

to know African nationalism from within. Only in this way will their observations carry weight for then they will arise out of a sympathetic understanding of the aspirations of African leaders. The churches in Africa need to take African nationalism seriously so that they may have a responsible attitude towards the most powerful force in Africa at the present time.

The demands that the ending of colonialism and the rise of African nationalism are making upon the churches are such that they cannot be met by the churches simply in words. As the years pass it is becoming increasingly clear that words, even Christian words, in themselves have less and less meaning for Africans unless they are translated into deeds. Africans are watching the members of the Christian churches, both black and white, very closely to see if their actions match their words. Unfortunately sometimes their actions speak so loudly that Africans are unable to hear their words. It sometimes seems as if the survival of the churches in Africa may depend to a large extent upon the readiness of Christians to become involved in the life-situations in which they find themselves, and on the degree to which they are willing to be identified with the efforts of those who are striving so zealously to shape the destiny of the new Africa.

AMONG THE MANY WAYS in which churchmen ought to be involved in contemporary life in Africa, few are more important than participating in the rapid urbanisation that is now taking place in so many parts of the continent. To many Africans the town is becoming the symbol of political, social, cultural, and moral emancipation. It is in the urban areas that words like nationalism, freedom, progress, are taking on a new meaning and an added power. Yet this is never the whole story of the meaning of urban life for Africans. So often the town also means demoralising social conditions, uprootedness, human misery, new social tensions and injustice, impersonal economic forces, indiscriminate materialism. Surely the members of the churches in Africa ought to be trying to discern the bearing of their religion in the search that is now going on for new social institutions and new patterns of human relationships.

This phenomenal growth in urbanisation is being accompanied by rapid economic development and industrialisation in many parts of Africa. So far most churchmen in Africa have done too little either to help Africans understand their status, role, and function in an industrial society, or to play a very significant part in the building up of strong and effective trade unions which are essential for the workers in any industrial community. Yet here, if anywhere, is a place where Christians need to act as well as to speak. Admittedly this is only one illustration of the many ways in which the churches, if they will, can serve the new Africa. Changing Africa means that a good deal of the former attitude and ways of working of churchmen in Africa has now become outmoded and obsolete. Changing Africa is confronting the churches with many new and searching demands. But this is not all. Perhaps more than anywhere else in the contemporary world, changing Africa offers churchmen, both black and white, many new opportunities for exciting service. ●

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## Defending the Indefensible - II

*The role of the  
High Commission Territories*

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PETER WARREN

IN AN ARTICLE THAT appeared in *The New African* of 8th June we showed that the present South African Government is preparing for a civil war. Their appreciation is that it will take the form of sabotage in the industrial areas and towns, local unrest in the form of strikes and general antipathy, and most important of all roving guerilla forces attacking isolated towns and villages. We agree with this estimate.

If we look at similar revolutions in colonial territories, for example in Indo-China, Algeria, Angola, Cyprus and Malaya we find that the Freedom Armies were invariably supported from outside sources, Communist China, Tunisia, Congo, Greece, and Communist China again. It would appear fairly certain that African countries will do the same for anti-government forces in South Africa. In view of their present attitude to the Republican Government countries like Ghana, Nigeria, Algeria, Egypt, and Tanganyika (probably also Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland) will give assistance to those groups fighting in South Africa. In virtually all past instances this assistance has been in the form of money, supplies, and trained men and came overland across a common border.

South Africa has a long coast line, and long borders, mainly with the protectorates Bechuanaland and Basutoland. It is highly likely that independent governments in these territories will assist the Freedom struggle in South Africa; above all because of the indignities suffered by their own populations in South Africa and because of a common cause as Africans.

As these countries are still under British control and are likely to remain so for the next five years the questions we must examine are: What will Britain's attitude be to the use of any of the Protectorates as a route for arms, ammunition, and men, and secondly as a base from which operations may be mounted?

While it is quite possible that under a Labour Government British actions may be far more tolerant of African Nationalism in the South, they have not in the past shown themselves much less self-interested than the present Conservative Government. The main reason is probably that in the British House of Commons there is a very powerful lobby acting in the interests of the British foreign investment in Africa. Britain has almost

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R2,000,000,000 invested in South Africa and we must also consider the influence of local associates of British industrialists. Both these have a great deal to fear from a revolution, in reduced profits during the battle, ultimate reduced profits through rising African wages and possible expropriation (They will probably suffer this for their present attitude anyway).

This lobby is very powerful (consider British attitudes over the Congo) and may be successful in forcing some action by Britain. But, what action can she take? To send British troops into the Protectorates to fight South African freedom fighters will not only call down the wrath of the Afro-Asian block but probably the whole United Nations. Britain can no longer afford to appear anti-African for she stands to lose so much in goodwill, and in any case can hardly afford the economic cost of fighting yet another freedom army. To permit South African troops to enter the protectorates will probably have much the same result. Both these alternatives are possible but would more than likely have the effect of bringing considerable Communist and American assistance to the freedom fighters. The American Government would certainly try to dissociate herself from Britain.

WHAT ELSE COULD Britain do? The most likely seems to be supplying information to the South African Government and taking what legal action she can against the guerilla forces in her territories. While Protectorate politicians have to be "docile" in order

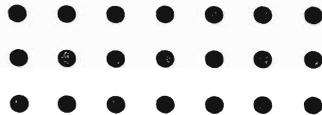
to receive limited self-government this might be quite effective, but it could not go on for ever. In any case overt co-operation with South Africa would be strongly disapproved by the United Nations. Thus what probably would be done would have to be fairly secretive.

Additional factors that could assist the guerilla activities in the Protectorates would be U.N. action in South West Africa which could itself be used as a base and which could also enhance the use of Bechuanaland, and the establishment of a representative government in Southern Rhodesia. Neither of these events can be far away and it will be significant if powerful pressures are brought to bear to force the British Government into giving Southern Rhodesia independence while still under a white government.

It would seem that the Protectorates probably can be used by anti-South African Government forces. Initially this will probably be for the transport of stores and equipment. It also appears that Britain can do little about it openly. However some foolhardy guerilla-leader could prejudice this by premature and flamboyant actions (a more virulent and aggressive Leballo, for example). If the Protectorates are used with intelligence and subtlety they will be of great assistance and the long borders an exceedingly difficult problem for the Republican forces, who will in any case be fully extended maintaining a semblance of order elsewhere. ●

## The Mob

A Story



### WEBSTER MAKAZA

THE FIRST FLASH OF lightning came as the jurymen were filing to their seats in the jury box. It held them for a split second like a photographer's flashlight and some looked startled and others merely blinked. The judge was in his chair and old van Dyk was in the dock, and outside, two banks of storm-clouds in the northern sky moved ominously towards each other.

The court had grown quite dark as the black clouds massed across the sun, but it took the lightning to show how dark it really was.

The first rumble of thunder came just as the foreman was announcing the verdict. The Judge had to lean forward and say, "Please repeat that". The foreman had a strong notion that the judge had heard quite well, but was reluctant to believe his ears.

The first time he announced it, the foreman had given their verdict with confidence. It was a different thing to be made to repeat it to a judge who was

obviously incredulous. Now he found himself speaking defensively almost apologetically.

"We find the prisoner not guilty, My Lord."

The judge looked hard at him. There was a gasp of appreciation of the rightness of the verdict from the white spectators and many looked round with scornful smiles at the black people on their benches.

Finally, the judge said, "We must forget that a white man is being charged with a crime against a black man. The prisoner is a man, and so was he who was killed. The prisoner is charged with killing this other man and it matters not that these two men had skins of a different colour. The law recognises no distinction. The life of each of these men was a human life. Each life was as valuable as the other. If a man's life, or the lives of those around him, are in imminent danger, then, as a last resort, he has a right to shoot at his assailant to protect himself, and if his assailant is killed, then the man could not be judged guilty of murder. If the prisoner is absolved from blame for this man's death, it does not absolve the system of society that brought his death about. If society has found the prisoner guiltless, then society has condemned itself. Each one of you here," and he looked towards the white people in the court, "are members of that society, a society that stands condemned cannot survive. The prisoner is discharged."

Except for the Africans, who sat on disappointed and bewildered, everybody in the court started talking at once. Men hurried across to congratulate van Dyk. A little man wrung him warmly by the hand.

He said, "You did a fine thing, sir, standing up to

WEBSTER MAKAZA lives in Pretoria. His short story, "The Last Room" was published in The New African, 20 February 1963.