

CONFIDENTIAL

Don Barnett and Henry had more than an hour with the Bishop last week. We had offered to tell him what Arthur had been thinking during his last days, when he had asked for a meeting with the Bishop (which the latter did not accept.)

After reporting some of Arthur's impressions in Lusaka and Maputo, we told of his guidance in the hospital to see the two men he did not want to meet. We told him of Arthur's challenge to Dad: "It is time to bury our pride, to sit down with those we don't agree with and listen to God." We said we were with Arthur when he had listened to the Bishop's broadcast which contained, Arthur felt, a direct threat to his life; and how, in spite of this, Arthur still wanted to "meet as brothers in Christ, and pray together."

We spoke of the gulf between the propaganda statements of the government, claiming all is going well, and the reports of suffering and cruelty at the hands of the "private armies", which reach us from the people themselves. Don asked why people who, only a year ago, regarded the Bishop as the one leader they could trust, now say, "He says one thing, thinks another and then does a third."

He reacted heavily: "I do not care what people say about me. Only my conscience matters." Then he started to tell us what he called "the truth about Arthur". He denied our assertion that he and Byron had turned down offers of positions in the other parties. His information was that they had gone to Maputo to join Robert; and had been rejected. For a long time, Arthur had been working to replace him by Chik, for tribal motives; many had urged him to get rid of Arthur as Treasurer-General for eighteen months before he did so.

He said, "We must get this clear. If we can't then I shall have to change my attitude to you and your people." Earlier he had said, "I am going to show you a side of my character you may not have seen." His reason for refusing Arthur's offer to meet him was that "the security people warned me not to." Don asked, "Were you afraid of him?" "Yes, to be honest, I was," he replied.

We tried hard to help him see the ideological issue: determined forces, dividing men who should work together; and the need to get God's mind on information given him by men.

On the "private armies", he insisted that there are no such things - only auxiliaries under central military control. "We are getting requests from many villages to send more of our auxiliaries to protect them from the guerillas." "In spite of what the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission says, two Catholic people recently came to thank me for all our auxiliaries were doing. I personally brief all the auxiliaries before sending them off, telling them to care for the people." All this contrasts sadly with the experiences of Steven, John Musekiwa and others.

His secretary several times tried to interrupt, saying that people were waiting. "Let them suffer," said the Bishop, and kept on talking.

It was a painful and passionate time, in which we said little once he started to talk. Naturally we fear that we have made a costly mistake; but feel that we obeyed our guidance and touched his conscience. What was terribly evident was the total lack of any human feeling - whether for Arthur or for the suffering of the villages. He seems ruthlessly, if sincerely, determined to win power, believing that this is the road to better things for all. His intransigence is part of the massive obstacle in the way of bringing the war to an end. He pooh-pooed our talk of Arthur's reconciling efforts.

Michak Ndisi, the senior Kenyan on the staff of the ILO, continues to come in every day, almost. He is a friend of Joshua's and his guidance is to become a friend of the Bishop's. His hope is to bring these two together. He told us how the young men who are attached to the different groups here are spending their nights in Geneva. Someone is giving them money. They have got uniform khaki suits and platform shoes and foregather in the bars. Their frustration and indulgence makes them impatient with their own leaders who are in turn upset by the pressure coming from their own young men.

The British continue to catch it from all sides for different reasons. The whites feel they are giving no lead, and wish they would get on with more substantial matters than the fixing of the dates. The blacks think they are giving no lead - and wish they would force Smith to behave. The truth is of course that our official attitude is one of getting not too involved. Ivor Richard otherwise seems to be a good Chairman.

Last week Robin Byatt, the senior British Civil Servant here under Sir Anthony Duff, had breakfast with Arthur, Max and Henry Kachidza. They found him "a good man who listens". We greatly hope that Ralph will make headway with more of the British this week.

With best greetings from all of us,

As ever,

Henry

Dear Brenner, George, Bill, Peter & all.

This will bump you on our latest impressions.

1. Richard has just announced that all except Nkomo. Mugabe have agreed on elections ~~present~~ + to do. We rejoice - it indicates that the British have refused to be bluffed by N-M; and that the Bishop has stood firm. P.K. & Co. also seem to have been

Helpful.

Grateful for such word as reaches us of Bill J & Conrad & all. Long for more!

Cheers from us all,

Henry