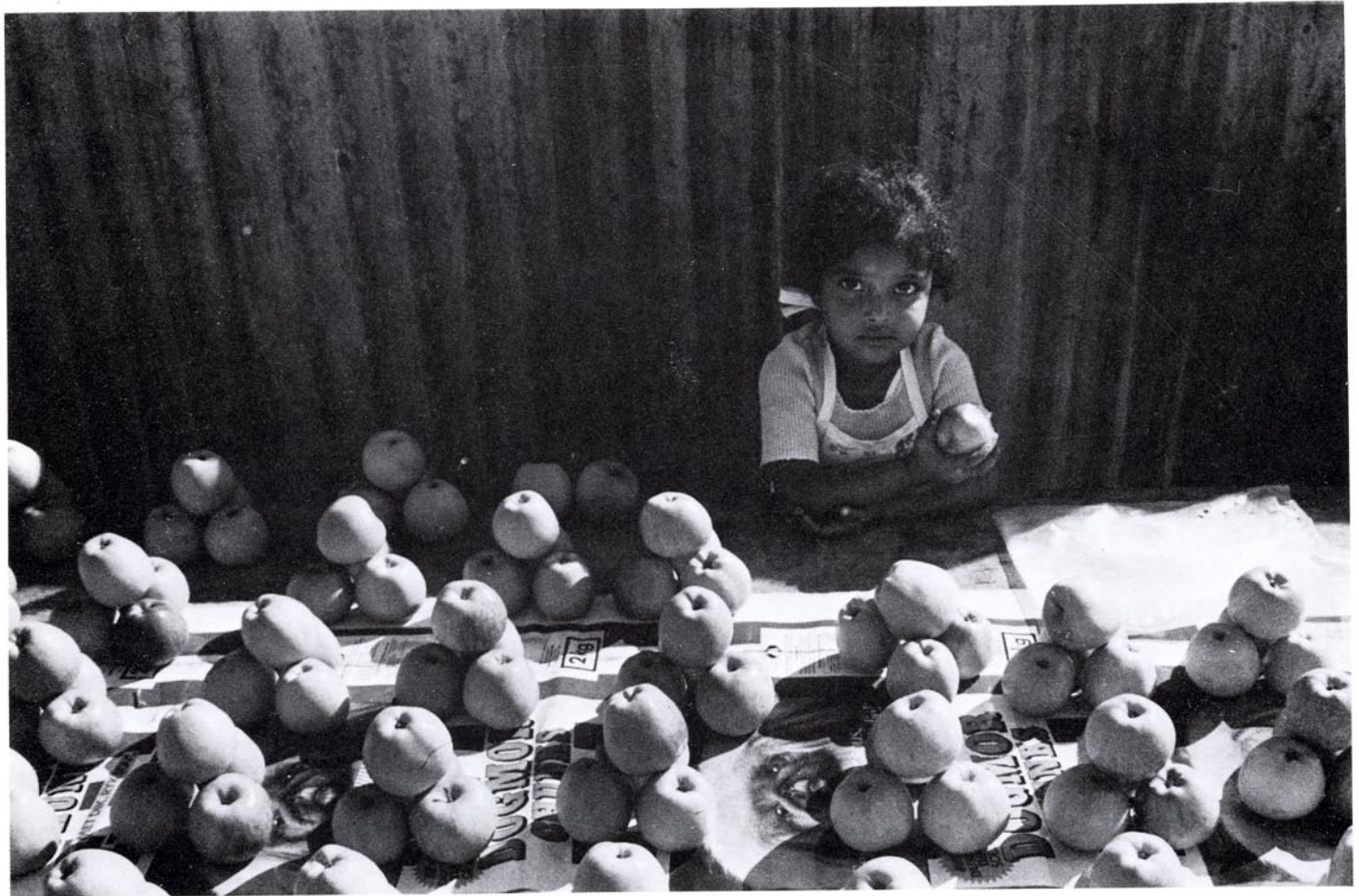
Outside Squatters Market



Queen Street



Outside Squatters Market
Victoria Street



Helping the family
Victoria Street-Bridge

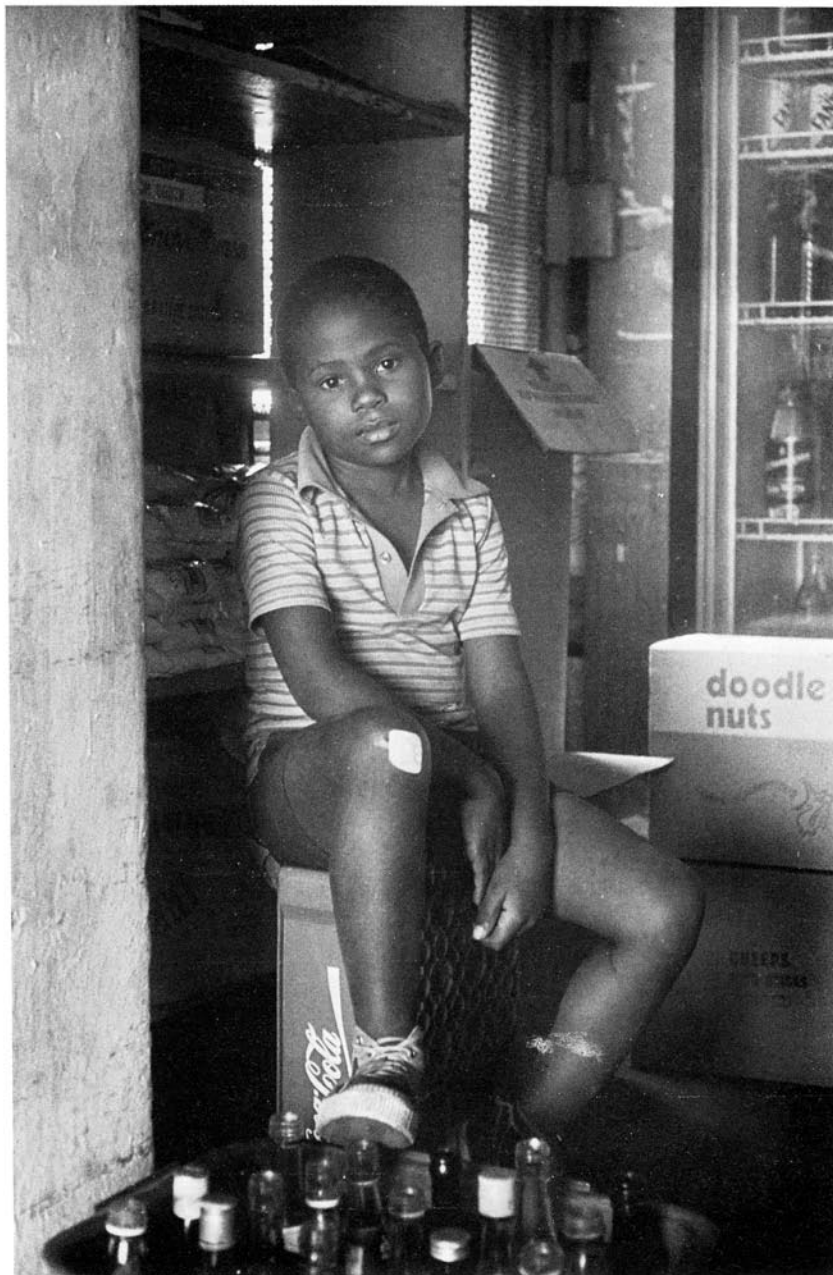


Victoria Street



Ismail Bassa
Albert Street

Father said "Better than growin' up in the streets"
Wills Road

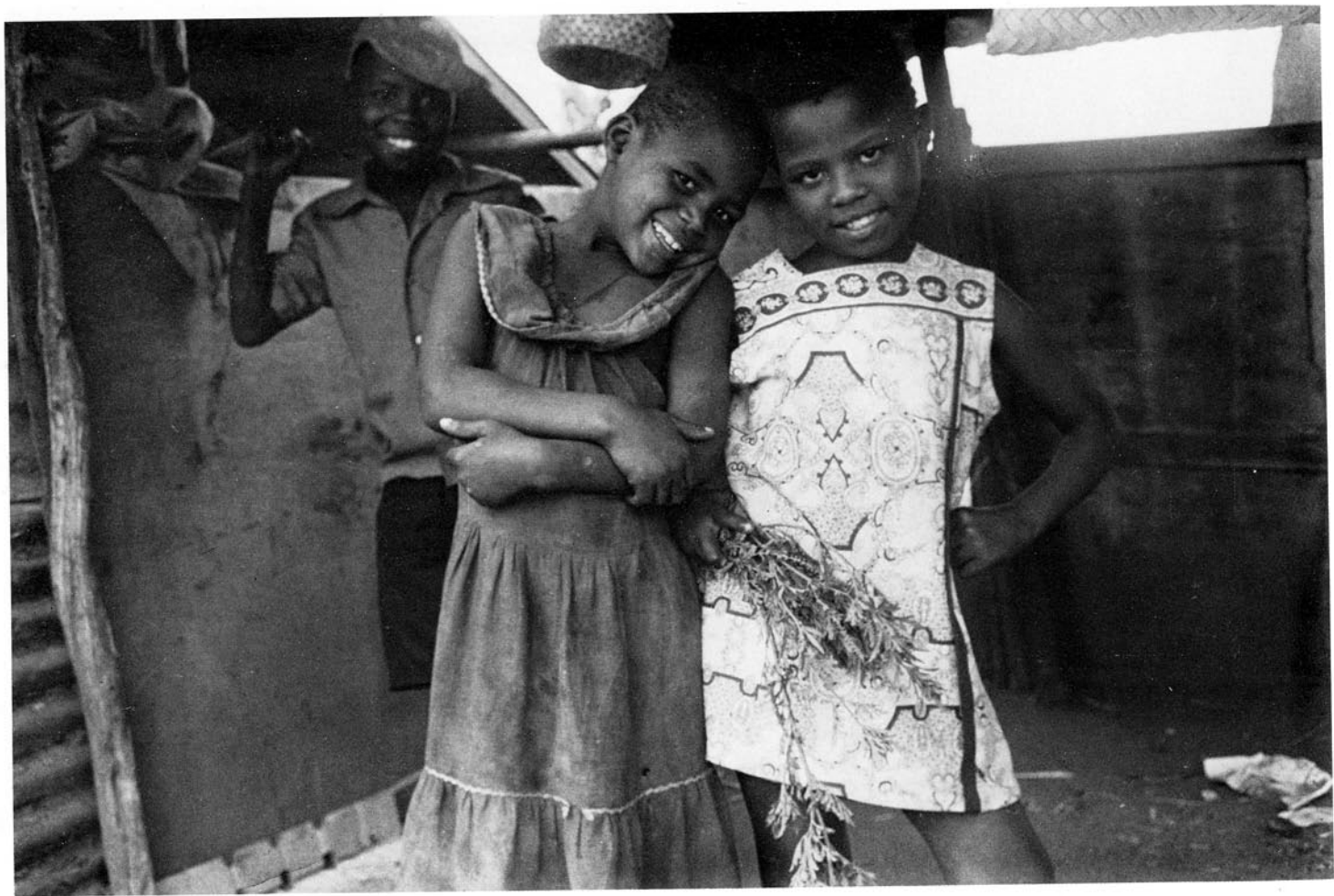




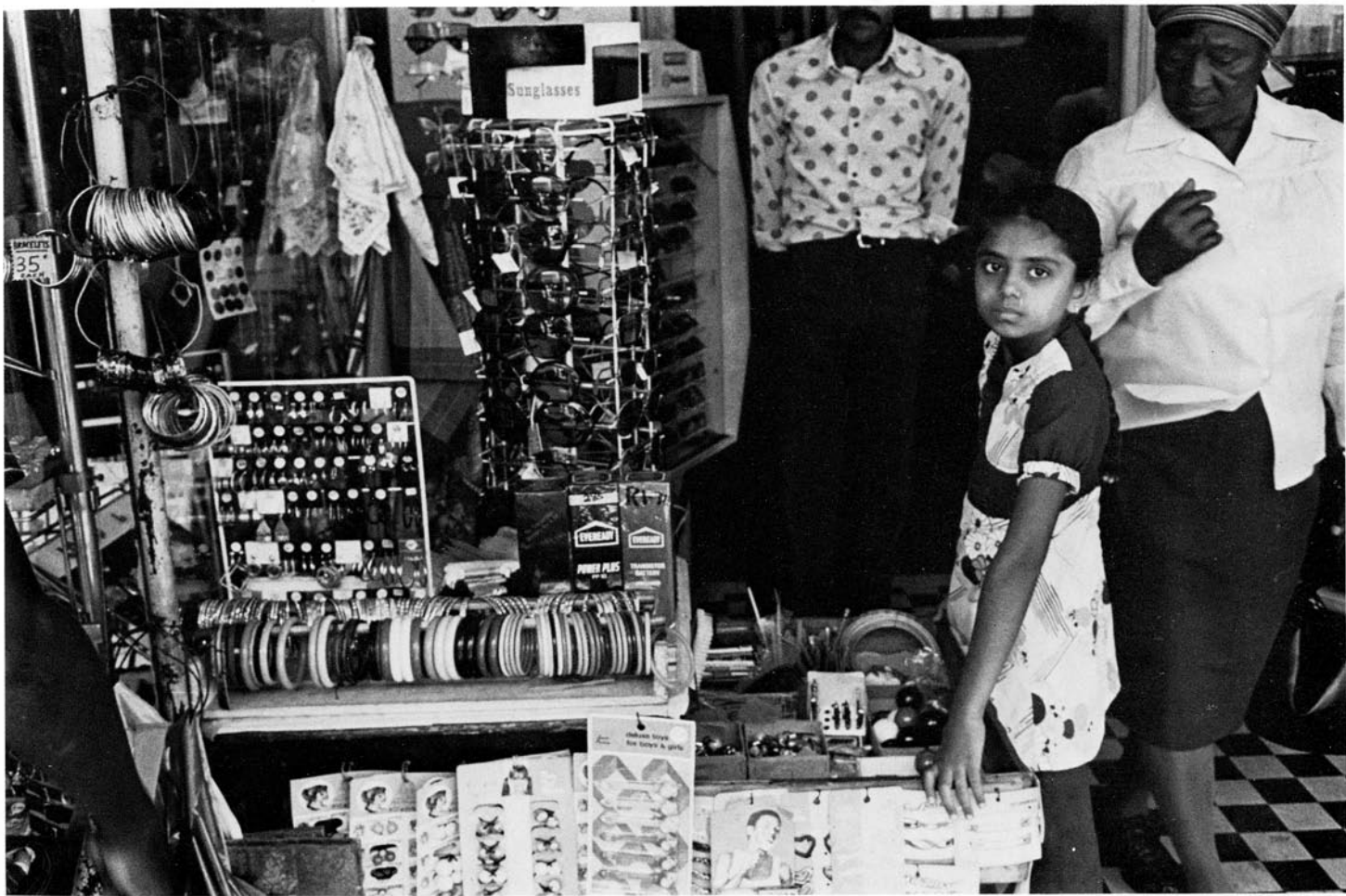
**Schools in Inanda,
Works and lives in
Overport**



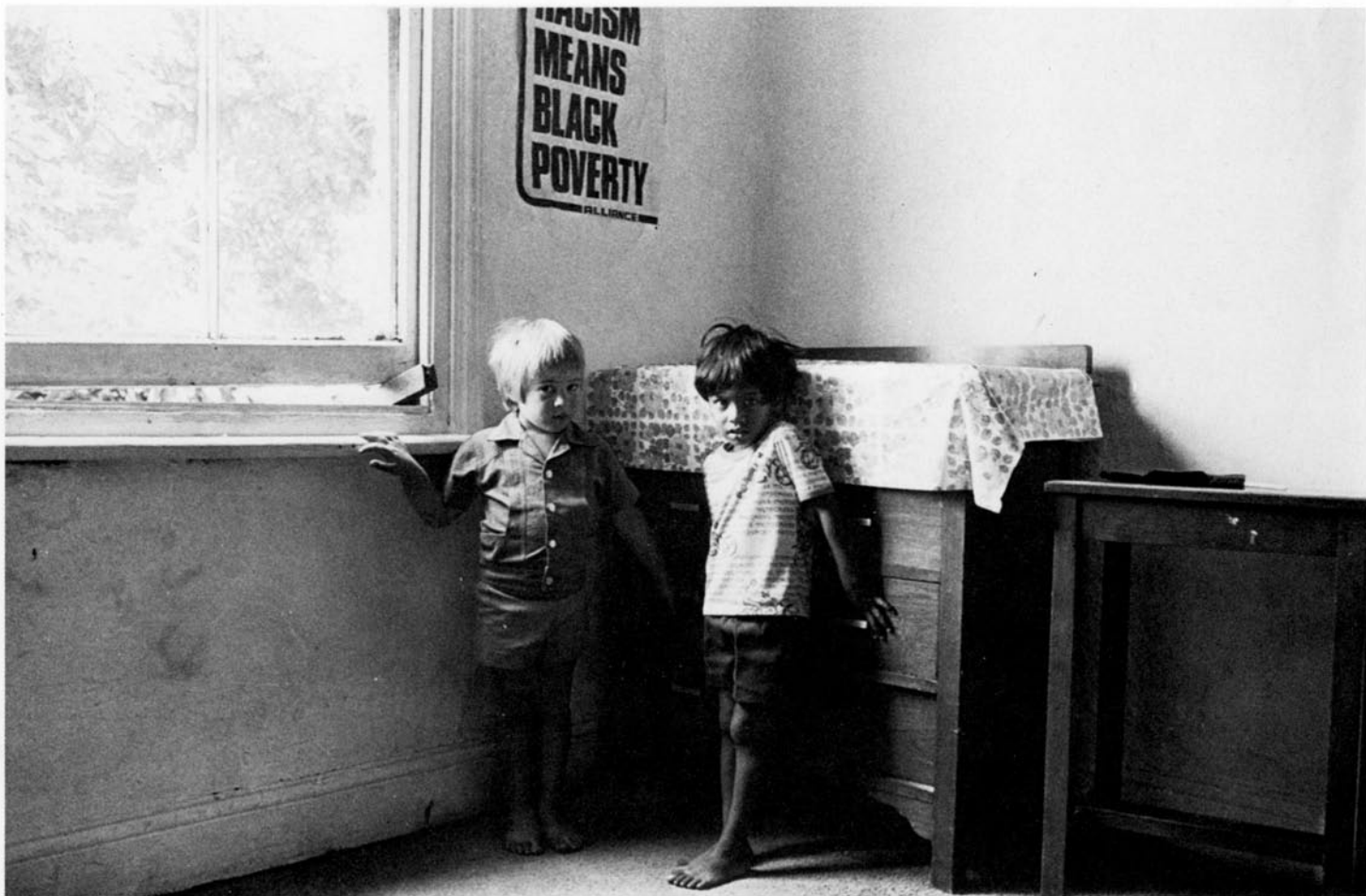
Grey Street



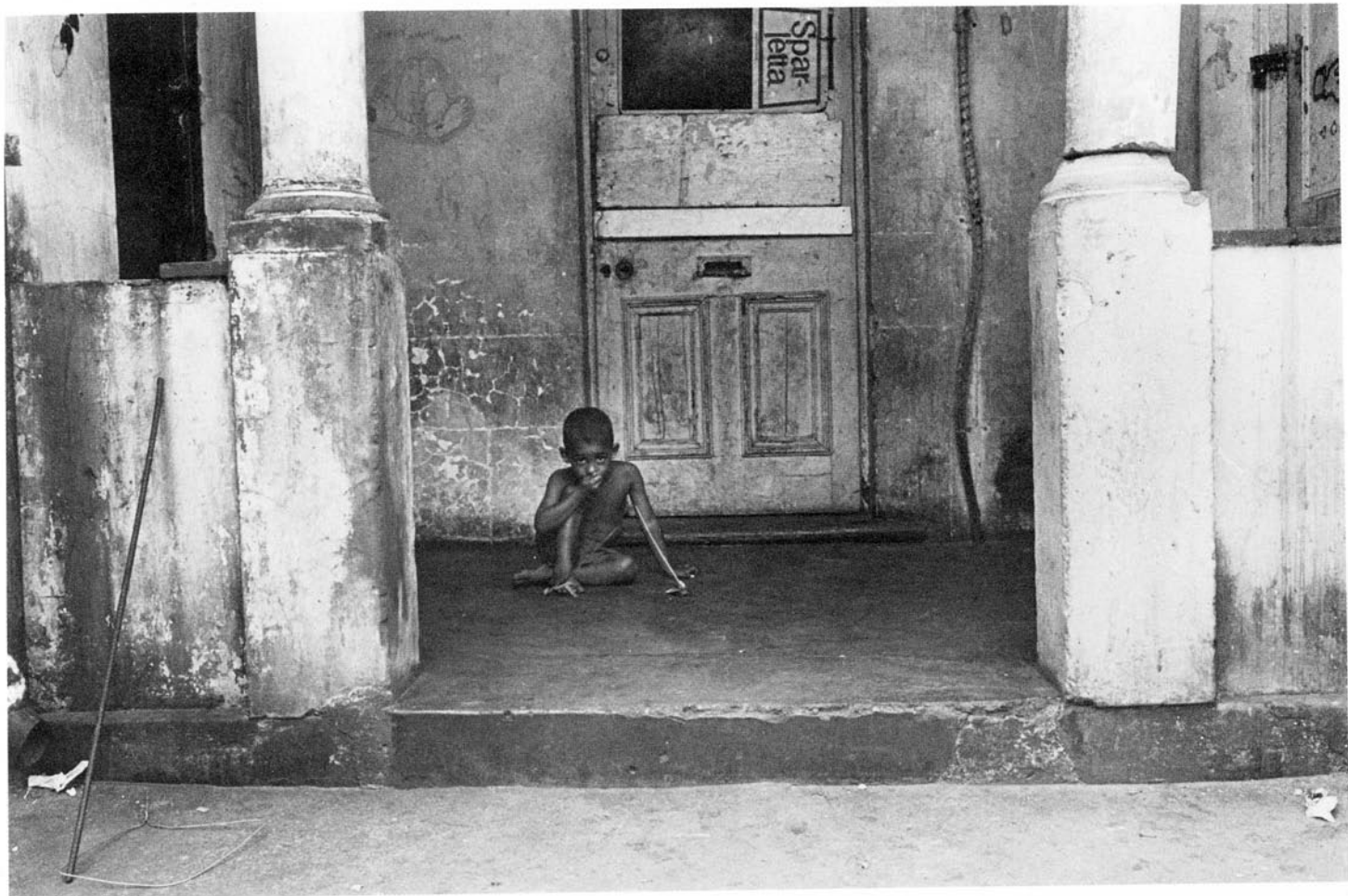
Tourist Stall
Umgababa



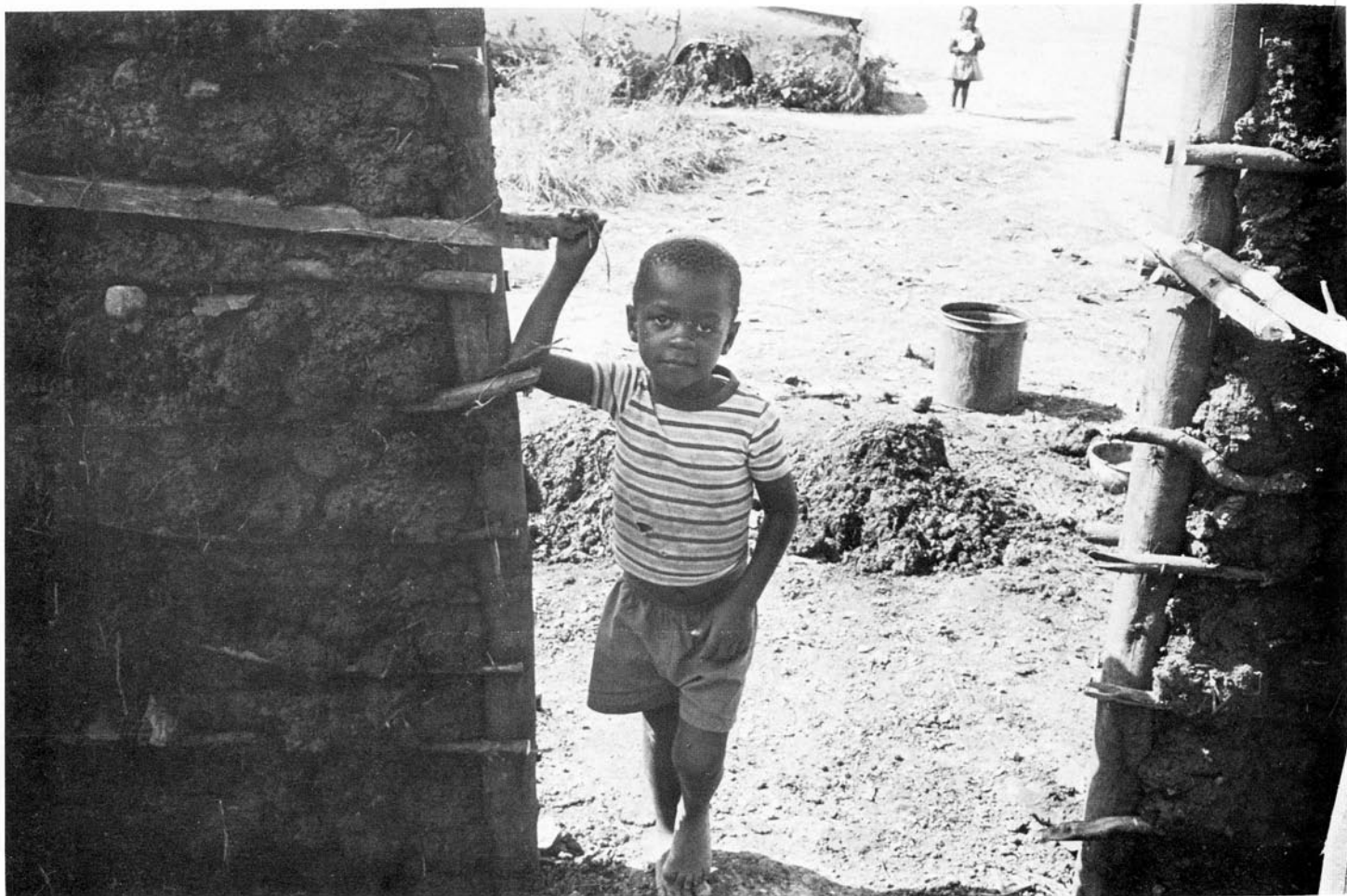
Munira Ballim
Queen Street



Dougy Naidoo, Mark Weinberg
Rocky Street
Doornfontein — Johannesburg



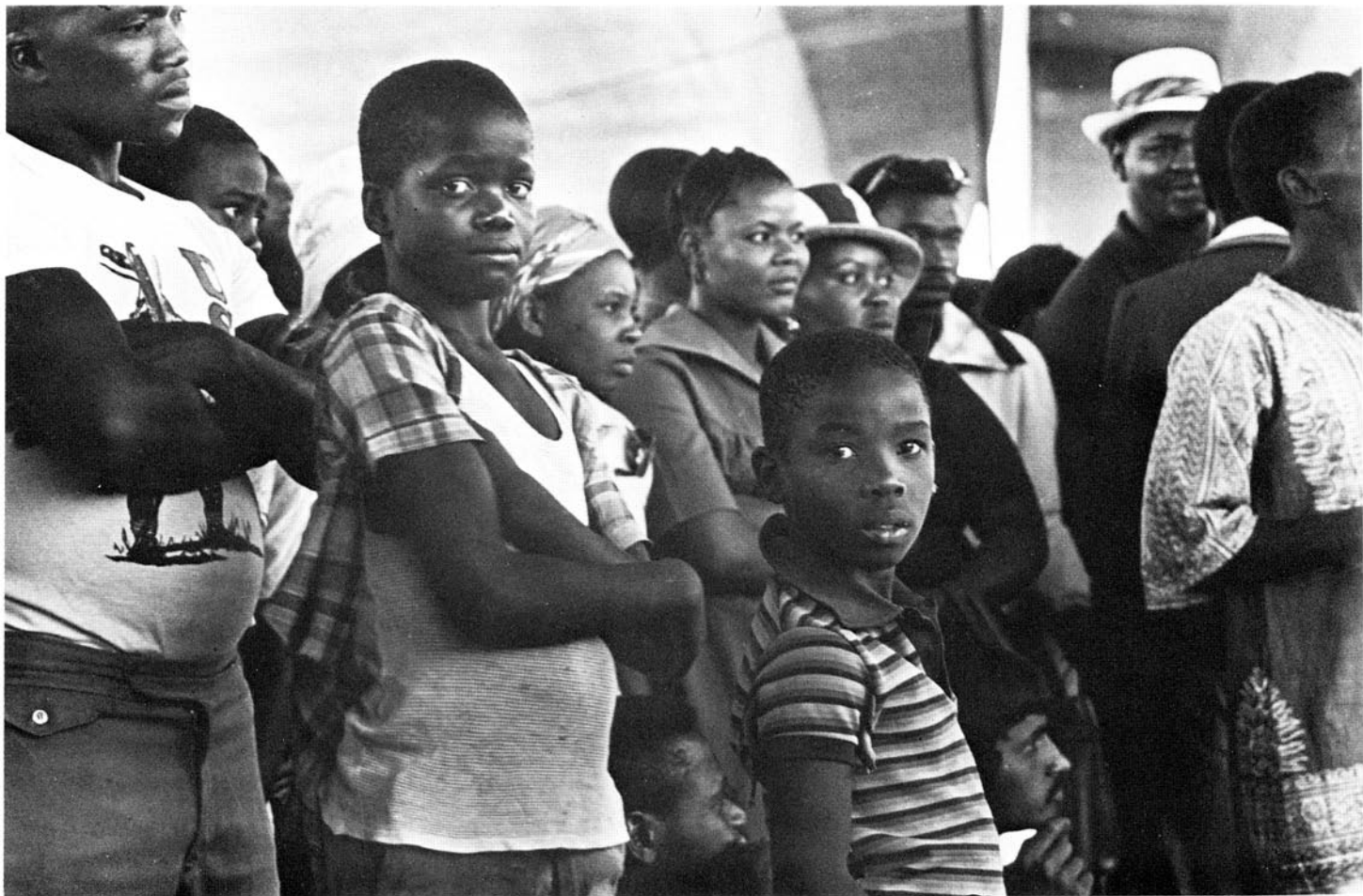
Milton Road



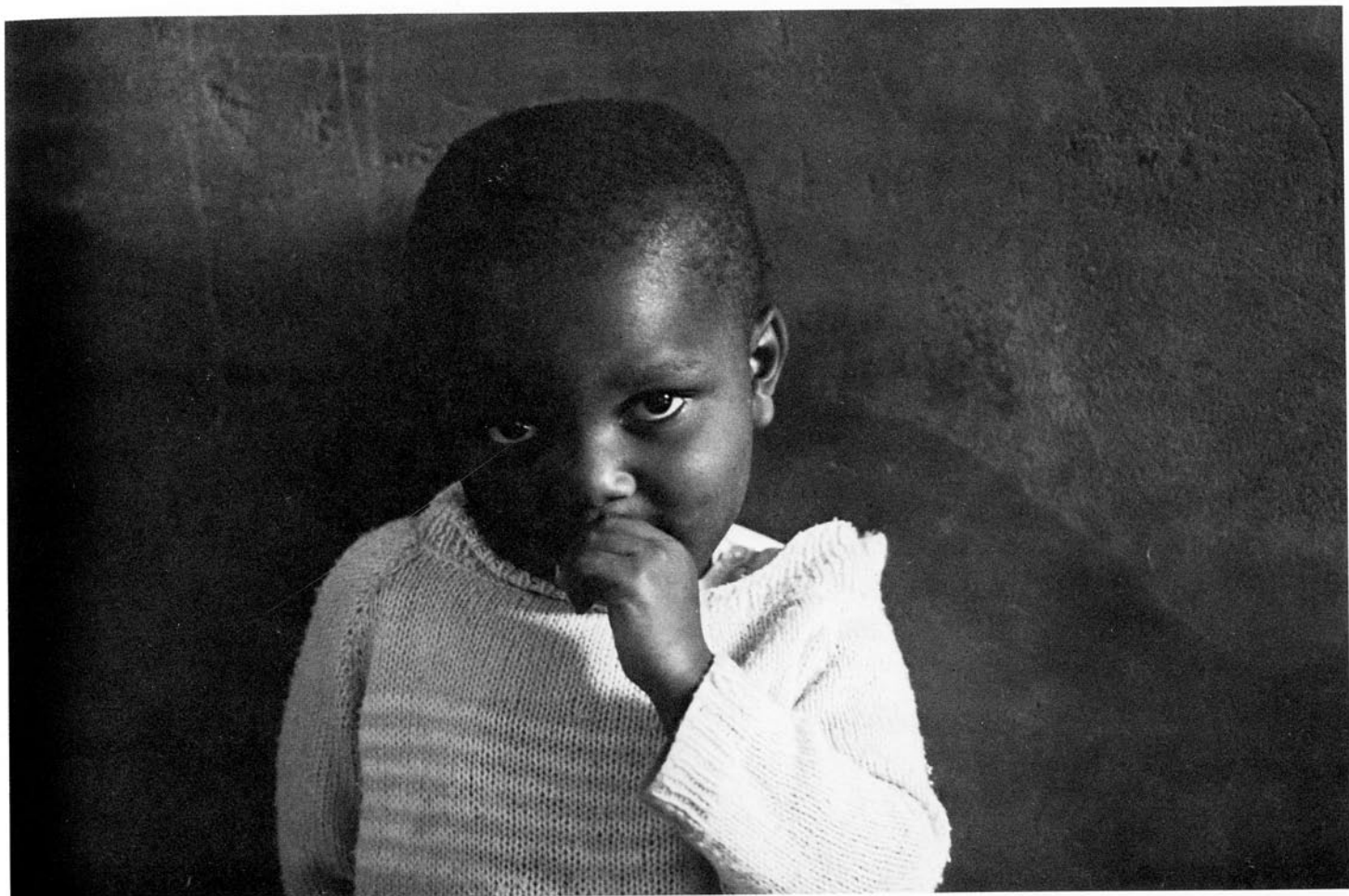
Inanda



Queen Street



Street Theatre Audience
Victoria Street



Pitumulani Mthetwa
Father "Banned Trade Unionist"



**Goga children
Reservoir Hills**



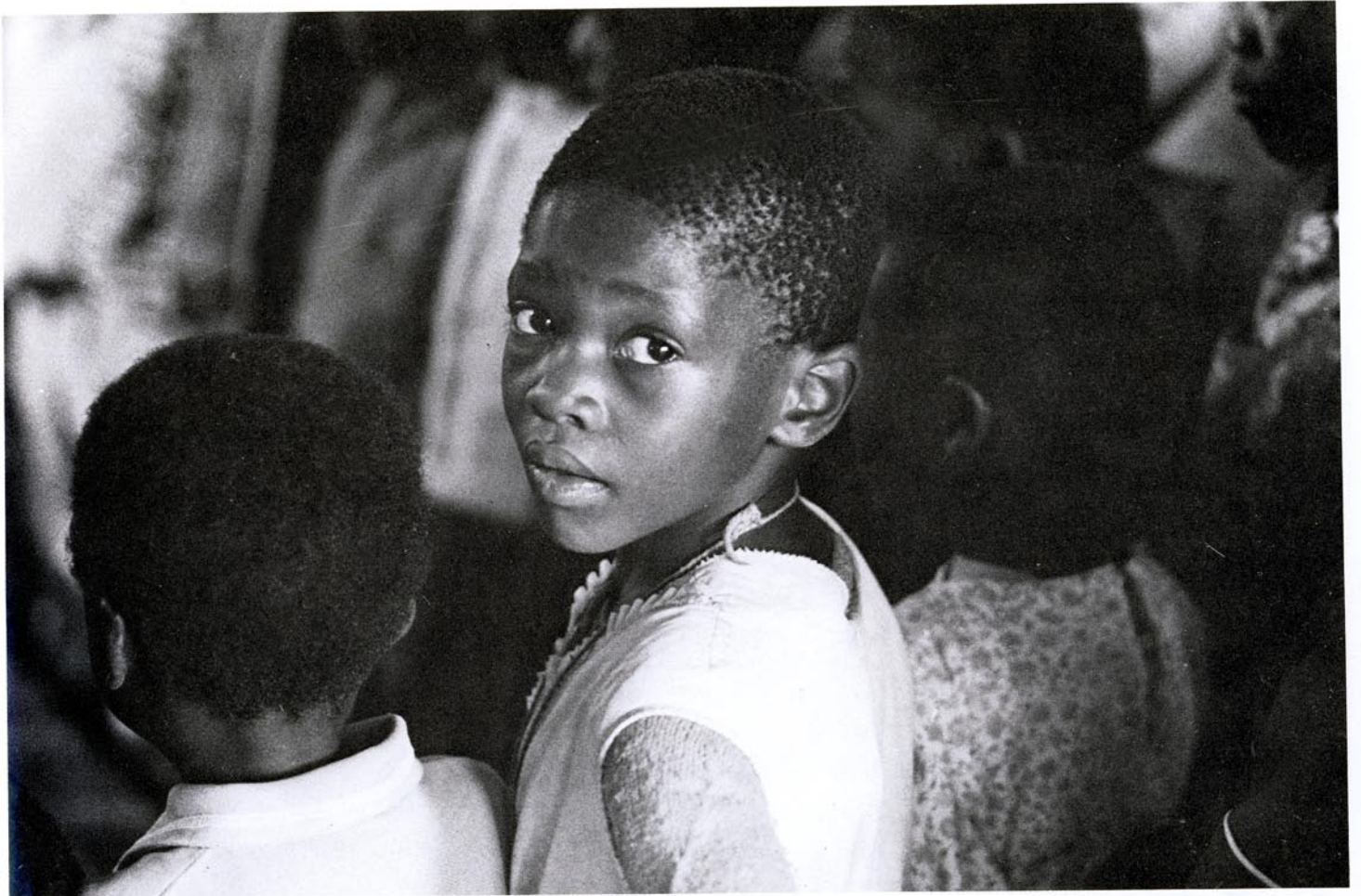
Hill Street
Overport

Nadia Baderfeldt
A.I. Kajee Hall
Leopold Street





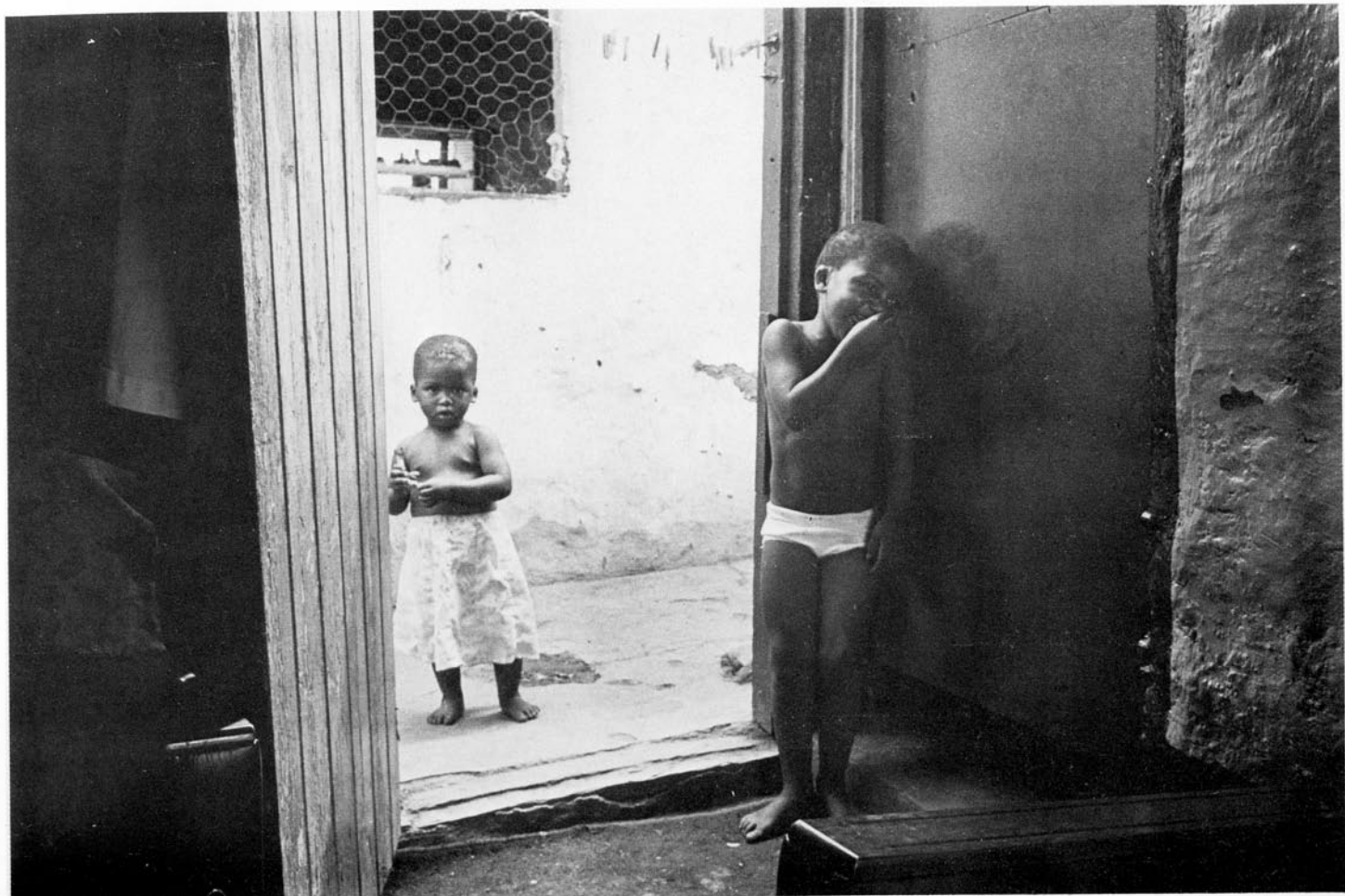
Resent arrivals
Inanda



Mary Mokoena
Delalle School
Hill Crest



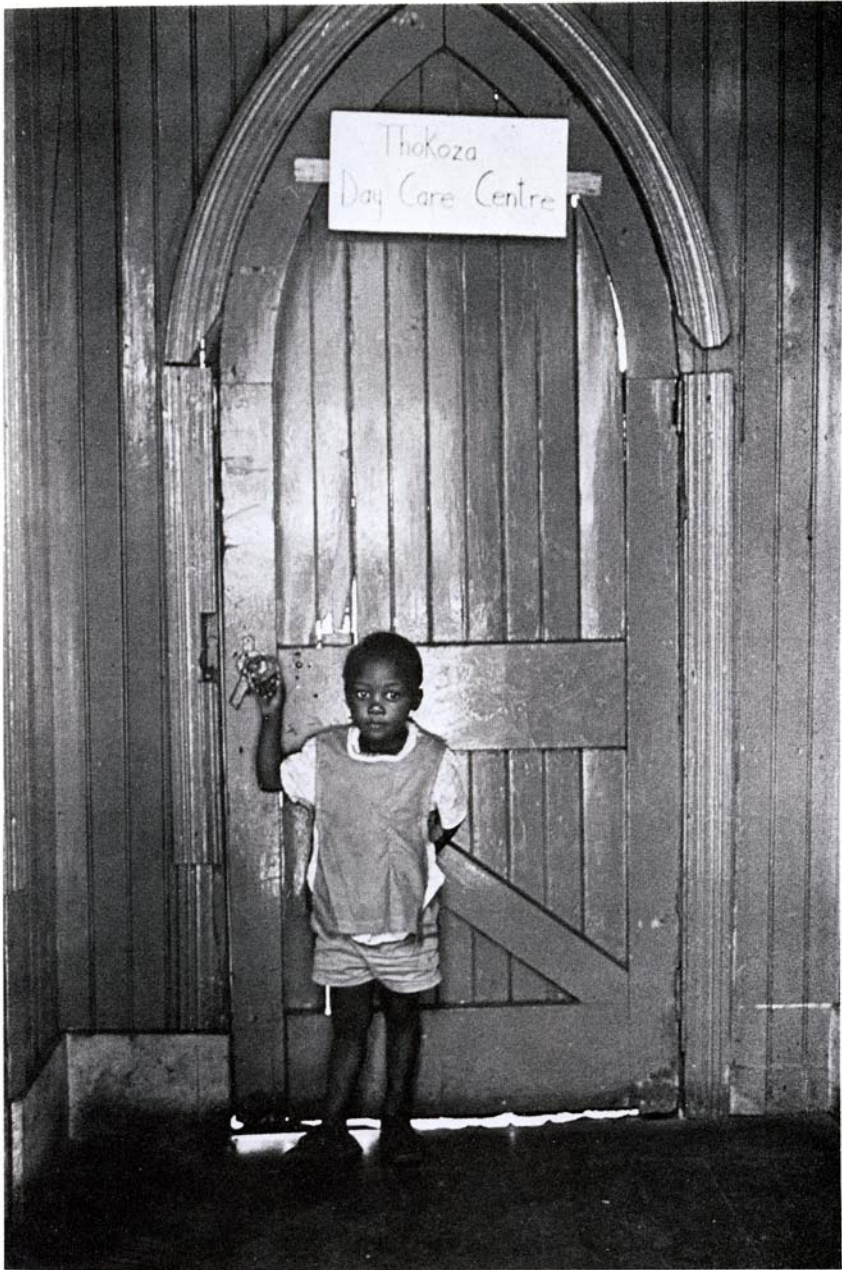
Wills Road

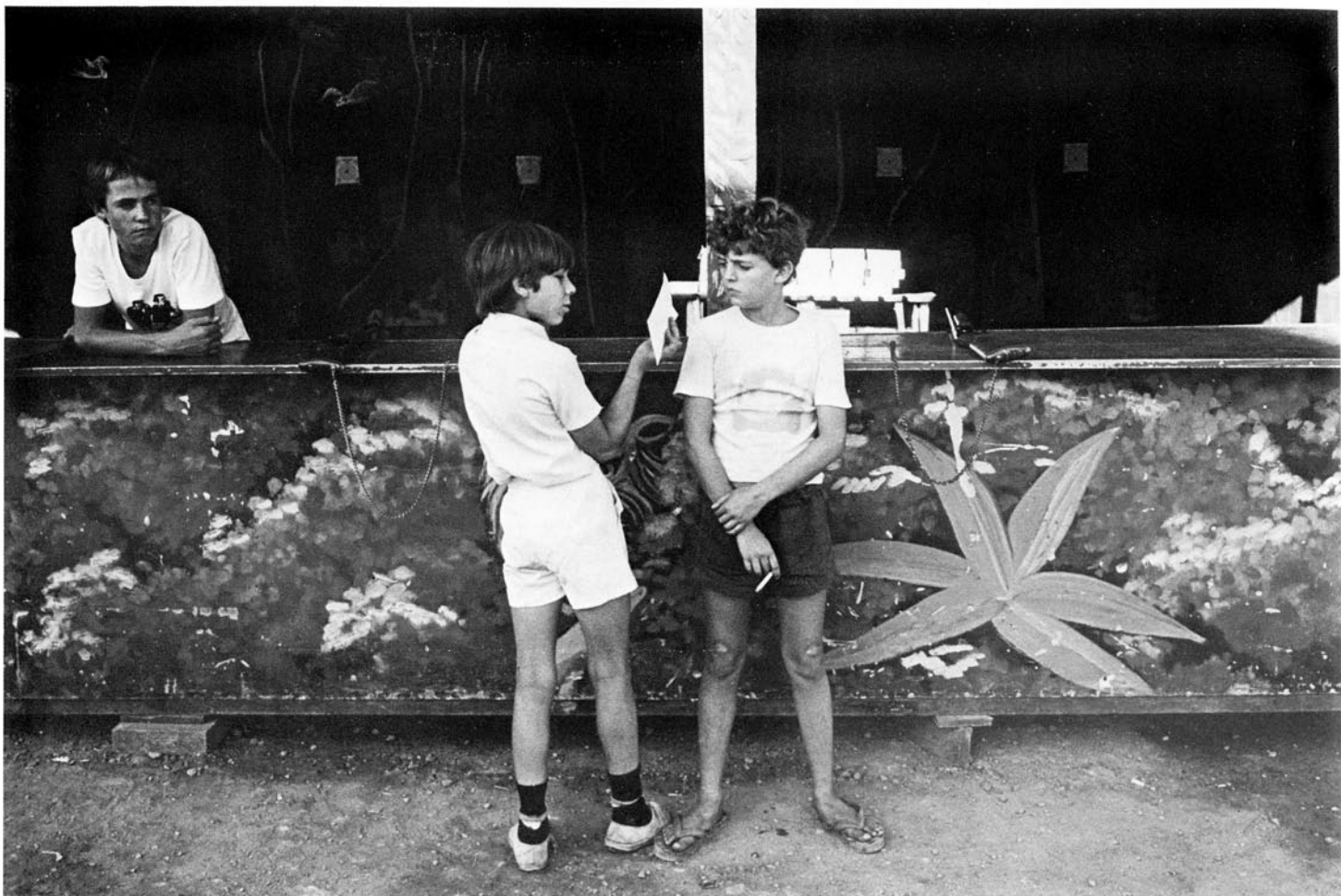


**Thandeka and Mukelani
Maphumulo, children of
ex-Robin Island detainee**

Labourer's children
Umgababa







Fair Ground
Snake Park Beach
Durban



Local Saint "Sufi Sahib"
Celebration
Brook Street



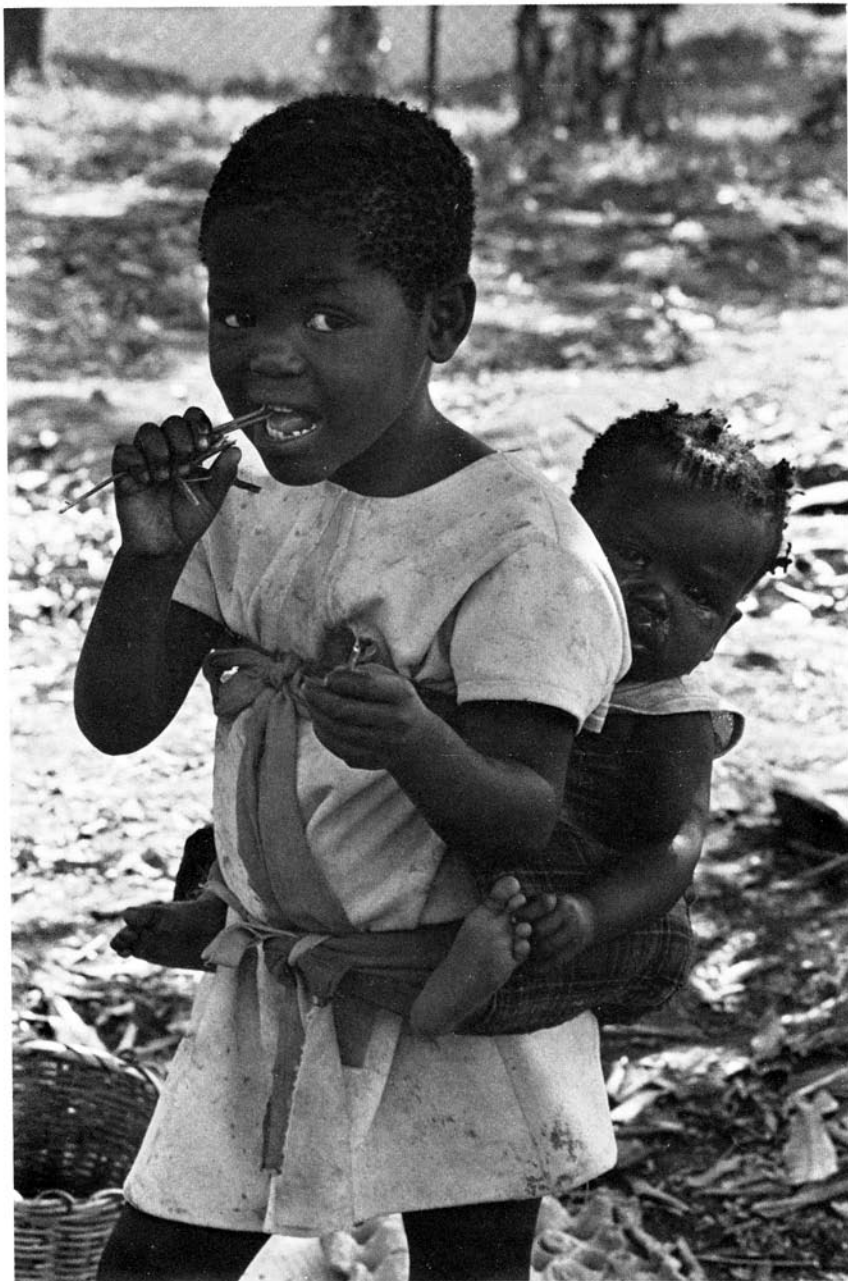
Arion Bezuidenhout
Son of a railway worker

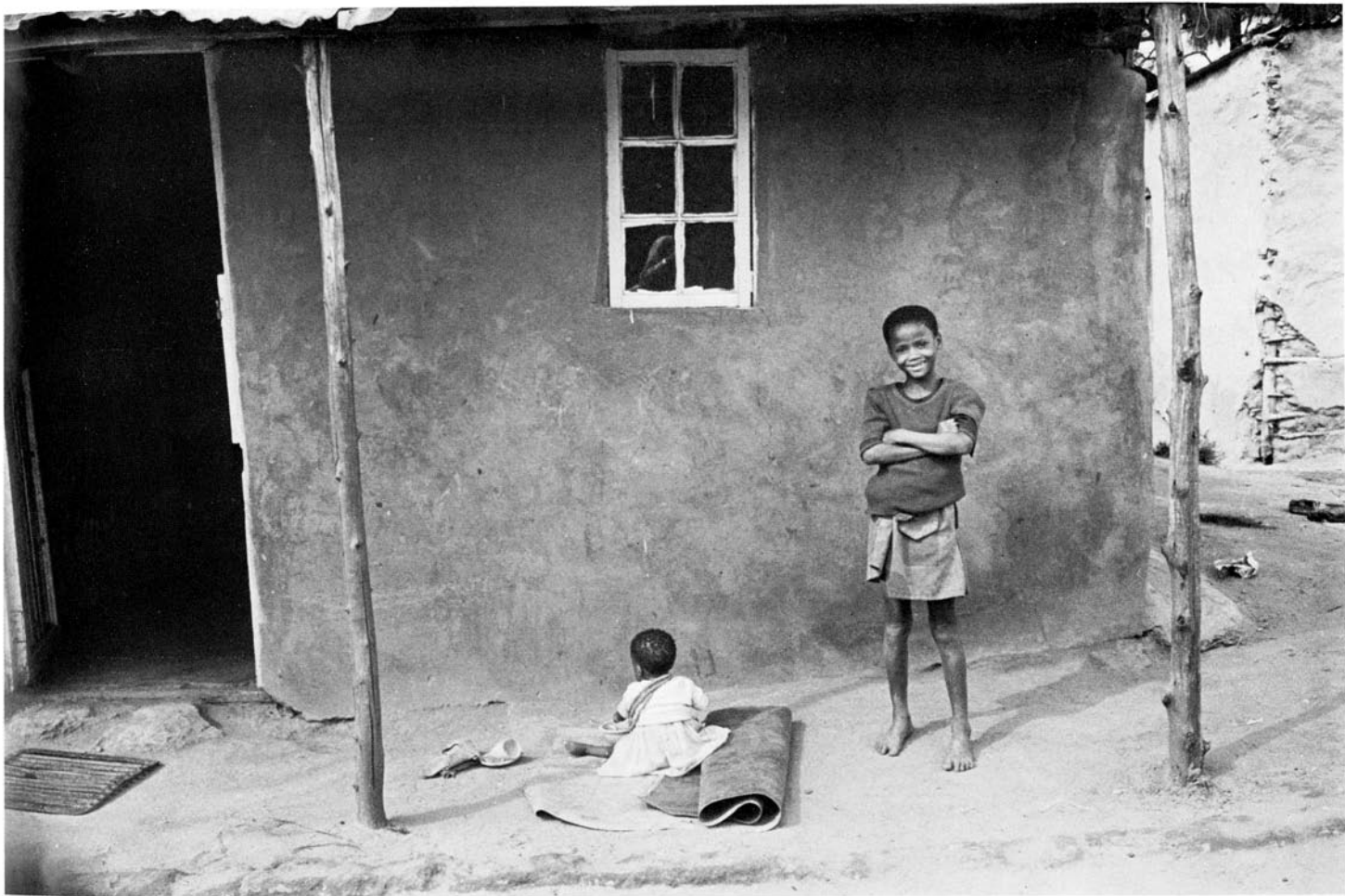


Park
Chapel Street
Overport

Overport

Labourer's children
Gandhi Settlement
Phoenix

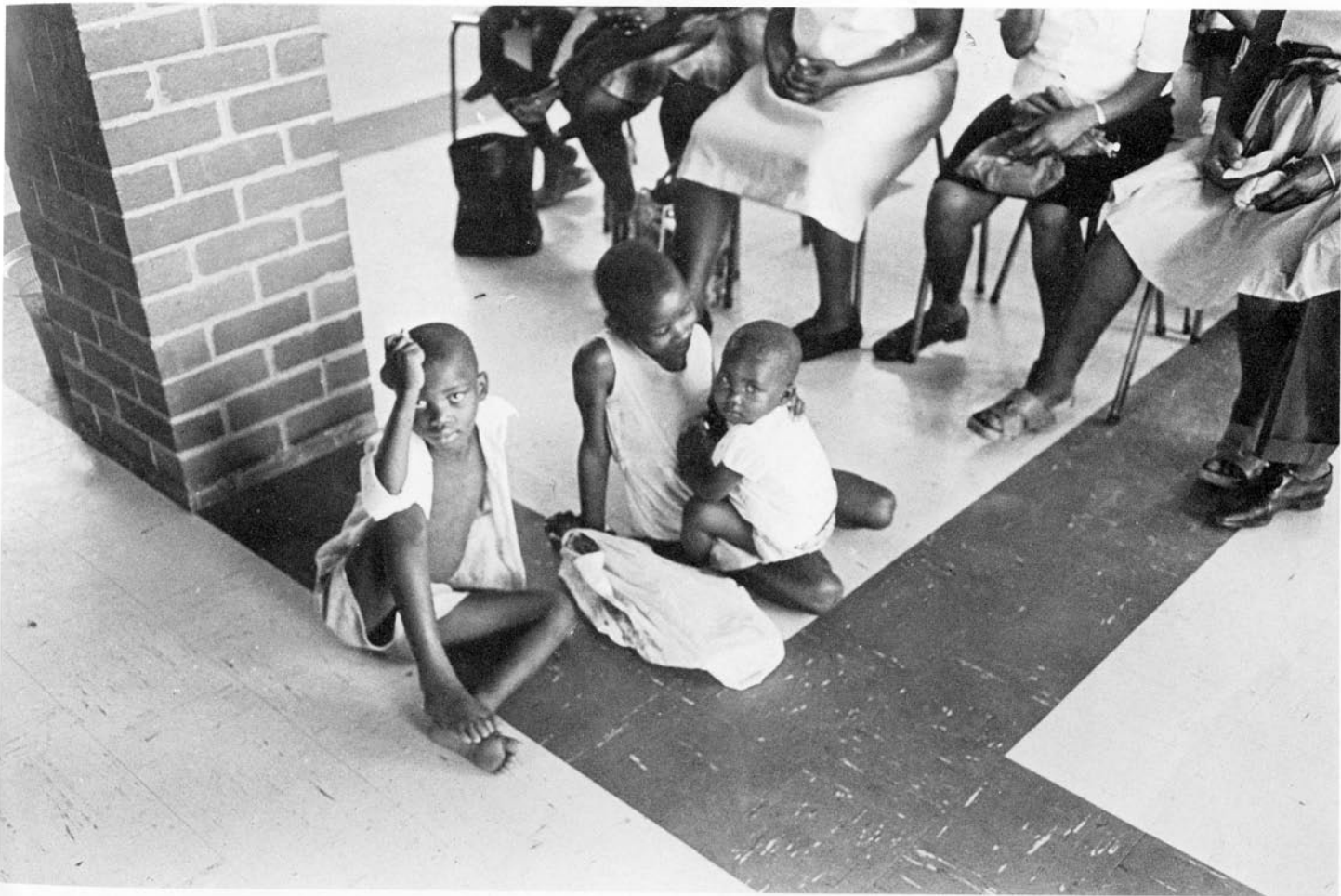




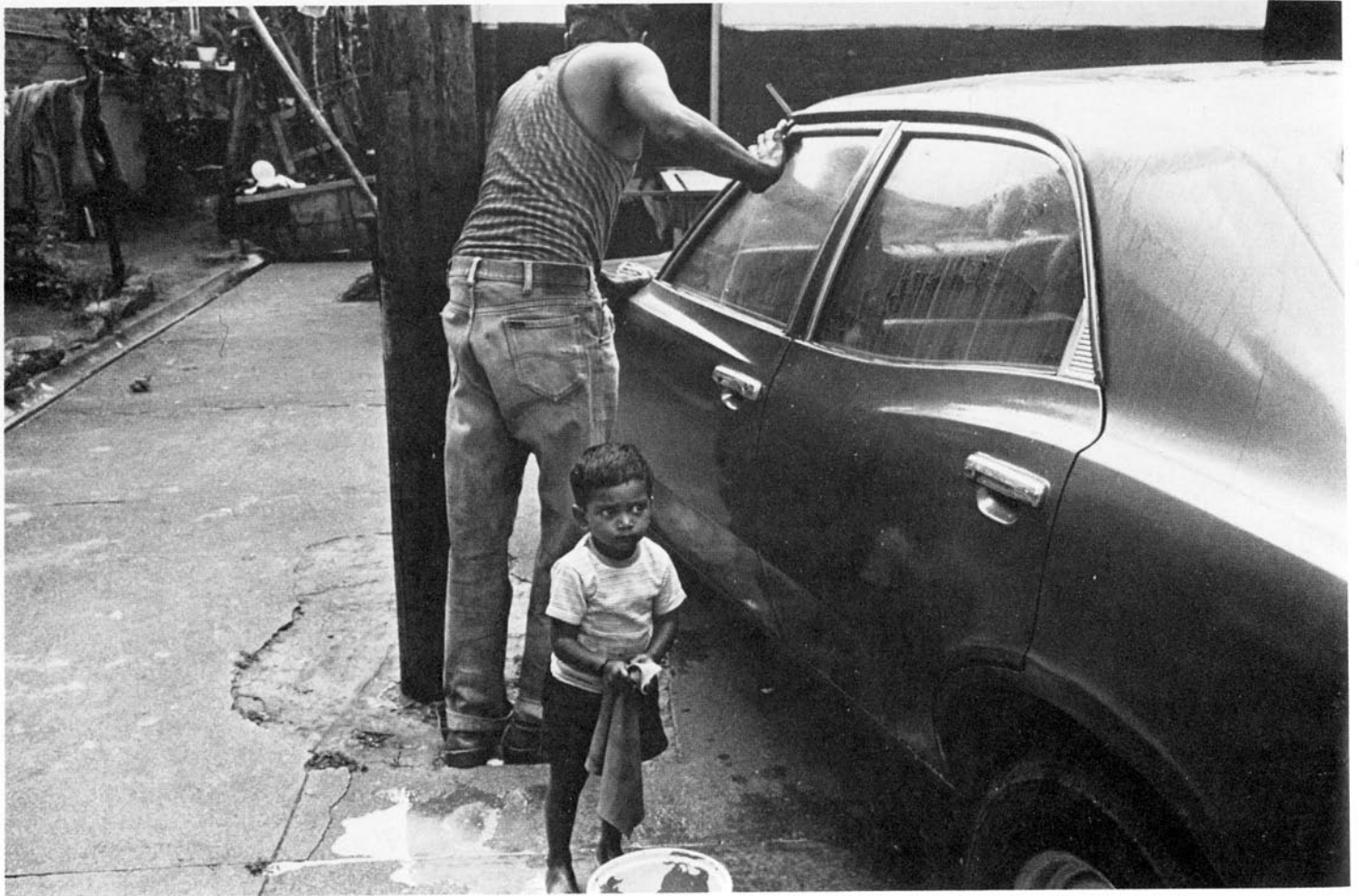
Dube children
St. Gwendolins



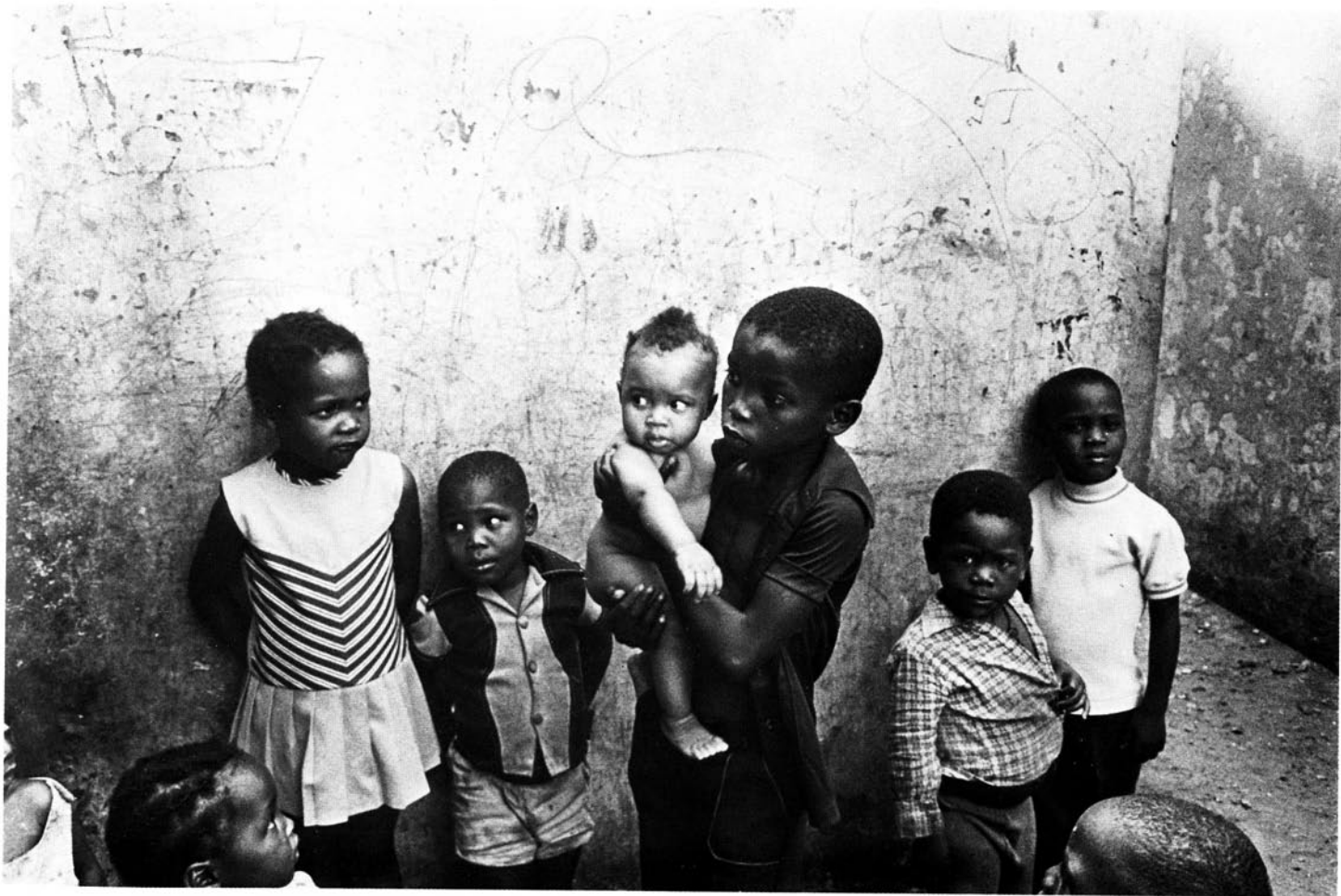
Fahim Docrat and Sibongile
Prince Edward Street



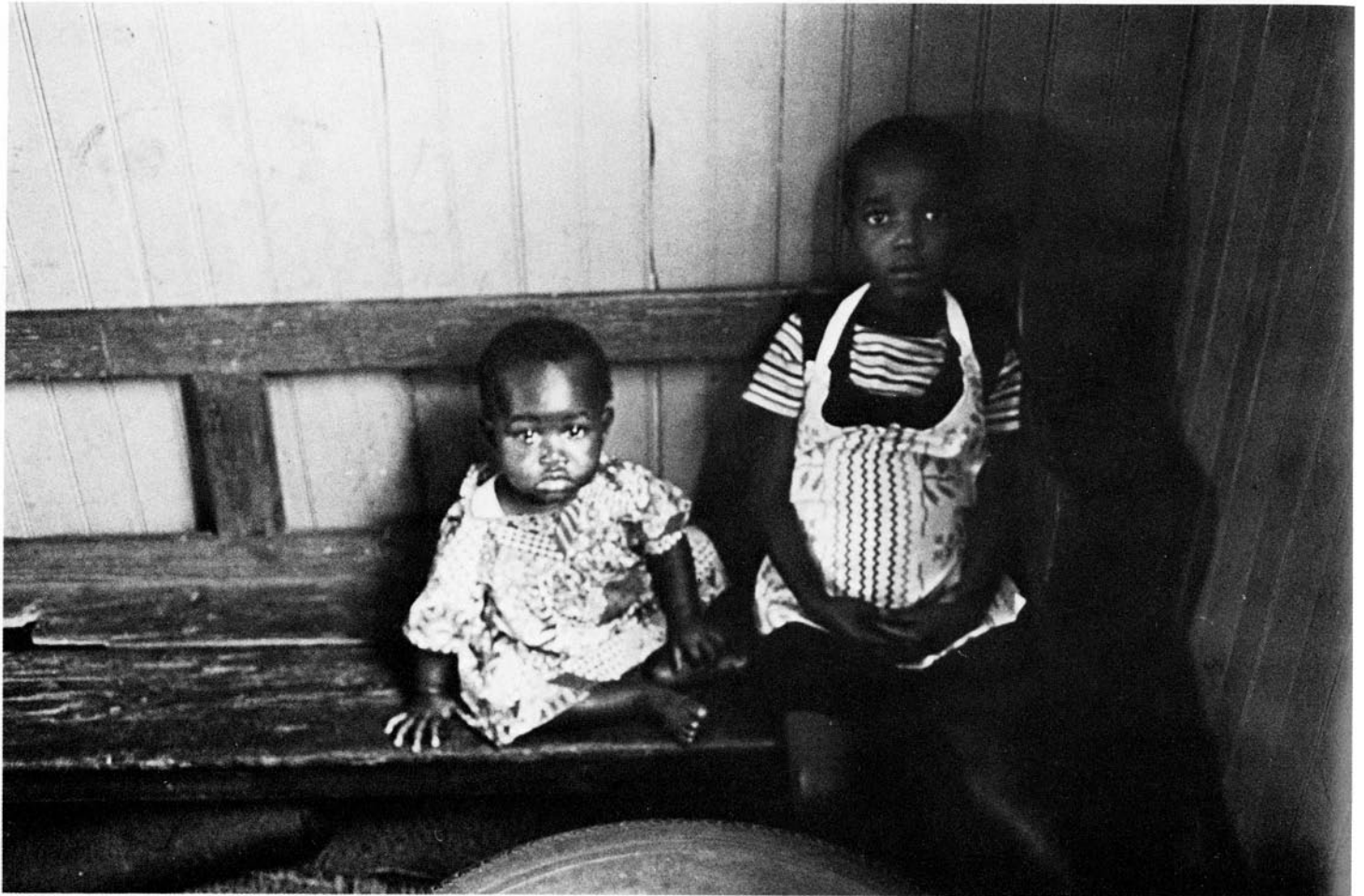
Clinic Day
Gandhi Settlement
Phoenix



Sydenham Road Barracks



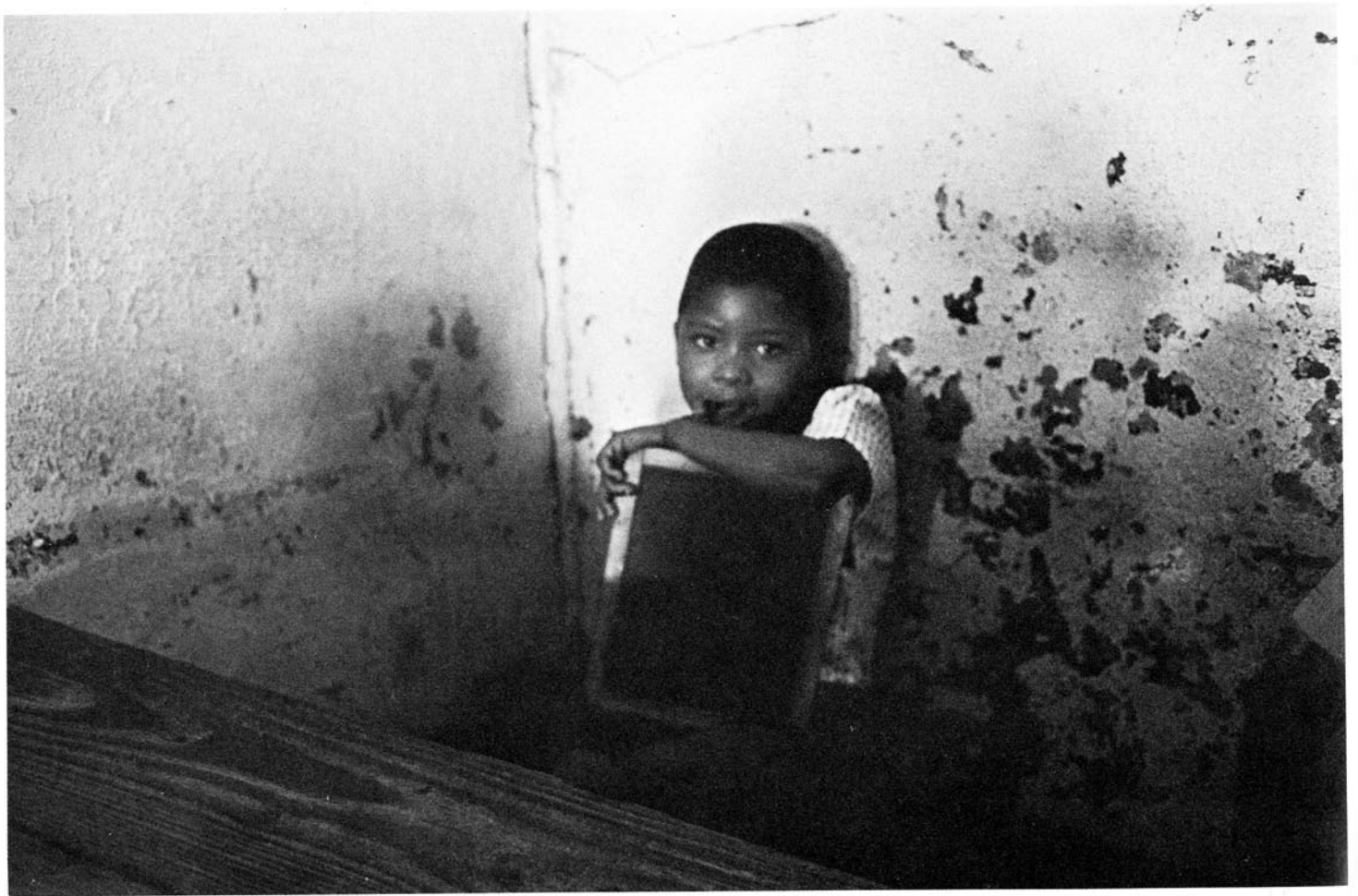
Some are classified
African, Asian and Coloured



Lungile Dladla, Zanele Cebekhulu
Thokoza Day Care Centre
Bothas Hill



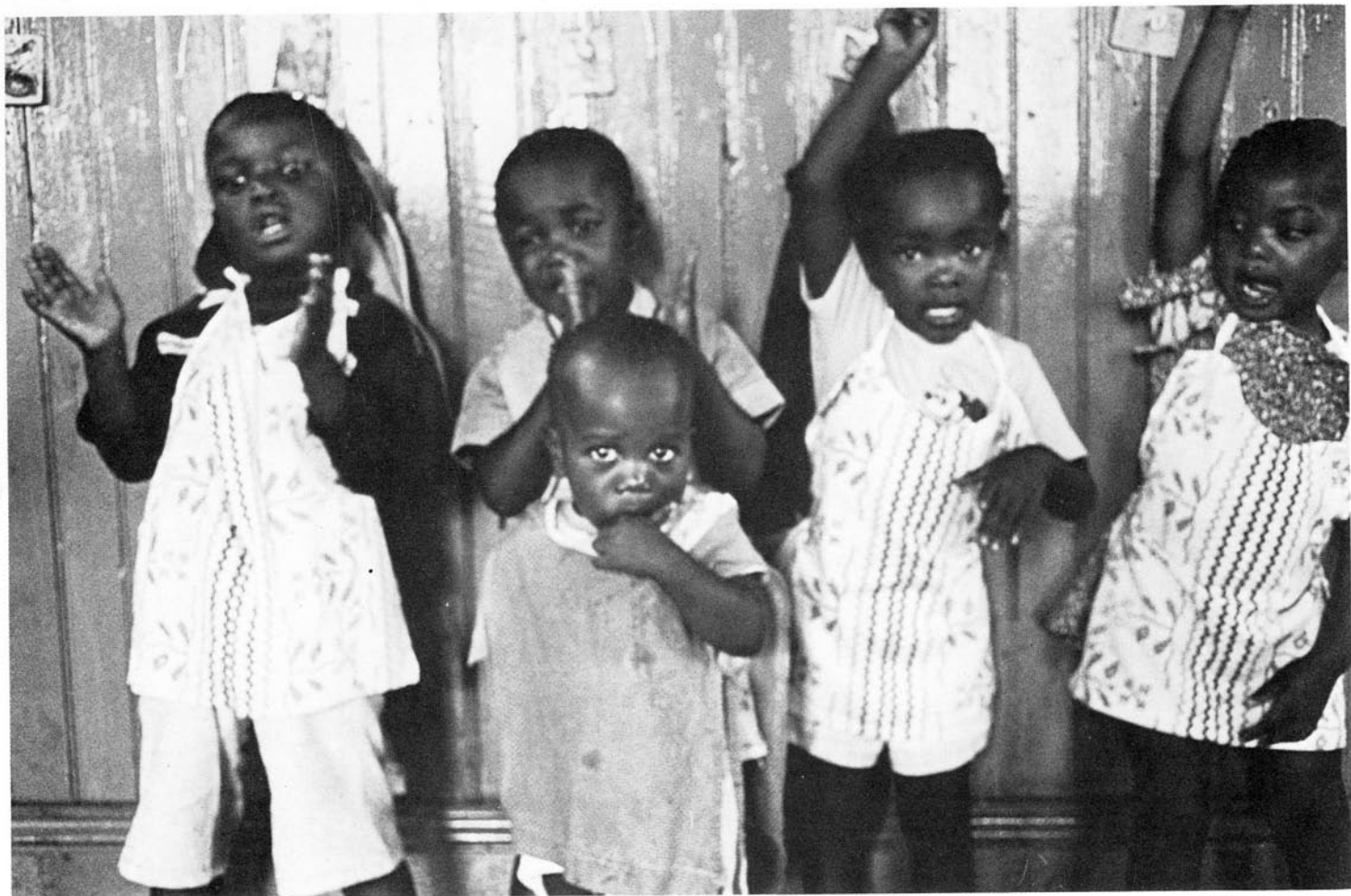
Delalle School



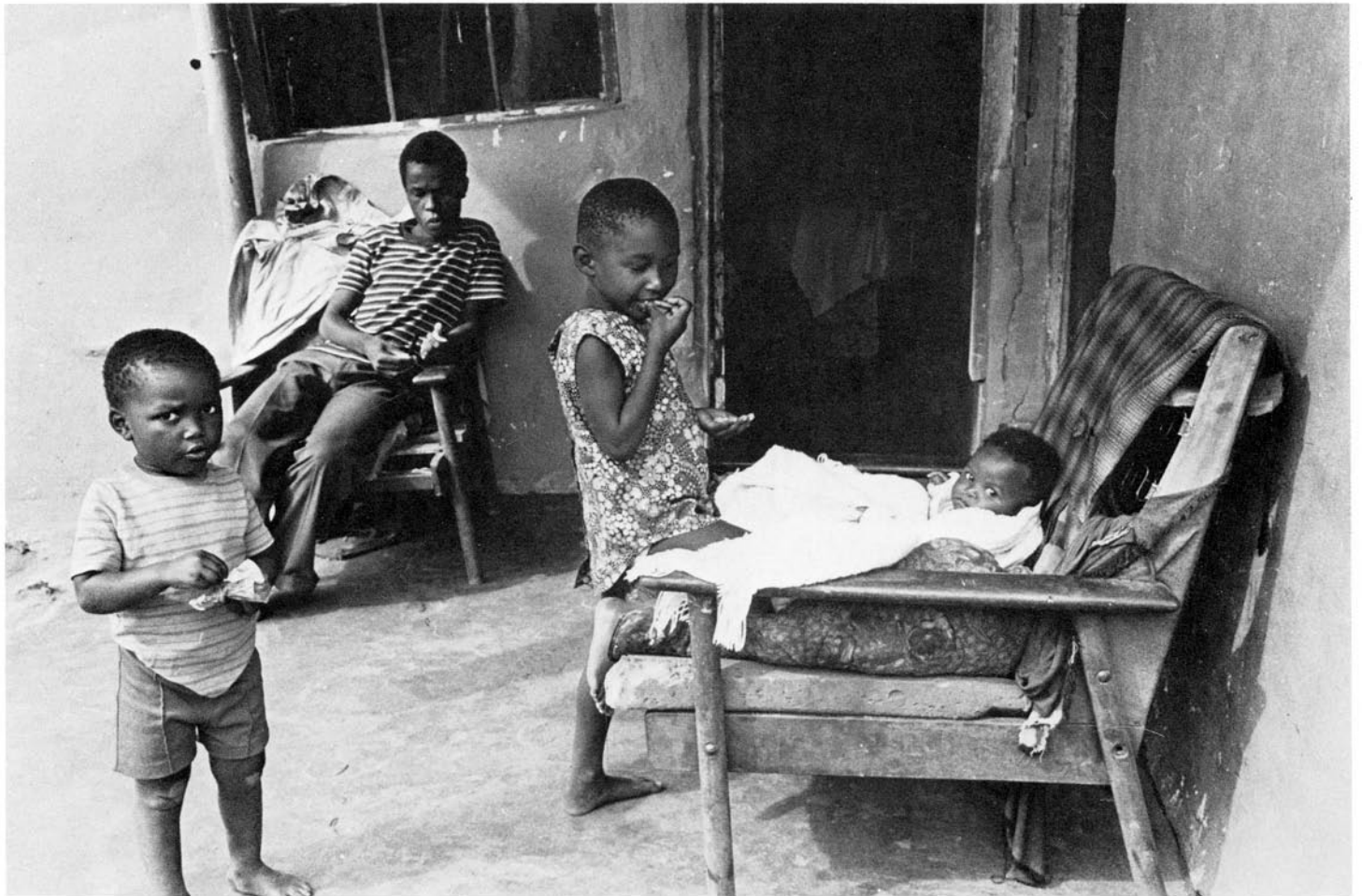
Saunders Malinga
Delalle School



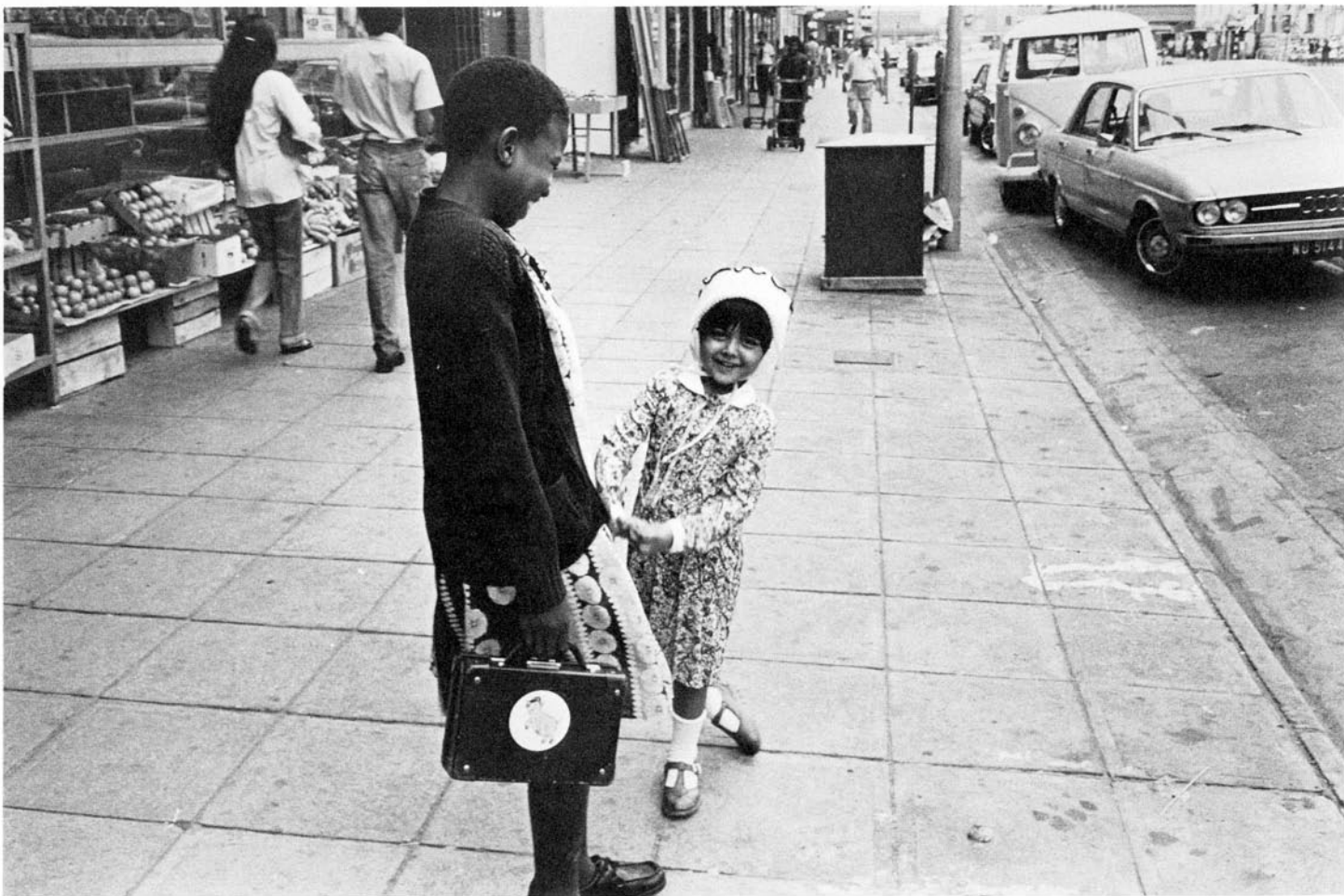
Going to Madressa
Overport



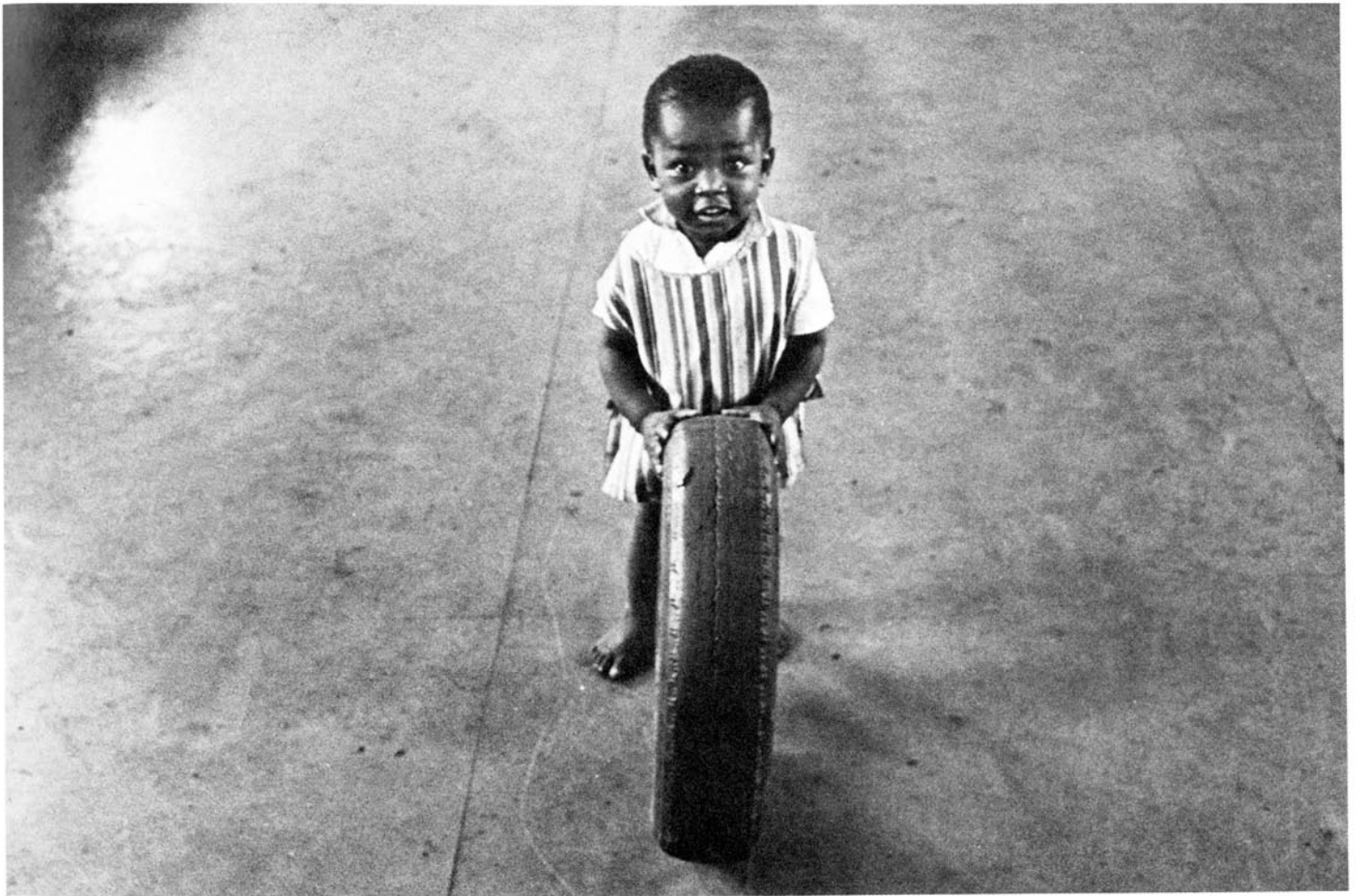
Thokoza Day Care Centre



Pitumulani Mthetwa
and friends
St. Gwendolins



Dora and Tasneem
Queen Street



Siphelo Mtshali
Thokoza Day Care Centre



Sydenham Road Barracks



Inanda



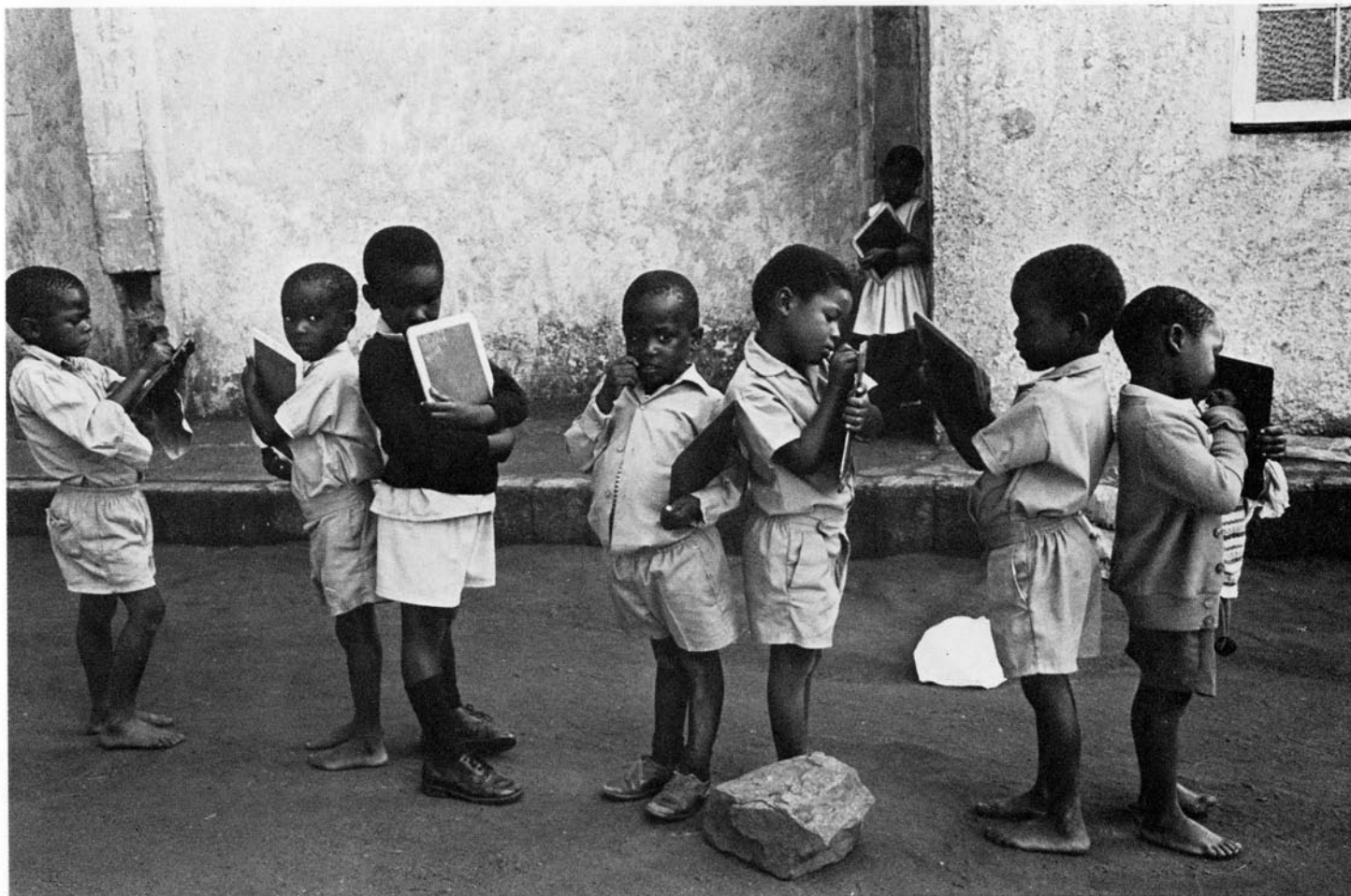
Delalle School



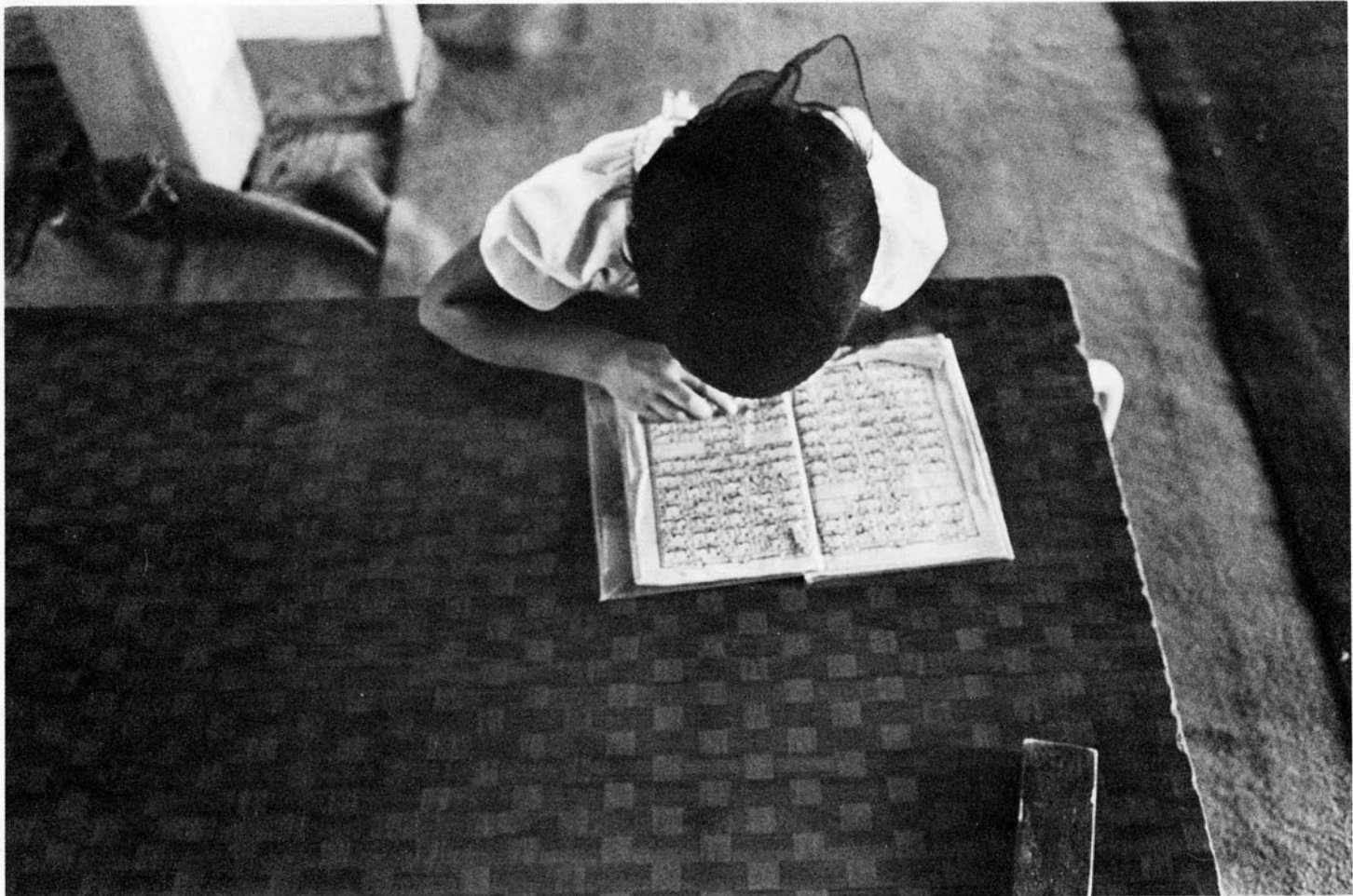
Grey Street



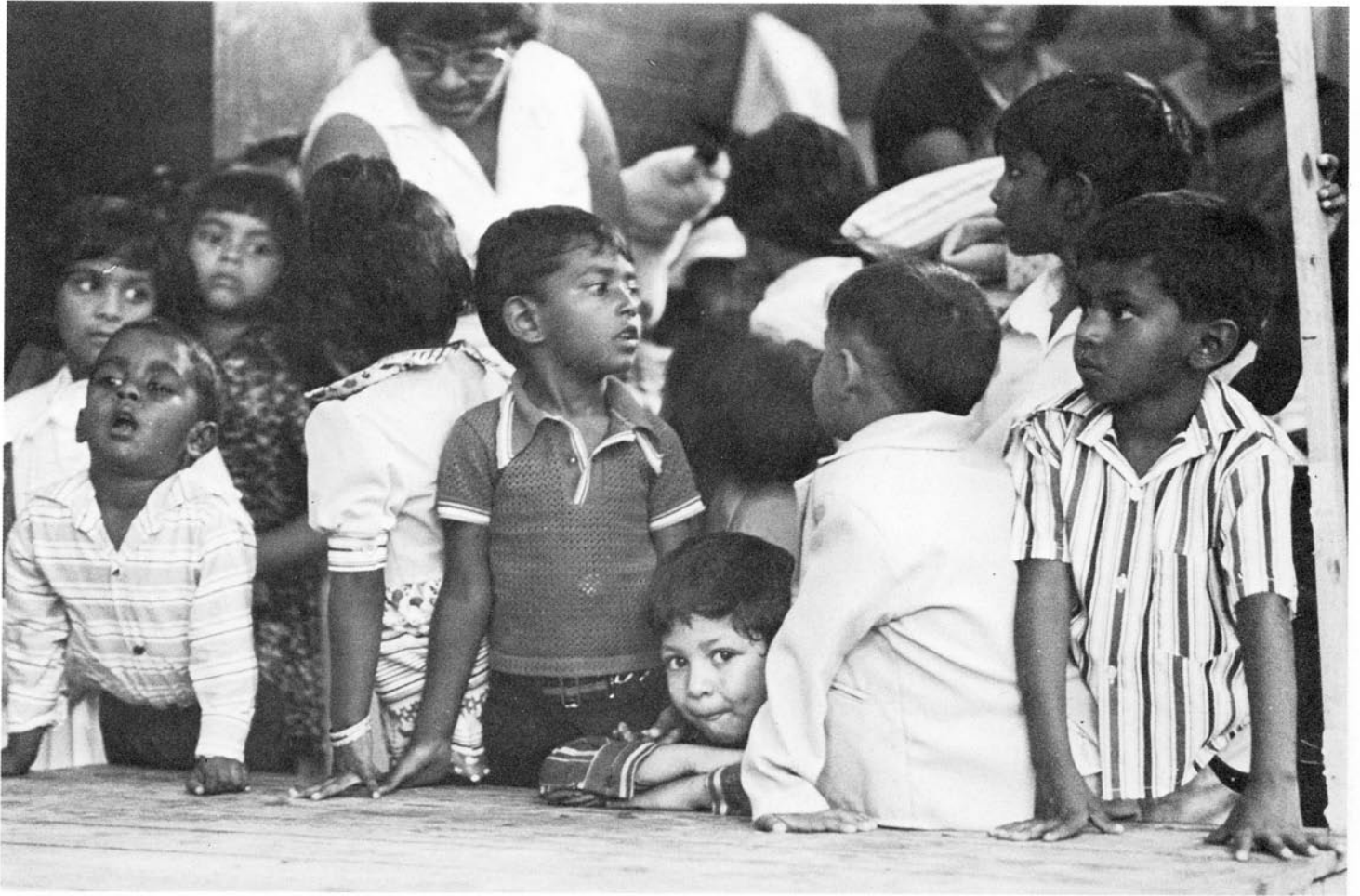
Mitchell Park



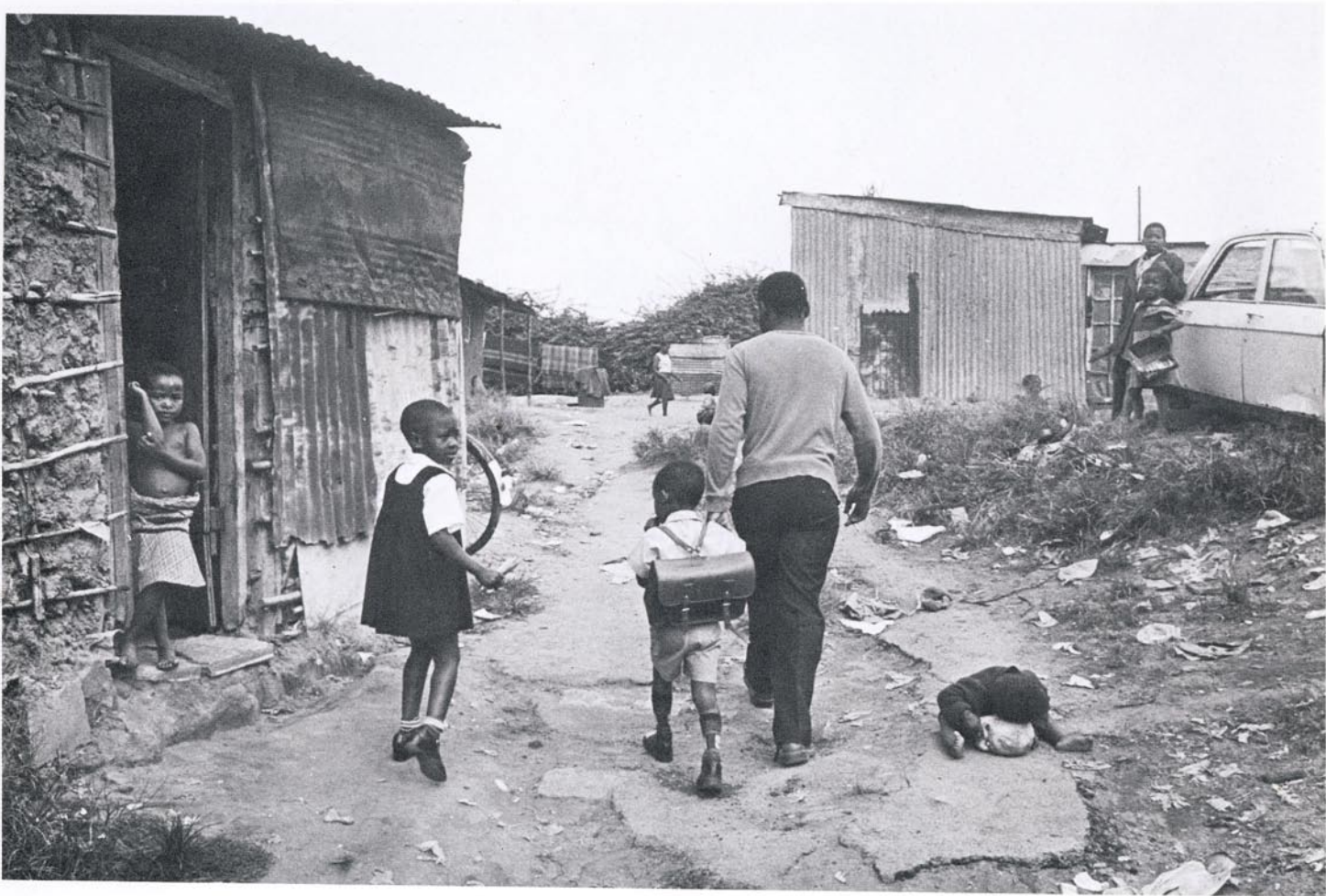
Delalle School
Hill Crest



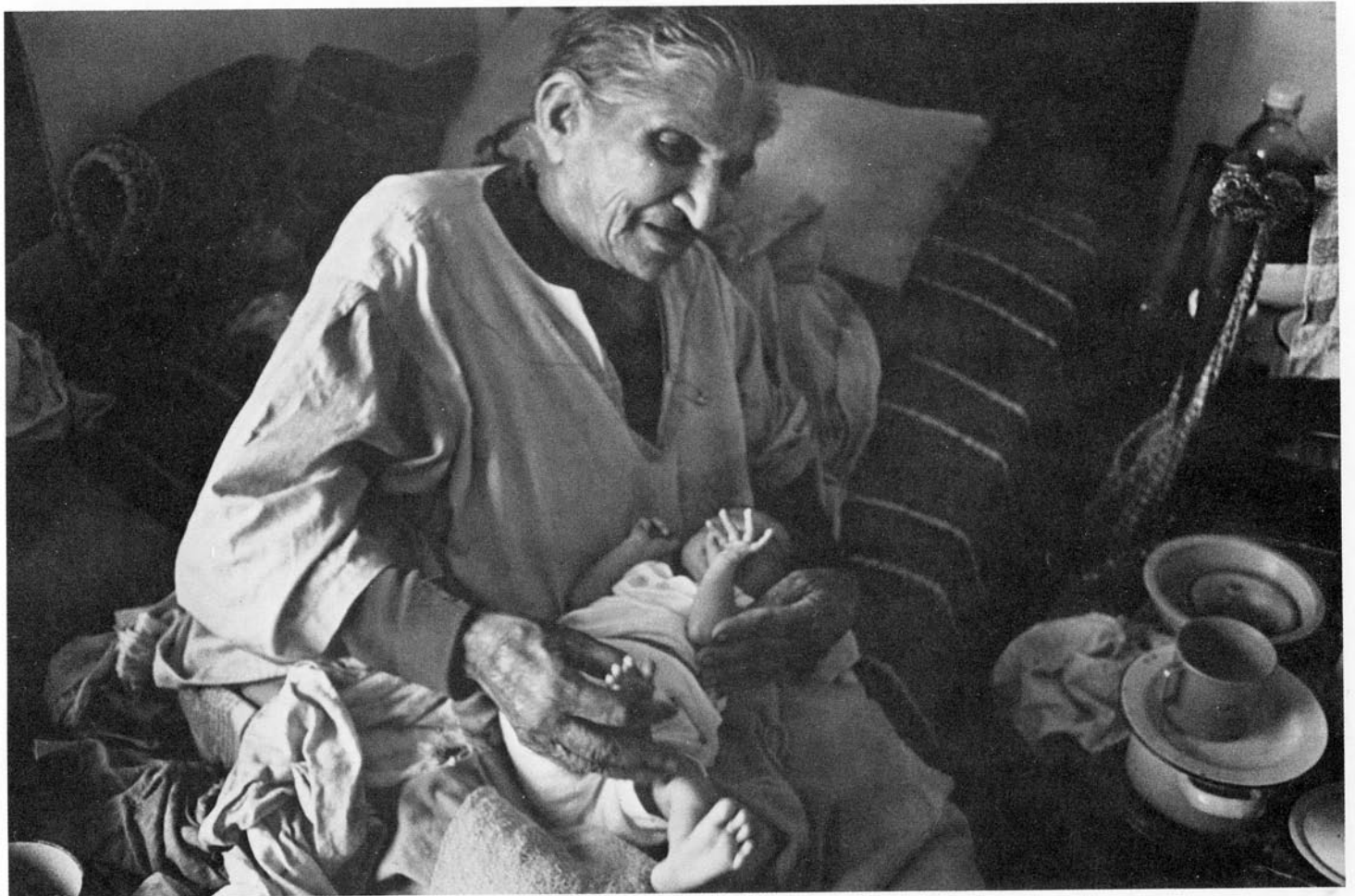
Madressa
Lorne Street



Young actors
end of school term
Merebank



Alpheus Mthetwa
and children
St. Gwendolins



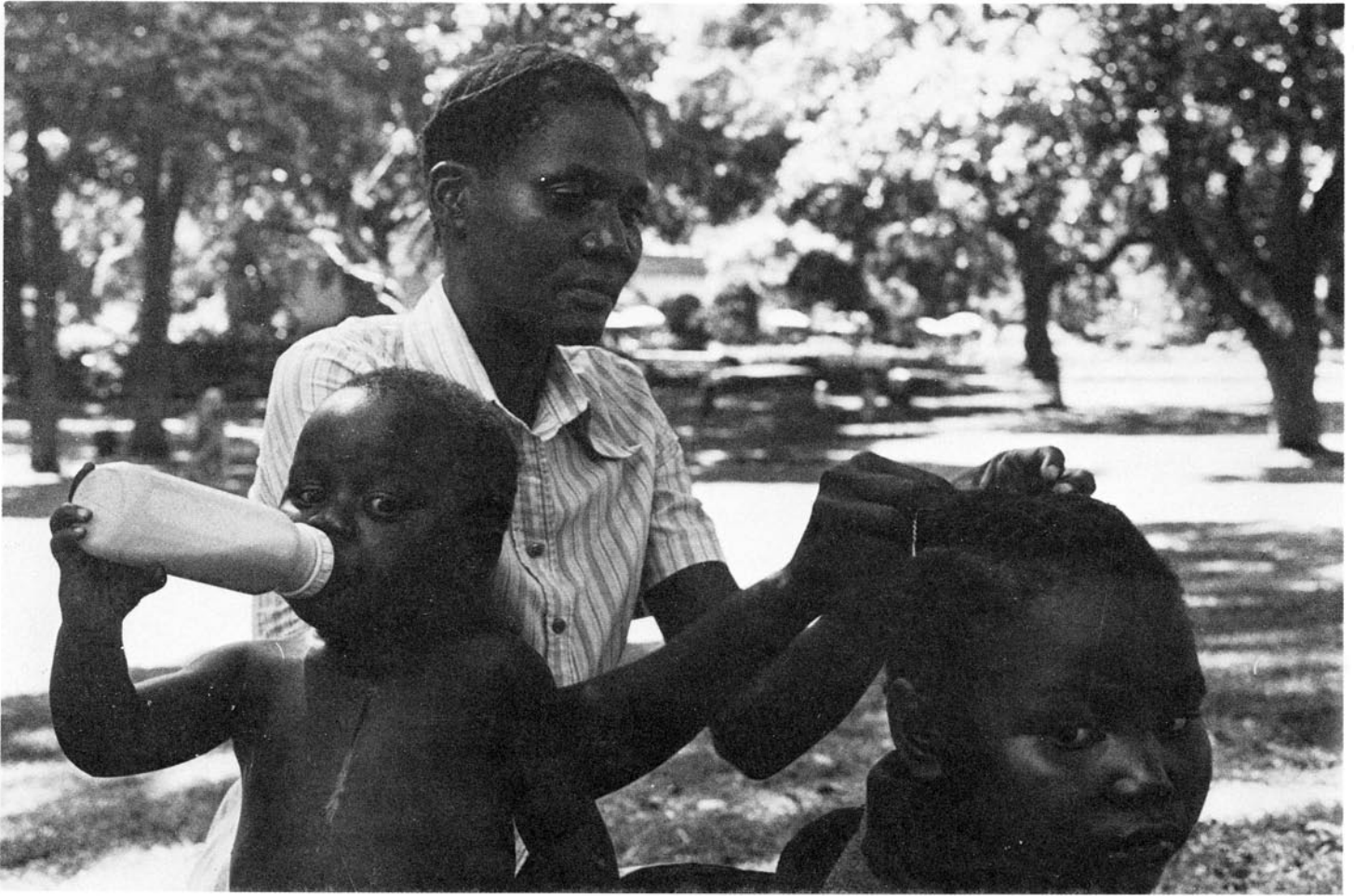
Farzanah and Great
Granny (b 1888 — June 1979)



Albert Street



**Mrs Moonsamy Naidoo
and grandson Rajan
Sydenham Road Barracks**



Family of migrant worker,
Visit to Durban on a
72 hour pass
Mitchell Park



Tourist Stall
Umgababa

Town Gardens
Durban





Sunday lunch
Mitchell Park



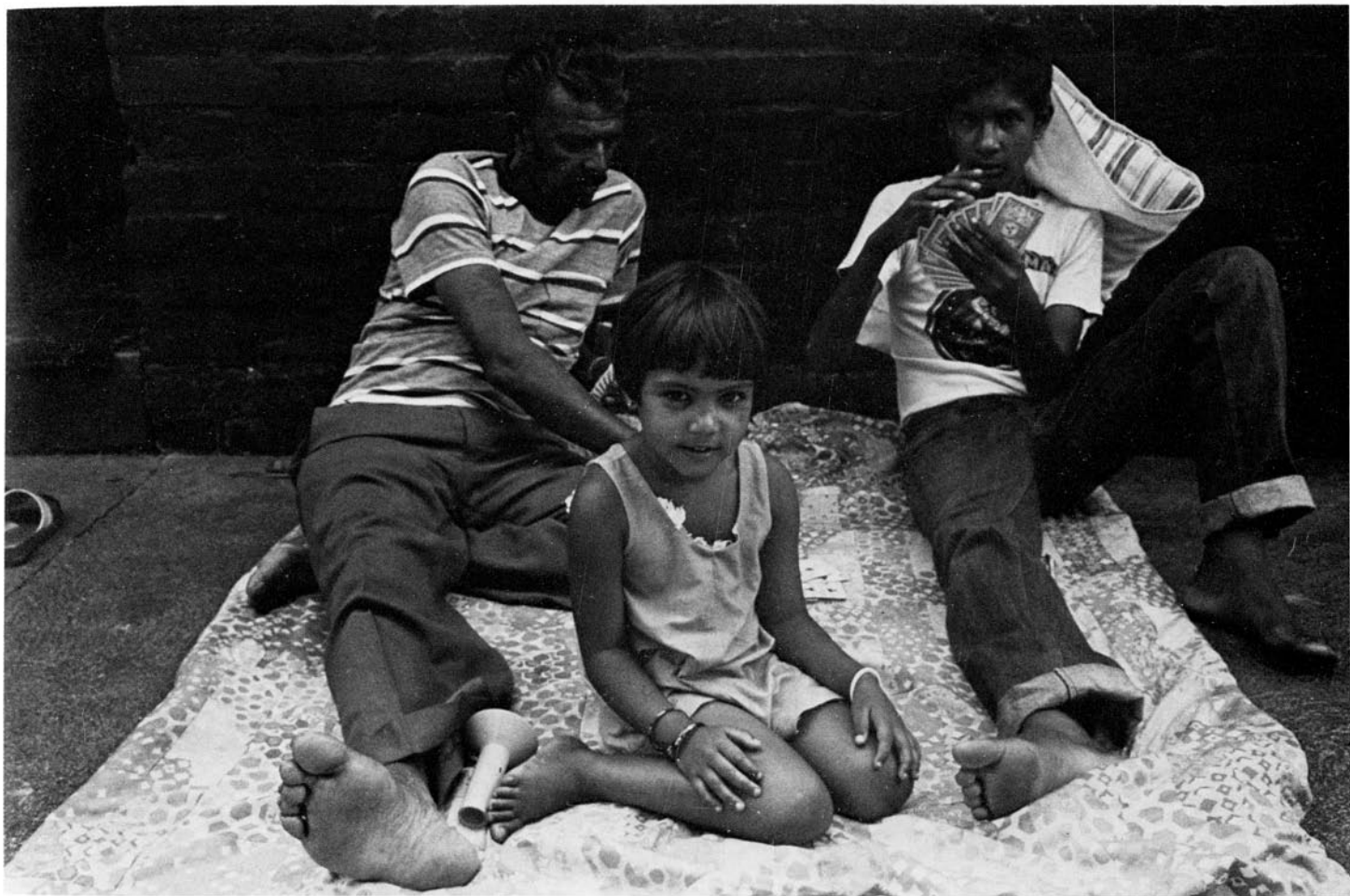
Essenwood Road



St. Gwendolins



Park
Ridge Road



Mr Govinsamy Pillay
with Vanie and Sevin
Sydenham Road, Barracks



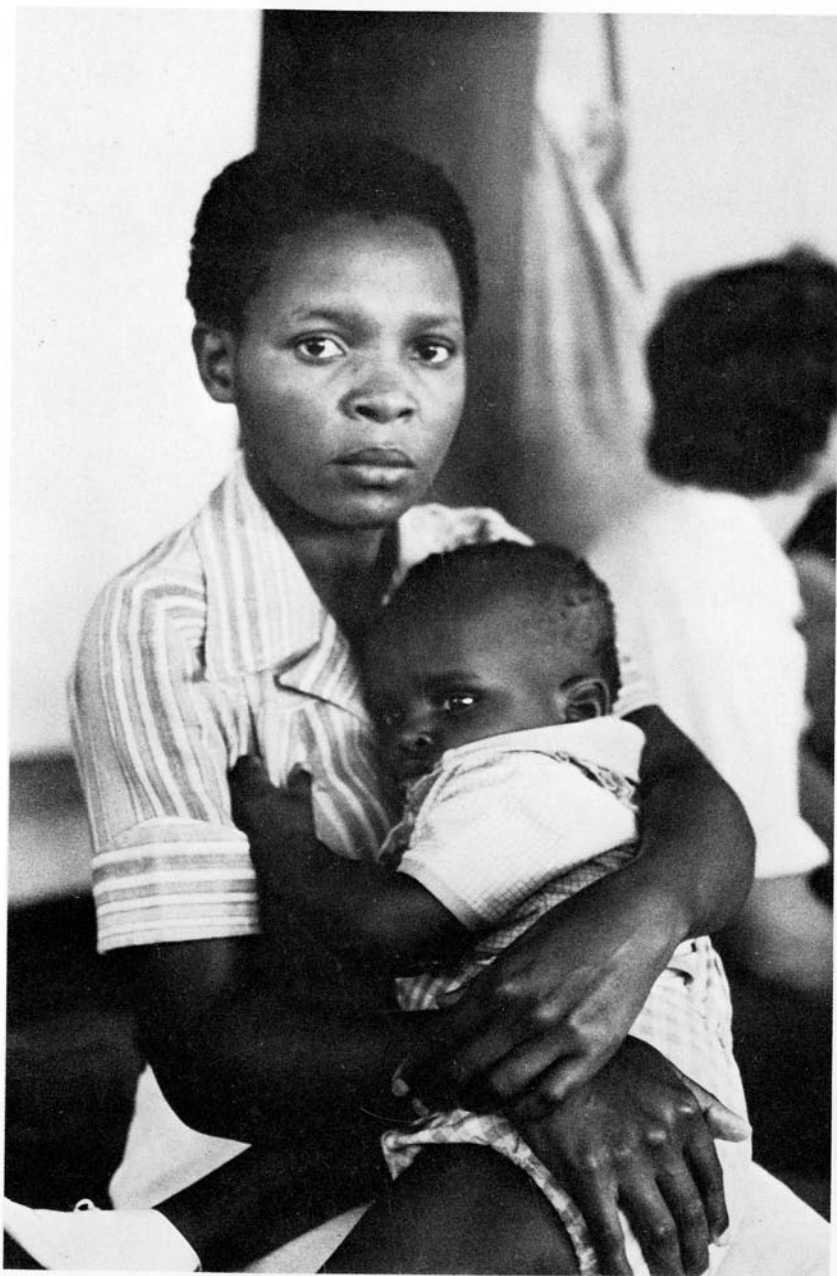
At the doctor's
Newcastle



Mitchell Park



Labourer with daughter
Gandhi Settlement
Phoenix



Irene Dlamine and baby
Secretary of Chemical Workers Industrial Union
Gale Street