

South West Africans: Aliens In Own Land

New York (RNS)—“Because of the color of our skin we are strangers in our own household and aliens in our own land.”

These words were spoken during a Eucharistic service at the chapel of the Episcopal Church Center here by an Anglican layman of South West Africa now in exile.

He is Jacob Kuhangwa, secretary general of the South West Africa People's Organization, a pro-independence group with headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. While it is not officially banned by the South African government, which administers the territory, the organization is regarded as a source of “treasonous” ideas

by the regime. Most of its leaders are either exiled or in prison.

The Eucharist at the Episcopal Church Center, one of the regular noon services held daily for staff at the Church headquarters and for others in the midtown area, offered special intentions for 35 South West Africa men now on trial in Pretoria, South Africa, and for their families. Most of them are Christians.

These men are charged under the Terrorism Act of the Republic of South Africa, a law passed June 21 of this year. One section states that the provisions of the law “shall be deemed to have come into operation on the 27th day of June,

1962,” five years before the actual law came into existence. Acts committed in the five years before the law was passed are punishable, according to the statute, thus covering the date of the acts charged to the 35 men.

South West Africa, a territory about the size of California, Oregon and Washington combined, was a German colony before World War I. In 1920 the territory was mandated by the League of Nations to the Union of South Africa, which was then a part of the British Empire.

In October, 1966, the General Assembly of the United Nations voted to end South Africa's mandate over the territory, looking toward independence in June 1968.

However, South Africa has refused to recognize the U.N. action and has continued to incorporate the territory into the South African republic. An 8 to 7 vote of the World Court in June 1966 was cited by South Africa as legal authority for its action.

The territory has 70,000 whites and some 450,000 black Africans. Nevertheless, South Africa has extended its apartheid law to the area and has

refused to allow black Africans from the territory to appear before the United Nations.

The South West Africans currently on trial in Pretoria are charged under the Terrorism Act. Eight of the men were arrested following clashes with South African police in August

1966. Later that same year the government arrested executive members of the South West Africa People's Organization and took them to Pretoria where they were held incommunicado.

Thus the statute under which they are charged did not exist until more than a year after their arrest.

In addition to the men now on trial, there are 44 men considered by the South African government as co-conspirators who would also be on trial had they not fled the country. Mr. Kuhangwa is one of these.

A number of Church groups outside South Africa have allocated funds for the defense of the prisoners. The Lutheran World Federation, the United Presbyterian Church, the Episcopal Church and the Methodist Church are among them.

Mr. Kuhangwa told worshipers at the service that by praying for the imprisoned men “you have become spokesmen for people oppressed, who have been silenced by oppression. Let your demonstration of goodwill and brotherhood create bonds of Christian love.”

He added: “The wounds that are inflicted on these people are inflicted on you.”

Racism Rising In England?

Oxford, England—(NC)—The prior of Blackfriars in Oxford, a former missionary in South Africa, has warned Britons against a rising racism in the country.

Father Guy Braithwaite, O.P., said that one of the most frightening experiences in South Africa was the way that many white Catholics spoke contemptuously of Africans and the Colored (of mixed blood).

“Coming back to England, I regret to say I am beginning to hear the same phrases,” he said. “Within the last two weeks, I have heard priests expressing points of view which are absolutely typical of the hardening racial prejudice and they are using them without a second thought.”

“It just didn't occur to them that it was totally un-Christian. I am afraid of this,” he said.

In recent years, England has had a growing number of Negro immigrants from the British West Indies and from Africa, and dark-skinned natives of India and Pakistan.

Around The World

Negotiations Reported on Cardinal Mindszenty

Budapest—(RNS)—Catholic sources here report that new negotiations are underway between the Vatican and the Hungarian government which may lead to the departure from Hungary of Josef Cardinal Mindszenty during 1968.

Cardinal Mindszenty, the Roman Catholic Primate of Hungary, has been living in asylum at the American embassy here since the end of the Hungarian Revolt in 1956. He has reportedly refused repeated offers by the Hungarian government which would allow him to leave the country, and Western diplomatic circles here generally consider it unlikely that he will change the terms he has previously required for his departure.

Communists Hail Pope's Plea for Peace

Vatican City—(RNS)—The Soviet Radio and all other Communist radio stations, except in mainland China, broadcast support for Pope Paul's plea that New Year's Day be observed as a special Day of Peace.

In its broadcast, the Soviet Radio noted that Pope Paul's latest appeal was “one of many” which the pontiff has made in behalf of world peace, and this “should and would be appreciated the world over.”

The Communist station also gave wide publicity to a reply from Patriarch Alexei of Moscow, head of the Russian Orthodox Church, to Pope Paul's plea for a Day of Peace observance. Patriarch Alexei said prayers for peace would be said on New Year's Day in all Russian Orthodox churches, “as indeed they are said every morning and evening.”

Spanish Approve Religious Freedom Law

Madrid—(RNS)—Spain's Minister of Justice, Antonio Maria de Oriol Urguio said here that the Religious Freedom Law passed by the Cortes (Parliament) last June “is good in itself” and “has been generally accepted.”

The provision of the law most criticized by Protestants has been its requirement that non-Catholic churches must register with the Ministry of Justice, unlike the Roman Catholic Church. Mr. Oriol said that some Protestant groups have applied for registration under the law while others who had not yet done so nevertheless remained in contact with the Ministry.

French Catholics Approve Vernacular

Paris—(RNS)—According to a survey director by the Roman Catholic hierarchy of France, 80 per cent of French Catholics approve the introduction of the vernacular at Mass.

After a tabulation of returns on 30,000 questionnaires, a spokesman for the bishops reported, less than 2 per cent of Catholics replying were found opposed to the change from Latin to French at Mass. Among the clergy, only 1 per cent believed that the change recommended by the Second Vatican Council, was turning people away from the churches.

Rough Winter Ahead For Arabs

Jerusalem—(RNS)—With food and cash gone, the Arab middle class of Jerusalem faces an encroaching poverty that may soon reduce this large group to helpless dependency on the already strained resources of charitable agencies.

The collapse of the tourist trade is the key to this condition. Taxi drivers sit idle and plush hotels remain empty week after week. Small shop keepers too are feeling the squeeze. In addition to this, with the new government in charge, those working for the civil service find themselves without a job. Postal workers and policemen have been among those hardest hit.

English Parish Goes Missioning

Huddersfield, England—(NC)—St. Brigid's parish has three priests, a \$58,000 teen club with a full-time director, a church that needs expansion or rebuilding, 2,500 members and, in short, most of the advantages and problems of a good-sized suburban parish in the United States.

“The grace of renewal cannot flourish in communities unless each of them extends the range of its charity to the ends of the earth.”

So it's doing the only sensible thing—it's sending all three of its priests, three of its teen club members and an airplane to help the Canadian frontier diocese of Prince George, B.C.

The parish figures it can get along well enough for the next three years without building a new church or finding some new project on which to spend its money at home.

The first priest to go will be Father Edward Walsh, St. Brigid's pastor. He will take with him one of the teen club members—and an airplane donated by an anonymous parishioner.

At the end of a year they will leave Prince George—and the plane—and their place will be taken by another teenager and another priest, either Father John Roach or Father Henry Clarke, the assistants at St. Brigid's.

The last team will go in 1970. The effort started when Fa-

ther Walsh, an Irish native, first read the Vatican Council's decree on mission activity. “The words that did it were these,” he said.

“We have just 19 priests for as many Catholics in Huddersfield,” he said. “But we only have to cover 35 square miles.” The idea was put before Bishop William Gordon Wheeler of Leeds, and before the St. Brigid's parish council. Both approved.

So did Bishop Fergus O'Grady of Prince George, who has recruited volunteer helpers from as far away as New Zealand to build schools, teach in them, and otherwise help the Church in one of North America's last true frontiers.

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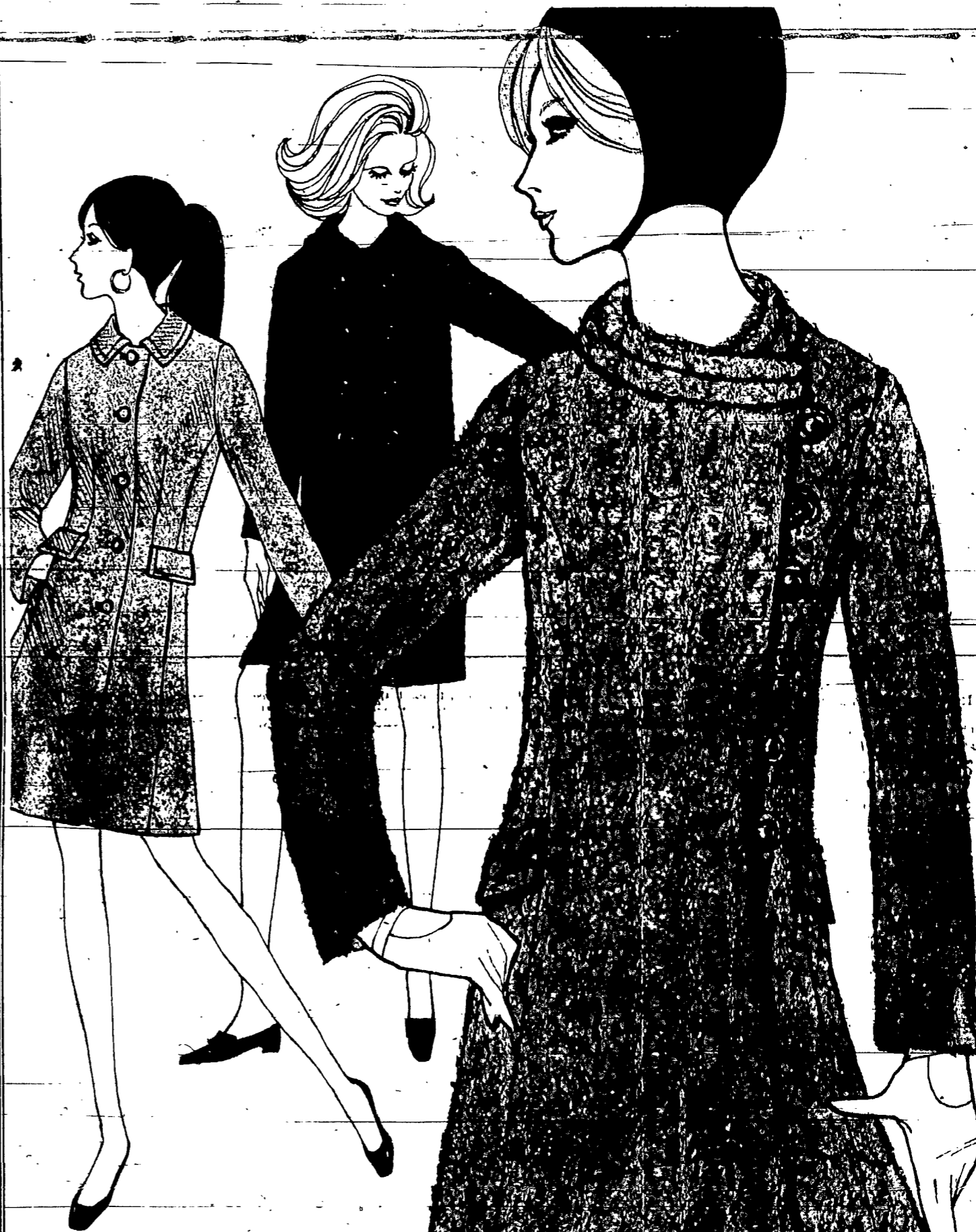
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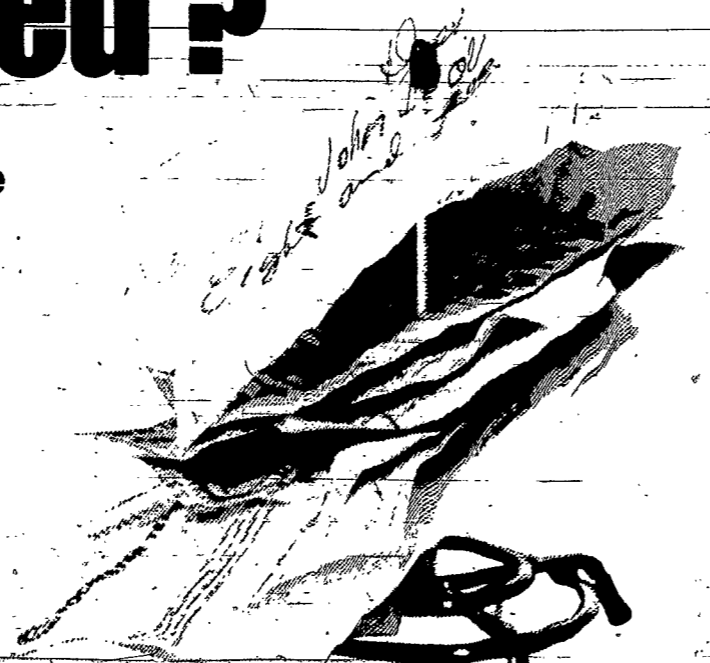
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