

# Pendennis

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2140 HALF-CASTES.

**I**F the Pan-Africanist leader ROBERT MANGALISO ("The Wonderful") SOBUKWE is now sent into detention on Robben Island off Cape Town, the first victim of the South African Government's latest affront to liberty, African history will be repeating itself. For this is where the British sent to life imprisonment the great Xhosa leader MAKANA, who led the Fifth Kafir War of 1819. (His army has a song about its aims: "to chase the white man from the earth and drive them to the sea.")

Makana organised a revolt of prisoners on Robben Island. They got away in a boat that capsized. Everyone arrived safely ashore on the mainland—except Makana, who disappeared; and for a long time the Xhosas believed there would be a Second Coming of Makana.

## Own version

Sobukwe's parents were devout Methodists and he had a good education at one of the best secondary schools in the Cape. Nothing of the revolutionary about him then. His turning-point came at Fort Hare University, where he became fascinated by African (and especially Xhosa) history. He began a serious course of African Studies, taught his own version of history and got into trouble for it. Eventually he became a lecturer at Witwatersrand University in Johannesburg.

He was grave, scholarly, brilliantly gifted; and he had little time for the young black Johannesburg politicians who lived a wild gay life in the townships and at cocktail parties in the white suburbs. Sobukwe preferred to identify himself with the common people, commuted into Johannesburg with the workers, listening and talking

to them with a patience and humility other university-trained African leaders sometimes lacked.

He was arrested for his part in the anti-pass demonstrations that ended in Sharpeville, 1960. He believed it was time Africans took the initiative in deliberate acts of defiance. He had left the African National Congress for the Pan-Africanists, largely because he felt that the A.N.C.—with its alliances—was too much under white influence. But this did not necessarily mean that he and the Pan-Africanists were against all contacts with the whites. They believed each group should wage its own struggle. From the recent decision allowing PATRICK DUNCAN to join P.A.C. it seems that experience has led them to change their tactics.

One indication that relations between the P.A.C. and the A.N.C. are not too cool was the exchange of Notes between Sobukwe and the A.N.C.'s charismatic leader, NELSON MANDELA.