

# Why I Support ZANU

*by Shakespeare Makoni*

THE formation on August 8, 1963, of the Zimbabwe African National Union under dedicated dynamic leadership symbolised an end as well as a beginning, pro-pounded struggle as well as victory. African politics today needs a leader who injects hope and confidence into his followers, a leader prepared to face and overcome with his people the hazards that the struggle to independence demands.

At his first public meeting in Highfield, the Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole declared: *'People must have the power to make or depose their leaders. The good leader is prepared to suffer with his people, to fight with his people and to heed the voice of his followers'*. Asked how he would liberate this country he replied: *'The situation will dictate the methods. Those who want the deadlock to be resolved by peaceful means must create an atmosphere in which the issues will be solved amicably'*.

## The Problems

The Highfield meeting, attended by about 300—mostly young men between 17 and 30—was the most lively I have ever witnessed. The boys publicly defied Nkomo's intimidators, clapped and shouted anti-Nkomo slogans, and gave thundering support to Mr. Sithole.

The heartening thing about these 'rebels' was the fact that they were fully aware of the problems we face before independence. They knew that Mr. Sithole faces two formid-

able opponents, the Government and the Nkomoites: one just hopes that Nkomoites will not fight ZANU instead of opposing the Government. Many of Mr. Sithole's followers want him to move faster than Nkomo. ZANU is more likely to pursue a policy of co-existing with Nkomo; they are less concerned with him than with their determination to win freedom for Zimbabwe.

## 'Cowardly Leader'

Nkomo was a compromised leader locally and national disaster abroad. He has associated with the formation of the Federation: he deserted his followers when they most needed him: he waged his battle against the settler regime at the UN instead of within the country. He accepted the 15 African seats in the 1961 Constitution although he had promised nothing less than one man one vote. He has travelled widely and lived luxuriously but achieved nothing for his followers.

*He has never been to prison.* The three parties he has led have all been banned, strangely enough, in his absence. He earns the unenviable title of being the most cowardly 'nationalist leader' on the African continent.

Nkomo has been kept in leadership for the sake of unity. When ZAPU was banned it was thought it would continue underground, but Nkomo had never worked out the machinery to ensure this. We now sacrifice his leadership because we

do not believe in uniting to do nothing. He has publicly declared that he has reached his wits' end.

*The old fellow has lost the confidence of nearly all African independent states, all university students here and abroad, all banned ZAPU external officers, the majority of the African intelligentsia, and the more effective former executive members.* The ZANU leaders have declared their determination to make GAOLS THEIR HOTELS, NOT LUXURY HOTELS THEIR GAOLS.

## Time to Change

Nkomo's ironical fate compares with that of Sir Edgar Whitehead, banned ZAPU but was in turn banned from political power by the white electorate. Now Nkomo has been banned by his more effective followers. Just as the RF election slogan was 'It's time for a change—a change for the better' so have we adopted the same slogan against the decadence of Nkomoism.

The Europeans will mourn Nkomo's fall. They like him because his leadership has been ineffective. We would not be surprised if he should receive funds from local capitalists. It must have been cold comfort to him to be declared life president at his 'hand-picked' conference at Cold Comfort Farm when he has no machinery properly organised to carry out his plans. If he were an effective underground worker no split would ever have occurred.

What about European membership of ZANU? Mr. Sithole might perhaps accept some but the odds are that most of his followers suspect whites in nationalist parties. Thus European members are unlikely to have any influential say and will be completely kept out of the inside activities of the party.

I make no apologies for being an ardent supporter of ZANU and its leadership and for being an uncompromising opponent of indolent Nkomoism. I trust Mr. Sithole will become the Nkrumah of the dawn-Zimbabwe Republic.