

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

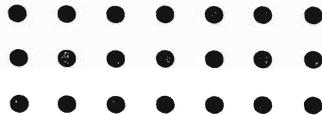
to receive limited self-government this might be quite effective, but it could not go on for ever. In any case overt co-operation with South Africa would be strongly disapproved by the United Nations. Thus what probably would be done would have to be fairly secretive.

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

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defend yourself against these brutal attacks. If I may say so, sir, your courageous action symbolises the determination of our people to protect our civilisation. Weren't you frightened when you saw the gang of striking savages swarming into your garden to stop your servants from working on that day of the strike?"

"I have never been frightened by a bloody kaffir in my life. But now they are waiting to kill me. They are only waiting for the chance." He pointed to the Africans in the gallery and shouted. "These people are waiting to kill you all. One day they will rise against you and they will murder you as they murdered our fathers in the past."

The little man asked, "Were you born in Africa?"

"Yes. And my father and my grandfather and his father before him."

"Where was your father born?"

"In an ox-wagon on the Great Karroo."

"Were those the days of the great trek when men and women moved northwards into Africa from the Cape?"

"Yes. My great-grandfather was one of them."

"What happened to him?"

"He was murdered by Zulus in the Drakensberg."

The little man looked on the old man with a new respect. "When you learned that your grandfather was killed by natives, what effect did this have on you?"

"It made me suspicious of natives all my life."

"So that when this mob of natives entered your garden there was no doubt in your mind that they intended to kill you?"

"Yes, that is why I shot one of them."

"Were they attacking you?"

The old man's beady little eyes looked at the little man with contempt. "Don't be a fool", he said . . . "What white man's going to let a bunch of black savages get near enough to attack him, eh?"

OUTSIDE, WHERE THE AFRICAN crowds were waiting, the sun had gone behind the storm clouds and the sky was heavy and overcast. There was another flash of lightning and a rending crash of thunder.

As the Court doors opened the white people from inside streamed out under the high porch. At the bottom of the steps policemen pushed with their batons, that the white people might go unhindered to their cars. They strolled confidently down the street, chattering and laughing.

The black people were not laughing. They stood grim, and silent, watching the white people, and as they watched something was happening to them. There were no leaders shouting slogans to them, rallying them to revolt. This time there was no need for leaders. They were merely angry and their anger was growing.

Few of them knew van Dyk by sight, but when the old man came out to the steps the crowd recognised him on the instant.

There was a long "Ah . . . h . . . Shoo . . . oo." from the crowd and a policeman said to the old man,

"You'd better wait till they've cleared off a bit."

The old man answered, "It is better to die a death of a hero, than to live a life of a coward." He turned and beamed his gums at the policeman, and added "I want to take my medicine like a man."

The policeman laughed back. He said, "At least we'd

have given you a ride. Now you will have to walk home."

"Not on your life, man. My young nephew's waiting for me. He knew I was going to come out a free man."

A strapping youth, over six feet, blonde and flat faced, was sitting on the running board of the battered Buick which had been pulled up outside the court, facing the kerb. He stood up and stretched his long body and looked over the top of the car at the mob and shouted, "So long, monkeys". The mob was not in the mood to return any courtesies.

He opened the door and climbed into the driver's seat, while the old man walked round to the near side of the car. He gave the old man no greeting nor word of congratulation. He lit a cigarette before he started the engine. He had to back his car away from the kerb and he deliberately backed into the mob. This was the sort of amusing game that young white giants could play with Africans with impunity. Africans always jumped out of the way when you drove a car at them. Usually they thought it quite a joke.

But this mob was not in the mood for games or jokes. It was an angry mob and in the car was the target of its anger. In an instant, before the policeman could hold them back, they had surrounded the car and were battering at its doors. They were pushing each other to get at the man inside and the sheer weight of the mob lifted the car up and turned it over on its side. There was a rattle of loose tools falling to one side in the boot, and then old man van Dyk's hoarse croak which was quickly muffled.

THE OLD MAN LAY AGAINST the door which was now flat on the street. The mob was shouting and a man picked up a stone and hurled it at the windscreen and there was a crash of splintering glass.

A little trickle of liquid began to run from under the side of the car down the camber of the street. It did not run far, for as it flowed it evaporated. The young man had managed to wrench open the door above him and was pushing with his head. He still had the cigarette in his mouth and its smoke was getting into his eyes. His hands were busy with the door and he spat out the cigarette and it fell into the street and rolled in jerks down the camber towards the little pool of petrol.

There was a flash, more vivid than lightning, then a shattering roar; then the tearing crackle of hungry flames, and above all, the old man's screams.

OVER THE CITY, THE air that had been so still and heavy started to stir. First it was only a light breeze then, within seconds, it was a wind that picked up all the dirty scraps of paper and rubbish in the gutters and tossed them over the roof tops. It picked up the dust that had lain in the streets through the long dry winter months and, with the sand it had collected from the bare veld outside the city of Durban, it swept along in a solid cloud.

The dust filled men's eyes and ears and throats. They had been running from the mob that had broken loose outside the court house, a mob angry and out for blood. They were running into the wind and they turned their backs to avoid its stinging lashes. When they turned

they could see through the cloud before them a great crimson glow, like a mighty setting sun.

It was old man van Dyk's funeral pyre. All the myriad particles of dust were catching its flaming light in their microscopic prisms and over the street there hung a red pall, the colour of blood.

Then there was another flash of lightning and a crack of thunder. A great hissing noise came borne on the wind as the trees lining the streets bowed before it. The rain swept down and across the city of Durban in a great wave and soon the gutters, were roaring, cascading rivers. In a few minutes there was nothing left of the angry mob as men fled anywhere for shelter. The street outside the courthouse, and all who were in it,

had been saved from the mob by the wind and the rain.

The storm spent itself quickly. In the steaming quiet after it had ended there was nothing to be seen but a twisted heap of junk that had once been a motor-car and under it, and protruding horrible from it, a sodden mass of pulp that had once been two human beings.

An African policeman stood patiently on the kerbside, drenched to the skin, water dripping from the rim of his helmet like a fountain. When everybody had run for shelter, he had been sent out into the deluge by his superiors to guard the remains of old man van Dyk until the storm had passed, as if there were some real danger that someone might come along and want to take them away. ●

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**E**NRAGED by a SABC broadcast called Africa Survey a friend wrote somewhat hotly to the Director of Programmes protesting at both its tendentiousness and its errors of English. He received a reply from the official concerned, Mr. C. D. Fuchs, who, after dealing courteously with his language complaints, reacted to my friend's political criticisms in a paragraph so revealing as to deserve a wider public than my friend alone:

I do not wish to react to the less dignified and unsubstantiated aspects of your letter except to say that I cannot escape the conclusion that the S.A.B.C. will satisfy you in respect of non-tentiousness only if it were to become completely left-wing, if it were to become the mouthpiece of all the systematized left-wing criticism, all the clichés, all the thundering phrase-making which comes rolling in on us from all over the world. We are trying our best not to become victims of what Ionesco calls rhinocerotis.

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**I**F you have a white South African friend whom you believe may be persuaded of the futility of white supremacist policies and even encouraged to play a part in their defeat, do not send him *The New African*. Unless, that is, he is more tough-minded than a recent recipient, a rising industrialist, who told his would-be converter that he spent a sleepless night after reading it. Send him instead Laurence Gandar's *The Nation that Lost its Way*, issued in June by South African Associated Newspapers. This 24-page collection of six articles recently published in the *Rand Daily Mail*, which Mr. Gandar edits, purports to "analyse the current political situation

in South Africa." This Mr. Gandar does not do, happily, since such an analysis would go the way of those from, as Mr. Gandar puts it, the "handful of liberal men and women who speak out with courage and realism (but who listens?)"

There is certainly no lack of courage and realism in Mr. Gandar's writing, but the reason why his view is transmissible to groping whites is that it is addressed to them and is written in language they understand. He speaks to white South Africa, not to his multiracial readership: "When we should be utterly involved in the politics of change we are busy with the eroding and debilitating politics of resistance to change." This is also the reason why *The Nation that Lost its Way* is only a partial analysis of South African politics in mid-1963. It does not seek to analyse the turmoil in the liberation movement, and among the unrecruited yet oppressed millions. This would be too much for Mr. Gandar's prospective convert to the new "national purpose" toward which white South Africa must find its way. Is there a hope that people like the sleepless industrialist will respond to Mr. Gandar's call? For he commends to them "a common ideal rising above the immediate self-interest of the various groups . . . a national course capable of harnessing the energy of all (our) peoples . . . in the larger unity of a common humanity."

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**I**F only social anthropology would try and discover why the white problem is so acute in South Africa, why "the great amorphous body of (white) public opinion . . . continues to swallow the mind-deadening dope peddled to them by

the two main political parties", as Laurence Gandar puts it. Works on the social systems of our disintegrating tribes no doubt have their value, as do studies of sex-life in slum 'locations'. But it is time that the AmaBrit and AmaBoer were given the same treatment. The social anthropologists would suffer nothing like the snags undergone by researchers among Africans. Apart from the risk of bias in interviewers, there is the impossibility of obeying the rigid laws of procedure set down in modern sociology, caused in South Africa by "both the lack of adequate census material and the nature of the political situation." So found Mr. E. A. Brett, author of the latest Institute of Race Relations Fact Paper *African Attitudes* subtitled "a study of the social, racial and political attitudes of some middle-class Africans." Here is jam-packed fact about the views of 150 educated, middle-class people. It contains shocks and distress as well as inspiration for the reader who accepts Mr. Brett's ably and bravely formulated "conclusions" despite the unscientific elements that South Africa imposed on his investigation. Mr. Gandar's castigation of the white middle-class for their utter involvement with "resistance to change" is counterpoised in Mr. Brett's findings thus: "the group's rejection of the present (political) situation has led, in the majority of cases, to a very strong desire for change and in many cases to the acceptance of political methods that lie outside the law, including the possibility of violence and civil war." Mr. Brett pleads for "far more research in this field" in order to "alleviate grievances". I hope sociologists will infer the "this" nonracially.

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