

red cod—but it also reveals, by contrast the obsolescence of *Safeguarding Your Future*, the Progressive Party statement of policies and principles, which was, regrettably left virtually unchanged by that organisation's congress in Durban in August. The chief value of *Nonracial Democracy* lies in its honest examination of South Africa's problems and its revelation that

somewhere in the Liberal Party there is a socialist party trying to get out.

If *Nonracial Democracy* is a signpost pointing the general direction of the party it is to be welcomed: if on the other hand it is the destination itself Liberals may find they are the only ones who wish to go there. ●

In the Rhodesia-Zimbabwe Process

The Skin-hats Stage

JOHN REED

VISITORS TO SOUTHERN RHODESIA from the Republic have sometimes remarked that events here compared to the grim realities further south have an air of comic opera. The cultural battles described in this article nearly all take place in the sphere of the ludicrous. But the issues involved are not ludicrous. Southern Rhodesia will be the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to move from being a white settler country in the full sense, with a virtually independent white settler government, with its own traditions however jejune and its own European way of life—and to become an African country.

It may take a decade before the change is complete. It will probably only take five years. In any case the process has already begun. For although Rhodesia still has a white settler government, and will continue to have such a government under the new constitution if this is ever put into force, still that government is no longer ruling, in the sense of shaping the country without obstruction according to a settler ideology.

The government is now merely dealing with a situation that has arisen, as best it can, confusedly, on some fronts apparently getting ready for African power, on others trying to postpone or prevent it. The coming of colonial territories to independence if it has not always brought a cultural awakening has usually brought a cultural preoccupation. The coming of a white man's land to African nationhood involves a cultural conflict—not on that deepest level where a conflict of culture has been going on ever since the white man arrived in Africa, and still continues—but on the conscious level of attitudes taken, affirmations made and slogans coined; a cultural accompaniment to the political struggle. In Southern Rhodesia cultural questions—what a man should eat and what he should put on and what past he should revere—now make headlines.

J. O. REED is on the staff of the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and was one of the joint editors of *Dissent*, Salisbury. With the banning of ZAPU on 20 September 1962, he was served with a "restriction order," as chairman of the Salisbury City branch of ZAPU.

NOT THAT THE SOUTHERN RHODESIAN European has a culture of his own in the sense that the Afrikaner has. Most adult white Rhodesians were not born in the country and have roots in Britain or South Africa. But there is the local form of the settler mind which is little more than the conviction of the distinction between "us" and "the natives". In Southern Rhodesia this is no longer official dogma. But it continues to be powerful.

"Events which are perhaps even now imminent" . . . "It all points to a crisis". John Reed's article and A. K. Brooks's review (page 6), written just before the banning of ZAPU on 20 September, should be read with the leader on page 1.

As for culture, the settler here feels secure in Michelangelo and Tolstoy. He doesn't have to produce a cultural justification from his own immediate resources (how embarrassing to have to cite Doris Lessing, who is the only major artist Southern Rhodesia has produced) any more than he has to depend on his own resources independently of Europe in any other sphere. With all this behind him, he can remain unimpressed by the massed arts of Africa.

The Africans at the moment are more modest and more local. Their pulses do not much quicken at the thought of Nok culture or the poetic achievement of Léopold Sédar Senghor. Their cultural awakening is the discovery that they themselves have for so long been taken in by a European conspiracy to pretend there could be nothing of value in things African. All they have to do is to affirm what has been denied.

"The missionaries have said we should not dance. Now we dance." They do not have to demonstrate the value of the dance. Sufficient, to quote the principles set down to guide the judges at ZAPU's traditional dance competition, that "the performance should arouse enthusiasm or interest from the audience—it may arouse joy or sorrow". There is no need to demonstrate against any standards the greatness of an African past, of African heroes. It is enough to affirm them. Zimbabwe. Chaminuka. Lobengula.

FOR THESE REASONS, the great International Congress of African Culture held in Salisbury provoked what quarrels it did largely within the European camp. That this very important occasion in African arts took place in Salisbury at all is almost entirely due to Frank McEwan, director of the Rhodes National Gallery, a man who has never once stopped waging his wild, unstinting battle with Salisbury's bleak archaic vulga-

rity. Into his cultural desert he managed to coax representatives from Nigeria, Ghana, the Ivory Coast, Mozambique, African artists from all parts of Africa, African experts from all parts of Europe, and managed to avoid a boycott by ZAPU though the gallery is supported by the Government.

These are not mean achievements. But even he was unable to convince the local European press that the occasion was of much importance, though they published letters which said that the exhibition of African art put in by the congress depicted nothing but the "crudity, primitiveness and savagery of African 'culture'." The Leader of the opposition in the Southern Rhodesian Legislative Assembly objected to "the absolute rubbish on display at the moment" and said that instead of giving £3,500 a year to the National Gallery the Government should spend this amount on sub-police stations.

ZAPU officials were present at the opening ceremony of the Congress. But with half-a-crown entrance to the art exhibition with another ten shillings for the very necessary catalogue, the Congress did not make a widespread impression on the African people of Salisbury. To take place at all the Congress had to keep above politics. And perhaps this meant keeping above the cultural issues of the moment.

BUT THE SOUTHERN RHODESIAN Government cannot be so aloof. On the 4th August in the *African Daily News* appeared a Government advertisement, headed "WE DEPLORE THE NATIONALIST REVERSION TO TRIBALISM." Then beneath:

"The wearing of skin hats, skins, the use of tribal trappings with its threat of moving backwards instead of forwards—the Nationalist magazine which is distinctive in its articles and has on its cover a mask, axes and even a witchdoctor's horn."

Further down the advertisement continues:

"Remember—Zimbabwe is just a ruin—a silent reminder of a dead and unhappy past. What an insult to ask you to call yourself a Zimbabwean."

This Governmental reaction to some cultural trappings of nationalism which have begun to appear this year year perhaps needs some notes of explanation. Skin hats, that is hats made of fur, had become popular among nationalist officials. The Africans of Southern Rhodesia have not preserved any traditional costume, and the skin hat probably originates more in the desire of the young man in the town for some extravagant touch in his attire than in the revival of any genuinely traditional garment. Certainly to a European eye the skin hat does not give its wearer an African look—but rather, according to the style of the hat, an appearance reminiscent of Davy Crockett, Robinson Crusoe or some visiting Soviet diplomat. The Government's denunciation however has fixed the skin hat as patriotic wear.

The *African Daily News* after the attack published a row of photographs, a Royal Horse Artillery bugler, the Queen, Buckingham Palace Guard, Joshua Nkomo—all wearing skin hats. This was to make fun of the Government. The real justification of the skin hat is not, of course, that Europeans do wear them but that they don't. The hat has become a symbol of allegiance. So when a European asked two Africans in a restaurant eating a meal and wearing skin hats, to remove

these, according to a press report, one of the Africans replied, with biblical dignity: "We cannot take off our hats because they are not hats as other hats are." Though a policeman was called the men finished their meal and left still wearing their hats.

THE PASSAGE IN THE Government advertisement about its being an insult to be called a Zimbabwean refers of course to the African Nationalist habit of calling the territory now known as Southern Rhodesia, Zimbabwe—which will presumably in the future become the official name of the country. As one African wrote to the *Daily News*:

"If it is an insult to some people's ears to be called Zimbabweans, then it must also be an insult to other people's ears to be called Rhodesians . . . Rhodes was born far away from this country and Africans have no connection with him". . .

SO THE BATTLE GOES ON. Mr. Robert Mugabe, Publicity Secretary of ZAPU and perhaps one of the most Pan-Africanist minded of the party's leaders—he has worked in Ghana, has a Ghanaian wife and sometimes attends ZAPU meetings with a Nkrumah-like toga over his suit—commented: "There is nothing wrong in wearing skin hats. We would like to return to the days of 1890 and revive everything as it was then and have our land." The Government retorted with another advertisement "AS IT WAS IN 1890 BY ACKNOWLEDGED EXPERTS OF THE PERIOD" followed by various extracts including one from Dr. Ranger's extremely radical pamphlet *Crisis in Southern Rhodesia*.

The Government's assertion is that these things are a reversion to tribalism. In fact they are the very opposite, part of the creation of a national consciousness. "There were only warring tribes here say the Europeans "we created the nation". They created the governmental and administrative structure in which a nation could come about. But they know they did not create a nation—as the belated "Build a Nation Campaign", a U.F.P. sponsored attempt to encourage Africans to enrol as voters under the new constitution, witnesses. It has of course, been a failure.

For whatever the future of Europeans in Southern Rhodesia may be, the ideals and traditions of a settler community cannot possibly play any part in the forming of the consciousness of the new nation except by provoking reaction. This sounds so obvious as hardly to need saying. Yet how difficult it is for the European to accept that the tradition of Rhodes and the pioneers is not that around which a new multiracial patriotism can crystallise: that the pomps which the Europeans have devised to praise themselves have to wither away.

September 12th is kept in Southern Rhodesia as a national holiday. It is the date on which the Pioneer Column reached the place where they founded Salisbury. Last year the name of this festival was changed from "Occupation Day" to "Pioneer Day". Unsatisfied by this concession members of the Youth League of the National Democratic Party (the African Nationalist Party of that time) picketed with posters the open-air service held in Cecil Square at the centre of Salisbury with the attendance of surviving pioneers, their descendants and the Governor.

After the service was over these, many other Africans and one or two Europeans were found to be sitting in a group on one of the lawns in the square. Europeans coming from worshipping their God and hoisting their flag stood around jeering, calling racial abuse. One man had the wit to purchase a supply of monkey nuts and with these he pelted his fellow citizens. Police soon ordered the seated crowd to leave and though it was dispersing quietly, police dogs were used to chase the departing demonstrators.

THIS DEMONSTRATION HAS grown into the most appalling insult to every sacred feeling, if we judge by letters written to the European Press. This year it has been announced that no longer will the Governor attend the Pioneer Day service, and the responsibility for the arranging of this service will no longer belong as heretofore to the Salisbury Municipality but to the Rhodesia Pioneers and Early Settlers Society. Immediately the Press and the Leader of the Opposition protested that this was because of last year's demonstrations, a surrender to hooliganism. Sir Edgar Whitehead replied with touching irrelevance "The time has come when there are no longer any of the original settlers left and it is now a question of their descendants."

But the real answer is obvious. Sir Edgar Whitehead's government is committed to a multiracial state, and although apparently he cannot yet reveal this openly to his white supporters, he can no longer give official sanction to the celebration of the European arrival as a national event and symbol of national unity.

The pioneer tradition is not only no longer valid but it is no longer possible to pretend that it is valid. The celebration of September 12th becomes a matter for antiquaries and the family piety of the descendants of the pioneers. What the National occasions of the new Southern Rhodesia—of Zimbabwe—will be, we do not know. They will be the commemoration of events which have not yet happened, but which are even now perhaps imminent. ●

ZAPU'S Witness

A. K. BROOKS

Chapupu [Independent Monthly—Southern Rhodesia] Vol. 1, Nos. 1 & 2, August-September 1962.

IT IS FASHIONABLE at present to describe Southern Rhodesia as a 'Police state.' As a term of abuse, the phrase is no doubt useful; as an instrument of analysis it tells us little. *Chapupu* tells us a good deal about the erosion of liberties and the suppression of African nationalism in Southern Rhodesia, and in doing so it adds useful detail to the hazy outline suggested by the notion of 'Police state.'

Chapupu, (which means "Witness"), is clearly the organ of the Zimbabwe African People's Union

A. K. BROOKS, a Rhodesian, is a student at the University of Cape Town.

(ZAPU), despite its pretence of independence. It is an articulate, outspoken and at times eloquent witness, but those who hope to find in its pages constructive thought about economic, social and cultural policy for the future will be disappointed by the first two issues. Perhaps this is a built-in weakness of an extra-constitutional nationalist movement, its negative formulation of attitudes. 'One-man-one-vote' is a slogan, not a policy. 'Down with Whitehead' and 'Repeal the Land Apportionment Act' may well be necessary cries for the moment, but when Whitehead falls (as he might, in trying to repeal the Land Apportionment Act), what then? On this *Chapupu* has nothing to say.

In other respects, however, the magazine is of great value. It reminds us that six men are still languishing in detention at Gokwe, that the B.S.A. Police are an active aggressive arm of the United Federal Party regime, that the Government's propaganda campaign is crude and dishonest. An article by the students of Epworth Theological College shows that the missions have played their unwitting part in equipping African nationalism for its struggle.* The possibility of the African church militant lined up against the white church reactionary is as real in Central Africa as is the possibility in the Republic of a massive rejection of Christianity by a rebellious black majority. The mission students write:

"The great encouraging thing is that all those who fight for a just cause will conquer without weapons. This is clearly shown in the Old Testament Bible History and also in world history."

The radical reader on seeing this may begin to wonder whether religion is not an obstacle to change after all, but the next few lines should reassure him. They contain a demand for power, the demand of a dispossessed people couched, with superb irony, in the political and religious language of the imperialist culture which imposed itself on them:

"We know that a person must struggle against sin, and must struggle for education, so we fail to see why he should not struggle to establish a government running under a democratic principle of majority rule. So if we are to follow democratic ways we find that it is the majority who should rule, and according to Christianity it is the owners of the land . . . We fail to see why it is only Mr. Nkomo who should use democratic and Christian tactics when the founders of democracy and the propagators of the Gospel fail to use them."

IN SHORT, THE FAMILIAR pattern of colonialism in decline is being repeated in Southern Rhodesia. Why else the increasing frequency of violent outbursts, the alliance of ZAPU with the radical wing of African Trade Unionism, the introduction of more repressive legislation, the £4-million Police Vote, the ill-disguised concessions made five years too late? It all points towards a crisis.

But the leaders of ZAPU would be wrong to think that they have merely to huff and puff in order to blow the ruling class down. They have made bad tactical mistakes in the past, and are prone to lean heavily on the uncertain props of British intervention and United Nations pressure. They could do no better than to study the efficient organisation of the Malawi machine

*This is a theme developed by a man who admirably illustrates it himself—Rev. N. Sithole, chairman of ZAPU—in his work *African Nationalism*.