

ESSAY REVIEW

ANGLICANS AND ROMAN CATHOLICS
BEFORE AND AFTER INDEPENDENCE

WRITING CHURCH HISTORY has its own peculiar problems. No church exists simply in terms of its institutions because a church is not its institutions but the body of believers which pay allegiance to it. Belief in itself is difficult to quantify, for of its very nature it is internalized in the believer and, although sacramental churches can obtain some sense of how widespread belief is through people's participation in liturgical practices, statistics of baptisms, confirmations and partakings of the Eucharist make for dull history.

The historiography of missionary churches is even more difficult to handle. The central question that must be asked of any successful missionary enterprise is why it succeeded at all. Missionary success, after all, means that a people who had religion appropriate to their whole cultural experience chose to repudiate it and put in its place a set of alien beliefs which, more often than not, designated their former practices as works of the devil. One way of considering the success of missions is to invoke the power of the Spirit which draws people to its light through its own mysterious processes. Such an account of conversions may be satisfying in pious magazines, but history does not deal in mysteries. If missionary history is to satisfy, it must offer an account which pays some attention to crises in the culture of a people, the problems the old religion had in accommodating those crises, and the way in which the teaching and practices of the new church have a peculiar and engaging relevance.

W. E. Arnold has chosen another, and to me the least satisfactory, way of writing a history of the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe.¹ He deals with the men and women, bishops, priests and lay-people who have over the years worked for the Anglican Church in this country. Sometimes his account degenerates into a list of appointments and resignations, accompanied by a brief biographical sketch of where people had come from and where they were going. What they thought they were doing when they were here is hardly addressed, except for the Bishops who seem to have been pretty certain about their mission. What Zimbabweans thought of their comings and goings and why some chose to join the church seem not to be issues in Arnold's text. This is a pity, because a history of the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe should be very interesting. As a church it had a unique relationship with the settlers and the authorities of Southern Rhodesia. Anglicanism was not an established church here, although Bishop Skelton recalls having difficulty in persuading the Roman Catholic Bishop of Bulawayo of this fact.² The latter's confusion is understandable because the Anglican Church always behaved as though it had a privileged position. It was the church of the various governors and would emerge on state occasions to give its blessing to

¹ W. E. Arnold, *Here to Stay: The Story of the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe* (Lewes, Sussex, The Book Guild, 1985), 159 pp., price not reported.

² K. Skelton, *Bishop in Smith's Rhodesia: Notes from a Turbulent Octave, 1962-1970* (Gweru, Mambo Press, Mambo Occasional Papers — Missio-Pastoral Series 12, 1985), 152 pp., Z\$6.90, 6.

whatever was going on. The reason for this was, of course, that the majority of Whites would have been nominally Anglican, and at those various moments in settler history when the essential Britishness of Rhodesia was being bandied about to show that we were not South Africans, the monarchy's spiritual authority could be located in the Anglican Church as its secular authority was located in the Governor and Assembly.

Arnold's book contains maddeningly few statistics, but Skelton mentions in passing that in the diocese of Matabeleland there were equal numbers of Black and White communicants. In Mashonaland the proportions are something like ten Blacks to one White, although one would not guess this from Arnold's account. He mentions the great missionary centres of St Augustine's, St Faith's, Bonda and Daramombe, but their success in terms of baptisms is not explored. In fact, if I had not had access to figures giving the racial make-up of the Mashonaland Anglican Church, Arnold would have left me with the impression that in this respect Mashonaland Anglicanism resembled that of Matabeleland. This in itself is interesting as the Anglican Church is the only mainstream church in Zimbabwe of which it would not be automatically assumed that membership is overwhelmingly Black. But both the status of the Anglican Church and the impression of it as the settlers' church created its own problems. As the established church in England and the most important settler church, Anglicanism was peculiarly vulnerable when African nationalism challenged the morality of White supremacy and segregation, when it challenged the ideologies on which settler colonialism was based. The question then arose whether the principal institutions of the Anglican Church were so inscribed with supremacist ideology that even when Anglican leaders opposed the Rhodesia Front, they spoke not for their Black Anglican members but out of a liberal discourse within settler ideology.

The tension between the different demands and expectations of Black and White Anglicans can be seen from the beginning of the church's work in this country. Arnold cites Marshall Hole's impression of Canon Balfour in the early 1890s: 'He was torn between the duty imposed on him of Christianising the natives and that of ministering to the spiritual needs of the pioneers with whom he had arrived and among whom he made his friends'. Of Balfour's excursions from Salisbury on foot, Marshall Hole wonders 'what possible impression could one man make upon hundreds of thousands of savages scattered over an area the size of France and steeped in witchcraft and the grossest form of paganism?'³ That quotation is a useful one because it sums up how differently work among Blacks and Whites could be perceived. 'Among whom he had made his friends' is a revealing quotation when it is set alongside savages, witchcraft and gross paganism. Marshall Hole may not be the most representative voice of the Anglican laity but his sentiments about the task of the missionary were expressed in a slightly more euphemistic way at the first Synod of the Church in 1903. A resolution on 'the native question' speaks of neither individuals nor races being born with equal faculties or opportunities. It notes that the native is unambitious, and attributes this to polygamy and the absence of wants. The Church sees itself working hand in hand with the State so that 'irresponsible nomads may be turned into citizens and kraals into homes'.⁴ Throughout, it emphasizes the discipline of

³ Quoted in Arnold, *Here to Stay*, 13.

⁴ Quoted in *ibid.*, 21.

work. The one dissenting voice in the passing of the resolution was Arthur Shearly Cripps, already a maverick among his brethren. Similar quotations could be found from the official statements of all the churches at this period, but coming from the Anglican Church it shows how far Anglicanism confirmed the routine contempt with which the British South Africa Company's officials were accustomed to write about the cultures of the people whose land they had occupied. The Anglican Church was in a position to be the conscience of officialdom and it was not for many years that it made any attempt to accept that responsibility.

Perhaps the strongest indication of how far the Anglican Church almost unconsciously identified with the settlers can be seen in the pattern of residence of expatriate clergy. Arnold notes that in the early days of the settlement and after 1960 the great majority of clergy stayed here only four or five years. The proportion of priests staying ten or twenty or more years slowly increased over the years until the uncertainties of the 1960s led most to serve no more than the duration of their initial contracts.⁵ Arnold puts a brave face on this: it meant that there was always a body of clergy in England or South Africa who knew the needs of the Church in Rhodesia and were willing to help from outside. A less charitable view of these movements is that the Anglican clergy followed the ordinary patterns of immigration and emigration of the settlers themselves. Most of these stayed a few years and then moved on to South Africa or back to England when the various economic and political crises of the colony's history increased the insecurity of Whites. As with the settlers a few stayed to become permanent residents. This could be interpreted to mean that the Anglican Church was staffed with people who, whatever their motives for coming here in the first place, soon came to share the anxieties of other Whites about the country's future. If this is indeed what happened, they must have been alienated from Black Anglicans whose interpretations of crises and hopes for the future were necessarily very different from those of the settlers.

In fact, as Arnold's account shows, these divisions in the Anglican Church did not become a public issue until African nationalism began to produce an alternative agenda for Rhodesia in the early 1960s. The bannings of successive nationalist parties and the split between ZANU and ZAPU which turned the townships into places of violence coincided with the appointment in 1962 of Kenneth Skelton as Bishop of Matabeleland. He shows a very different face of Anglicanism from that with which Whites and Blacks had been familiar over the previous seventy years. But the Diocese of Mashonaland in the late 1960s and 1970s, and after Bishop Skelton's departure the Diocese of Matabeleland as well, tried to steer some middle course between the expectations of Whites and Blacks.

How far this would have been different if Alderson had not been killed in a car accident and Skelton had remained is difficult to tell from Arnold's account. At the time of UDI Alderson wrote of utterly repudiating it as an illegal act and although he lacked Skelton's combative style he seems to have been in sympathy with the Christian principles Skelton was trying to proclaim as normative in the situation. Bishop Burrough on the other hand saw the role of the Bishop of Mashonaland as that of reconciler. Reconciliation would have been an admirable

⁵ *Ibid.*, 33.

counsel even ten years before his appointment but by the time he set out to reconcile the racial divisions in his diocese, the violence of the State was being countered by a nationalism which had resorted to arms and was willing to use a 'just war' theology to justify its choice of action. Burrough often spoke and wrote as if both state and nationalists acted from equally morally defensible positions which even at the time seemed difficult to understand. With the 1969 Constitution the Rhodesia Front regime made race the explicit taxonomy within which the political life of the country was to be maintained, and from that time onwards the battle lines were drawn between most of the church leaders and the regime. Burrough joined with other heads of denominations in opposing the new Constitution but in the decade which followed his emphasis on reconciliation in a situation where Whites were defending the indefensible and Blacks were aspiring to what was justly theirs made it often seem that he was trimming his sails to the winds of settler ideology. He approved of the 1971 constitutional proposals, a blunder the enormity of which was shown the following year when the Pearce Commission demonstrated — if demonstration were required — that these were totally unacceptable to the vast majority of the people. Perhaps the nadir of his episcopate came when he preached in St Paul's Cathedral condemning the use of force. His assistant, Bishop Muridagomo, publicly criticized what he had said on that occasion and Burrough had to confront the fact that the racial divisions in the country and his own diocese extended to the leadership of the Church.

Arnold reports these differences of opinion but does not analyse their causes. One reason was that Burrough responded to reports of the war in the local media which were expressions of a sophisticated propaganda exercise. Nationalist guerrillas were invariably represented as murderous thugs who had no support from the people. Atrocities by the security forces were never mentioned and the impression of a peaceful land turned into a shambles by nationalist savagery was conveyed by press and radio day after day. This was the way White Rhodesians saw the war and it is hardly surprising that most of them should have regarded any claim that there was a defensible morality in the nationalists' methods and motives as wickedly perverse. But that Burrough should have given the impression of sharing the limited understanding of his fellow Whites of how the war was being conducted is difficult even now to explain and defend, except that he shared with White members of his flock an understanding of the events leading up to the war and of how the war was being conducted.

Arnold takes us through to the years after Independence. With the appointment of Bishop Hatendi to Mashonaland after Burrough's retirement and the creation of the new diocese of Lundi and Manicaland the Anglican Church at last allowed its structures to reflect the fact that the majority of Anglicans in Zimbabwe are Black and rural. By acknowledging this the Anglican Church can justly proclaim the optimism of Arnold's title: *Here to Stay*.

If we merely had Arnold's book to look at the history of Anglicanism before Independence it would make for sad reading. Fortunately, Kenneth Skelton's account of his eight years as Bishop of Matabeleland was published in the same year and provides an impression of a very different sort of witness within Anglicanism from that which the Church of Arnold's account seems to offer. In Skelton's book we see a man who was aware that Black and White Anglicans in his diocese not only had very different perspectives on the political life of

Rhodesia but that these were formed from positions whose morality it was possible to judge. Skelton did judge and had no hesitation in showing that the position of the Whites was based on injustice. Naturally enough the Whites did not like to have their way of life characterized as immoral and, with Lamont and Todd, Skelton soon became one of the Whites most loathed by his fellow settlers. In fact his book opens with an anonymous woman threatening to shoot him and Skelton was soon being pilloried in press and Parliament. Skelton's credibility with the Whites would probably not have been greatly enhanced had he been here longer. Their many years in the country helped neither Lamont nor Todd, and Sir Robert Tredgold, who was born in the country and was one of the few great men White Rhodesia produced, was frequently spoken of as just another crank hopelessly out of touch with the realities of the situation.

But perhaps Skelton was seen by the Whites to be so egregiously offensive because he was a new arrival and because he showed scant respect for the unspoken convention that no newcomer should comment on the political attitudes and institutions of Rhodesia until he could do so from a White Rhodesian perspective. The effectiveness of his criticisms were also mitigated by the antagonism to Britain which reached one of its several peaks in the early 1960s as a consequence of Britain's withdrawal from much of Africa and her refusal to grant independence to Rhodesia. For whatever else Skelton was he was English. When one reads his book now, one sees this Englishness not as the disadvantage which the Whites would have regarded it in the 1960s but as a source of the insights into and the frequent outrage he felt at the situation around him. He knew what the Whites could have been and what they had become. A chapter called 'The White Dilemma' shows an awareness of the Whites' insecurities and fears, strengths and weaknesses which is as perceptive as many longer pieces written about the White community: Rhodesian nationalists who merely reproduced middle-class British life-styles in Africa; intensely ignorant about the people in the land they called their own; hard working and above all conformist to the mediocrity of opinion and debate which Smith and his party had made normative. On several occasions Skelton expresses his astonishment at the unwillingness of liberal Whites, appalled at the sorry drift of public life under the Rhodesia Front, to make their opposition public. As an Englishman he is very conscious of how quickly British immigrants who in Britain would have been at the bottom of the social pile assumed the privileges which their race guaranteed them. Like Lessing before him, Skelton senses a communal neurosis among the Whites which he attributes to insecurity and guilt. He quotes Guy Clutton-Brock's brilliant epigram: 'Our Africans are the happiest people in the world and we the most joyless' — and the angry edginess he finds all around him in the early 1960s would certainly confirm the justness of the last part of that remark.

Skelton is less sure of himself when he writes of Blacks. He calls them 'Mr Smith's Other Citizens' and he writes with compassion and perception of the insults and contempt to which they were routinely subjected by Whites. This, though, is a comment on the Whites rather than on the Blacks themselves. More importantly he understands how the economic structures of the country and the racial divisions of the land impoverished most of its people. As far as his own church is concerned he soon becomes aware of how the discriminatory practices of the society at large were reflected in discrimination in clergy salaries and

housing. How far he addressed himself to these issues within his own diocese is hard to tell from the book. He was referred to by the Anglican archbishop in Lusaka as the conscience of the Church in Rhodesia, and he may well have aimed at being a national figure rather than a good housekeeper within his own diocese. This concern with the moral health of the whole country is perhaps the reason why he seems weak when he writes about Blacks as people rather than a political group. They are wise, polite, joyful, acute, patient, although — gesturing towards science — he notes their inability 'to react energetically' which he attributes to bilharzia, drought and poverty.⁶ The Africans' thirst for education is introduced by an anecdote of a youth wading into a stream, in which Skelton's wife and daughter were paddling, in order to establish the correct position of a decimal point.⁷ There is, in short, a tendency when Skelton writes of Blacks to write of them in White liberal clichés which sit awkwardly with his considered statements of their political disabilities and their political potential. It is difficult to avoid the word 'quaint' when one considers his depiction of Blacks.

The key to Skelton's short episcopate lies in a sermon he preached shortly after Smith arranged to replace Winston Field as Prime Minister and when an illegal declaration of independence seemed probable. The following Sunday Skelton made persecution the subject of his sermon. Of course he was perfectly right in identifying this as the likely fate of a church which opposed the Rhodesia Front, which had so strong a sense of the rightness of its cause that it designated anyone who disagreed with it as evil. It would be unfair to say that Skelton invited persecution. He spoke as he saw fit, identifying the glaring immoralities of Rhodesian life. But it would also not be unjust to record the feeling which one has as one reads this book of the relish with which he took on the role of warrior for Christ, alone and embattled in his fight for Christian values in his church and in the country at large.

It is the sense of the solitariness of his witness that his book provides that one must take issue with because it gives a misleading picture of his actual role in the Rhodesia of the 1960s. Certainly he shows that there were other Christians who were speaking out. For example, he quotes the Roman Catholic Bishops' *Peace through Justice*, which was issued before he came to the country, and which spoke of 'laws of men which are in contradiction to the natural law'.⁸ After his sermon on persecution he joins other church leaders in Salisbury who issue a joint statement emphasizing the need for the consent of the people before any constitutional change is made. There are numerous references to the Christian Council and the Heads of Denominations organization. But all this evidence that other church leaders were profoundly concerned at what was happening is underplayed: Skelton is at the centre of the stage. Of the Salisbury statement he writes of his satisfaction 'that the minds of others had been moving in the same direction [as his own]'.⁹ He adds that he was thankful that he could find himself in line with his colleagues. Often this sort of egotism results in ludicrous asides, as when he notes that 'the rich and fortunate are privileged to provide for the poor and unfortunate', and adds in parentheses that Pope Paul agrees with him.¹⁰

Other examples can be provided. Skelton quotes from his Synod charge of

⁶ Skelton, *Bishop in Smith's Rhodesia*, 35.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 100.

May 1964 in which he returned to the theme of persecution in a morally sick nation, and then adds that Lamont said much the same thing in 1968 when he spoke of the physical violence in the country being insignificant beside the moral violence 'daily offered to so many who simply because of race or colour must be content to remain second-class citizens'.¹¹ Lamont had been pursuing this theme throughout the 1960s and the implication that Lamont was echoing Skelton is simply inaccurate. In justice to Skelton it must be noted that when in 1970 all the churches opposed the residential provisions of the Land Tenure Bill, he gives credit to Father Randolph for an analysis of what implications the provisions of the Bill would have for any church which worked in the so-called Tribal Trust Lands. He mentions the Roman Catholic bishops' threat to close all their institutions rather than register as Voluntary Organizations, which was how the Bill designated the churches. But even amidst these generous concessions that Christian consciences other than his own were being disturbed by Rhodesia Front legislation, he makes his very good sermon preached in Umtali for a meeting of the Christian Council an important contribution to the debate, mentions the hostile press it received and comforts himself that 'on this occasion I was massively supported' a month later by other church leaders.¹²

In the event, Skelton had little impact on White members of his flock, although, since much of what he said after UDI was censored, this is not perhaps very surprising. Skelton mentions the frustrations of censoring but draws some consolation from the fact that the Roman Catholic bishops had no more success in getting their message across to Whites than he had. In 1961 the Catholic bishops' Pastoral spoke of the 'shameful comment on us all . . . that the Catholics of Rhodesia do not seem to have heard the message', and there was little indication that their message was heard during the next twenty years until Independence forced a change in White consciousness. As Skelton remarks, the voice of Rome may make a greater impression than that of Canterbury or Geneva but it 'is not much more heeded by those who do not want to hear'.¹³ The implication of this seems to be that if Whites did not pay much attention to the Roman Catholic bishops, it is no wonder that Skelton, embattled and alone, worked to so small a result.

At one point in his book Skelton assures the reader who may have had doubts about it that because of the devotion and generosity of many of the Anglican laity in Matabeleland, he was not 'Bishop of some insignificant little show'.¹⁴ One wonders whether he protests too much and whether the high profile he strove for while he was in Rhodesia was an attempt to give significance to an appointment which the Bishopric of Matabeleland did not possess. In the 1960s I was grateful for the witness of Kenneth Skelton; I am sorry now that the self-importance of so much of this book does little justice to the united stand of so many Christian leaders to the growing evil of Rhodesia Front policies during the 1960s.

Skelton at one point makes a joke — his book at times shows humour in its author but this is not one of the better ones — that the Anglican Church is the only 'free church' in the country which is not beholden to some outside authority; it is indigenous and self-governing. As we have seen from Arnold's history, until

¹¹ Quoted in *ibid.*, 51.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 98.

¹² *Ibid.*, 109.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 88.

Independence the Anglican Church was indigenous in theory only. No bishop who retired remained in the country and Paget retired to live in South Africa. Skelton himself resigned from Matabeleland to become an Assistant Bishop of Durham. (He attributed his resignation to family reasons which was perhaps a coded way of saying that he feared the scandal that deportation or even imprisonment could bring to the Church.) But Skelton was quite correct in emphasizing that each diocese of the Anglican Church is self-governing, and although each bishop is linked fraternally to other bishops of the Anglican communion none has any authority over how another diocese conducts its affairs. This may in part explain why Skelton's opinions come across as personal and subjective. He is not expressing or attempting to express a *magisterium* or even an agreed point of view with his fellow bishop in Mashonaland. There is little sense in his book of a listening bishop whose teaching voice is informed by the opinion of the People of God within and outside his diocese. Although the labours of the Anglican laity are referred to, it is hard to tell how such people affected his own ideas; when he cites sources from outside Rhodesia, they are used to confirm rather than provoke his own ideas.

In this respect his book contrasts strongly with Father Randolph's *Dawn in Zimbabwe*.¹⁵ This is based on the quinquennial reports for the years 1977 to 1981 made to Rome by the various Roman Catholic bishops in Zimbabwe and which they are required to make by Canon Law. Such a report covers all aspects of the situation in a particular diocese and in the case of these reports covers the last three years of the liberation war and the first two years of Independence. It is ironic that the church with an authoritarian tradition, as Skelton characterizes Roman Catholicism, should on the evidence of this book be more willing to listen than to proclaim. Randolph shows a church exploring with curiosity and charity the complex realities of the situation it is working in, suspending judgement on policies which its traditional teaching condemned out of hand and admitting its own failure to witness during the long years of Southern Rhodesia. The country of Randolph's book is not the country of Skelton's in which there are Whites and their dominant ideology and Blacks and their dispossession and the lonely but prophetic voice of Kenneth Skelton. Admittedly, Randolph is writing about a five-year period which demanded more complex responses from the Christian leaders than the eight years whose tensions and antagonisms Skelton recalls. In the 1960s Blacks could still be made objects of Christian compassion; in the late 1970s and early 1980s Blacks were in control of their own destiny. But, even granted the very different political forces which were operating during those two periods, Randolph's book has a documentary richness and variety which Skelton's book lacks, and the complex situation he portrays grows out of that variety.

For example, he writes about the late 1970s as a period when

Every emotion and prejudice was unleashed into action and confrontation. For the Church to be silent, was to acquiesce in an unjust situation, or to be irrelevant; to speak out, was to be accused of 'mixing politics with religion', or to be acclaimed as a social reformer;

¹⁵ R. H. Randolph, *Dawn in Zimbabwe: The Catholic Church in the New Order: A Report on the Activities of the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe for Five Years 1977-1981* (Gweru, Mambo Press, Mambo Occasional Papers — Missio-Pastoral Series 13, 1985), vii, 235 pp., Z\$7.50.

to approach either side, was to be accused of collaboration with the enemy by the other side; to be confronted as a missionary in the field with what the government forces called 'terrorists' and what the majority of the people called 'freedom-fighters', required an immediate decision to be made on the spot in charity and in justice, which led to a dilemma: refuse the 'freedom-fighter' and be shot; or assist the 'terrorist' and be hanged. ... The Black wanted liberation; the White wanted the continued security of his familiar privileged status quo. The Black wanted indigenisation, 'incarnation', inculturation of the Gospel into an African setting; the White hankered after the sophistication of western civilization, now less Christian and more than ever neo-pagan.

In addition to this, as Randolph points out, the Roman Catholic Church had to deal with these various crises at the very time when it was rediscovering its own sense of itself amidst all the tensions and disturbances of the new post-Vatican II order.¹⁶

As these quotations suggest, Randolph does not flinch from registering the brutality of the war on both sides. Skelton's Blacks are quaint; Randolph shows them as much more humanly varied. Among the guerrillas some were militantly anti-religion, some were friendly to the missions and some who called themselves guerrillas were simply bandits 'owing allegiance to no one but themselves'.¹⁷ At the end of the war twenty-five Roman Catholic religious and lay-workers had been killed, eighteen deported, fifteen secondary schools and three hospitals closed. It was a terrible toll, although in comparison to the numbers of Blacks killed in the war, which Randolph put as high as 80,000, it is astonishing that more missionaries did not die. Although the ZANU(PF) leadership always insisted that it was not a racial war they were engaged in — a profession whose truth has been amply demonstrated since Independence — the temptation to kill Whites who were entirely unprotected in communal lands must have sometimes been very strong. As Randolph observes, the Church had for a very long time supported the political status quo, and although from 1961 onwards the pastorals of the Roman Catholic Bishops made such a charge no longer tenable, there were seventy years of collaboration to account for. In fact, an appreciation of the Church's later stand was made by President Mugabe himself when he spoke in 1980 of the significant role played in the liberation war by the Roman Catholic Church: 'Not that they fought with arms as we did, but they opposed racialism, and refused to be made an agent of the Government implementing racial policies. ... it helped to internationalize our grievances and helped to mobilize international support for us'.¹⁸

Why did the Roman Catholic Church emerge so well at the end of the war? One reason must be precisely its international dimension to which President Mugabe refers. Like an Anglican bishop, a Roman Catholic bishop is the supreme authority in the diocese, but always behind the latter's teaching is the Vatican. At its worst the Vatican is obsessed with centralization, conformity and the perpetuation of its own power; at its best it provides the channels by which an individual bishop can learn from and contribute to the teaching of the Church in every part of the world. The Anglican Church is also an international church, but with its traditions of multiple discourses, Anglican teaching can invite disagree-

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 26-7.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁸ Quoted in *ibid.*, 57.

ment as readily as it can assent. Skelton was probably more intelligent than any of the Roman Catholic bishops in this country during the 1960s, but his exhortation could easily be dismissed as the eccentric comments of an individual. When the Roman Catholic bishops issued their joint pastorals they made it clear that they were judging Rhodesia by the standards of a universal and international Christian morality. White Rhodesia had a deep mistrust of internationalism, but the internationalism of the bishops came from men who were intimately involved in the Rhodesian situation. What they wrote could not be dismissed as the opinions of people ignorant of the details of the local situation.

It is this awareness of peculiar details of the local situation which makes Randolph's book so interesting; such details can be provided only by ecclesiastical authorities accustomed to collating the evidence of people in widely different situations and approaching similar problems from widely different points of view. Judgements are, of course, offered but the emphasis of the book and presumably of the bishops' reports is on the evidence itself: people and government are being allowed a voice. The examples of one chapter, 'The Enigma of Zimbabwean Socialism', can be used to demonstrate Randolph's and the bishops' methods. It consists almost entirely of quotations, with only occasional comments by Randolph. He notes, for example, that the term 'communalism' was being used in preference to communism in speeches made just after Independence and was being opposed to a selfish individualism which no Christian could defend. He quotes from the ZANU(PF) Manifesto of 1980 which recognizes historical, social and other constraints which will make the transformation of Zimbabwe into a socialist society a gradual process. Far from opposing the social teachings of the Catholic Church, President Mugabe in an interview in 1978 remarked that 'the basis of organizing society which brings people to work together to avoid rampant individualism seems to be in harmony at least with the Catholic Church.'¹⁹ Throughout this chapter numerous quotations from Party documents and politicians' speeches emphasize ZANU(PF)'s belief that people must be allowed complete freedom to practise their religion. Shortly after Independence President Mugabe spoke of Marxism-Leninism being one of several influences on the party's socialist ideology: there is also 'a streak of morality that runs through our principles, and this morality is a synthesis of our tradition and our Christian practices here'.²⁰ On another occasion President Mugabe defended the collective ownership of the country's resources by referring to Genesis where man is given dominion over the earth. The use of biblical texts to justify policy is seen again when Dr Chidzero takes the injunction, 'Love thy neighbour as thyself', and sees in it 'all the principles of social life, all the objectives of society, and all the necessity for action.' Put into practice even a pagan can become an 'Alter Christus'.²¹ Vice-President Muzenda, on the other hand, observes that the Papal Encyclicals *Rerum Novarum*, *Mater et Magistra* and *Populorum Progressio* are all influenced by Marx in their diagnoses of society.²² Perhaps the most frequent theme in the quotations is the impossibility of reconciling the Church's social teaching with 'the avaricious nature of capitalism'. A secondary theme in the chapter is that ZANU(PF) envisages an active partnership between Church and State.

¹⁹ Quoted in *ibid.*, 72.

²¹ Quoted in *ibid.*, 76.

²⁰ Quoted in *ibid.*, 73.

²² Cited in *ibid.*, 79.

Randolph is interested in more than Church-State relations, although, given the period covered by the book, these are given a prominence unusual in *ad limina* reports. He gives, for example, a detailed account of events at the seminary whose sorry history of strikes, silences and closures is a scandal in the local church. He is also interesting on the resurgence of traditional religions before and after Independence, which added another problem to Christian communities in rural areas. Skelton noted how little attention White Roman Catholics paid to their bishops, and Randolph confirms this: 'It is certain that in some cases Churches were emptied of the European element of their congregation, because of the "politics" of the Parish clergy and the relationship with him of his prejudiced parishoners [sic]'.²³ Above all, Randolph gives an account of a church going about its business of teaching the Word, adjusting its institutions to meet the new circumstances of war and independence, and noting the successes and failures in its mission.

In fairness to Skelton's elegant text it must be added that Randolph's book is something of a baggy monster. Perhaps because he is collating six separate reports which made use of the same information, there are several quotations which keep on recurring. As with Arnold's book there is no index, although that omission is perhaps more serious in *Here to Stay* which is a history. All the information one wants about the Roman Catholic Church during the five-year period it deals with is there. It is a pity that the publishers did not do a more thorough job of editing, thus making it more accessible.

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²³ *Ibid.*, 157.

