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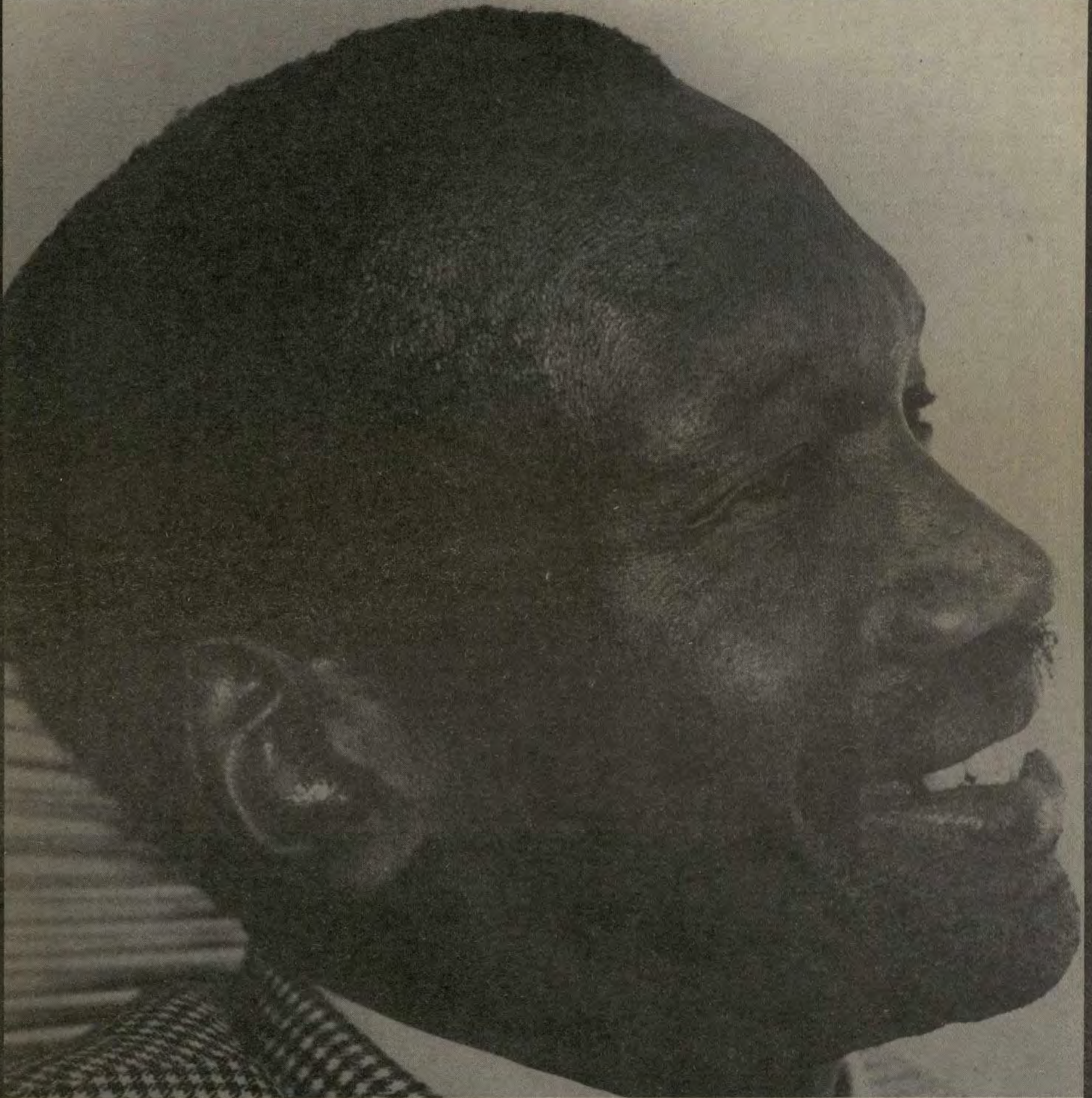
THE VOICE

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A NATION MOURNS

"THE DEATH OF Mr Robert Sobukwe has made South Africa poorer", said the Rev Abel Hendricks, president of the Methodist Church of South Africa who was at Mr Sobukwe's death bed shortly before he died.

South Africa had failed to make use of "god-given leadership", said Mr Hendricks in an exclusive interview with THE VOICE.

A personal friend of the Sobukwes', Mr Hendricks made a special trip from Cape Town to Kimberley to administer the holy communion to Mr Sobukwe in hospital. Recalling his last moments with Mr Sobukwe, Rev Hendricks said he had marvelled at the kind of courage he'd noticed in the seriously

ill Methodist lay preacher who had "endured both physical and mental pain".

"I admired his Christian integrity which he bore until the end of his life", said Mr Hendricks. Mr Sobukwe stood for nothing but the truth and would not compromise on that score, he said. He had a deep concern for peaceful change which would have transformed the face of South Africa.

The Methodist Church had sent a special message of condolence to the Sobukwe family said Mr Hendricks.

In the meantime, several other leading clergymen have added their

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● THE SMILE is unmistakable. It was always present even during turbulent times. Even when he knew that he was seriously ill, Mr Sobukwe the founder-president of PAC always had a smile for everyone and seldom showed depression.

'A NATIONAL TRAGEDY'

(From page 1)

voices to those who are mourning Mr Sobukwe's untimely death. Said the Rev Sam Buti, President of the South African Council of Churches. "His death is a national tragedy". He added that his church had been planning a day of prayer for Mr Sobukwe before he died.

Bishop Manas Buthelezi of the Lutheran Church expressed disappointment that Mr Sobukwe had died a silenced man, because of his banning order. Another top churchman, Dean of Johannesburg, the Very Rev Simeon Nkoane, commented that in a normal society Mr Sobukwe would have been a great national leader.

Mr B A Dlamini who knew Mr Sobukwe since the early '50's described him as a devoted family man and "a nonviolent person".

Said Mr Dlamini: "He was a prince and intellectual giant among men. He was very fond of Xhosa poetry and Shakespeare.

How was he apart from being a public figure?

"He loved his wife and children and deserved their respect and love. His wife, Veronica, called him 'Ba-

ba' and he, in turn, called her 'Mama'.

"During his time as a teacher, Sobukwe was very helpful to people trying to complete their degrees. He was a simple, humble, and unselfish man. He was also devoted to the cause of his people.

"Whenever he could, he would stretch out his hand to those who needed help. He would get out of his way to assist and believed in thrashing out differences and would not take a man for granted," said Mr Dlamini.

About the Mr Sobukwe image?

"He was always prepared to hear the other side of the story. There is no doubt, he was highly idolised by his university students.

"South Africa has lost one of its most talented sons who could have been fruitfully used in the interests of all South Africa. He was no tribalist nor racist," Mr Dlamini added.

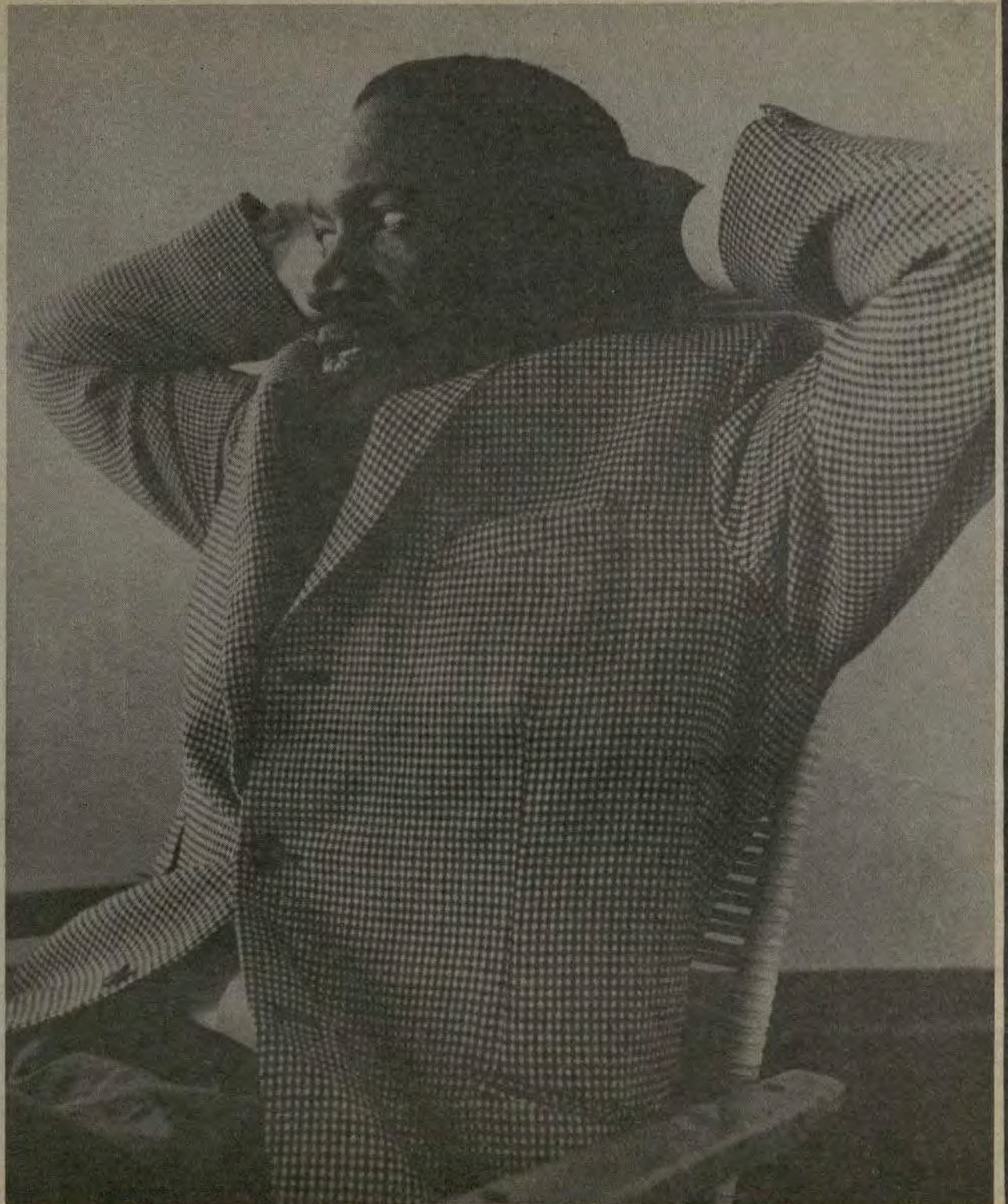
FOOTNOTE:

Although a post mortem has not yet been performed, it seems certain that Mr Sobukwe died from lung cancer, and must therefore have known for a long time that his end was near. His cheerful nature, however, concealed his inner emotions until the very end.





● IT WAS a moment of triumph and happiness for Mrs Veronica Sobukwe when the powers that be finally decided to release her husband, Mr Robert Sobukwe from Robben Island where he was confined after he had served a three years' sentence. Here her colleagues congratulate her after news had reached them that her husband was free at last.



● THE PROF in a reflective mood. The entire Black nation has been affected by the death of a man who was regarded as a Father of the Nation. Messages of condolence have been pouring in at his adopted home in Kimberley from all over the world.

● THE PROF, Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe and his wife, Veronica. They were posing for photographs at their Kimberley home where Mr Sobukwe was banished to, after being released from Robben Island.

Robert Sobukwe Papers

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