## Tshekedi Khama

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Author/Creator</strong></th>
<th>Benson, Mary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Publisher</strong></td>
<td>Faber and Faber (London)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date</strong></td>
<td>1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resource type</strong></td>
<td>Books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subject</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coverage (spatial)</strong></td>
<td>Botswana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source</strong></td>
<td>Northwestern University Libraries, Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies, 968.1 T882Yb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td>This is a biography of Tshekedi Khama who was a Regent of the Bamangwato of Bechuanaland and was in conflict with British colonial administrators. His most serious crisis with the British came over his marriage to a white woman, Ms. Ruth Williams.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Format extent</strong></td>
<td>331 pages</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

TSHEKEDI KHAMA

Tshekedi K-hama

TSHEKEDI KHAMA

by

MARY

BENSON

FABER AND FABER

24 Russell Square

London

First published in mcmlx

by Faber and Faber Limited

24 Russell Square, London, W.C. I

Printed in Great Britain

by Ebenezer Baylis and Son, Limited

Worcester, and London

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557 41

To

ELLA

Faith in their hands shall snap in two, And the unicorn evils run them through;

Split all ends up they shan't crack; And death shall have no dominion.

-DYLAN THOMAS

Twenty-Five Poems 1936

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book owes much to a manuscript written by the late Douglas Buchanan, Q.C.

I am most grateful to his family and to his friend, Donald Molteno, Q.C., for entrusting it to me and hope that they feel I have done it justice in the rewriting and adaptation.

I am also grateful to the Rev. J. H. L. Burns and Peter Sebina, for placing at my disposal the papers from which they intended to write their own accounts. The book as written is my sole responsibility, but among others whom I wish to thank for their help, either in giving me information or criticism, are: Margaret Roberts,
Dr. Ellen Hellmann, Dr. S. M. Molema and Colin Legum; Sir Charles Arden-Clarke; the Hon. David Astor and Bridget Astor; Chief Bathoen II and his son, Seepapitso Gaseitsiwe; John Buchanan; Mr. Blackbeard; Mrs. Clarke; Robert Clarke; W. A. W. Clark; Guy Clutton-Brock; the Rt. Hon. Clement Davies, M.P.; Michael Foot; Halcro Ferguson; the Rt. Hon. Patrick Gordon Walker, M.P.; the Rev. A. F. Griffiths and the London Missionary Society; the Rev. A. J. Haile; Mrs. A. W. Hoernlé; Arnold Johnston; Chief S'retse and Ruth Khama; Chief Rasebolai Kgamane; Chief I-losea Kutako; Peter Kuenstler; Freda Levson; G. Mathiba; G. Marobela; W. T. Mansell; Mr. and Mrs. Minchin; Dr. R. N lackay; Professor Z. K. Matthews; Miss Margery Perham; Sir Ronald Prain and the Rhodesian Selection Trust; the Rev. K. Raditladi; L. Raditladi; Obeditse Ratshosa; Phyllis Randone; Christopher Rieu; Tom Reay; Anthony Sillery; the Rev. and Mrs. A. Seager; the Rev. A. Sandilands; B'onyerile Khama; Rev. Michael Scott; Anthony Sampson; Tsoegang Sebina; Molwa Sekgoma; Manyaphiri Sekgoma; N11. Selepen; Mrs. Shaw; Jane Symonds; A. Lee Tattersall; Mr. and Mrs. Woodford; Clifford Hopkinson; William l'Olmer; R. A. R. Bent; officials of the High Commissioner's Office and of the Bechuanaland Protectorate Administration; Arthur Gaitskell; E. L. Mallalieu, Q.C.; and Mrs. V. Norman.

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Chiefs at end of book

PRONUNCIATION
Tshekedi-Tse-kay-di Khama-the Kh is pronounced with a slight guttural sound

SOME PROPER NAMES
Ngwato, BaNgwato, Bamangwato, Bamanwato-the tribe (BaNgwato means the
people of Ngwato, the chief after whom the tribe was called)
Mongwato-one member of the tribe Tswana, BaTswana, Bechuana-the tribe
Motswana, Mochuana-one member of the tribe BaSotho, Basuto
.Matabele, Ndebele
Matsheng, Machen, Macheng, Matseng---early chief of the Ngwato
Tyrant or 'A Man Under Authority?'

Shekedi Khama was at the peak of his eventful life when it was decided that this book should be written. A man in his prime is rarely a subject for a biography, but he had reached the end of a long series of controversies, some spectacular, some tedious, and had just achieved substantial advances for the Bamangwato that presaged a new era, so that the story seemed timely.

The idea originated with Tshekedi's legal adviser and friend, Douglas Buchanan, Q.C., who, during a slow and fatal illness, wrote a record of their cases in the hope that 'it might help, in however small a degree, to bring about a better understanding between Europeans and Africans, to the benefit of each and the world as a whole'. Buchanan regarded it as essentially a preliminary work and hoped that Tshekedi himself would one day write fully about his country and his life. But Buchanan died in 1954 before it was completed. In March 1958 his friend, I),,nald Molteno, Q.C., knowing that I had been associated with Tshekedi since 1951, on behalf of the Buchanan family, -ked me to adapt and complete the work. Tshekedi gave the !lizgestion his blessing in the following terms: 'I of course have 1:*, objection at all to your doing something about the MSS. .hich I learn dear old Douglas wrote about me. I hope it will ! possible for you to confer
with me before it is published. I suggest this in order to see that it is factual. Both you and Douglas are my very great friends and you may be tempted to disaggree!

Buchanan, in fact, had not intended Tshekedi to see the draft before it was published because he feared that the Chief would disapprove of certain laudatory passages. I was prepared risk this and arranged with Tshekedi that I should take the draft out to him in Bechuanaland, where we could work on it together. Early in May 1959 I was ready. The problem 2

The Kihamas was how to fit my visit in between Tshekedi’s innumerable activities-his visits to Mafeking, Lobatsi and Francistown, to Pretoria, Cape Town or Salisbury, to London or Strasbourg, to Bechuanaland Advisory Council Meetings, to his lands or cattle posts in the remote bush, or simply his daily duties in the Bamangwato Administration in Serowe.

I was in London awaiting his invitation when, on May 22, I received a cable: TSHEKEDI SERIOUSLY ILL. ARRIVING LONDON WITH ELLA FOR TREATMENT. On Wednesday, June 10, 1959, Tshekedi Khama died. The B.B.C. carried the following item in its news bulletin: 'Tshekedi Khama, the former Regent of the Bamangwato tribe in Bechuanaland and uncle of Seretse Khama, died in a London hospital early today. He was 54. He had flown to Britain over a fortnight ago for treatment for a kidney complaint. On Monday, Seretse Khama-the former Paramount Chief of the tribe-flew to London to see him. Tshekedi was Regent during his nephew's minority and went into voluntary exile in 1949-along with more than forty headmen of the tribe-as a protest against Seretse's marriage to a white woman, Ruth Williams, a London typist. The British Government then banished him for three years. He returned home as a private citizen in 1952. Tshekedi was an able and progressive administrator, whose name first became widely known when he ordered the flogging of a European in 1933. Similar reports that dwelt largely on the more sensational aspects of exile, flogging, and on his nephew's marriage-the stuff of headlines-appeared in the popular London dailies. A different picture was presented by The Times' which spoke of Tshekedi's immense drive and vigour, of the quality of happy living that he brought to everything in which he engaged, and paid tribute to his constructive work in the, Bamangwato tribe and his remarkable mastery of the British political system and scene. 'More than once,' it said, 'he was involved in great controversies, but he was without bitterness. He believed that white and black had to live together and his advice was always given on the side of moderation, negotiation' and faith in the future.'


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Tyrant or 'A Man Under Authority'?
dominant, coldly aloof, at times puritanical' who ruled 'with an iron fist', who 'flogged wrongdoers and burned their homes or 
4.:ilcd them.'
Margery Perham in The Observer described him as 'a man of authority' while the Rev. Michael Scott suggested he might more appropriately be called 'a man under authority'-he had much in common with the Roman centurion who ruled over many people but was himself under the authority of a great Imperial power, and yet finally gave his allegiance to a still higher Power.
What was the truth about Tshekedi Khama? Perhaps the answer lay in a remark made by one of his closest friends in Bechuanaland, who said 'with conviction' that Tshekedi is 'the man the world has not known, not even Whitehall itself in Lon don'. There are some officials from Whitehall, however, who with equal conviction believe that they did know him. One described Tshekedi as 'the perennially Angry Young Man of the 1Wnmangwato'. Tshekedi as a man, he considered, had been .rossly overrated, and it was preposterous that the backward, insignificant Bamangwato should have been the centre of more publicity over the years than any other tribe in Africa. When
I hrned that I was going ahead with the book, he asked what
, cirth there was to write about. I suggested that he should r,-ml the book and see. June 14, 1959.

CHAPTER 2
The Pagan and His Son
Tshekedi Khama's forebears would have been amongst the tribes whose presence in Central Africa was recorded by Massoudi of Baghdad in 915. Arab traders sailed down the east coast and met tribesmen from the interior who bartered gold and ivory, panther skins and tortoise shells for the markets of India and China.1 This romantic picture gives way to one of mass migrations as the tribes began to move south. Among them were the Sotho people, who made the journey in three great waves between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries, and then divided into two tribes, the Basotho (Basuto) and Tswana (Bechuan) . The Tswana in turn broke into several tribes, of whom the Hurutshe were senior, and settled in what are now the Western Transvaal, Northern Cape and Bechuanaland. From them, c. 1770, the three main tribes of modern Bechuanaland are said to have formed when three brothers, Kwena, Ngwaketse and Ngwato, broke away from their father, Malopea-Masilo, to establish their independence with a number of followers.
The word 'Ngwato' means 'a poor piece of beef'. The story is that the boy was thus christened because at a time when his mother had been childless, Malopea-Masilo gave such a piece of beef to her to symbolize her barrenness: when a child was born she wanted to remind her husband of his coldness and neglect.2 For a while Ngwato remained attached to his eldest brother, Kwena, and he and his followers shared Kwena's totem, the crocodile. But again the desire to be independent asserted itself and Ngwato and Kwena quarrelled. There is a legend that in the ensuing fight Ngwato was forced to flee, Exhausted, he hid in a cluster of thorn bushes. Suddenly he
The Pagan and His Son

heard three of the enemy approaching. They were about to discover his hiding place when an animal burst from the bushes: thinking it was a lion they started back in fear. But it was only a small deer, a duiker or phuti (pronounced pooti), and they mocked each other for their alarm. As it had lain quietly in the shade until they disturbed it, they concluded that no man could be in the bushes, and moved off, still laughing. Ngwato rejoined his scattered forces, and amid great rejoicing told them of his miraculous escape. Soon he and his followers had achieved their independence and chose the phuti as their emblem. From then on the Bamangwato venerated the phuti: no one ever hunted it or ate it.

The Bamangwato became firmly established as a tribe under Mathiba I, c. 1780. Among his successors were Kgama I, one-eyed and cruel but generous; Kgari, brave, wise and merciful; and Kgama II, a bad ruler and a bachelor. During the latter's rule the tribe was scattered by the effects of the Mfecane, the 'crushing', which the Zulus inflicted on tribe after tribe, so that the Tlokwa and the Matabele fell upon the Tswana tribes. It was fortunate for the Bamangwato that c. 1834 Kgama II was succeeded, not by Macheng the rightful heir, but by Sekgoma I, who accepted many refugees from the Matabele raids into the tribe and united them around a capital at Shoshong which soon had a population of 15,000—the Ngwato clan being senior to a number of sub-clans. The people were cattle breeders and agriculturists and in those days their country—golden in the dry winters, green after the brief rainswarmed with giraffe, antelope, rhino and elephant. Land was plentiful and, for the first time under Sekgoma, the Bamangwato tribe could look forward to a settled existence.

Many other tribes were to suffer havoc from the impact of European culture, as brought by traders, colonizers, missionaries and settlers. The trickle of whites from the Cape became a stream as Dutch settlers trekked north. The Bamangwato soon realized the nature of these newcomers when they saw fellow Africans to the south and west succumbing and losing their lands. Their neighbours, the Bakwena, became directly involved in frays with the Dutch. Happily for the Bamangwato, their first contacts were confined to hunters and missionaries. D1.vid Livingstone, one of the first white men to visit Chief Sekgoma, in 1842, found the Chief generous and friendly, in

The Khamas

spite of the fact that he was, as another missionary ruefully recorded, 'a heathen of the heathen.' In appearance Sekgoma was tall, with a perfect figure, and was wall-eyed so that he had a roguish look. Capable, fearless, tough and unscrupulous, he yet could appeal to the man of another God: 'Change my i heart. Give me medicine to change it, for it is proud, proud and angry, angry always.' Livingstone held out the Bible but Sekgoma said, 'Nay, I wish to have it changed at once, for it is very proud and very uneasy, and continually angry with
someone.'2 And indeed he remained adamantly pagan and compared the word of
God ' to nothing except going out to the plain and meeting singlehanded all the
forces of the Ndebele'.3 Nevertheless, some years later when he was ousted by his
half-brother Macheng, and was living in exile with his family among the Bakwena,
he allowed Khama and Kgamane, his sons by his senior wife, Keamogetsi, to
attend a school run by three German Lutheran missionaries, and even invited mis-
sionaries to Shoshong when he was able to defeat Macheng and return there.

Khama had been born in the late 183os and had been brought up, a pagan child,
steeped in the ancient beliefs of his people. He grew into a striking young man,
over six feet tall, with aquiline features, thoughtful, but also athletic, a swift
runner (his name appropriately meant antelope), a lover of horses and a brave
hunter of lion. He responded eagerly to this new teaching and when he was in his
twenties was baptized into the Christian faith, together with his favourite brother,
Kgamane, and his wife, MmaBessie.4 Khama's was a conversion on the grand
scale. He renounced every pagan belief and practice, and set himself to follow
strictly the Word " of God.
The Lutherans were followed by another austere denomination, the
Congregational London Missionary Society, whose missionaries were often of
Scottish birth. Robert Moffat, his., son-in-law Livingstone, and John Mackenzie
(who came to live among the Bamangwato) raised their reputation high. Soon
Khamas and Kgamane were helping to teach in the mission

1 E. Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, p. 76.
2 G. Seaver, David Livingstone-His Life and Letters, p. 58.
4 Women are addressed as Mma, mother; men as Rra, father.

The Pagan and His Son

school and some of their half-brothers, sons of Sekgoma's eight subsidiary wives,
were beginning to take an interest. Sekgoma viewed with horror this apostasy, this
refusal of Khama and his friends to uphold time-honoured beliefs and to take part
in such important ceremonies as bogwera (initiation) and rain-making. European
customs and dress were even being adopted. Desperately Sekgoma ordered
Khama to take a second wife, relying on the profound respect any son owed a
father to induce obedience. Khama refused.

Sekgoma was humiliated and enraged. He had already killed two would-be
independent brothers, now he was determined to subdue Khama. From that time
on the story of the Bamangwato royal family reads like that of King Saul and
David. Sekgoma laid a series of foolish and infamous plots against his eldest son,
ranging from the use of witchcraft to attempted assassination. Six weeks of virtual
war of religion ensued, and Khama retired to the hills, merely defend ing himself
and his followers against (ie antagonists. It was typical of his behaviour that,
when his inen captured Sekgoma's horse, he reproved them and returned it to his
father with a message of apology.1 His passive resistance illiled his father who
well knew his courage and initiative in battle-only recently in 1863 Khama had
led the tribe in lally beating off the fierce Matabele. Mzilikazi, the Matabele t
hief, had remarked that the Bamangwato were mere dogs, hit the son of Sekgoma was a man.- Khama added more coals 1,) the fire of Sekgoma's wrath when he became a powerful 1. Iocate of temperance. One day during a lull in their conflict, ...v went together to buy a horse from a white trader who, in , hope of getting a better bargain, plied the Chief with hr.tiddv. Sekgoma became so drunk that Khama stopped the :.lialction, and ordered their servants to pick his father up and .him home. He determined to keep liquor from contami',,.ring the Bamangwato.3 He said: 'I dread the white man's ,r!.. more than the assegais of the Matabele.'

Ira two further unsuccessful attempts on Khama's life "", zoma enlisted the support of his half-brother, Macheng, :!1! lat.r of Kgamane. This was a dreadful blow to Khama to

1,1 Kgamane was as Jonathan to David. When Sekgoma
1. Lloyd, Three Great African Chiefs, p. 46.
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The Khamas
and Kgamane attacked his supporters, who numbered nearly half the tribe, and seized their women and cattle, it was the last straw. He lost patience and challenged his brother to fight; but Kgamane and Sekgoma fled.

This left the way clear for Khama to be installed as Chief, but he soon brought his father back, only taking on the chieftainship again when the old pagan died in 1875. For all his terrible passions, Chief Sekgoma could show a detached appreciation of his eldest son. Once he had said, 'We think like that,' as he drew a circle in the sand; 'But Khama thinks like that,' and he 1 drew a straight line.

As soon as Khama III was installed, he instituted reforms fundamental to his religious faith and his growing confidence in values of Western education and justice. Some of them could hardly have been more unpopular. He outlawed witchcraft, polygamy, the payment of bogadi (bride price), barbarous forms of corporal punishment, traditional destroying of one of twin children, and other such customs. Prohibition was sternly enforced, and the conditions of the Masarwa (Bushmen), who had long been in servitude to the Bamangwato, were improved.' A law to protect big game and certain big birds was another innovation. He established a new capital of some 30,000 people at Palapye. First his own household had to be sited, and the kgotla meeting ground and public cattle kraal. After that were built clusters of thatched huts and the kraals of various families, placed according to a customary plan. He built schools--one classroom in each of ten divisions-stores, a telegraph office, and the beginnings of a large church towards which he contributed generously.2 A contemporary described the scene:

'As soon as the move was satisfactorily accomplished,. Khama's energy, always directed towards the well-being of hig people, became astounding. Rising every morning at dawn he spent a large part of each day in the saddle . . . visiting th
workers in the fields, advising them as to their crops, arranging for the sale of their produce or for the purchase of ploughs and other implements. Later on he would be found sitting in his kgotla administering justice or interviewing traders and other white men on business. He was never idle, and his tall, wiry.

The Pagan and His Son

In the following years he organized villages in outlying districts as well so that people could be nearer their lands and cattle posts, and the capital consequently became smaller.

The drama in the Bamangwato royal family, and the tribe's progress under Khama, should be seen in a wider context. The scramble for Africa was on. For reasons of strategy, prestige and trade, European powers were competing with each other in dividing up the continent. All over Africa tribes were beginning to realize that the pale foreigners, with their fascinating tools, clothes and customs, and their menacing guns, were out to get their land and their labour. The Portuguese, the Belgians and the British were closing in on Bechuanaland to the north, the Dutch to the east and south-east, the British to the south, and the Germans to the west. The Tswana tribes' immediate contact was with the British and the Dutch and their experiences had a profound influence on their attitude then and subsequently. Though the aim might be the same, the methods differed considerably: the British (accompanied by missionaries and 'entrepreneurs) could be paternal and philanthropic; the Boers, intent on escaping from hated British rule (with its restrictions, its air of patronizing superiority, and its comparative liberalism towards natives) tended to be harsh and inflexible.

In 1856 the Boers had set up the South African Republic under Pretorius on the eastern border of Bechuanaland. By 1868 some of them had crossed the border into the Tati area where gold had been found. Pretorius announced its annexation. Macheng, who was chief of the Bamangwato at the time, at once appealed to the Governor of the Cape to rid his country of these miners. However, the Governor was not interested and they remained. Fortunately they were soon diverted by the Kimberley diamond rush. But many Boers, including a number of freebooters, continued to filter in, causing trouble and frequent skirmishes. Khama, together with Sechele I of the Lesotho, in 1876 therefore asked Queen Victoria for protection because the Boers' actions 'are cruel among us black people'.

The Khamas

Again there was no response. Much chagrined, the Rev. John Mackenzie, setting an example for a series of missionaries who helped the Bamangwato chiefs in one
controversy after another, campaigned unsuccessfully for a Protectorate while he was in London on furlough. Cecil Rhodes now entered the scene. In the Cape Parliament he was agitating for the annexation of Bechuanaland. He saw it as the corridor to the north, where his British South Africa Company was rapidly expanding over Mashonaland and even in Matabeleland. Representing as he did a commercial company and potential white settlers, Rhodes was seen as yet another threat by the Africans, who even then could discriminate between British settlers in Africa and the British Government and people at home. It is impossible to exaggerate the profundity of their fear that they might lose their lands.

For the moment the British Government did not respond to Rhodes’s manoeuvres. It took Bismarck’s intervention in 1883 in annexing South-West Africa, on Bechuanaland’s western border, to alarm them into action. They sent as Commissioner to British (southern) Bechuanaland in 1884 first the missionary, John Mackenzie, and then Rhodes himself, while a force under Sir Charles Warren helped to turn Boer freebooters out of the republics they had set up in south-eastern Bechuanaland. Her Majesty assumed power over the whole of Bechuanaland by Order-in-Council in 1885.1 (Ten years later the southern part was incorporated into the Cape Colony, Mafeking, situated in this part, nevertheless became the capital of the Protectorate.) The three senior Tswana Chiefs, Sechele, Khama, and Gaseitsiwe, of the Bakwena, Bamangwato and Bangwaketse tribes, were left to govern their own people. A further Order-in-Council in 1891 conferred limited powers on the British High Commissioner in the Cape and it soon became apparent that the British Government intended handing the Protectorate over to Rhodes’s British South Africa Company.

Events, however, were not moving fast enough for Rhodes. William Plomer, Rhodes, p. 31.

2 In 1890 the Foreign Jurisdiction Act was passed with far-reaching effects.

The Pagan and His Son against the threatened incorporation of their country by Kruger’s South African Republic; Moshesh, the Paramount Chief of Basutoland, had already succeeded in bringing himself and his people under the British Crown in 1868. So when, in 13895, it was openly suggested that the Protectorate be transferred to the British South Africa Company, Chiefs Khama, Sebele I of the Bakwena, and Bathoen I of the Bangwaketse, set sail for England.

Khama’s reputation had gone before him. Officers of the Royal Engineers serving in Bechuanaland had reported that his rule was more by kindness and generosity than by severity or fear. Traders and travellers described his courtesy and honesty. However, it was known that when his hospitality was abused, as had
happened in the case of Englishmen and Boers selling illicit liquor or trying to provoke inter-tribal disputes, his justice was implacable. Physically he remained upright and energetic. Ills thin, nervous face was full of intelligence and decision; his manner quiet and dignified, his smile charming, his personality winning. Among much praise can be found only a few discordant voices: one or two missionaries who felt he was autocratic; a French explorer who thought himself important and dictatorial towards white men; and Rhodes and his friends, who said that he bullied their Bechuana land Exploratio Company which so incensed Rhodes that he avoided him. Khama also angered Rhodes and the British South Africa Company by his appeal to the British Government. He said: 'We fear that they will fill our country with liquor shops, they have Bulawayo and some parts of Mashonaland and Matabeleland... and we fear also because we hear the words of the Makalaka and Matabele, who live under the Company, that we see that these people don't like their rulers.'4

Once in London, the Chiefs, accompanied by two missionaries the Rev. W. C. Willoughby and the Rev. Edwin Lloyd, is a busy and highly successful campaign. The measure of its success can be gauged by the account given by Rhodes's old, Marshall Hole, whose sarcasm revealed the Company's way: 'Khama, having no experience of the lengths to which he was carried away by this misdirected outburst of sympathy.'

During this time the Chiefs entered into direct negotiation with the Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain. Khama's appeal was simple and straightforward: 'There is no government we can trust as we can trust that of the great Queen. We pray you, therefore, not to throw us away as if we were troublesome children who would not listen to their mother's words.' Britain had brought upon herself the grave responsibility of having won the trust of the Africans. This trust, and the reverence with which those Chiefs, and many others, regarded Queen Victoria, were the origin of a mystique that is still potent. It was a marvellous occasion for the three Tswana Chiefs when they met the Queen - 'Mosadinyana', the little woman-in Windsor Castle. The Queen was evidently much taken with them and there was an exchange of gifts. The Chiefs expressed their lasting loyalty, and presented leopard skin karosses (rugs made of fine skins) to Her Majesty, who thanked them and gave them each a Bible engraved with the royal arms, and an Indian shawl for their womenfolk. In Khamas Bible the Queen had written, 'The secret of Khamas greatness.' Mr. Chamberlain had at first been unsympathetic. He had advised the Chiefs to come to terms with the British South Africa Company and had promptly gone on holiday. On his return they reported that their talks with the Company had
confirmed their worst fears. But the Queen's interest, and the public support that they had won through their resolution and their intelligent lobbying, had their effect. After they had been in England for two months, on November 7, satisfactory terms were reached with the British Government. Under the Queen's Protection they would rule their own people much as before. The Queen's Officer, who would receive orders through the Secretary of State and the High Commissioner in the Cape, would try cases involving death, and involving white men or natives of other tribes, and would hear appeals in serious cases. The Chiefs would give up a strip of land in the east for a railway; and boundaries for their respective countries would be defined. I M. Hole, The Passing of the Black Kings, pp. 278-9.

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In response particularly to Khama's urging, a ban was placed on the 'white man's strong drink'.

Their fears of the British South Africa Company finally evaporated with the fiasco of the Jameson Raid in 1895 when the Company was told that 'in view of recent occurrences in South Africa the matter must stand over for the present'. At last the British Government firmly established its protection over Bechuanaland. The new Protectorate was three times the size of Britain, but sparsely populated and poor. The Government appointed a Resident Commissioner, with headquarters in Mafeking, and Resident Magistrates for the eight tribal areas and the small pockets of white settlement on the Protectorate's borders. Tribal boundaries were agreed in 1899.

Meanwhile, new dramas had developed in the Bamangwato royal family. Polygamous marriages had resulted in dynastic disputes and family feuds in most tribes, and the Bamangwato were no exception. Sekgoma I, the last pagan chief, had had nine wives and of his eighteen children sixteen were boys. The sons of the first, second and the seventh huts were principally involved.

Khama's favourite brother, Kgaman, was moved by ambition. Soon after Khama had been installed as Chief, he had occasion to make Kgaman his deputy, while he himself led a force against raiding Matabele. Kgaman made a bid for the chieftainship, promising the people a return to heathen practices and beer drinking if they gave him their support. On returning, Khama promptly exiled him. In Sekgoma's day, the punishment for conspiracy against or opposition to the chief, would usually have been death. In a more enlightened era it had become banishment, often with confiscation of property. If this punishment were not meted out, it was felt that the rebellious red had been condoned, and the authority of the chief would be red.

In 1894, the Raditladi dispute occurred, sowing seeds of unrest that were to bear a fine crop for four decades, as will seen. Raditladi was the eldest son of the seventh house; wise and educated, but resentful of his junior position in the
and Mphoeng (pronounced -po-eng), his half-sister from the second house, quarrelled with Khama, and an administrative inquiry recommended that they be given land.

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and independence. In the end, Khama banished them, and they and their followers went to live in Rhodesia. They soon found their bonds of kinship could not withstand growing feelings of rivalry: Raditladi chafed against Mphoeng's seniority and finally broke away with some followers.

Elders of the tribe will say that small happenings can set off a major clash between members of the royal family. Sometimes the feuds are amicably and suddenly patched up, sometimes a triviality sets them off again. The people tend to remain loyal to the rightful chief. It is rash to seek any close parallel in other nations, but some conception of the feelings involved, and the* ramifications, may come from a glance at the age of the Tudors when 'Of all the political sentiments of the people, respect for the crown and the dynasty ranked first,' and when the machinations of rival members of the aristocracy were defeated by the deeply implanted political obedience of the average, citizen.

But the most serious of the family troubles during Khama's reign was his quarrel with his son, Sekgoma. Sekgoma I seemed to have had some intimation of this when he prophesied an unhappy life for his grandson. Sekgoma II was born in 1869 and was greatly loved and pampered by his mother, Mma. Bessie. He was educated at Lovedale but preferred riding and hunting to studies. The first occasion when his father was open displeased with him was when he chose a wife of whom Kham strongly disapproved. Much implicated in the ensuing event was Ratshosa, Khama's cousin, son-in-law (married to Khama's eldest child, Bessie), and secretary. Khama entrusted i

with duties and powers which Sekgoma regarded as rightfully

his. Ratshosa fostered the rising ill-feeling between fath and son,2 while Sekgoma's jealousy of Ratshosa was fostered by young men dissatisfied with

Khama's strict rule. Matte came to a head when Khama returned from his visit to England in 1895 and found that his son, while ruling ii hi

absence, had made new laws of which he disapproved, and ha ransacked his private papers, keeping some and publishin others to the people. A series of incidents led to disruption in tribe and to the exile of Sekgoma in 1900. Khama express his sorrow, and went so far as to deny him as his success


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Perhaps if MmaBessie had still been alive, she could have intervened successfully, but she had died shortly before. The Resident Commissioner at the time attributed blame
for the conflict in part to Ratshosa, largely to Sekgoma, but also to Khama, as he was autocratic, a man 'of hasty and violent temper', who 'would brook no opposition'. The official added that Khama had quarrelled with his father and usurped his throne; had driven out his brother Kgamane, and his halfbrothers Mphoeng and Raditladi, and had quarrelled with at least one missionary: an interpretation of events that many writers saw differently, though all would agree that Khama was intolerant of signs of independence.

Khama's treatment of Sekgoma, his refusal to allow him certain responsibilities as he matured, has been compared with Queen Victoria's treatment of Edward VII. No doubt he was incapable of seeing Sekgoma's point of view, so deeply rooted was the belief that children should submit themselves utterly to a parent's authority. This traditional and still prevalent attitude has been described by E. A. Ritter: 'The dominant rule was that of complete submission to parental authority; and that authority was drastically enforced. Unquestioning, unanswered obedience to the supreme power was demanded without distinction of all alike--of mothers, of ons (some of them already middle-aged men with families of 'their own), of every child. Every failure to obey was immedi. .Iclv followed by a penalty inflicted without mercy; while persistent insubordination might lead to the disgrace of expulsion, and open revolt might even terminate in death ... .longside, or out of this practice of complete submission was gradually evolved something more than mere respect-almost *1 ! oly awe... for those above one. And this again was mutual .I ld universal, the little boys revering the big boys; the bigger vs the men; and all, their parents.'1

Khama had given his final obedience to a higher authority, but were his patience and gentleness towards his father partly an expression of this submission? And was this not what he in turn was expecting from his son?

Bathoen II, present Chief of the Bangwaketse, when asked Chief Khama could feel so bitterly towards his own son as to exile him, explained: 'It is not a question of bitterness. It ' Shaka 2.ulu, Panther Books, p. o.

The K'hamas resembles what happened when the Duke of Windsor was exiled from Britain. It arises partly from the very closeness of the family and also from the son having done something so that he could not be respected.'

With Sekgoma exiled to a remote part of the country, the elders of the tribe began to worry about the succession. Khama had been married three times (his second wife, like his first, had died, the third he divorced), but of his seven children, six were daughters. He therefore agreed to marry again in 9oo. He chose Semane ('a honeycomb'), a well-educated young woman of twenty-one, whose family were good Christians. Most people respected and loved the young Queen but certain sections of the royal family disliked her because she was a commoner and because, having an outstanding character, she was likely to become influential. Their first child was born on September 2o, 19o. It was a girl and, some say, because of that she was christened Bonyerile -'the glory or strength is departed' or 'the end of all hope'.
Twin girls followed, who died in infancy. However, on September 17, 1905, Semane gave birth to another child, a boy. There were great rejoicings throughout the tribe. The baby was christened Tshekedi. One interpretation of the name (to which he himself subscribed) is 'the Clarifier' (when cattle come down to a pool to drink, they walk into it and muddy the water; when it clears again it is said to have been clarified or tshekile-ed). Another interpretation is 'adjudicator' or 'advocate', from tsheko, a court case or inquiry.

CHAPTER 3
The Clarifier

Tshekedi Khama was born in his father's lolwapa-homestead in the heart of Serowe, the new capital of the Bamangwato. Chief Khama had decided to abandon Palapye in 1902 when water became scarce. From there, across the wide undulations of bush, could be seen the Shwaneng-twin hills-of Serowe, forty miles to the west. At the foot of these hills Khama chose his site, and some 17,000 people made the move. Queen Semane, as Mother of the Tribe, led the women in their traditional building of the neat round huts and courtyard walls. A queenly woman dressed in bright colours, a dock %wathed round her head, she could be seen, alongside the others, mixing mmu--clay-with her hands, interspersing layers of it v, ith small stones, and finally smoothing grey or red clay over the completed wall. The Chief's hut was spacious, the stamped r.irth floor covered by splendid leopard, lion and jackal skin rug, the furniture solid and Victorian. It was the men's duty to ild in windows and doors and erect the pole and rafter :xkmework for the thatch, spacing it from the wall to prevent :hc spread of white ants. Sometimes women did the thatching %,ith a shaggy grey straw, sometimes m-en- in a more com-,ct way so that it looked as if the hut wore a close furred

crowe was soon the biggest village south of the Equator, its , listers of huts with yards and cattle kraals scattered over a *..src area. Pole fences or hedges surrounded family homesteads **,nd in the hot summers the rural scene was enlivened by the ,r-liant green of the mokgalo, makhi and makala trees, the 'hite of the makoba and yellow of the mosetlha trees, that *=!:d the lolwapas. On a stony hill stood the minister's home, * " .!rbu were the first iron-roofed traders' stores. One hill was !':ctacular, its tree-covered slopes breaking at one end into a

The Khamas steep outcrop, with huge boulders tossed haphazard around the crest. Below was the kgotla-aan expanse of stamped earth sheltered by a crescent-shaped windbreak.

This was the centre of the tribe's life: here, every morning except Sunday, men would assemble to fulfil their judicial and political duties. In the evening they might return for maitiso, the time of conversation. Life was ordered and orderly; men, women and children had certain roles to play, allotted tasks to fulfil.
Against this background Tshekedi had a happy and normal childhood. Like all African babies he felt the security of being carried on his mother's or his nurse's back. Family groups being large and affectionate, there were always other children to play with and he and his sister got on well together. Dark-skinned like his parents, he was a small, slight child, quick and mischievous. His naughtiness, when discovered, was punished by his mother who brought up her children strictly and scorned what was lazy or impure. But she was not priggish, and with her rich sense of humour there was gaiety and laughter in the Chief's house. Permeating their life was a deep religious conviction. Semane was voluntary deaconess, President of the Women's Christian Temperance Union and Sunday School superintendent. She also organized Dikaelo, a way of teaching religion to children that began in her own lolwapa and spread.

to many villages. Every evening at dusk Tshekedi, Bonyerile, their cousins and the servants' children, would come to one corner of the lolwapa and Semane, or one of the other women of the royal family, would tell them Bible stories and teach them hymns and passages of scripture. They acted out the stories, and were questioned about what they had been taught. Bonyerile often thought that Tshekedi had fallen asleep under cover of the darkness until she found him readily giving answers. As the stars appeared suddenly, one after another, the children's voices would rise in the curious, sweet African harmonies that transform the drieist hymns in a Victorian hymn-book.

When he was seven, Tshekedi was sent to the Serowe public school, at that time held by Tsoegang Sebina, the first NgwatO teacher, under the trees beyond the kgotla. Although he detested lessons and managed to play truant for a week, he was an apt scholar.

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An old woman who looked after the Chief's lolwapa used to tell him bedtime stories. Once she had occasion to warn Tshekedi that when a little boy was naughty a wolf took him away. He promptly asked, 'And what happens when an old woman is naughty?' As she reached for a stick, he darted out of bed and ran, to the delight of the other children who watched her fruitless chase. But generally he was respectful and, although as Chief's son he had servants at his beck and call, he would himself groom his horse and mend his clothes.

Arnold Johnston, whose parents, a trader and a former missionary, were friends of the Khamas, noticed that when the boys made oxen and elephants of clay Tshekedi's were the most lifelike. When they played n-ai, a game of throwing a certain kind of stick so that it bounced along the ground, he was among the winners. He often led the boys' games, but in the presence of girls was shy, while with Europeans he was positively tongue-tied, as indeed were all African children until they came to know the individual well. Arnold also admired his courage when he was thrown from a mettlesome horse and insisted on remounting. Another side to his nature was apparent the first time he saw a goat being
prepared for the slaughter: he pleaded for its life and wept bitterly when it was killed. For a long time after he refused to eat meat. 
At the age of nine, he went during school holidays as herdboy to his father's cattle posts (meraka) in the bush, a hundred or more miles from Serowe. Many boys would herd for most of the year so that the schools were attended by more girls than boys. Meraka are the sites of water, natural or from a borehole, here breeding herds of 50-200 beasts are pastured. Tshekedi would be up before dawn and, as he made the fire, the sky could change from the first pale green light to the full blaze of the sun. Once the milking was done he would be given food for the rest of the day and would take his herd out into the veld. It was a flat landscape with occasional hills, covered in winter by a multitude of skeletal bushes, interspersed with bare trees. When the summer rains the bleached earth would turn red, and bushes and trees were suddenly clothed in fresh green leaves, me with scented blossom. One particular tree would harbour an invisible hoard of Christmas beetles, so that the whole tree vibrated with their screeching din. While the cattle grazed, Dickedi would collect wild fruit, dig for root vegetables to roast over the fire at night, or follow the honey bird to a bee's nest. He hunted with a knobkerrie or trap for hares and rabbits, delicacies like partridges, and other birds. He preferred the tracking to the kill. Clad only in a loin-cloth he could move freely, unaffected by rain or sun. Late in the afternoon he would round up his herd and return to the moraka where he and the other boys might run a relay race, or break in young bullocks for riding. If any women were visiting the post, the boys might dance to their clapping and singing. At night they would have their meal around the camp fire, the men discussing the day's happenings and points of the various animals, or reminiscing about Bamangwato history and animal lore. Sometimes a storyteller would be carried away by a desire to show off his daring and one of his mates would contest his veracity. The dispute was friendly and casual, entertaining the listeners. Tshekedi particularly enjoyed listening to Bamangwato history, as he watched the sparks flying from the fire. When it was time, he would choose a place nearby, curl up and go to sleep, to the sound of the voices murmuring on.

With the coming of the first rains, in October or November, Chief Kham with his family led the people in the annual migration from Serowe to their lands and everything from five to fifty miles away. This Tswana custom meant that! the villages were left for half the year, some of the men moving between lands, village and cattle posts, and some of the children, remaining at school, under the care of a relative or servant, while most women worked consistently on the lands. Under Semane's leadership they ploughed, sowed grain and vegetables and reaped the harvest. As he grew older, Tshekedi was allowed to help in the ploughing. If his mother's lands yielded a good crop, she took to her friends in Serowe, including
Europeans, gifts of green mealies (maize) and pumpkins. In Serowe the family moved into a large Victorian house which Khama built between the rocky outcrop of Serowe hill and the kgotla. It was cool, surrounded by a wide-roofed veranda, and the gardens and houses of other members of the homestead were well laid out. At this time a singular honour was conferred on Tshekedi. Although he was only a boy, the Matlhogela, one of Khama's regiments—men grouped according to ages at the time of circumcision, formerly as military bodies, but latterly to perform public works and duties at the age of 40—was conferred on him. Although he was only a boy, the Matlhogela, one of Khama's regiments—men grouped according to ages at the time of circumcision, formerly as military bodies, but latterly to perform public works and duties at the age of 40—was conferred on him.

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Chief's direction—chose him as their leader and composed a song, praying that he would grow and rule over them, this being while his half-brother, Sekgoma, was still in exile. One day he happened to pass by when some of the regiment who had failed in their duties were about to receive the customary punishment of a beating. He stopped at once and quickly took his place alongside the men lying on the ground. The headman in charge was so taken aback that he ordered them to be freed.

In 1916 Tshekedi went to boarding school in the Union. Khama had chosen Lovedale, the well-known Church of Scotland institution in the Cape Province, and sent Peter Sebina, one of the leading family of the Bakalaka sub-clan, with him. Among their fellow-pupils were boys who were to become distinguished chiefs—Sobhuza from Swaziland and Bathoen of the Bangwaketse—as well as Z. K. Matthews. The latter found Tshekedi the most impressive student: intelligent, quiet and modest, always master of himself and of any situation in which he happened to be. In addition he had a passion for truth that was not always appreciated by his fellows, protesting, for instance, when some of the older boys stole fruit from a neighbouring farmer. As one of the smallest boys he got teased and set upon by a bully, but fought back. Only once did he cry, when he hit so hard that the bigger boy cried, which made him cry too! Tshekedi's friends said he did not know the meaning of the word defeat. Yet there was a weakness that he could not overcome: he stammered terribly, "especially when angry. After one fight with the bully when Iter Sebina held 'a court of inquiry' to find out the cause, he could not utter a word and onlookers had to speak for him."

Their studies went well until, in March 1920, certain students lined to strike because of the bad food. They persuaded some of the Bechuana boys to join them but Tshekedi refused. However, when the strike actually took place, he supported it because he felt it would be cowardly not to. They were expelled. His sister was proud of him but his father was visiting Professor of Theology at Columbia University, New York.

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angry, told him and the other Bamangwato students that they should have sided with authority, and refused to allow them to return to Lovedale. Instead they studied under Mrs. Clarke (Arnold Johnston's sister) at her home on the edge of the Kalahari desert. It was almost a banishment and for a year Tshekedi did not see his father.

Meanwhile under Khama the Bamangwato were attaining a dominant position in the Protectorate although traditionally they would always be junior to the Bakwena. In 1905 he had welcomed Herero refugees from the German massacre in South-West Africa and had given them use of land. After the Boer War, Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland became associated as the three High Commission Territories under the British Governor-General and High Commissioner. In a glow of post-war generosity the British Government ignored the repressive trend of native policies in three of the four provinces of South Africa, and the danger of granting power to a privileged white minority. In the Boer republics Africans were subject to pass laws and to the payment of heavy hut tax, and could not own land. They were debarred from many avocations in the towns, and even in their own reserves had no real security.2 Natal, with its strict reserve system, was set on a similar course. Yet it was hoped that the more liberal policy of the Cape would prevail. The Act of Union was passed in 1909.

Fortunately for the High Commission Territories the British Government did not transfer them but safeguarded their status in a Schedule to the Act. But it was not long before the South African Government began agitation for their incorporation and as a result the inhabitants developed a feeling of insecurity that increased with each new demand from the Union.

Khama kept a watchful eye on the situation. Among much praise for his enlightened if autocratic rule was some criticism particularly for his treatment of the Mabirwa, one of the clans under the Bamangwato. In 1920 he was asked by the Administration to remove these people at short notice from land the had occupied in the Tuli Block. The manner in which his regiment performed the task led to the Mabirwa chief, Malemr

1 Population 1909: 19,414 Africans, 1,004 Europeans, 361 Colour

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bringing a case against him. Although in the end a British Government commission of inquiry found most of the allegations untrue or exaggerated the odium remained. As he approached eighty, he was still active until, in 1916, he was temporarily laid up after being kicked by a horse, and had to undergo several operations. A happy outcome was the return of his eldest son, Sekgoma, after seventeen years in exile. From then on Sekgoma lived in a house in his father's lolwapa, With Tebogo, his wife. Their son, Seretse-'red earth'-was born in 1921.
Soon after this Tshekedi went to Fort Hare College in the Cape. Z. K. Matthews was again a fellow-student, and they lived in the same hostel, Beda Hall, for whose warden, Bishop Snyth, Tshekedi developed a high regard. The Bishop shared the rough conditions in which they, as pioneers of this first college in British Africa, had to live. Matthews, a senior, was employed part-time to teach and found Tshekedi a quick student who put himself wholly into his work. He was planning to study law and this, allied to an inherited love of justice, was to give him lasting confidence in legal and constitutional methods.

This was but one of the characteristics that he inherited from his father. From the time when he started herding, his father had taught him the duties of manhood: unquestioning obedience to parents, respect for elders, refraining from swearing, lying and stealing. Later, as they rode round the cattle posts or lands, Khama had spoken of his ambitions for the progress of the Bamangwato. Tshekedi had become imbued with his father's love of uprightness and his puritanical outlook, but had r espect, also, for his grandfather, Sekgoma I. Arnold Johnston told to him one day: 'Your father is a wonderful man. But what a real old rotter your grandfather must have been.' Tshekedi at once defended the old pagan Chief, explaining to the white how what a remarkable achievement his had been in building up tie tribe from nothing. For Khama he felt something far deeper than the love and customary respect due to a parent: a reverence that came near to worship. In 1923, when he was eighteen, his father died. Khama, ugh in his late eighties, insisted one day on rounding up a herd of cattle that was suffering from lack of water, driving

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them through dust and heat and through a downpour, to a watering place. He returned home with a severe chill and, soon after, died. At his funeral, when the women began to wail Tshekedi told them to stop, for he knew that long ago, at the funeral of his own babies, Khama had similarly reproved people. 'God has given and God has taken away,' he had said, 'and you must be quiet.' Chief Khama was buried on the hill in Serowe. There Sekgoma erected a monument, a phud standing on a pedestal inscribed with one of Khama's sayings: 'Righteousness exalteth a nation.' The little deer stands, delicate and noble, in the clear space between the huge rocks. Below the hill Serowe clusters and sprawls. Beyond stretch the plains and hills of the country Khama loved.

Kruger, Mzilikazi, Lobengula, Moshesh, Olive Schreiner, Rhodes-these were Khama's great contemporaries in Southern Africa. He was distinguished by the dedication of his life to his God and to his tribe. Lord Lugard, the famous authority who had travelled widely throughout Africa, said that he was the most enlightened and capable Chief he ever met, and a most original thinker. The Earl of Buxton, who as a former Governor General and High Commissioner regarded himself as a great personal friend of Khama's, said that he was the most remarkable Chief he had met.

In 1923 Sekgoma II, a forthright man with the natural dignity of the Ngwato royal family, was installed as Chief. At last he had the responsibility for which he had craved but
after his long exile in malarial country he was ageing and ill and his rule was unhappy. His domestic life had caused difficulties with his father-who strongly disapproved of certain of his marriages and relationships-and led to subsequent disputes over the chiefship. After two divorces he had married Tebogo-'Gratitude'—with his father's and royal uncles' consent, and their son, Seretse, was three years old when Sekgonf9 became Chief.

His rebellion against his father had died out and he was eager to follow Khama's ideas on education and social reform. During the short time of effective rule between bouts of illness.

'Sculpted by Anton von Wouw and unveiled in 1924 by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.

'House of Lords, Hansard, 1933.

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he urged the need for a hospital, and he gave a firm retort to a bid from the Union Government to incorporate the Protectorate. 'We are a contented people,' he said, 'not like those who are under the Union Government. There the native people are oppressed... We would strongly oppose any effort to include the Bamangwato reserve in the Union.'

Inevitably there was a resurgence of family feuds. The Mphoengs and the Raditladis had been welcomed back by Khama in 1907 or soon after: their descendants were incensed by the Ratshosa family's increased influence. Ratshosa, Khama's son-in-law and secretary, had died in 1917. His widow, Bessie, on her death-bed, had obtained from her father, Khama, a promise that their three sons should be well taken care of. Johnnie had succeeded his father as Khama's secretary, Simon, the ablest, was principal of a school, and Obeditse was interpreter in the Magistrate's office. Although their father had once set Sekgoma against Khama, Sekgoma was an easygoing man and was on good terms with them, while Simon became his son-in-law, marrying his eldest daughter, Oratile. Phethu Mphoeng believed that the Ratshosas were usurping his functions as a headman and, with his brothers and the Raditladis, he petitioned the Resident Commissioner, complaining of oppression. They particularly cited the Ratshosas for influencing Chief Sekgoma, for being a source of strife in the tribe, and for inhibiting educational progress. The petitioners, several of whom had been educated, warned that the power of witch-doctors was growing, and suggested that the punishment of banishment should be abolished. They were promptly banished by Sekgoma. The Mphoengs remembered a threat made by Simon Ratshosa in 1921, that he would one day have the Mphoengs banished. When they and the Raditladis were pardoned by Chief Sekgoma, and returned to Serowe, they relished the discovery that the Chief had begun to fall out with the Ratshosas.

The bitter rivalry and the manoeuvrings for power between the two parties reached a climax on the death of Sekgoma soon after, in November 1925. Added to this, there was another Action, long antagonistic to Semane, which caused a
minor r., rt and made an abortive attack on her house, accusing her of 'v.:ing
Sekgoma's death so that her son, Tshekedi, might Petition of January 21, 1924.

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become chief. In fact several factions had ambitions for the chieftainship but
Se mane and her son were not amongst them.
e of Sekgoma's eldest but illegitimate son, Gasethe name wse; others mentioned
his eldest shwarwe, was canvassed by som, n.. de or atdadacpe
child, Oratile Ratshosa. It was soon demonstrated and accepted that under tribal
custom neither could be chief, and when it was clearly established that Sekgoma's
four-year-old son, Seretse, was heir-apparent or 'chief's son' (morwa kgosi), he
was thus designated. It was recognized that Khamas second son, Tshekedi, was
next in line. As he was still at college it was decided that the senior royal uncle,
Gorewang Kgaman, smChief, and at the Resident should temporarily be Acting-
GlwaseUptasithm
Commissioner's suggestion a council was set up to assist him. This, however, was
unpopular with the people who suspected that it was an administrative device
limit the chief's powers.1 It was decided to recall Tshekedi before he had
completed
his matriculation. Sekgoma had planned that he should study , law in Britain, and
he himself was eager to do so. Apart from this wish to complete his education, he
had no desire to be chief. He was warned that if he did not return, the tribe would
go to pieces. He therefore came back into the thick of the, intrigues of the
descendants of Sekgoma I and his junior wives..
I. Schapera, African Political Systems, p. 7 Ed. Fortes & Evak.ii
Pritchard.

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Part II The Regent

The Chief's Lolwapa, Serowe
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The burial ground of the Khamas

CHAPTER 4
Aristocratic Insolence
hen Tshekedi returned to Serowe, the missionary J there, the Rev. Haydon
Lewis, wrote to the London
V Missionary Society.1 asking them to pray for the
young man who, at the age of twenty-one, would be called on to carry the
responsibility laid down by his father, Khama. Lewis described him as a
sincerely-minded lad who would help the Church to repair the damage that might have been done during Sekgoma's short rule.

On January 19, 1926, the installation of the new Chief Regent of the Bamangwato tribe took place. From all parts of the country the crowds poured into Serowe. The village looked much as it had early in the century except that it was bigger and there were rough roads, a few more stores, and the imposing church that Khama and the tribe had built. The kgotla was packed with men in uniforms or dressed in their best garments. [he women, in brightly coloured dresses and docs, were zithered on the fringe. It had rained beforehand - a good omen and the two great makala trees in the kgotla were bright. The ceremony was performed by the Resident Commissioner on behalf of the Government, and by one of Khania's half-brothers for the tribe. Tshekedi, slight and nervous, was presented to the tribe: a fine leopard skin was placed round his shoulders to symbolize chieftainship. 'Pula! Pula!' Rain!..r tribal cry went up, followed by the women's joyful trilling dation. Leading elders admonished him to rule firmly but *dlv, to attend to his duties and to listen to his advisers. His was brief. He said everyone had counselled him to follow his father's footsteps; that was difficult and only the future could tell how he would do it. He simultaneously became leader of the new regiment formed of his age group, the MaLetamotse. November 6, 1925.

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The Bamangwato tribe was the largest in the Protectorate and Tshekedi was to rule over some 60,000 people in the biggest tribal area (40,000 square miles) of a country three times the size of Britain (275,000 square miles) with a total population of 152,983. He had not been trained for chieftainship but had an inbred knowledge of tribal custom and a respect for its laws and values. The tribe's social relations were equalitarian, though members of the royal family, big cattle owners and, increasingly, educated men were particularly respected. Reverence for the chieftainship went very deep among the Tswana tribes and one element of this feeling was the tribesman's willingness to let the chief think for him. The chief's title, Father of the Tribe, meant what it said. Tshekedi found that he had great responsibilities and wide privileges. He must keep law and order, punish crime, collect taxes, allocate the use of land which is collectively owned, give ear to all in need, of counsel or help, and see that no harm befell his people. He must regularly call and attend the kgotla to hear cases, petitions, grievances and news. He must organize public works such as the buildings of roads, dams and schools. He should care not only for his relatives but for widows and destitute people. His hospitality should be liberal, his advisers should be given rewards of cattle, and his servants given their keep and clothes, and sometimes payment or cattle. He was the main instrument for implementing the British Government's policy in the tribe and had to deal with missionaries, traders and foreign visitors. Tshekedi, from the beginning, had a strong sense of paternit and he had two ambitions. One was to fulfil his particular.

* responsibility as Regent: preserving the chieftainship intact for the chief-to-be, Seretse' bringing the boy up as his own son, an giving him the best education
possible. His second anibitio was to carry out his father's belief that the conservatioin of th,! best in African tradition and family life should go hand in hani with progress in the accomplishments of modern society. KhamA had impressed on him that, in a fast-changing world, the on]..

I The principal tribes are: Bakwena, Bamangwato, Bangwaket'i Batawana, Bakgatla, Bamalete.
I I. Schapera, A Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom, p, 68 f. Tswana, p. 28. Since 919o the Ngwato Chief had been paid a salary of £1,000 fro] tribal funds and £200 for entertainment p.a.

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safeguard ultimately was the people's own strength and organizing ability, and a capacity to compete with whites at every level of existence: therefore they should adapt and develop their own social system while acquiring the skill, training and discipline needed to do as well as the white man in his sphere.

The foundation of Tswana society is the lineage group, consisting, say, of several brothers, the eldest of whom would be head, and whose male descendants would become headmen. As the families grow and new groups form, they remain attached to the others by forming a ward. Thus was woven the fabric of mutual obligation between man and man. Each village is divided into wards and newcomers would be absorbed into them, or might form a new ward. In this way the twenty clans of the Bamangwato tribe gradually came together under the senior, Ngwato, clan, their headmen becoming sub-chiefs. To help him in his duties, Tshedidi could seek advice from any member of the tribe but on important matters he would summon his senior paternal uncles and the ward heads. Under a system instituted by his father, he also appointed chiefs representatives to eight administrative districts, where they performed the duties of chief in a local setting.

He set to work seriously. For instance, he told his friends that he could no longer engage in private correspondence: they should write only what could be openly discussed. This was no doubt partly due to his own reserve, but also a precaution against the intriguing of some of the aristocracy.

Most mornings that he was in Serowe, except Sunday, he would hear cases in the kgotla. At sunrise he would walk rapidly from his lolwapa to the kgotla, draw up his low campchair in the shelter of the palisade, a prayer would be said and the cases, referred to the chief's kgotla by ward kgotlas, would begin. A few of his uncles and cousins and some headmen would sit nearby and all around would be the participants and the 1stcners, some on chairs, many sitting on the ground.

They ,ore anything from smart suits and neat khaki shirts and pants, to a ragged assortment of greatcoats; from trilbies to pith !.elmets and woollen balaclavas. One or two tribal policemen "0uld be present. The plaintiff would stand and put his case; '-'n the defendant. Witnesses might be called and anyone .%hing to question them or comment could take part. Women

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involved in cases might be there, but otherwise only men took part. Boys approaching manhood could attend to listen part, while boys stayed to play and learn. Tshekedi might refer to precedents, and the defendant’s character would be considered. At the end of each case he might debate the issue with senior members of the tribe before giving judgment. If he dissented from the majority he explained why. His brief study of law had been useful and he was clear and quick, keeping strictly to Tswana law. Punishment was usually a fine or corporal punishment of a few strokes with a cane or sjambok, and for serious offences banishment could be imposed. Appeals went to a court consisting of the Resident Magistrate and the Chief. As the day passed, the gathering would move from one patch of shade under the makala trees to another, until at midday they adjourned for dinner. Tshekedi would join his mother, MmaKgos, who remained Mother of the Tribe and ran his household. In the afternoon he would do administrative work. The administration was also based on the kgotla, and if he wished to discuss a question affecting the whole tribe, his messengers went to village kgotlas calling them to assemble in Serowe. They would pass the request on to the wards, who would send it to the lineage kgotlas. The numbers who assembled and the length of discussion depended on the importance of the issue and the interest in it. When everyone who wanted to had spoken, the Chief summed up and, if necessary, gave his decision. Sometimes Tshekedi visited outlying kgotlas and summoned a Chief’s kgotla there.

Like his parents, he was an ardent advocate of temperance. Originally people had brewed a healthy, palatable beer but, with the coming of white gold-diggers in the 1860s some had acquired a taste for quick intoxicants. They began to add fiercer concoctions to their traditional beer. Khama had punished these illicit brewers ruthlessly, even banishing some of them. No doubt the installation of a new, immature Chief was seen as an opportunity for license; at all events there was an upsurge in brewing soon after Tshekedi took over. He was determined to stamp it out and, after a hearing in kgotla, sentenced some women brewers to corporal punishment with,

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he said, the object of deterring others from brewing these noxious drinks. His zeal could be tempered by his sense of humour. He was walking past Mr. Johnston's store in Serowe one day when a disreputable-looking old man, who was known to like beer, stopped him. The old man, obviously not recognizing him, asked: 'Young man, have you heard where there's a dead donkey?'

'Dead donkey?' Tshekedi repeated. 'What ever do you mean?'

'You know,' the old man said with a wink, 'the thing Tshekedi Khama says we mustn't have.' 'I don't know where it is,' Tshekedi replied.
'Well,' the old man said, 'here's half a crown. If you find some, give it to me,' and he handed Tshekedi the money, and went on into the store.

Mr. Johnston, who had seen him accosting Tshekedi, asked, 'What were you talking to the Chief about?'

'Chief, what Chief?.' the old man asked. 'That young tsotsi? That Westernized young man?'

Then other people in the store assured him that it was indeed the Chief.

The next day the old man, in a fever of anxiety, hurried to the kgotla at daybreak to ask the Chief's forgiveness. The fires were lit, and Tshekedi took his seat. He looked around and saw the old man. 'Rra,' he called, and the old man started to beg his forgiveness. Tshekedi cut him short. 'I was only going to tell u, Rra, that I never got to finding that donkey of yours,' and jw gave the old man back the half-crown.

At first Tshekedi was handicapped by his bad stammer. Once, when he had been travelling back from college for the holidays, and it was too dark to see the names of the stations, he had wanted to ask the guard whether they were approaching L'hapye, but the train had stopped and moved on again before he could get the words out coherently. He then and there remedied that he would cure himself and, whenever he was mph, practised over and over again the remarks he wished to say. When he became Chief, he did the same with his speeches atxi he succeeded. Only occasionally, when he was nervous or angry, did the impediment recur. One of his tasks, though for him it was a great pleasure, was to ride around the cattle posts and inspect the herds that he had inherited from Khama, and that Sekgoma had bequeathed to Seretse. The latter needed particular attention because they had been allowed to deteriorate during Sekgoma's exile and during some bad droughts. To the Tswana, cattle are not only a source of pride, but of status and wealth. In fact, their life centres on their cattle, and they are more loath to sell a beast than a European is to sell a safe investment. Tshekedi began to experiment, carefully selecting, crossing one breed with another, with a passionate enthusiasm.

As he went about the country he became sharply aware of its problems. Bechuanaland, clinging to the edge of the Kalahari desert, semi-arid, is a huge country with poor communications. Sparsely populated and poor, it was so remote,* and unimportant that it had been neglected by its powerful Protector, and its poverty was being used by the South African Prime Minister, General Hertzog, as an excuse to press for its incorporation. In Tshekedi's first year as Chief the revenue for the whole Protectorate was £131,568. The country had just managed to survive one of the worst droughts on record and the Union Government had placed a weight restriction on cattle that effectively barred any exports from Bechuanaland. It was no wonder that people were apathetic.
But before Tshekedi could take any constructive action he was embroiled in the old feud between his nephews, the Ratshosas, and his Sekgoma cousins, the Mphoengs and Raditladis. (Because of the family ramifications and , elfavouring of marriage between cousins, relationships were complicated. For instance, Phethu Mphoeng, though much older, was both Tshekedi’s cousin and his brother-in-law, whilec4 the Ratshosas, grandsons of Tshekedi’s father, were also nanO years older than Tshekedi.) The Ratshosas were angry whe Tshekedi dissolved the regency council, which they had sec. as a means of extending their influence. They disregarded ti fact that it had been a temporary administrative pedietl until Tshekedi took over and that he had only dissolved it with

There is no limit to grazing land provided a man can sink borehole and the wealthy cattle owners should help others less fortunate, shari*
t ealt catte ownwere a milk and slaughtered beasts with neighbours. in the past there wr hereditary royal herds confiscated in wars, or paid as fines in cases, t belonged to the Chief. Khama ended this system by dividing the between loyal headmen and the herdsmen.

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the approval of ninety leaders and headmen. But most provoking was the fact that he was accepting advice from the Mphoengs and Raditladis rather than from themselves. A Regent is always simply a caretaker, open to more criticism than a Chief, never commanding quite the same loyalty. Tshekedi knew that some members of the royal family were out to make the most of this and were hoping that in his inexperience he would serve their ends.

Tension ran high between the two factions but once again there was a small beginning. Oratile Ratshosa claimed two of the Masarwa servants working for her stepmother, Tebogo (Seretse’s mother). Tshekedi retrieved the girls, whereupon Simon Ratshosa complained to the Resident Magistrate. Less than three months after Tshekedi’s installation the case came before the Chief’s kgotla, and the three Ratshosa brothers were summoned to appear before him and the Magistrate. They ignored the summons. Later in the day Simon Ratshosa failed to parade with his regiment for routine work on the roads and this was reported to Tshekedi. He therefore sent out a new summons. This time the brothers obeyed and when asked to explain their conduct could find no satisfactory reply concerning the first occasion but maintained that at the time when the regiment was called they had been attending a wedding, with his permission. There was a general feeling that the Ratshosas had taken the privileges given them by Khama for granted and were arrogantly abusing their rank. Tshekedi ordered cnporal punishment. The Ratshosas bitterly resented any f rm of punishment, but this was the ultimate humiliation. They struggled to get away, there was a scuffle, Simon and ()hcditse escaped, but Johnnie was caught and beaten. Simon .id Obeditse rushed home to get guns and, from outside the ;’4lotla palisade, fired several shots into
the kgotla, then fled back to their homes. Tshekedi and another man were wounded hastily, and a third man seriously. For a time there was chaos. An attempt on the life of a Chief in kgotla had been punishable death under tribal law before sentences of capital punishment were taken over by the British Administration. In the "mediate alarm, Tshekedi ordered that the would-be assassinsuld be brought before him, alive or dead. Some men had hurried off for their rifles and a crowd made for the 'hosas' houses, but before many shots could be exchanged

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the Resident Magistrates aided by Tshekedi, calmed the people and took the Ratshosas into custody.
The kgotla reassembled and Tshekedi, on the advice of a senior member of the royal family, ruled that the Ratshosas' houses should be burnt by a regiment. The order was carried out. The two assailants were subsequently tried in the High Court of the Protectorate on a charge of attempted murder and were each sentenced to ten years' hard labour. (Today, the only surviving brother, Obeditse, a mild, thin, wrinkled man, who fired the shot that wounded Tshekedi, is adamant that he did not aim at the Chief. 'My brothers and I,' he states firmly, 'had nothing against Tshekedi or his rule for, after all, he had only just become Chief when the incident occurred.') Mr. Haydon Lewis, the missionary in Serowe, described Tshekedi's coolness and self-control. In a letter to the Losdo, Missionary Society severely criticizing the Ratshosas he said 'We are all delighted with the firm stand which he has taken." Perhaps if Tshekedi had been older or more experienced, he, would have resisted the advice of his cousins and treated the undoubtedly able Ratshosas more diplomatically. As it was, they now became his enemies and they were by no means silenced. In prison they were visited by a South African writer, who espoused their cause, saying that they hankered after a Black republic and referring to the regency council as a Bantu.' democracy.

A comparison with the 'blessings' attendant on the Tud monarchy may be appropriate here: 'the maintenance of peace and order, the enforcement of justice, the repression of aristocratic insolence, the protection of the poor, the encouragement to commerce.' Having temporarily repressed on upsurge of aristocratic insolence, Tshekedi could concentrate on some of the other 'blessings'.

Among his activities were the reorganization of tax collection and the redrafting of two Proclamations concerning divorce and witchcraft that had been drawn up by the British Administration. He protested against power being given to the Magistrate to divide the property of parties to a divorce, and against failure to distinguish between herbalists (who were benefic a
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and witch-doctors. In support of his arguments he quoted such legal authorities as Lansdowne and Gardiner, and he won his latter point.
Although he admired the Western way of life, he never despised African ways and beliefs. At the same time he was a dedicated Christian. The London Missionary Society was in an unusual position in the Ngwato country. Khama had given them the monopoly and had refused admission to other societies and sects. As a result they had become virtually a state church and both Khama and Tsekedi developed an attitude not unlike Henry VIII's towards the Anglican Church.

In his early days of chieftainship Tsekedi was accused of religious persecution. The incident involved a group of Bahurutshe, who had originally been taken into the tribe by Khama on condition that they respected his laws regarding drink, and would leave behind them their Church (a few of them were Anglicans.) However, when Tsekedi became Chief, the Ratshosas encouraged ideas of independence among them and they broke the conditions. Tsekedi called them to the Serowe kgotla to inquire into their identity and the nature of their grievance. Twelve men and their families were given the choice of living at Serowe, or returning to their original home outside the country where they would not be subject to the conditions formerly accepted. They refused to obey and proceeded to stand on the Shashi railway siding whenever a train passed, shouting to passengers that 'they had been driven out of house and home by Tsekedi and the London Missionary Society missionaries'. There was reason to suspect that they were using religion to cloak indiscipline and disloyalty. A subsequent inquiry attended by the Administration upheld Tsekedi's judgment. Tsekedi believed that the task of the missionary was to translate in a practical manner faith in a supreme power that would bring light and hope to the people of a backward country. To those missionaries who had helped his father and his chiefs to win protection from Britain, he paid a glowing tribute for tenaciously holding to their principles of Christianity: lighting for the rights of the weak peoples; a duty that he regarded as being no less necessary in the modern world than in 'trian days.

Ultimate responsibility for the government of the High Commission Territories lay with the Queen and Parliament acting through the Secretary of State for the Dominions. He delegated power to the High Commissioner for the Territories who, until 1928, was also Governor-General of South Africa. This ambivalence remained even when the two offices were separated: for the High Commissioner both supervised the Territories and represented the United Kingdom in the Union of South Africa. He and his staff accompanied the Union Government on its annual migrations between the seat of administration in Pretoria, and Parliament in Cape Town. An imperial Secretary advised the High Commissioner on Territories' matters and supervised the Resident Commissioner of each Territory. The latter, with the assistance of a Government Secretary, supervised Resident Magistrates stationed in various districts. Each office had its secretariat that grew over the years.

Under the system of indirect rule, the Chief or Native Authority was supposed to have a large measure of independence and to receive the advice of the Resident Magistrate and technical officers on the Resident Commissioners staff. However, under government by proclamation from the High Commissioner, the Chief's powers were being gradually curbed. Furthermore the High Commissioner had overall power to depose or banish Chiefs. The Resident Magistrate heard cases: involving Europeans, serious cases in which sentence of death might be involved, and appeals from the Chief's kgotla; he conveyed Government instructions and communications to the Native Authority; he disbursed Government monies; and was the 'man on the spot', supposed to be in close touch with the life of the tribe and the authority on its activities and needs. From High Commissioner down to Resident Magistrate the officials also administered the Crown Lands and the blocks of European farms. A link between British and African Administrations had been established in 1920 through the Native Advisory Council, consisting of chiefs and tribal representatives chosen in kgotla, under the presidency of the Resident Commissioner. The Council, which could only discuss and advise, met annually. It was handicapped by the Bamangwato's refusal to join it because Khama thought each tribe could more satisfactorily deal with its own problems. Sekgoma and Tshekedi followed his example. A European Advisory Council had been simultaneously formed.

Ideally, the British Administration should have been learning to understand, assist and, on occasion, guide the people among whom they worked, and the Chiefs should have been drawn into discussion at the very inception of all far-reaching measures contemplated by the Government. Even so the administrative machinery and the parallel tribal system would have been clumsy, and anyone with initiative
would have been frustrated by the procedure of frequent reference by the Magistrate to the Resident Commissioner, who might consult the High Commissioner in South Africa who, after sometimes lengthy consideration and possible reference to Whitehall, would reply through the same channels. But the men who could have fulfilled these ideal needs were seldom recruited. Pay was low and there was not much prospect of improvement for in those days Colonies and Protectorates were meant to be self-supporting. Besides, it was taken for granted in Britain and in South Africa that the High Commission Territories would sooner or later be transferred to the Union. This was one reason for Britain's neglect; another was that they were far away and insignificant at a time of world depression. And of the three Territories Bechuanaland was the Cinderella. Such authorities in the Colonial field as Lord Lugard,1 and Margery Perham,2 were beginning to remark on the system of indirect rule.  

1 Lord Lugard, GC.M.G., etc., 1858-1945, soldier, explorer and Administrator of Nigeria 1912-18. Authority on Colonial Affairs. 2 Margery Perham, C.B.E., Rhodes travelling fellowship for study of Tropical Africa, and exponent and practi...
extra expenditure, it not only had to filter through the channels already mentioned
(with frequent bottlenecks), but it also had to go on through the Dominions Office
to the Treasury, and there await its turn in a long list of more pressing needs when
seen in relation to national defence and other concerns of the...
British Government. The local Administration seldom eXplained and discussed
these problems with the Chiefs and.
Tshekedi sometimes held individual officials responsible for..
 obstructiveness when they were not always to blame. 'The proximity of the Union continued to be a majorK,
administration of Coloured Race& 9!29-32. Since t947 Fellow in uiaperT'
Government Nuffield College, Oxford. Author and editor of man) bookl'i on
Africa and authority on African history and government; fellow-work
with and biographer of Lord Lugard.
'August 31, 1931.

'Who Was That roung African?' influence and the resulting personal and political sense of insecurity of the people
in the Territories was a factor that the British Administration should have
reckoned with in all its dealings. It was obvious that from the High Commissioner
down to the Resident Magistrate, officials were constantly looking over their
shoulders to ensure that their plans and actions did not offend the comparatively
powerful South African Government. Tshekedi realized the dilemma but deplored
its effects such as the recruiting of many officials from the Union who at worst
had the traditional white South African's attitude to Natives, at best were paternal.
The Union also exerted a powerful influence on the Protectorate's economy. The
Bechuana, largely dependent on the sale of cattle, had become impoverished by
the Union's embargo since 1925 on cattle below a certain weight, a situation
exacerbated by two periods of severe drought and famine in the early 'thirties. Tax
due to the Tribal Treasury ranged between 5/- and fio, according to a man's
wealth: the Government had imposed a further 28/- annual tax (35 per cent of
which was returned to the Tribal Treasury). So poor were the people that one-
third of them were likely to default. In 1928 hut tax collections were smaller than
in 1917, while in 1933, when they could not scrape together the necessary 28/-,
tax had to be reduced to 15/-. As there was limited scope for employment in the
Protectorate, the men had no alternative but to seek work in the Union. They were
drawn also by the usual attraction of cities. Some twenty-eight per cent of the
able-bodied men migrated annually for long periods to work as miners, servants,
errand boys, odd-job men, or farm hands, causing a gradual breakdown in tribal
and family life. Various authorities drew attention to the British Government's
culpability. Mrs. W. A. Hoernl6, the South African anthropologist, remarked that
as Britain expected one day to hand over the country to the Union, the
Bechuanaland Administration's only object was to ensure that it should not be a
charge on the British taxpayer, lo that it had simply become a reserve .for
unskilled-labour for the Union. Another writer said that the whole system might ,
ave been specifically designed to secure the economic stagna:on of the
Protectorate. The Administration was so eager to ‘ar.Jce to any tune the Union cared to pipe that it seemed never tj have perceived that its aim in encouraging migrant labour to
produce taxes, was destructive of its attempts to preserve an outmoded tribal system.' Unfavourable comparisons were even drawn between Britain's failure to develop the country and the Union's development of the Transkei. One immediate social result was malnutrition and an increase in disease. G. F. Orde Browne, the weas known expert on Native labour, said that the inference was that the population was compelled by grave economic pressure to seek wage-paying labour, while their i 

physique rendered the s domg= yand nsoritteol m
The diagnoses were indeed gloomy and ooisen i to be the remedy? Could Gover n e f this together, and work to recover themselves from their 'common calamity' as Sir Alan pim (not a man to use such a word lightly) was to describe it?3 together,

There was no question of a remedy being sought' Towards the end of 1928 Chief Tshekedi visited the High Commissioner's Office to discuss a minor matter over which there had been some disagreement. In the course of the interview one official reprimanded him, pointing out that if he did not do as he was told, he could be removed from the chiefNot long after he was asked to see the Imperial Secretary, chief adviser on High Commission Territories to the High , Commissioner, Lord Athlone. Captain the Hon. Bede Clifford,' a tall, gaunt man, told him that the Government advocated mining development in the Bamangwato reserve where I geologists had indicated the probability of coal and other] minerals. To the Government it was an obvious remedy, but it was a drastic one, implying an alien infiltration, and a vast i social upheaval. Many years earlier, in 1893, Khama had granted a concession to the British South Africa ComrpaY However, whe he had found that it was unsatisfactory he bad asked the British Government to help to terminate it. They

obtained legal advice but nothing further was done until aftC4his death when Chief Sekgoma had taken the matter up, l''

be given some reassurance. Tshekedi had not yet had time to: pursue the matter further. Now he was suddenly confronte.
1 Leonard Barnes, 7e Star, August 1931, November 1933. m e
See Chapter 9. ..n m
1 Later Sir Bede Clifford, G.C.M.G., Governor and onmandcr" Chief, Bahamas, 1932-7. 62
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with a virtual fait accompli for he was informed that the Government had already improved and revised the original concession and that the British South Africa Company had accepted the revision. He was advised to accept it and was assured that, in so doing, he would be carrying out his father's wishes. Tshekedi, to put it in his own words, did not see eye to eye with the Government. He refused to sign it and went away to study the case.
As was customary when Government put any matter of importance to the Chief, Tshekedi reported back to the headmen and people and there was mounting dismay. The men in the tribe knew the effects of rapid mining development in the Transvaal; the flow of white prospectors, technicians and miners; the loss of land, the breakdown of family life. Tshekedi's remedy for the ills of his country was steady development of cattle ranching, improvement of agriculture and, basic to these, of education. He was not averse to mining as such, but felt that it should come when the people themselves could welcome it, and on their own terms. He thought that the terms of the revised draft agreement were unfavourable to the tribe and that if he agreed to it he would betray them.
He went to Kuruman in the Cape, to ask an old friend for advice. The Rev. A. E. Jennings was a stout, short, pugnacious man, his features as blunt as his manner, dark moustache above a humorous mouth that curled up on one side as if he were invariably debating what his next step should be. His colleagues respected even when they did not agree with him. Occasionally, people who did not know him were put off by a pompous note, but he was regarded with affection and trust by many Africans. He had been missionary in Serowe at the time of Tshekedi's birth and although he had moved to stations in other parts of the Protectorate and the Cape, he kept in touch with Bamangwato affairs. He had a flair for the law and offered to accompany Tshekedi to Cape Town to introduce him to an advocate who sometimes advised the London Missionary Society, Douglas Buchanan, K.C. Buchanan, who was to be an important figure in Tshekedi's life, was the son of Sir John Buchanan, a judge, and grandson of the Scottish missionary, David Mudie. At St. John's College, Cambridge, he took an Honours degree in the Mathematical tripos and in London qualified as a barrister of the Inner Temple. He represented Transkei Africans in the South African Parliament and his office in the centre of Cape Town, near the House of Assembly and the High Commissioners office, was always busy. As a boy he had met Chief Khama on his way to see Queen Victoria and was intrigued to meet the
In February 1929 Tshekedi and Jennings arrived. Buchanan later described their meeting: 'There appeared in my chambers a member of the London Missionary Society together with a young African. Knowing Tshekedi as I do today, I should have written "Tshekedi appeared with his missionary". Certainly on that day he was a very shy young man with a marked stutter.' Tshekedi took at once to the tall, sunburnt man with lively blue eyes and warm smile. Not only was there a feeling of mutual confidence but the two men matched each other in energy.
Tshekedi came straight to the point: could the concession with the British South Africa Company be cancelled? Buchanan was doubtful but said he would study Khamapa's original concession. Jennings accompanied Tshekedi to see Captain Clifford, thought the Imperial Secretary seemed sympathetic to the cancellation or modification of the original agreement, and hoped that good relations had now been established. By the time they returned to their respective homes, Buchanan had given his opinion: that the concession could be terminated on reasonable notice. He suggested to Tshekedi that he give one year's notice. When they subsequently received a copy of the original legal opinion obtained by the Administration at Chief Khamapa's request, and sent to Chief Sekgoma in 1923, they found that the Government legal adviser, Advocate R. Feetham, had reached a similar conclusion. The then Resident Commissioner, Sir James Macgregor, had told Chief Sekgoma that the Secretary of State would take the matter up with the British South Africa Company, and consequently the Company's Report for 1924 stated that the Minister had intimate that mining operations in Native Reserves were undesirable to the interests of the Natives. Tshekedi, who knew of this Report, had assumed that this was still Government policy. He resolved to get a statement of that policy in writing.

Later Judge of the Appellate Division of the Union. Formerly arbitrator for boundary between N. Ireland and Eire. A

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He paid several more visits to Cape Town in 1929, accompanied always by the stalwart Jennings. Together with Buchanan they had long and increasingly strained interviews with officials there. The Bamangwato in kgotla had instructed Tshekedi to cancel the agreement and to refuse to allow mining. However, when he was verbally assured that it was His Majesty's Government's new policy to insist on mining development, he agreed to discuss the terms of a new draft agreement. He was officially told that even if the tribe could, as Buchanan and Feetham had advised, cancel the old concession, the Government would still have to allow mining to proceed. Tshekedi and his advisers tried on several occasions to get a statement of Government policy in writing, but all they got was a letter from the High Commissioner expressing the opinion that the new draft agreement was fair and equitable.

Tshekedi told Buchanan and Jennings that if it were indeed the policy of Government to insist on mining, he would, of course, have to agree, but he was not convinced of this. He believed that if he could explain the views of the tribe and himself to the Secretary of State and to the British people, Ohev would see reason. The tribe was eager that he should Make this appeal. In kgotla he had been told: 'Your father went to England to seek protection. Now it is for you to go overseas about this mining question.' He replied: 'I hear what you say but I have
no money and is not a small question and will involve expense for travelling. And for legal advice.'

The assurance was: 'No. We will shoulder the expense.'

There was another reason for trying to see the Secretary of state: the other senior chiefs, Sebele II and Bathoen II, 'hared his grave concern about the situation in the Union where 'le new Prime Minister, J. B. Hertzog, had introduced laws subject further the non-whites. Tshekedi wanted to express 1.r depth of the Bechuana fear of incorporation and get some reassurance from the Secretary of State himself.

By this time the Imperial Secretary had toured the Ba manzwato Reserve with a geologist and his enthusiasm for mineral development was increased. Buchanan wrote to him: 'If you think that an interview with the High Commissioner might be active in postponing the introduction of mining . . . we

The Regent would welcome same, but if you regard this as a waste of time, it seems that the only alternative would be for the Chief to proceed to London to interview the Secretary of State.'

Meanwhile, at the request of Tshekedi and his two advisers, the London Missionary Society had reported the Bamangwato's apprehensions and objections directly to the Dominions Office. Apparently this, with Buchanan's letter, precipitated interviews with the High Commissioner himself for Lord Athlone saw Tshekedi twice in August. Tshekedi was accompanied by his 'ears and memory', Thankane Mathloame, and by two African secretaries.

The High Commissioner asked why the Bamangwato should object to mining when so many of them went to the Witwatersrand mines, Tshekedi replied: 'My people are working at the mines yet they dislike mining in their own country and they say I am selling their country. Just as other people leave their countries to seek work, not wishing their homes to be taken away from them.' He quoted Advocate Feetham's legal opinion and the assurances given to Chief Sekgoma.

Lord Athlone said if he wished to end the concession he must take it up with the Company, but their legal adviser, Lord Simon, had advised that the Chief had no power to cancel or shorten the concession. He went on to read a memorandum reviewing the discussions between the Imperial Secretary, representatives of the Company, Jennings, who read it later, could not help noticing that it gave to Government all the credit for the improvements on the original draft concession, whereas these were the outcome of strenuous fighting by Buchanan, Tshekedi and himself.'

Another missionary who arrived in Bechuanaland at this
time was to sympathize with the Chief and tribe in their dilemma, The Rev. J. H. L. Burns, a tall, slight, handsoll' Scot, and his modest wife, had been doubtful of their reception by Tshekedi who had appealed to the London Missionary Society against the transfer of the previous incumbent, because he and the tribe were happy with Mr. Lewis, and he felt tribal dissensions and denominational splits would be difficult for a newcomer to understand. Burns need not have worried.

1 Letter of May 14, 1929.
2 Notes of August 7 and 9, 1929.

'Who Was That Young African?' as soon as he and Tshekedi got to know one another they became friends. Jennings introduced them to each other at Palapye station. When Burns asked Tshekedi about the state of the crops his nervous stammer disappeared and he spoke with gravity: he was much worried because the rains had been poor, the land was parched and the crops dangerously thin. Burns became vividly aware of the controversy between the Imperial Administration and Tshekedi and the tribe when Lord Athlone visited Serowe to open the new hospital. The original outlay had been C700 given by Chief Sekgoma and

the tribe to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, during his visit in 1924, for mhago (customary food for the journey). The Prince had increased this to Ci,000 to be used towards Serowe's first hospital. The opening ceremony was typical of such formal celebrations: first, the Chief's herald called from Serowe hill; the people-Bamangwato and European-assembled, led by Queen Semane, with Chief Sekgoma's widow, Tebogo, and his son and heir, Seretse. Tribal regiments, wearing a variety of uniforms (including kilts) lined the roads along which Lord Athlone and H.R.H. Princess Alice drove, to be greeted on arrival by Chief Tshekedi and cries of 'Pula!' from the crowd. The children sang and there were speeches.

Lord Athlone spoke about the building of the hospital and his hope that the tribe would support it and co-operate with the medical officers instead of relying on their own doctors. Suddenly he began to make references to the failure of the Bamangwato to take the advice of the officials, and their tendency to resist progress. 'I tell you,' the Earl said, in his courteous manner, 'that unless you progress you will become weak and poor and your land will be taken over and worked by more industrious tribes... you will be overwhelmed as the natives of North America and Australia,... I wish to remind you now that I think you Bamangwato are progressing too slowly. Unless you make proper use of your land, ploughing and digging well and working the minerals, others will drift into our country who are not so lazy and they will displace you.' At this point Tshekedi, his
face like thunder, crumpled the rites which he had prepared in anticipation of a social speech on a social occasion, and thrust them into his pocket. He was angry with Lord Athlone, for he could not believe that he had written the speech. The High Commissioner continued his

The Regent's strictures unless they listened to Government they would become poor like the Bushmen; if they listened to Government they would become better than other tribes, 'and as civilization advances upon you it will not find you unprepared like cattle that have not been inoculated.'

After this unhappy comparison Lord Athlone thanked the tribe for their present to his wife and himself on their silver wedding anniversary, and proceeded to congratulate Chief Tshekedi on his work for the tribe and for the very good hut tax collections.'

Tshekedi made an impromptu reply, in which he maintained that the Bamangwato were making steady progress, and added: 'Europeans took many years to be what they are today. Formerly they lived in caves and wore skins just as the forefathers of the Bamangwato did and now we too are on the way to progress and cannot attain it in a day. But we are going on slowly and surely.' Tshekedi and his friends felt that Lord Athlone took these remarks in good part. Lord Athlone's speech is still deplored by members of the tribe who were present but who, like Tshekedi, did not hold the High Commissioner himself responsible for its content. Oddly, however, his biographer seemed to think it necessary to defend him and 'said: 'These were not the words of a ruthless land-grabber threatening to despoil a subject race, they were paternal words of advice to a tribe inclined to be lazy and truculent, who were being deliberately misled by enemies of the Government to:

their own detriment.' 2 The Annual Report for Bechuanaland had a doubtless unconscious moment of humour when it recorded that the speech was well received.

After the ceremony Lord Athlone called Tshekedi aside to tell him that the Dominions Office saw no reason for a personal interview with him because the High Commissioner could settle the mining questions, and the incorporation of Bechualand in South Africa was not contemplated. Tshekedi said he would appreciate the latter assurance in writing.

Towards the end of 1929 the Imperial Secretary reported the Resident Commissioner, Lieut.-Col. R. M. Daniel. He said he found Tshekedi disinclined to take the High Commissioners' advice-truculent, sulky and capricious. He added that the speech on October 6, 1929.

2 M. E. Sara, The Rt. Hon. the Earl of Athlone, p. 217. Stanley Paul 'Who Was That Young African?' Magistrate had said Tshekedi was not consulting the kgotla and was acting independently in opposing the mining concession. Therefore, he continued, the
Resident Commissioner must himself call a kgotla as it would be most unfortunate if, owing to the caprice of a man like Tshekedi, the British South Africa Company's offer were refused. Colonel Daniel, a very tall, solid, rather quiet man, replied in spirited terms. He said that Tshekedi was most careful not to do anything for which he would not be able to account in a satisfactory manner when the time came to relinquish his regency. The tribe had been assembled to consider mining development, and as a whole had rejected it. Colonel Daniel pointed out that the chiefs and people of Bechuanaland had always regarded 'advice' from the High Commissioner in the popular sense and meaning of that word and, while giving due weight to it, considered they were free to decide on what they considered most in their own interests. It was different where the High Commissioner had actually issued instructions and once Tshekedi had been told that something was an order from the High Commissioner, he loyally accepted it. The Resident Commissioner gave warning of the tenacity with which the Natives held to their privilege to rule themselves under the tribal system. It was possible that a good deal of what might appear to be disinclination to accept the advice of the High Commissioner was in reality their endeavour, after many years of experience, to maintain their independence and follow their own laws and customs. Any intention to alter this system would be most revolutionary. Colonel Daniel said that he thought Tshekedi was one of the best chiefs in the Protectorate. He did not drink nor squander his own or the tribal funds; his whole outlook was for the good of his tribe. He had made a record hut tax collection; successful progress in education; had obtained the consent of his tribe to increase Native Fund Tax; and had agreed to bear the cost of the agricultural census in the Jamangwato reserve. He and the headmen were improving their stock by importing good bulls, and the price for slaughter at the Johannesburg abattoir had been higher for Bama. The tribe were building rented or earth dams and doing much to establish the dairy. Colonel Daniel quoted the Magistrate as saying that Tshekedi a. always polite. In conclusion he said that his action in 69.

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remaking the road from Serowe to Mahalapye, so that the High Commissioner could travel comfortably during his recent visit, was an act of respectful hospitality and not suggestive of an obstructive or sulk' native'.

Colonel Daniel's term of office was about to come to an end, but before he left he recommended that Tshekedi be allowed to go to the United Kingdom because this would be the only way of restoring his confidence in the British administration. The new Resident Commissioner gave powerful reinforcement to the desire for rapid mining development. Colonel Charles Rey, a small, brisk man with a bristling moustache and a reputation for being a hustler, was shocked by the stagnation into which Bechuanaland had sunk, both through its meagre resources
and the Administrations lack of i e had never come across such a neglected country. He was filled
with a sense of mission to raise it quickly on to a sounder * economic basis and to
improve the lot of the Bechuana, and he quickly accepted that this could best be
done by minig
development in the Bama gwato reserve. He overrode the
tribe's obvious antagonism, and a warning from Lord Lugard
about the evils that flowed from white prospectors pouring
into an Africanl countryIn the meantime Tshekedi’s resolve to go to England had
been intensified by another issue which had arisen. The two Ratshosa brothers
who had fired on the kgotla in 1926, on
appeal, had their ten years' sentences reduced to four yea 1. 4 Simon and his
brother John had each brought actions against .
Tshekedi personally for 5oo damages. When the Admiistraj "
tive Court dismissed these, they appealed to the special Court, whic, ounertri_.-.
Duncan,2 the new President, reversed the.
judgment and on September 20, 1929, awarded them damages Tshekedi proposed
to appeal against Duncan's judgment to tbe:>I Privy Council. This would take him
to London, and as he was, also dissatisfied with the calibre of some of the local
AdminiSt). -#.t ion, he thought he could discuss possible improvements withA.,
the Dominions Office. All this he put to the High Commission-r,.i
-though- Jennings- doubted .the wisdom of raising the latter.
problem.
The Imperial Secretary's response should have been
I Later Sir Charles Rey.
2Later Sir Patrick Duncan, first South African-born Goveror-Gencr
70

"Who Was That Young African?"
derrent: Patrick Duncan’s judgment, he said, had been very carefully thought
over and there was no chance of an appeal. But to Tshekedi obstacles were
hurdles to be cleared. He went ahead and the Privy Council accepted the case.
Immediately, however, he had to return to Cape Town, and in January 1930 was
again trying to get it stated in black and white that mining development was, in
fact, Government policy. As a last resort he wrote to the High Commissioner’ that
he confessed to feeling from verbal interviews and to some extent from' Lord
Athlone's speech at the hospital opening, that the Government was putting
pressure on him to induce him to sign the draft agreement, Therefore, in spite of
having been advised that an interview with the Secretary of State was undesirable,
he would be 'leaving the coasts of Africa' on February 7, 1930, to go and register
the views of his tribe and himself at the Dominions Office.
While this letter, innocent as a small stick of dynamite, was on its way to the High
Commissioner's office, Captain Clifford was telephoning Buchanan to say that if
Tshekedi would not sign the new concession, there was no alternative but to allow
the British South Africa Company to mine under the old agreement. He himself
would call the tribe together and tell them this, and would issue an enabling
proclamation. As for the Ratshosa appeal, he gave the opinion that no court in the
world would hold that it was right to go and burn down people's houses, and the
decision would rest on the whole question of the powers of the chiefs, and he had
orders from England to define these. He concluded that it was a damn fool thing
that it should have gone before the Privy Council.'

The climax came on the following day. Tshekedi's letter arrived: he was sent for
by the High Commissioner. Buchanan was forbidden to accompany him.
Jennings was allowed to attend as interpreter only and provided he did not speak.
Thankane Mathloame was there as ears and memory. Lord Athlone saw them
alone. We have Tshekedi's account of the interview: first, the High Commissioner
referred to the Ratshosa case. Tshekedi had told him that *although His
Excellency had expressed personal doubts of his chances of
-psetting Duncan's judgment, he felt it out of the question to
-Letter of January 22, 1930.
'Note by D.B., January 23, 1930.

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th such a judgment passed against him, and he rest satisfied wi t to appeal to the
Privy Council. Lord had no alternative but all woP.... , uld be very pleased
Athlone commented that he person if Tshekedi won his appeal.
He went on to discuss Tshekedi's letter alleging that pressure had been put on
him. Tshekedi handed to him a second letter iadeen hic t had been even more
concisely and forcibly in which this had sene o en for the Imperial
formulated. Lord Athlone promptly sent for e ied Secretary, and showed him
the letter. Captain Clifford denied that it represented the Government's views but
Tshekedi refused to withdraw it, Clifford asked if he would do so if the High
Commissioner wrote explaining the position. Tshekedi did not
reply. Clifford said Tshekedi's action was tantamount to saying Government was
telling a lie. Tshekedi answered: 'What I
have said, I have said, and it cannot be changed about.' He i
then referred to Clifford's recent announcement that chiefs' powers were to be
defined and said he wished to put his views before the Secretary of State. Clifford
said that this should
be done to the High Commissioner, and added that it was -l
necessary that chiefs should not have such wide powers as to burn other people's
houses. Tshekedi replied: 'We are not a conquered tribe, and the Government,
well knowing ourmilitary weakness, promised to work with the chiefs and not
define our powers.' Captain Clifford pointed out that chiefs in Uganda had not
been conquered yet their powers had been
defined. Tshekedi said he was prepared for such definition butwanted the
opportunity to discuss it first. Clifford remarked
that his insistence on seeing the Secretary of State showed lack of confidence in
the High Commissioner. Tshekedi retorted !
that he'd heard the Imperial Secretary saying so on severaloccasions and it was a
serious charge.
A more detailed report of what followed was given in Buchanan's chambers afterwards, Tshekedi and Thankane walked into his room. Tshekedi could not keep a slight smile off his face. Buchanan asked what had happened. Tshekedi turned to Thankane and said: 'Tell Mr. Buchanan what happened.' Thankane went off like a gramophone, putting on the voice and striking the attitude of whoever was speaking.

It began something like this:

High Commissioner: 'Chief, it seems to me you don't trust us,' Record of January 24, 1930.

'Who Was That Young African?'

Tshekedi: 'Your Excellency, not only do I trust you but I and my people love you and the members of the Royal Family. We have only to know what is your wish and we will do it immediately.'

There followed a short discussion that was marked by Tshekedi's bluntness and Lord Athlone's tolerance. It ended on a friendly note:

High Commissioner (pushing back his chair and getting up): 'Tsha! Tsha! there must be some misunderstanding somewhere, let's have some tea.'

Three days later Tshekedi at last received in writing, and from the High Commissioner himself, the statement he had frequently requested over twelve months. It said that the Government could not terminate Khama's agreement with the British South Africa Company, only Tshekedi as his successor could, and if he wished to, the proper course was to give twelve months' notice. He was assured that a new mining proclamation that had caused him concern would not take away the Bamangwato's rights over minerals. Lord Athlone wrote: 'I wish you to understand quite clearly that the Government has never brought and does not intend to bring any pressure to bear on you.' The letter ended with a stern reproof, asking Tshekedi to withdraw the letter he had handed to the High Commissioner with its 'distortions'.

Having got a clear enunciation of Government policy, Tshekedi withdrew this offending letter. Lord Athlone gave him permission to go to London. At the time of one of the sessions between Tshekedi and the High Commissioner, Margery Perham, who had gone out from Oxford University to study colonial affairs, called in at the office in Cape Town. She was on her way upstairs when she heard someone crashing down towards her. She quickly stepped aside to avoid being knocked over, and a young African bounded by, two steps at a time. She went on up to find several Wilting officials sitting at desks littered with papers. 'Who was that young African?' she asked. Their reply came as a groan, 'Tshekedi Khama.' When she met Tshekedi a few weeks later in Serowe he asked: 'Isn't it true that the banks of England and America bury gold in their vaults and it is never used?'

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'Yes! rto
'Well then, why can't we save all the expense and effort of digging it up? Why can't geologists simply assess more or less what is under the soil and then leave it there as a buried asset to that country?'

CHAPTER 6
First Appeal to Britain
On February 28, 1930, Tshekedi, Jennings and three African followers, among them Thankane, sailed for England. Laurens van der Post, who interviewed him for a Cape Town newspaper, says Tshekedi was one of the most impressing young people he ever met: sensitive, intelligent, imaginative, hopeful and full of courage. Tshekedi was naturally excited at the prospect of seeing the great country, and especially London, to him the seat of justice. He was also proud to be making the journey his father had made, in search, as his father had been, of protection from an alarming threat.

Soon after their arrival he met John Harris, Secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society, the organization that had shown a consistent interest in the affairs of his people. Harris suggested that a gathering of people to advise Tshekedi should take place in a room in the House of Commons, to which Tshekedi replied that he thought it better to meet privately because 'I don't know anything about the Government of England but my native [Senwato] feeling is that Lord Passfield might think that I had no confidence in him and might not feel sympathy with my case as a result of this. I am of opinion that I can judge for myself what attitude the Secretary of State takes . in the course of discussions and this will then enable me to see what action is necessary.'

It might be supposed that it was fortunate that the first Secretary of State Tshekedi should encounter was a Labour Minister, Lord Passfield, formerly Sidney Webb. However, it was soon evident that the Minister had been well briefed by the Ifigh Commissioner's office. At their first interview, when the mining concession was discussed, Lord Passfield told Tshekedi that he was acting foolishly and had been badly advised: he referred back to Lord Simon's advice that the concession could not be cancelled without the consent of the concessionaires.

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which they refused to give. It was a most unsatisfactory meeting and Tshekedi had been in London only a short time when Lord Passfield pointedly suggested that he catch a ship within a week as it was inexpedient for a Chief to be absent from his tribe longer than was necessary. Tshekedi replied politely but firmly that he was concerned with his appeal before the Privy Council and must remain. He trusted the Secretary of State would not interfere with his liberty which would be the case if he were ordered to return. Lord Passfield did not insist.

For the Privy Council case Tshekedi and Jennings had attended a first consultation with counsel at 7 Fig Tree Court, in the Temple. Geoffrey Lawrence, K.C., led F. O. Langley and Lance Mallalieu.2 Mallalieu remembered their first meeting as a great experience. Before the leader came down to the business of asking him some details about the case, the young Chief remarked, 'I would like
just to say something to you. I know that in this country I am a very small man: in this room even'-and he looked at Mallalieu, aged twenty-five and obviously a beginner-'I am the smallest.' Then he added, in a shy manner, 'But I want you to know that in my own country I am a very important person.' Mallalieu felt it was the simple truth of the latter part that added to the attractiveness of the remark and the way in which it was made.

Tshekedi's case was that he had ordered the burning of the Ratshosa houses in accordance with native law and custom and that it was necessary for the peace and good government of the territory. When the papers had first come into the counsels' chambers they had caused quite a stir for the barristers were eager and curious to read the story of the far-off land, to follow the workings of its constitution, and learn about native law and custom to which the fiat of British law had, in certain circumstances, been given. They had never heard of Tshekedi, and only vaguely knew of Khama the Great. At first it looked as if it might be difficult to justify his strong measures, but, Mallalieu says: 'We need not have worried. Every detail of constitutional procedure had been carefully followed by Tshekedi: native law and custom had been scrupulously-1 Afterwards Lord Oaksey who presided over the Nuremberg trials after 4

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almost over-observed in an effort to avoid what proved to be the only way of dealing with the rebellion, for such it was. Although Tshekedi gave the orders, it was the "paramount chief in kgotla" which made the decisions. Doubtless Tshekedi did much to guide the kgotla: but he never did anything without its authority.'

It is simpler to complete the story at this point, although the hearing only began in October 1930, after Tshekedi's return to Bechuanaland, and was then adjourned until 1931 to enable the Attorney-General to appear to assist the Privy Council. Mr. Wilfrid Lewis appeared for the Dominions Office in an intervention which led to an amusing exchange. He explained that he was not appearing for the Appellant or for the Respondent, but the substance of his evidence was that the Dominions Office maintained that if the custom of the burning of houses of rebels was properly proved to be a custom, then it was a bad one. He emphasized that some of the Ratshosa houses were made of brick and stone, and were not just huts. Furthermore, they were in a town of 30,000 inhabitants (Serowe). Their Lordships cross-examined him:

Lord Tomlin: 'I do not know that that makes any difference.' Lord Blanesburgh: 'It would be all the easier to localize the fire.'

Lord Tomlin: 'The more the town is built of stone, the safer this custom will be.'
Mir. Lewis: 'The reason for that is-I am saying this on instructions-that they allow
the burning of a kraal out in the country in order to be able to compel the
recalcitrant owner to come into the town where they can keep their eye upon
him.'

Lord Blanesburgh: 'Do I understand you to say that this custom
is only bad in parts, and in some places may be completely justified?'

Mr. Lewis: 'No, my Lord. The custom of burning houses in a town without
removing the furniture or anything else, in the view of the Dominions Office, is a
custom which is not compatible with peace, order and good government.'

Lord Tomlin: 'Do I understand you to say that the burning of houses, if you have
moved the contents., is compatible with peace, order and good government?'

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Mr. Lewis: 'No, my Lord, not when it is in a town and in
circumstances such as only saying what he had been and he reiterated that he
was in the Dominions Office and the instructed to say was the view of the
High Commissioner:

Lord Tomlin: 'Am not quite sure that the Dominions Office
are entitled to have any view at all about what is compatible with peace, order
and good government. That seems to me from the local authority-
to make pur( July allo ord afte hez we Si ag an e d
T ix I

a
c
s
be essential a V th ... ic Secretary of State, the High Commissioner and the e rial
Secretary, had disapproved of Tshekedi's decision to e the appeal, although they
made it clear that this was
ely a matter of opinion, and not of advice. However, on 10, 193T, the Judicial
Committee of the Privy Council > wed Tshekedi's appeal. Their LordshiPs said
that he had ered the burning of the dwellings in his capacity as Chief, er
consulting and with the approval of the councillors and
dmen of the tribe assembled at the kgotla. Their Lordships re of opinion that the
undisputed facts of the case showed that on and Obedtse Ratshosa took part in an
armed rebellion A
ainst the Chief and attempted to murder him by shooting, d that John was acting
in concert. They added that the idence was clear that by custom of the tribe an act
of armed : bellion was punishable by death and by the burning of the
wellings and property of those taking part in such rebellion, 'he councillors and
headmen had been unanimous in approving the orders of the Chief to burn the
houses of the culprits. however, their Lordships made it plain that they did not
approve of the Chief's action and said the custom was not compatible with peace,
order and good government. They suggested that administrative action on the part
of the High Commissioner could prevent a repetition.'

At a final interview with Lord Passfield, Tshekedi was give, the major assurance
that he wanted: If the existing concessIO "I, w e cancelled, the Government
would respect the tribes ownership of mineral rights under the Protection agreement's and would not insist on mining taking place. Tshekedi ha The Times Law Report, July 11, 1931.

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the Minister. With regard to the threat of incorporation, Tshekedi was promised that Britain would not hand over the Protectorate without submitting the question to the Bechuana. Lord Passfield also informed him that the Government proposed to establish chiefs' courts on a proper footing: the Ratshosa case had emphasized the need for some statutory provision.

On their last day in London, Tshekedi's party was given a reception in Livingstone House. He spoke of his visit. Apart from a few days in Scotland, during five weeks he had attended a debate in the House of Commons, met African students in universities and learned some of their difficulties, and visited Livingstone's tomb in Westminster Abbey. He had been especially interested in the Underground and its escalators. His outstanding impression arose from the fact that: 'Neither I nor my followers have once been discriminated against. We have never experienced a single act of incivility or unkindness. We have never experienced anything like this before, and we shall never forget it.' In conclusion he said: 'Britain regards small tribes and nations as worth upholding. Britain loves us and we desire nothing but love between ourselves and our rulers.'

Back at home he and his advisers decided not to give notice to the British South Africa Company but to see how satisfactory an agreement they could reach now that their position had been strengthened by the Secretary of State's assurance. Jennings, who was by this time over sixty, could be well satisfied with his part. He reported to his Society in February 1932 that his efforts were nearing completion and, in addition to the actual agreement, they had done a great deal of concomitant work on the proposed Government regulations to control mining in the Protectorate.

Negotiations between the Bamangwato and the Company extended over two years. Some time before they were concluded the impatient Resident Commissioner announced that largescale mining development was imminent, and yet another official statement, quoted in Johannesburg, said it was confidently hoped that this would result in the influx of a large number of Europeans! "News Chronicle, May 1930.

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In June 1932, the new concession was signed. The perseverance of Tshekedi and his advisers had led him to believe to be the only known instance of an African chief acquiring extra land for his people by peaceful means: "A two strips of land on the Bamangwato border giving access to nearby rivers. The Company also agreed: to give compensation for use of grazing land around cattle posts; to pay the tribe an annual sum (double the amount laid down in the Administration's draft concession); to pay royalties that were slightly higher in some
instances than those paid in respect of mining concessions on Crown Lands; not to employ 'foreign' labour so long as local labour was available, etc.
But it was such an advantageous agreement from the tribal point of view that in 1934 the Company decided to abandon it so that in the end the tribe got the extra land free of any mining concession at all. Four years later Tshekedi negotiated a concession with the Mineral Properties investigation Ltd., but the war prevented further development.
There are two postscripts to the story. Tshekedi was not a man to feel personal animosity, and his later references to the controversy with the Imperial Secretary ranged from the cordial to the rueful. Buchanan believed that Captain Clifford also felt no ill-feeling, but showed his sense of humour after he was promoted to the Governorship of the Bahamas in 1932 by sending Christmas cards to both Tshekedi and himself. As for Lord Athlone, the Bamangwato still speak with admiration of his simplicity and friendliness. Some years after his retirement, he happened to meet Buchanan in London and, after asking how Tshekedi was, remarked, 'I have a great respect for that young man of yours.'

CHAPTER 7
'A Young Volcano'

The long-drawn-out controversy over mining development caused a regrettable diversion from Tshekedi’s main work. One of his first achievements had been the improvement of the school built by his father, the Khama Memorial School, the largest for Africans in the Protectorate. Like his father he paid for its maintenance out of his own pocket, until after several years he instituted school committees. But the provision of qualified teachers and of accommodation could not keep pace with the school's rapid expansion, and in the early 'thirties the number of pupils grew from 574 to 774, though by 1931 only ten of the Bamangwato had been educated beyond Standard 6. The only other tribal school, built by another progressive Regent, Isang Pilane of the Bakgatla, had 244 pupils.

Constructive work was continually impeded by tribal tensions. While Tshekedi was in England a section of the Bakalaka clan in the north, led by John Mswazi, began to agitate for secession from the Bamangwato until an inquiry by the Magistrate brought temporary calm. More immediately serious were the activities of a Motawana (Batawana tribe), Moanaphuti Segolodi, who, after causing trouble in Maun, had been moved to Serowe where he soon began to agitate against Tshekedi’s rule. The Chief warned him in kgotla that if this continued he would be returned to Maun.
One of Moanaphuti’s complaints was against regimental labour. Formerly men's regiments made up the armies of the Tswana; nowadays they serve mainly as a labour force for such public works as road, dam or school building, and the
rounding up of stray cattle. Women's regiments clean villages, thatch, collect water and do lighter tasks. The regiments are formed every few years to include all the young people between the ages of 16-20, newcomers joining their particular age-group.

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so that every adult belongs to a regiment. The old initiation ceremonies having been forbidden by Khama, there is now among the Bamangwato only a simple calling together of the young people eligible for the new regiment by the Chief, who sets its first task, names it and, with some of the elders, gives instruction on adult behaviour. The strong group loyalty among members of each regiment continues throughout their lives and acts as a useful integrating force. Only the Chief can call out an entire regiment, but ward and village headmen can call out local members for public duties. Leaders of regiments (usually members of the royal family) are responsible for discipline and for punishment, though public opinion can usually deal with the lazy.

At the end of 1929 Chief Tshekedi had called up regiments to build a dam at Serowe. It was a colossal task made urgent by the imminent rains and some of the men, including Moanaphuti Segolodi, to evade the work went off to their cattle posts. Regimental leaders therefore sent out detachments to bring in and to punish the truants. The detachments met with some resistance and, according to Moanaphuti, assaulted people unnecessarily. Consequently on October 19, 1930, he and seven others joined in a petition to the Government alleging 'wrongs, tortures and grievances' perpetuated by the Chief and his representatives, and calling for direct rule by the British Government because they were living under 'slavery and oppression'. A counter-petition was drawn up by Peter Sebina, a sub-chief of the Bakalaka clan, and Bamangwato tribal secretary, and public opinion rose against Moanaphuti when his petition was discussed in kgotla. According to Moanaphuti himself, the whole tribe, except his few partners, hated him.' Within a few weeks the British Administration had set up a Commission of Inquiry and after a twelve-day sitting, Captain Nettelton, the conscientious Resident Magistrate of Serowe, gave his findings. He said the petitioners were mostly agitators (Moanaphuti, for instance, had caused trouble in every reserve he had been in), and he had no doubt that the Raditladis and Ratshosas were also involved behind the scenes. He opined that quite a number of people were dissatisfied with tribal rule as exercised by Tshekedi and some of his headmen, and were afraid to speak freely. He himself believed tribal labour to be healthy for the men and in the nature of compulsory military service, but trouble arose when a cruel or vindictive man led a regiment. He found that some of the allegations were untrue or exaggerated, and discounted the evidence of three men. However, he supported criticisms of the flogging of women in public and of
sentences of flogging imposed on certain civilized and respectable men. Generally speaking, it was aspects of tribal law and custom, particularly when abused by certain regimental leaders or headmen, that came in for stricture. But in particular Captain Nettelton condemned Tshekedi two or three times for being 'malicious and vindictive' because, in refuting the petitioners, he had revived events of twenty years earlier, and had tried one of the petitioners in kgotla for an offence committed eleven years before. Tshekedi, he feared, had appeared at his worst form in the course of the inquiry.

Tshekedi was disappointed in the Government, which he felt had failed to show confidence in his chieftainship by inviting evidence generally from the tribe, instead of confining the inquiry to the eight petitioners: a reaction that had been anticipated with some concern by Lord Athlone but discounted by the Resident Commissioner.

Despite his previous warning, he did not banish Moanaphuti. A few months later the latter proceeded, along with several other men including his brother-in-law, Disang Raditladi, and Simon Ratshosa from his exile, to make renewed allegations, this time to a wider audience, for they reached the British and South African public through three well-known visitors to Bechuanaland, William Ballinger and Margaret Hodgson from Johannesburg, and Leonard Barnes from Oxford. Barnes gave a vivid account of Tshekedi's 'little reign of terror' saying he had installed his 'creatures' as councillors, 'making' them by gifts of wealth and flogging and exiling his opponents. He concluded: 'Chiefly rule, as at present conducted, involves considerable ill-treatment of the people, and is a definite brake on social, political and economic progress, and in the main it is backed up by the Government.... As far as Serowe is concerned, the Government is evidently sitting on a young volcano.'

Disang Raditladi (one of the men whom Tshekedi trusted and on whom he relied for advice) had complained that he had forfeited his rank and that Tshekedi had taken his servants; the Mswazi complaints about Bamangwato rule had been referred to; other royal relatives accused the Chief of usurping servants and complained that he was not consulting them and was using commoners as his advisers. Barnes wrote: 'Many royal headmen, who traditionally would be the chief's closest advisers, are ignored or persecuted by the chief. The opposition dates back to the days of Khama...'. The Ballingers write that in justice to Tshekedi they must point out that he had not expected to be Chief and was not trained, his education had not been completed, and there had been rival candidates for the chieftainship, while loyalty to a regent was seldom as complete as to a Chief. It was 'difficult to see how he could (even if he knew how to) institute an era of reform and enlightened government, for what has been put into his hand he has in a few years to give back intact.' The fact that they did not discuss the complaints put to them openly in kgotla distressed Tshekedi. He himself had been away at the time, but there were many people, including royal headmen, who could have discussed or refuted some points. For instance, there
was no such thing as a system of councillors among the Bamangwato. Any member of the tribe could advise the chief, and there were certain people whom he consulted more than others—they might be near relatives or not. He naturally relied primarily on those whose loyalty was assured. The word 'councillor' was simply used for convenience.

Tshekedi wrote to one of the principal informants:

'There is a firm belief in the minds of our officials that the young Chiefs of today have enormous autocratic powers which they use to better themselves and not their tribes. I know how and this belief gained currency, and had our officials been a little further seeing they would have made allowances for the relationship existing between the Chiefs and their "confidential" advisers. It is the same belief which is the underlying principle guiding Ballinger and Hodgson in describing the conditions in the Protectorate. These people are very sympathetic towards t

3 I, Schapera, A Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom, p. 75.

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the Natives, and one cannot help realizing that their publications are well intentioned, but unfortunately for them they have been so badly advised and informed of the conditions in this country. You have been one of their principal advisers on questions affecting the Protectorate and had it not been for the relation between us at the time you gave such advices, I am sure you would have advised them better. I do not in the least intend to hurt your feelings, and I have no doubt you will receive my remarks in the spirit in which they are made.'

Tshekedi duly banished Moanaphuti from the Bamangwato country. After a stay in Kanye where he again made himself unpopular, he returned to Maun, where he later died after being attacked by a lion. His name lives on, for today when people are making trouble it is said, 'you are a section of Moanaphuti'.

Another investigation in 1931, and one which Tshekedi welcomed, concerned the traditional system of serfdom of the Masarwa (Bushmen) under the Bamangwato, and the use of corporal punishment under tribal law. Although the Batawana also had Masarwa, and all tribes used corporal punishment, the inquiry was confined to the Bamangwato apparently because they had been in the limelight over the Ratshosa case. The status of the 9,000 or so Masarwa generally was becoming a minor scandal in Britain where it was suspected that this was one of the last vestiges of slavery. Lord Lugard expressed the view that their status, and the use of unsupervised corporal punishment, were indefensible. Mr. E. S. B. Tagart visited the Bamangwato territory for a month in 1931, to be given every assistance by the Chief and leaders of the tribe in his inquiries, for they were anxious that the stigma of 'slavery' should be dispelled, and their system understood. Tshekedi had been particularly criticized for not complying with an instruction from the High Commissioner in 1926, that the Masarwa should be helped to stand on their own feet. He did not see how this could be done in a country where paid employment was almost non-existent, and any suggestions
that their Masarwa servants should be given regular wages and hours were regarded as unrealistic by the Bamangwato, who themselves had no regular wages or hours. They therefore frankly expressed themselves

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in favour of the system under which the Chief and a few wealthy Bamangwato kept Masarwa serfs as servants or cattle herders, and gave them food, shelter, and, from time to time, cattle. But as Tagart pointed out, the giving of cattle depended on the generosity of the master, the Masarwa had no redress against their masters and could only transfer to another with permission and, more serious, a young girl or boy could be separated from the parents. In opposing the regular cash payment of Masarwa, Tshekedi contended-'somewhat disingenuously', Mr. Tagart feared-that they would be worse off since fewer would be employed and the work would be made more exacting. Tagart added that, in fairness, he must point out that feeling among the Masarwa interviewed on this point was lukewarm, and Tshekedi himself had established villages and fields for the Masarwa who supervised his cattle. Tagart's report" affirmed that the Masarwa were not slaves, and their conditions of employment did not as a rule involve excessive hardship. However, their situation was sufficiently unsatisfactory to call for further investigation and he recommended that a census be taken of them, that they should be taxed, allotted land, and be protected by legislation.2

Tshekedi had specially requested the investigation into the use of corporal punishment by Bamangwato tribal authorities. He had once remarked to the Resident Commissioner that the term 'corporal punishment' was used in Britain, while the British called it 'flogging' or 'thrashing' in Bechuanaland. The Sechuana word 'kgwathisa' means 'a beating'. It was widely used as an alternative to a fine, usually for people who could not afford the fine, or who were habitually stealing. The principle was that punishments should be chosen as far as possible to improve the character of the culprit. Under native law it was not restricted to men but included people of any age and either sex, though it was unusual for it to be imposed on

2Proclamations 14 and 15 of 1936 provided some protection, and the Vice-Chairman of the Slavery Committee, League of Nations, stated in 1938 that the British Government, with the co-operation of the Bamangwato, was doing much for 'these primitive aborigines'. (The Spectator, August 19, 1938.) In the same year the London Missionary Society representative in Serowe said he was satisfied that persistent effort was being made for the betterment of the Masarwa. (Letter from Rev. J. H. L. Burns to Sir John Harris, Anti-Slavery Society, December 24, 1938.) 86

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the very young and old. Tagart noted that the Chief's kgotla at Serowe gave comparatively mild punishments of between four to ten strokes of the cane. He said that arguments had been put forward for continuing this form of punishment,
as the only alternative to fines and there being only meagre gaol accommodation far from the kgotlas, but he suggested that these arguments could be met by instituting a system of compulsory labour without pay. He quoted men who had said the system was abused and recommended that only the Chief's kgotla should have power to pass sentences of corporal punishment, subject to certain safeguards.1

It was not long before there was a new imbroglio in the royal family. Kesebonye, who with Moanaphuti had instigated the 1930 petition against Tshekedi, sponsored Gasetshwarwe, Sekgoma's eldest but illegitimate son, in an attempt on the chieftainship. They and some of their immediate supporters were prosecuted for sedition by the Administration, imprisoned or banished.2 Other young chiefs were not immune from these family disputes, and a rival had attempted to wrest the chieftainship of the Bangwaketse from Tshekedi's friend and schoolmate, Bathoen II.

Tshekedi did not suffer fools gladly, and if he thought that a point of view expressed was unwise he said so frankly. Some tribesmen believed that at all costs they should please the Chief, if necessary dissembling. This annoyed him and he demanded facts. But he was particularly impatient with people who used their rank or privileges for selfish purposes. In his relations with officials he reacted sharply to patronage or obstruction. Sometimes he withdrew into himself and became off-hand, sometimes he was coldly polite, and sometimes he ignored the man, going above him to the next level in the hope of getting satisfaction there. This practice was to infuriate several generations of those officials who felt that it undermined the whole British system based on a chain of responsibility, as well as their personal status.

One example occurred, when the question of Seretse's education arose in 1931. Tshekedi told the Administration that he wished to send his nephew to Lovedale as he and several Introduced under Proc. No. 75 of 1934.

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members of the tribe had appreciated the high standard of that institution. Whereupon the Director of Education recommended a Southern Rhodesian school where the natives could have an elementary literary education and could learn carpentry, agriculture, forestry and stock improvements. The official regarded this as more suitable for Seretse than Lovedale with its remarkably high standard of education designed for a situation exotic to Bechuanaland. Tshekedi at once wrote to the High Commissioner' quoting from the report on Higher Education in East, Central and South Africa by the Phelps Stokes Comission-'that the progress and civilization of all nations have required the assistance of other nations, that hermit peoples have usually been stagnated peoples, that the principle of self-determination is an important half-truth, that the complementary half-truth is altruism or brotherhood, which passes on experience and achievements to others' He added that there was a need for acquaintance with the great literatures of the world, knowledge of history and science, if Native leaders were to guide and
direct their people through the perplexing processes of evolution from primitive steps of life to those of civilization.

When the time came, Seretse went to Lovedale.

One side of Tshekedi’s nature was known only to humbler members of the tribe, to his immediate family and one or two close friends among the missionaries and traders, like the Burns’s and the Shaws of Palapye. It was apparent in the unlimited attention and help he would give to ordinary people. If anyone in the village, black or white, were sick or in other trouble he, like his mother, would be sure to offer sympathy and help. The two of them even, on occasion, helped to lay out the bodies of those who had died, and would comfort the bereaved.

One missionary noticed that when an old woman fainted at a gathering in the kgotla, Tshekedi was the first to attend to her, and afterwards drove her home in his car. Buchanan recalled an incident when he was due to leave for an expedition with Tshekedi and Chief Bathoen, early one morning. He reached Tshekedi’s house after breakfast, but to his surprise there was no sign of activity round the cars. Inside he found Bathoen, who pointed through the window at Tshekedi, sitting on a log beside a miserable-looking old woman. Bathoen said: ‘Look at the 1 Letter of November 24, 1931.

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crowd waiting to see him. He has been talking to that old woman for half an hour. You can go for a walk and come back about noon. He won't get away before then.’

Burns and another missionary, the Rev. A. Sandilands, were among many friends who experienced Tshekedi’s hospitality when they went on a long journey on horseback to investigate medical needs in the north. Tshekedi packed Burns’s saddlebags, and was solicitous of their well-being throughout, arranging hot baths for them in the remotest bush. And although he, like the others, was tired after long days in the saddle, he personally superintended the watering of the sixtythree horses and pack mules. Burns recalls Tshekedi, in jodhpurs, down on his knees, scraping mud away from shelving rock with a jack-knife, to break through to water for the thirsty animals.

The Khama household was a happy one, and the Burns’s, who often visited them, observed a characteristic that Tshekedi shared with his mother, a particularly strong sense of humour. Few officials knew of its existence, perhaps because he was reserved or because he was wary of them. He would make a joke or a teasing remark with a solemn face but his shoulders would start to heave until his whole body seemed full of laughter that would begin to surface in a grin, often ending in a peculiar, indescribable jerky sound, somewhere between a chuckle, a titter and broad laughter.

CHAPTER 8
The Navy On Dry Land
arly one Sunday morning on September 10, 1933, the
people relaxing on the beaches of Fishhoek, St. James and Muizenberg in the Cape, were startled to see a naval detachment of 200 sailors and marines, with three guns from the ships at Simonstown, passing by in a train bound, they learned, for the Bechuanaland Protectorate. No one had heard of any trouble there and the spectacle caused some alarm and speculation about what the Navy could possibly do on the edge of the Kalahari. The fact was that the Commander-in-Chief, Admiral E. R. G. R. Evans, R.N. ('Evans of the Broke'), the Acting High Commissioner, had received 'a call for protection from the Magistrate at Serowe' and had immediately rushed a detachment to the north. The Admiral later observed that the 'swift action by the Navy'-the Carlisle only received orders to send up the escort while she was at sea in a gale 200 miles from Simonstown and within two days the escort had gone 1,500 miles-'established a precedent for Imperial troops to be taken through the Union ....'

Tshekedi's legal adviser, Douglas Buchanan, was in his bath that Sunday morning when a guest who was staying with him called out: 'The Navy has gone to Bechuanaland!' He replied, 'Tell it to the horse marines.' However, while he was having breakfast the telephone rang: it was the Legal Adviser to the High Commissioner and Judge of the High Court of the Protectorate. He said Tshekedi was in serious trouble, and asked whether Buchanan would leave by the first train as, if so, they would hold the trial back till he arrived on Wednesday; otherwise it would take place on Tuesday. All that he would tell Buchanan was that it was very serious and that the Administration had offered to procure any counsel Tshekedi liked from

1 Admiral Lord Mountevans, Adventurous Life, p. 196. Hutchinson, 90

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Johannesburg, but he had replied that if he could not have Buchanan, he would defend himself. Buchanan agreed to leave by the Monday train though, as so often happened in his cases with Tshekedi, it was at such short notice as to be most inconvenient.

When he arrived at Cape Town station he was met by a naval officer, and thus described their talk: 'The N.O. was also "seeing red". The naval contingent had been dispatched by special train to Palapye Road without his knowledge or approval and apparently he thought the blame would fall on him. We rapidly discussed how matters could be rectified and I suggested that if Tshekedi had exceeded his authority or done anything wrong I was certain he would admit it, undertake not to do so again, and further reiterate his loyalty to the British Crown. Then the gunners could fire a feu de joie. On the other hand, if Tshekedi had done nothing wrong, wild horses would not compel him to say he had, and I, certainly, would not advise him to say so.' Both Buchanan and Tshekedi had wired to their friends of the London Missionary Society, and Jennings and Burns were awaiting Buchanan at Mafeking. They believed the complaint was that Tshekedi had unlawfully caused a white man to be flogged, but no specific charge had been formulated. They arrived at Palapye station in the small hours of Wednesday morning. The naval train was at a siding. Buchanan, who had become increasingly worried on the journey up, expected to find
Tshekedi sunk in gloom but as they stepped down from the train he hurried forward, in pyjamas and dressing-gown, 'full of beans'. Buchanan told him, 'But this is fearfully serious!' Tshekedi admitted this was so for himself personally but, and his teasing expression came over his face, 'The world will know of the Bamangwato now,' he said.

In reply to a question from Burns, as to what he really thought of it all, he said: 'Isn't it ridiculous? We don't need to be convinced of British power—we know it already.' He told them that the trial was to take place at 10 a.m. that day, but that so far no charge had been served upon him. Buchanan went off at once to ask the senior official in Palapye that the trial be postponed, but he was informed that this was impossible. When he rejoined Tshekedi and Jennings, before the Regent getting a few hours' sleep, they discussed such facts as they had gathered. About a year earlier, Tshekedi had complained to the Administration about two white youths born in the Protectorate, who had persistently misbehaved with African girls. The Resident Magistrate had supported Tshekedi's request that they be removed from the Territory but was then transferred, and the boys remained. When Tshekedi again had cause to complain the new Magistrate told him it was his responsibility to look after the women.

Recently one of the youths had assaulted a young Mongwato. In desperation Tshekedi tried the case in kgotla. After the kgotla he prepared a report for the Magistrate, Captain J. W. Potts, who sent a message of 'utter disapproval' and said Tshekedi's action was in direct conflict with the law of the Territory and would be referred to the Resident Commissioner, for the High Commissioner's consideration. Tshekedi asked the Administration to circulate a letter he had written to the European inhabitants, explaining the incident, to allay any wild rumours. When they refused to do so Peter Sebina, the tribal secretary, went round showing it to each European.

Meanwhile the Resident Commissioner, Colonel Rey, consulted Admiral Evans in Pretoria. The Admiral, in spite of inexperience, had definite ideas. He was to write later: 'The Negro is a great liar, he is naturally lazy, he loves talking ad infinitum... He understands rough justice, but petting and pampering are considered by the native as signs of weakness.' He added that the best workers in the mines and the 'nicest' to deal with were those from Portuguese East Africa and from Swaziland and 'the nastiest are the Bechuana'. He said that from the white political leaders of the Union he obtained 'valuable facts concerning the various Negro races', and his conclusions were: 'What you do realize, as a white man in Africa generally, is that the mosquito, the tsetse-fly, the hookworm and the water parasite are the enemies of the white man, the native his willing servant.'

The Admiral and the Colonel agreed on their action. A policeman was dispatched to serve a warrant on Tshekedi.

Here it is necessary to digress. Shortly before, when Sir
Herbert Stanley, the High Commissioner who had succeeded Lord Athlone, was leaving for England on holiday. Tshekedi

1 Admiral Lord Mountevans, Adventurous Life, pp. 194-5. Hutchinson.

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had realized that during his absence Admiral Evans, the Acting High Commissioner, would be dependent on the advice of local officials, and he was well aware that he was in the black books of some of them. He therefore sent a special messenger to the Cape Town docks with a letter to Sir Herbert asking that His Excellency excuse him for addressing him direct, but it was a matter of great urgency. He said he knew that reports, adverse to himself, had gone to the High Commissioner, and presumably been passed on to the Secretary of State, and he would like to follow Sir Herbert to England to discuss these matters with the Secretary of State in his presence. Sir Herbert replied: 'I assure you that there is no doubt in my mind, or the office of the Administration, as to your loyalty to the King and His Majesty's Government. I assure you that if, as High Commissioner, I should have occasion to make complaints about your conduct in the discharge of the duties of Acting Chief of the Bamangwato, I should not fail to communicate to you the grounds of any such complaint before taking action in the matter.' He added that under the peculiar circumstances he condoned Tshekedi's direct approach. His letter was written on board ship and handed to Tshekedi's messenger for immediate delivery.

When the news of Tshekedi's impending trial spread in Bechuanaland, feeling against the Administration rose rapidly, not only amongst the Africans but also amongst the majority of the whites resident in Bamangwato territory. It was said that one ex-solier who had offered his services to the Administration was actually kicked out of his own house by his irate Irish wife.

On the morning of the trial a big crowd of tribesmen gathered, many of them with weapons concealed under their greatcoats. Tshekedi guessed this and told them to leave the weapons-mostly an odd collection of sticks-at the police station. He also forbade from the trial any men who could not see their Chief insulted without resorting to force. All through the proceedings groups of men, furious at the discourteous treatment meted out to him, could be heard grunting their disapproval before marching away from the site.

Meanwhile representatives of the Press had arrived, expecting from their talks with officials that there would be some alarms and excursions.

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The trial on September 13 was held in the grounds of an official's house at Palapye-a canvas canopy, tables and chairs had been arranged under mimosa trees-and a 'guard of honour' of scores of Marines, wearing steel helmets, with fixed bayonets, stood behind the tables. Machine-guns were trained on the crowds of Bamangwato who squatted outside the fenced garden.

The Resident Commissioner, Colonel Rey, was walking about with a camera. A letter from him, dated September 10, was delivered to Tshekedi just before the
trial began: it told him that he was suspended from the chieftainship and was confined to the police camp at Palapye. For the first time he learnt what the actual charge was: that he had unlawfully ordered the flogging of a white man which had been carried out in pursuance of such order. An official had meanwhile sent for Serogola Seretse, Tshekedi's usual deputy, and had told him that he must assume responsibility. Serogola's reply was that he only took orders from the Chief.

When the Court assembled, Captain Nettelton, who was invited to be an assessor, rose. In a clear quiet voice he asked to be relieved of the duty. (He was the Magistrate who, twelve months before, had recommended the removal of the white youth. He later remarked that had he still been in Serowe at this time, the case would never have arisen.) After a slight altercation his request was granted.

The Presiding Officer, Captain Neale, proceeded to open the case. Buchanan, who with Jennings and Burns was seated beside Tshekedi, promptly got up and stated that he appeared on behalf of the accused. 'To my and everybody else's amazement,' he reported, 'I was told that I would not be allowed to appear, that it was not a judicial but an administrative inquiry. I protested and pointed out that I had come all the way from Cape Town at great inconvenience and expense and at the special request of
the Judge of the High Court; but without avail.

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'The Presiding Officer intervened and said they had had enough of that-it was a court of inquiry and he was not there to answer legal conundrums.'

The youth gave his evidence: on September 6 he had been summoned before the Chief's kgotla on a charge of assault. He said he was found guilty and ordered lashes. He made towards the Chief, in accordance with what he thought was native custom 'to get off the lashes', when 'all the natives jumped on to me and I had lashes'. While he was still going towards the Chief, Acting Chief Serogola 'hit the natives' off him. Next day he was sent for by the Resident Magistrate, who asked if he wanted to take legal action against the Chief. He said 'no'. He was asked if he knew whether it was lawful for the Chief to call him to the kgotla and said he thought it was. He was later examined by a doctor and was told to attend the Commission of Inquiry. He added that it was not the first time that he had
been tried in the kgotla. Under cross-examination by Tshekedi he said he had been satisfied with the judgment.
The medical officer who had examined him said that he had found two weals across his back and shoulder, and blood had flowed from one portion. These could have been inflicted by a sjambok or a light cane.
Tshekedi and others gave evidence of past complaints. He said that as the Administration, despite submission of the complaints to the Resident Commissioner's office in Mafeking, still failed to act, he had felt forced to do so. He contended that he had acted without malice in the public interest and in accordance with good morals, in the honest belief that in his capacity as Chief he was justified from the facts of the case.
During the lunch interval it was pointed out to Tshekedi and Buchanan that a Lewis gun, charged and only about ten yards away, had been aimed directly at them throughout the hearing. 'Evidence of Mr. A. Germond, Clerk to the Magistrate.

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They had been too preoccupied to notice but it had caused great amusement to the onlookers. Buchanan said 'it was not quite so amusing to us when we discovered it.' After lunch he therefore suggested to the sub-lieutenant in charge that he should point the gun elsewhere. The officer's reply was that he was under orders and would Buchanan please not talk to him.
Buchanan felt that the charges as laid had already failed and said: 'When the Court resumed, we were not altogether surprised when the prosecutor came forward with a long string of fresh charges quite unconnected with the "flogging" case. I immediately suggested to Tshekedi that he should ask for a postponement to go into these issues, but he said it was unnecessary. After the new charges had been read out, Tshekedi asked if the High Commissioner, Sir Herbert Stanley, had been informed of these matters before he went on leave, and was promptly told they had been duly reported to Sir Herbert but that no action had been taken to date. Tshekedi at once produced Sir Herbert's personal letter sent from Cape Town. Result: these further charges were not proceeded with, the case was closed and Tshekedi was notified that the Admiral would announce the judgment on the following day at Serowe.' Meanwhile the reporters were busy, so that papers were referring to this exhibition of so-called 'British justice', and public feeling both in and out of South Africa was running strongly in Tshekedi's favour.
('Incidentally,' Buchanan remarked, 'whilst the case was proceeding, and without any trial whatsoever, the Administration banished the two youths to Lobatsi.')
The next day the Navy's three howitzers had to be fetched from Palapye to Serowe in time for the Admiral's arrival in the afternoon. The road was a single track and the first gun got through by keeping one wheel in the track and the other on the edge of the other track. The next one reversed the process but found the going rather heavy and so arrived a couple of hours later. The third gun, however, had a very laboured journey, with both tracks obliterated and filled with debris.
The gun crew had actually to assist in places by fixing on their hauling gear and manhandling it along, so that it only arrived shortly before the Admiral himself. Buchanan pointed out that if Tshekedi had not had the tribe well in hand this would have 96

The family leaves Serowe for the Lands

Tshekedi Khama-London, 1930

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been an invitation to trouble. As a 'show of force' it was a dismal failure, and it also gave rise to an apocryphal story of how Tshekedi sent tribesmen to help the unfortunate gun crews dig the howitzers out of the sand. The Navy, for their part, did not fail to see the humour in the situation. A fat, perspiring petty officer, wiping his red brow as they disembarked in the barren tin-roofed Palapye station, was heard to say gloomily: 'Gawd, forty years at sea and then to be shot by a lot of bloody savages!' And a newspaper suggested a slogan comparable to 'Join the R.A.F. and see the world'—'Join the Royal Navy and see the Kalahari'.

Buchanan, Jennings, Burns, and other European friends of Tshekedi's, arrived at Serowe after lunch to find at the 'parade ground'-a flat, open space on one side of Serowe hill-a flimsy dais erected with the Union Jack fluttering high in the breeze. Tshekedi was driven up in a car labelled 'Ex-chief and police'. He was joined by four of his councillors,1 and by Chief Bathoen of the Bangwaketse with a councillor.

Buchanan asked Bathoen, 'What are you doing here?' He replied, 'I would sooner be in trouble with Tshekedi than out of trouble but in with the Administration.' The tribesmen were massed behind a white line some distance beyond where Tshekedi was made to stand, with Peter Sebina and two others of his staff by his side. The bulging brief-case from which he never parted was on the ground at his feet. Most of the European residents of Serowe sat by the dais. A detachment of Marines stood nearby with fixed bayonets and machine-guns and then the howitzers were hauled along and placed in position.

Admiral Evans, dressed in naval uniform, drove up in a 1932 tourer to be met by Mr. Percivale Liesching,2 the Deputy Commissioner for the United Kingdom, in full diplomatic regalia, by the Resident Commissioner, Colonel Rey, in khaki uniform and helmet, and by other officials. 'Tell me,' the Admiral asked, 'is it war or peace?' 'Trembling on the brink, sir,' is the reputed reply.
As the Admiral began to mount the dais, there was dead silence and, following official instructions, the tribesmen stood up respectfully. The naval guns fired their first salute and, with I Thankane, Peter Sebina, Senamela and Nonofhang. Later Sir Percivale Liesching, High Commissioner.

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one accord, the tribesmen threw themselves flat on their faces. Officials signalled furiously to them to stand up. They complied and just had time to register with surprise that the guns had been quite ineffectual and that the houses at which they were aimed were still standing, when the next salvo went off. Down they went again. Eventually the salutes over, there was again silence.

Tshekedi stood bareheaded before the dais.

The Admiral pronounced sentence. Tshekedi was guilty of having unlawfully inflicted corporal punishment on a white man. He was suspended from the office of Chief, banished to Francistown, and was not to communicate with members of his tribe. The Admiral admitted that he was known to be a decent clean-living man, of education and great intelligence, but he had 'frequently flouted the Administration while professing loyalty to the King'. From inquiries into Tshekedi's character, and the way he had studied the interests of his people, the Admiral said, 'it appears that you are an extremely capable chief, quite able to deal with your people, but it appears that your over-mastering passion is your selfishness and the study of your own personal rights and privileges.' (At this, according to Mr. Burns, there was a murmur of disapproval from the Europeans sitting beside the dais.) 'You have not always acted in the best interests of your people, nor in harmony with the Administration. Without this harmony the Administration is not able to function." The Admiral gave no evidence in support of these charges. Amid dead silence he returned to his car and drove off.

Buchanan described what followed: 'It was probably unparalleled in African history. The whole white population, including the parents of the boy who had caused the trouble, came forward in a body, and each in turn, men, women and children, filed past Tshekedi, shook his hand and told him how sorry they were for what had happened and that they hoped he would soon return as Chief.'

A police lieutenant went up to arrest him, said, 'Come away, Tshekedi,' and placed his hand on Tshekedi's shoulder. As he did so there was a deep muttering from the tribesmen around them. Tshekedi at once turned, motioned them to remain where they were, and said, 'Everything will be all right.' He accompanied the policeman to the waiting car with its label 'Ex-chief'. They drove away to Palapye.

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Before the day ended the European Chamber of Commerce and several individual Europeans of standing went separately to the Administration to say how serious the position was. They urged Tshekedi's immediate reinstatement.

It had been revealed that when the Europeans in Serowe felt the tension after the news of the dispatch of the naval force, Tshekedi had sent messages to them, especially to the women whom he knew to be alone, telling them that as long as he was Chief, he made himself personally responsible for their safety,, but he could not vouch for what would happen in his absence. He also had sent a polite offer of help to the Navy in the withdrawal of their guns from Serowe which was not accepted.

Throughout the day of the 'trial', while the naval contingent had been displaying its force at Palapye, the people of Serowe had been holding prayer meetings. When the officer in charge in Serowe asked Mr. Burns whether his Marines should remain there, he was told it was quite unnecessary, and in support of his statement Burns added that the people were in the church, praying.

'Whatever for?' the officer asked.

'For the restoration of their Chief and for better relations between the Government and the tribe,' Burns replied. This satisfied the Major and the Marines were withdrawn.

As soon as the Admiral had gone, Buchanan went to see Queen Semane. He found her in tears, with a letter in her hand which she had written to His Majesty the King, as a mother to a father, and which was literally wet with her tears. In part it read: '0 King, release for me the boy. I am undone, and the tribe is undone. This is my weeping my master. 0 let it be regarded.' Buchanan told her that he was sure that if Chief Khama had been alive, he would have been proud of the way his son had conducted himself throughout a very trying experience, and he assured her that Tshekedi's friends would not rest until his good name had been restored.

He added: 'I found that the police had been instructed to arrest her for resisting the Administration by holding a big public meeting of protest whilst the trial was in progress. Fortunately, the police on their own responsibility held their 'Review of Reviews, October, 1933.

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hand when they found that the alleged illegal meeting was merely the big prayer meeting in the church at Serowe and led by Semane to pray for God's strength and guidance to be given to Tshekedi in his ordeal.'

During Buchanan's interview with Queen Semane, Peter Sebina, the Bamangwato tribal secretary, came in and, after duly saluting her, said: I am off to exile with my Chief and have come to say good-bye.'

Semane at once replied: 'You will do no such thing. You will remain here and help carry on the work of the tribe, just as if the Chief had gone to Cape Town to interview Mr. Buchanan.5 But Sebina was determined to be with Tshekedi.

In the meantime, Serogola Seretse having refused to accept the official instruction that he would be acting-chief, the tribe had been ordered to appoint another chief.
That same night, one of Tshekedi's oldest friends, Mr. P. A. Johnston (Arnold's father), received a visit from some of the tribal elders. One old man said to him: 'Tomorrow you will only find dogs in Serowe, and some who have got lost.' Johnston asked him to explain. He replied that the Administration was ordering them to appoint another chief. 'But a chief is born, and we cannot, while we have a Chief, name another chief.' The tribe therefore would break up and scatter.

Johnston asked whether the tribe would reconsider their decision if he could get an official promise that all they had to do was to appoint a man to act. The elders agreed, Johnston received such an assurance from a local official, and the people remained in Serowe.

The next day, therefore, the kgotla met to debate the matter. Jennings and Buchanan were invited to attend and were asked for advice. Neither wished to intervene and Buchanan suggested that the tribe should do whatever they would have done if Tshekedi had suddenly met with an accident and were rendered temporarily deaf and dumb. The kgotla had been granted twenty-four hours in which to make up their mind. They finally decided to tell the Administration that such a decision could only be considered by the full tribal kgotla after due and proper notice to all the outlying districts, and that any snap decision they might make would be invalid and not recognized by the tribe in general. Consequently, they said they had arranged for Serogola Seretse to carry on in the meantime, as he usually did when Tshekedi went away, and had instructed him to summon a proper tribal kgotla to appoint the new chief in two months' time.

When Buchanan heard this he said: 'I think you have been very rash. What are you going to decide at this tribal kgotla?' An old councillor immediately blew three or four times on his fingers as if he was warming them and said: 'That day will never come.'

Buchanan replied: 'What do you mean?'

Again the old man blew on his fingers and repeated: 'That day will never come.' Buchanan impatiently retorted: 'Of course that day must arrive.'

Quite firmly and courteously the reply came: 'No, Mr. Buchanan, that day will never come. Before that day comes the locusts will have come and we shall all be far away in the veld fighting the locusts.'

'Buchanan,' Buchanan said, 'suppose the locusts don't come?'

'Then,' he said, 'the rains will have come and we shall all be away at our gardens ploughing. You need not worry; that day will never come.'

No more did it, Buchanan later commented.

Before Admiral Evans returned to the Union he had a talk with Mr. Johnston. The latter was on his way home after a day's work, feeling dusty and in need of a wash, when he came upon the Admiral with several officials. The Admiral asked to meet him, and inquired, 'You are a friend of the Bamangwato?' 'Very
definitely.' Evans asked for his views, and refused to accept Johnston's protest that there were several senior officials present who could better give advice. 'I have been officially told,' the Admiral continued, 'that there is a man more entitled to be chief than Seretse or Tshekedi. Is that correct?' (He was referring to a descendant of Macheng who had briefly been chief in the 1860s.) Johnston replied with another question: 'Would you consider the present King of England was more entitled to be King than someone from the House of Stuart, if he walked by?' 'You have answered my question,' the Admiral said. On the Thursday evening, Jennings and Buchanan returned

The Regent to Palapye to catch the early train south next day. Tshekedi was to leave very early in the morning for Francistown in the north. They went to his prison tent to see him and discuss plans. They sat on his stretcher-bed, he on an upturned soapbox, and for light they had a candle stuck in a bottle. As there was so much to discuss and to do, it was decided that Buchanan should immediately ask the authorities to permit Tshekedi to go to Cape Town, where he would be near his legal adviser, instead of over a thousand miles away. During the discussion Buchanan suddenly asked: 'Here you are in custody: what has become of all our confidential correspondence and papers?' Tshekedi said that they were in the tribal office and that he had forgotten to do anything about them, but Buchanan was not to worry. Buchanan accepted the position as inevitable.

Towards the end of the discussion, in the small hours of the morning, Tshekedi said to them: 'I have been cut off from all my funds or I should have sent you two over to England to plead my cause.' Buchanan said later: 'It occurred to me that, as I had been paid a substantial fee to come up to defend Tshekedi, it was really up to me to go at my own expense. I was badly beaten to it by Mr. Jennings who immediately said: "Chief, you cannot expect Mr. Buchanan to go without an adequate fee but I have a few hundreds saved up for my old age and I can obtain leave without pay and I'll go immediately." After that there was nothing for me to say but that I would do likewise.' Buchanan mused: 'Is it surprising that missionaries of this type had great influence with the Africans?' (As it turned out, Tshekedi got together enough to pay their second-class fares and expenses.) Buchanan was up early to say good-bye before Tshekedi's train went north. He asked the police guard if he might speak to him alone. The first thing Tshekedi told him was that he need not worry about the confidential documents: they had been removed from the tribal office at Serowe and were already in a place of safety. Buchanan commented: 'How all this was effected by, and known to, the Chief who had been under guard all the time since I saw him a few hours before still passes my comprehension.' By this time the case was headline news throughout South Africa and Great Britain, and continued to be so for three weeks.
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Not surprisingly, a good deal of the comment was satirical for the sailors and their Admiral had a touch of the Gilbertian.

The Administration were almost alone in failing to see the humour in the situation, though one of them showed an unconscious wit in assuming that Tshekedi had been taught a valuable lesson and that the effect on the other chiefs and the tribes generally was excellent. They had been shown the very definite interest which the Imperial Government took in the Territory! Editorial comment was generally sympathetic to Tshekedi and South African opinion (even Afikaner) condemned the official handling of the case. Not only the national press of Britain, but magazines like John Bull and Eoeyman took a stand, respectively commenting that 'the whole public is amazed and indignant' and that many features in the story suggested that local officials were anxious to shield themselves, and Whitehall to shield them. Time and Tide pertinently asked on what occasions Tshekedi had 'frequently flouted the Administration-except in his tenacious and legitimate opposition to extended mining concessions in his territory'. As many headlines showed, the case aroused conflicting emotions because a black man had tried and punished a white man-and, to make it worse for some people, the black man was able, hardworking, clean-living and honourable. To this there were two kinds of reaction. One emphasized the need to uphold British and white prestige at all costs: 'British administrators must be regarded at all times as the dominant race.' Tshekedi 'richly deserved' the punishment. The other was that colour should not come into it-What other course could be taken by an enlightened chief?'

The disservice to Britain's reputation of relying implicitly on the views of 'the man on the spot' (who oddly enough is always the white official or the white settler and never the equally-on-the-spot African), has seldom been more clearly exposed. Colonel Rey made no secret of his views: the incident was the climax of many years of trouble with a conceited youth who was out for his own privileges and the ambition to lead an independent nation. However, the British Government was having misgivings. The news letter of Ramsay MacDonald, the Prime Minister, regarded Admiral Evans's parade of Marines and howitzers as inexcusable, and the Dominions Secretary, J. H. Thomas, on holiday in Hove, but in hourly contact with the position, told the Press that he was gravely disturbed. The only explanation given of the grounds for Admiral Evans's accusation that Tshekedi had frequently flouted the Administration was 'the Acting-Chief's persistence in attempting to transmit representations intended for the Secretary of State through
an incorrect official channel, instead of through the Resident Commissioner. Yet at the same time the Government issued a statement criticizing Tshekedi for not reporting the youth's activities to the Resident Commissioner and the High Commissioner when his complaints to the District Commissioner had borne no fruit. A statement that conflicted with the evidence given at the inquiry by the Magistrate's clerk, that Tshekedi's complaints had been submitted to the Resident Commissioner's office.

Among those in Britain who paid tribute to Tshekedi's record at this time, and expressed dissatisfaction with official action, was Dr. George Bell, Bishop of Chichester, while back in Bechuanaland forty-one European residents of Khama's country had written to the Secretary of State, expressing deep sorrow and regret and stating that in their humble opinion the employment of a naval force was quite unnecessary and had created a very bad impression throughout South Africa, especially among the Natives. They told of the greatest kindness and respect with which Chief Tshekedi and his people had treated them and pointed out that never once had a European woman been maltreated by a Native in Khama's country—could the same be said of Europeans in their treatment of Natives?

Tshekedi, in exile in Francistown, accompanied by the faithful Peter Sebina and other followers, received support from another and most unexpected source: the Ratshosas, who were also in Francistown. Only recently Simon had been one of the Ballingers' informants. Now he was firmly behind Tshekedi and in a letter to a European spoke of his dignity and determination, News Chronicle, September 6, 1933.

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his generosity to rich and poor, his good nature and good will. Tshekedi, he said, was impatient of opposition and not always willing to listen and take advice, and was reserved in his domestic and public life, but he was the most acute and enlightened politician of their modern chiefs. He also wrote to Tshekedi, castigating Europeans for the deposition. Tshekedi reproved him: 'I cannot agree that the European mind will always remain a closed book to the Native, and consequently I am not able to say that no white man will ever understand the Native mind. Of course your statement was made having in mind the type of white men one often meets in the Protectorate, particularly in the Government service. It would be doing serious injustice to the British people if you were to take as an instance of their character in dealing with Natives our local officials. One has to sympathize with the latter, because they have often not been trained for the position which they have filled.'

At the time Tshekedi was anxious about the drought and general shortage of food and referred to these in reply to some of the innumerable letters of sympathy that poured in from all over the world. 'You will therefore realize how the recent events must have added a great deal to our troubles,' he added, and went on to
describe his mother's courage, for in spite of her distress she had attended a temperance conference in Johannesburg the week after his deposition. As for himself... 'the strife is by no means ended, but I am patiently biding His time when His will will be done.'

The letters he received did not always get such courteous replies. Peter Sebina has described Tshekedi's reactions to certain letters that aggravated him. One from a tobacco company asked if they could name a brand 'Tshekedi'. Sebina says: 'Tshekedi was no smoker, and he questioned the noble idea that prompted such a request. English girls in England played their part. They wrote and sympathized, some sent their photographs and asked if they did not look pretty; one actually sent an ivy leaf with her photograph. It did not occur to them that Tshekedi was an African living in Africa, and had no respect for Leap years and the mistletoe. With all respects due to the ladies, the photographs were each returned to the owner. In writing to these ladies I was carried away by sentiment, but Tshekedi would have nothing of the sort. I had to

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retype those letters to Tshekedi's satisfaction."I am returning your photograph you sent to me-Yours faithfully." One letter in particular was most annoying. It came from America. The writer, I consider, was a spiritualist, and she wrote accepting the proposal she said Tshekedi had made to her. She asked how far Serowe was from Johannesburg so that she could arrange to speak to him again. The letter might have been stained with leprosy, for it fell from his hands. His anger and annoyance were beyond all calculations. No reply was made to this letter.'

Buchanan, in the meantime, had returned to Cape Town where he obtained permission from Admiral Evans for Tshekedi to come there. On September 29, just two weeks after his exile had been announced, Tshekedi was on his way to Cape Town with Peter Sebina and Thankane Mathloame. Suddenly the Cape express in which they were travelling stopped in the small station of Touws River. They looked out and saw a number of men, who turned out to be plain-clothes police, coming towards them,

They handed Tshekedi a telegram. It was from His Majesty the King: as Tshekedi had abandoned any claim to the right to try a European, and had expressed regret for what had occurred and affirmed that he would co-operate loyally, His Majesty was pleased to announce the termination of his suspension and banishment. The police explained that huge crowds were at Cape Town station, waiting to welcome the Chief and, in order to avoid possible incidents, they asked him and his followers to leave the train there and proceed by car to Cape Town. As soon as they arrived Tshekedi went to see Buchanan and sent a cable to the King, expressing his humble gratitude and unbroken loyalty.

He next went to the High Commissioner's office to thank Admiral Evans for permitting him to come. He was told that the Admiral was engaged and could not see him. He replied that he would wait. Several similar messages were given to him during the morning but his reply was always the same. Apparently there was trouble in another area and local officials had come to consult the Admiral.
Eventually a message was given to Tshekedi that the Admiral would see him and his followers on board his flagship that afternoon. They were then taken to the Captain's cabin, where the Admiral gave them tea. He asked if he was glad that he was going to Serowe to reinstate him as Chief next week.

Tshekedi replied: 'That depends.'

'On what?' asked the Admiral.

'On whether you are going to say the same things about me when you reinstate me as Your Excellency did when you took me off the stool.' (The symbol of chieftainship.) After clearing his throat, the Admiral replied that he supposed he would have to say much the same.

'Then,' said Tshekedi, 'I am not at all pleased.'

'Why?'

'Well, sir, suppose you were the captain of this big battleship and suppose your superior officer had assembled the whole ship's company on the deck and had said: 'You see this man. He is not fit to be your captain. He has set a bad example to you all. He has been disloyal to His Majesty. He has been guilty of misconduct and behaved as no captain should and I am depriving him of his office as captain.' Well, sir, if a fortnight later you assembled the same ship's company on the same deck and after repeating all the charges you had previously made you ended by saying: 'However, I am reinstating this man as your captain and I hope he will behave himself in future,' do you, sir, think that such a captain would have any control of his ship's company? No, sir, if you are going to say the same things about me as you said before, then I am not at all pleased at being reinstated in such a manner.'

He added that he was worried about certain Press reports which had not given his side of the case. The Admiral reassured him with the remark, 'Never mind, you don't have to go to a game reserve to hear jackals bark.'

Evans made a point of the fact that Colonel Rey had recommended Tshekedi's reinstatement and concluded that he himself was glad an unpleasant thing was settled, and he hoped he and Tshekedi were now friends. Tshekedi was silent. Evans repeated the last remark. Tshekedi, never one to dissemble, replied, 'I don't know.' He bore no ill-will; his feelings towards the Admiral were quite dispassionate, but he could not express a warmth he did not feel. His misgivings proved justified when the Admiral's account of the whole episode was published some years later. Among many factual inaccuracies, the Admiral thus described the situation at the time of Tshekedi's deposition:

'At one time the situation looked ugly, but with howitzers and machine-guns handled by tough-looking bluejackets and equally tough-looking marines facing them with determination, the great crowd behaved well and the air was cleared. Tshekedi was made to live at some distance from his tribe until matters were
settled peacefully!' The Admiral added that the outcry in the Press had been mainly fomented by the London Missionary Society and by 'the Negrophiles' in South Africa. He described how his friend, Oswald Pirow, the Minister of Defence, and another South African Minister, had sent him telegrams of appreciation and had pointed out that 'had not decisive action been taken they could not say what repercussions Tshekedi's [sic] action in beating up a white man would have had amongst the natives, who were getting very much above themselves and threatening trouble in the mines and in other parts of South Africa."

Buchanan and his wife, who had driven Tshekedi and his companions down to Simonstown, had a diverting return journey. Having heard that they had toured the ship, Buchanan asked Peter Sebina, 'What was the most interesting thing you saw this afternoon?'

After some thought, Peter replied: 'You remember that Jersey cow with a huge udder that we saw at Lakeside? Well, I would like to have that cow up in Bechuanaland.' Imagining that they were perhaps at cross-purposes, Buchanan said: 'What was the next most interesting thing you have seen this afternoon?'

Again, after a little thought, Peter said: 'You remember that little stream of clear water running across the road into the sea just before we reached Simonstown?'

Buchanan said: 'Yes, what about it?'

'Well,' said Peter, 'I should like to have that also in Bechuanaland. What a waste to let that water just run into the sea.'

Buchanan commented: 'With a Mochuana like Peter, and in spite of his poetic tendencies, first things come first, Cattle and water are first things-big guns, torpedoes-are just not in the running.'

Shortly afterwards Tshekedi and his companions were given a moving send-off from Cape Town station by a mass of Africans. Some people travelled in the train to Paarl and

1 Admiral Lord Mountevans, Adventurous Life, p. 196.

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Wolsey just to see him, and along the route people went to stations to wave, while near Tigerkloof school the students were assembled along the line to cheer him. On October 4, three weeks after his previous visitation, Evans returned to the 'parade ground' in Serowe. Once again the dais was erected with the lofty Union Jack, the tribesmen massed, once again Tshekedi and several followers stood facing the representative of the Imperial Government. However, the big guns were absent.

Tshekedi's dignity throughout the episode, his patience and large-hearted behaviour, were remarked on by Bums, the missionary, who added that he could not say the same for the Administration, for the reinstatement was not done as graciously as it might have been, and he thought the silence of the listening people was a sullen silence. He himself, always a loyal British subject, felt ashamed of the Protectorate Govern. ment.
The Admiral read out Tshekedi’s undertaking not to deal with any European case in future and to work in harmony and loyal co-operation with the Administration, and said: ‘I believe that you earnestly intend to keep those promises. Because I believe this, I have felt able, at the request of the Resident Commissioner, who has always had the welfare of the tribe at heart, to recommend to the Secretary of State that the period of your suspension should be terminated. The Secretary of State has accepted that recommendation and has advised His Majesty the King accordingly ... You are now restored to your position as Acting Chief of the Bamangwato...’ He held out his hand. Tshekedi shook it. Colonel Rey held out his hand. Tshekedi ignored it.

There was rejoicing in the tribe and Queen Semane welcomed back her son, Had she not lost a lot of weight during those anxious weeks no one could have told from her serene face that she had been sorrowing. She had said: ‘Let it be as God wishes.’ Now she was grateful.

It was some time before the repercussions died down. There were questions in Parliament about who was to bear the cost of the expedition and eventually the £4,000 odd was provided by the British taxpayer.

A significant question was suddenly raised by Sir John Harris, in a letter to the Manchester Guardian, on February 24,

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1934: had Tshekedi, in fact, sentenced the youth to a flogging? The reason for Harris’s question was a recent remark made by the High Commissioner. Sir Herbert Stanley had said: ‘There is a dispute now as to whether (he) was sentenced or not. Some say he was sentenced to a flogging, and other people say someone got up in the court and said he ought to be flogged and thereupon he was flogged, and no one knows what happened. There may be a miscarriage of justice, but there should be no question as to whether a man has been sentenced or not. We do not know.’

What was the truth? Tshekedi’s friends the Johnstons and other people in Serowe knew that he had not actually ordered the flogging. They asked him why he had not insisted on this fact being established. He said that if the special court had conducted the inquiry properly, the truth would have come out: while he had been discussing the sentence and the youth had started forward, the aggrieved plaintiff had lost his temper and hit the youth. After this Tshekedi felt there was nothing more he himself could do: his authority as Chief had been insulted. The Johnstons readily understood the underlying concern that the authority of chieftainship should not be cheapened.

There was some interesting speculation as to the motives that had provoked the whole episode. Colonel Rey suspected that Tshekedi had deliberately sentenced a white man to a flogging because he realized that new Proclamations to limit chiefs’ powers and set up tribunals, were about to become law, and he was determined to sidetrack the whole matter by raising a constitutional issue. A contrary possibility was put in a debate on the High Commission Territories in the House of Lords that had been prompted by the incident. Lord Snell suggested that
the aim in deposing Tshekedi had been to break his opposition to the draft
Proclamations and 'to produce a tamed and
obedient chief.'
Tshekedi wrote to Bishop Smyth, the former Warden at
Fort Hare : 'It has strongly been suggested in some papers that whatever action I
took which brought about this unfortunate affair was a deliberate challenge to the
Crown. No,
this assumption is wrong, it never was my intention.'
Perhaps the white youth and Tshekedi should have the last
1 Hansard, December 13, 1933.
2 November 6, 1933.

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words. The former declared before being banished that he had been perfectly
satisfied with Tshekedi's decision to try him. Tshekedi was a gentleman and he
considered himself one of his subjects." Some years later he returned to Serowe,
explained to the Chief that he had not got the Administration's permission to do
so, but asked if the Chief would allow him to remain. 'Yes,' Tshekedi replied.
'You can come back. It's all over now.'
'.DaExnPress, September 1933.

CHAPTER 9
A Narrow Escape
-he 'Evans of the Broke' incident had not only put
Bechuanaland on the map but, in the words of the News Chronicle, 'Tshekedi has
opened all our eyes, and it was fully time. He has reminded us that Africa... is
awakening. The possibility of the African being some day competent to govern
some regions, at any rate, of his own country efficiently, is dawning. . . .'
Statements welcoming Tshekedi's return to the chieftainship showed a pleasing
concern about conditions in the Protectorate.
The gravity of the economic situation had been recognized by the British
Government in their appointment of Sir Alan Pim to report on the Territory's
financial position. In 1933 his survey was published. It told of the 'common
calamity' in which Africans and Europeans were involved. After several years of
drifting into deeper and deeper financial water, the country had gone head over
heels into bankruptcy, where it seemed likely to remain. On top of all this, an
outbreak of foot and mouth disease had closed down the already limited cattle
industry. Pim had studied the relevant factors: the basic poverty of the people, the
effects of labour migration, the malnutrition and disease, the need for water
development, the crushing South African embargo on cattle. He referred to
medical services--one bed for 2,800 Africans; to education the contribution from
general revenue to African education for 8,000 pupils at school was C100, to
European education for 1,800 pupils, £,000 a year average. He made
recommendations 'September 1933.
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for the development of water supplies, improvement of cattle breeding, and
instruction in preparing hides and skins, but he did not suggest any new sources of
revenue nor any ways of solving the labour migration problem. The British
Government's immediate response was to allocate a grant-in-aid of £177,000 to the
Protectorate.

While this constructive interest in Bechuanaland was developing, a less healthy
interest was being shown by the Union Government. In 1932, at the Ottawa
Conference, Mr. N. C. Havenga, Union Minister of Finance, raised the question of
the transfer of the High Commission Territories with the new Labour Secretary of
State, Mr. J. H. Thomas. Mr. Havenga 'gained the impression that Mr. Thomas
had no fundamental objections to transfer, that he agreed that no other future for
the Territories could be envisaged and that he agreed that the present time was
opportune for settling the matter.'1 The Union Prime Minister, General J. B. M.
Hertzog, followed up these talks with a letter to the British Government in
November 1932, saying that the matter was becoming daily more pressing as
South Africans were demanding that competition from neighbouring markets
must be restricted. He made a barely concealed threat that if the Territories were
not handed over, he did not see how the Union could avoid excluding their
inhabitants from working in South Africa. Mr. Thomas did not reply immediately.
However, in the House of Lords, in July 1933, Lord Strathcona gave the British
Government's pledge to Members of Parliament that they would be given every
opportunity of discussing and, if they wished, of disapproving any proposal for
transfer; that no decision would be taken until the Native and the white
populations of the Territories had expressed their views; and that the Government
could not support a proposal for transfer if it involved any impairment of the
safeguards for Native rights and interests. But simultaneously with this public
statement of policy, Mr. Thomas was having private talks with General Jan
Smuts, then Union Minister of Justice, in which the Secretary of State said he was sure that the right policy, especially in dealing with the Chiefs and their followers, was to discourage agitation against joining the Union and to concentrate on getting everyone, natives and Europeans alike, to work for the success of such co-operative 'S.A. White Paper G.P.-S.4846-x952-3-i,ooo, p. 10.

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measures as might be found possible." This bland reference to discouraging agitation failed to reckon with Tshekedi. He and Buchanan had learned of the substance of the talks between the British and the South African Ministers. Once again, Tshekedi's determination to get an unequivocal statement that the Territories would not be handed over to the Union was one of his objects in seeking an interview with the Secretary of State, soon after he had been reinstated by Admiral Evans. The other object was to discuss fully the contentious draft Proclamations, which he maintained were contrary to Native law and custom and would limit the powers of chiefs. Mr. Thomas, however, refused to see him and so his old friends, Buchanan and Jennings, rose to the occasion. They added a third objective: to clear Tshekedi's good name which they felt could only properly be done by securing a statement from the Secretary of State in Parliament. In October 1933 they went to London where, in spite of the fact that an official had warned Lord Lugard against them, they found him and other influential people ready to discuss these matters. Colonel Josiah Wedgwood, M.P.,2 the philanthropist, Sir John Harris, Secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society, Margery Perham, and M.P.s, were all concerned about the High Commission Territories, and particularly Bechuanaland, at that time.

Buchanan and Jennings were given a courteous reception by Malcolm MacDonald, the Under-Secretary of State for the Dominions. Buchanan described their first talk over lunch one day: "We arrived on time to find MacDonald and two other gentlemen awaiting us, the permanent head of the department and his deputy. When we were seated Mr. MacDonald said: "I have always been kept so busy with major dominion affairs that I had never even heard of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, much less the Bamangwato, so I am going to ask you, Mr. Buchanan, to start from the beginning and tell me how Bechuanaland became a Protectorate and bring us right up to date." He then turned to the permanent head and said: "You must just be patient as you know all that Mr. Buchanan will have to say." To that the permanent head replied: "I am I Draft dispatch from Mr. Thomas to the U.K. High Commissioner.
2 Later Lord Wedgwood, 1872-1943.

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in exactly the same position as yourself, sir, and that is why I have brought my next in rank." To which that person added: "Well, sir, I am in the same position, as my time has been so fully taken up with Ireland." Well! Our lunch party
continued till about 4 o'clock. I did not get much lunch as I was kept talking all the time.'

It was fortunate that he and Jennings had worked hard on the voyage studying the relevant treaties and proclamations, because for several weeks they had one or two similar lunches a week until the whole matter had been fully thrashed out with Malcolm MacDonald and his advisers, so that they understood the reasons for the Bechuana tribes' fears of incorporation in the Union, and the reasons for misgivings about the draft Proclamations. Thereupon a formal meeting with Mr. Thomas, the Secretary of State, was arranged on January 16, 1934, to which Buchanan and Jennings were accompanied by an influential deputation of members of the Liberal and Labour Parties, as well as Sir John Harris and representatives of other independent bodies. They were assured that there was no immediate intention to hand the Territories over to the Union. On another point they were not so pleased. Buchanan said: 'When Tshekedi had been suspended Mr. Thomas had animadverted against him in Parliament, but now flatly refused to have the matter again mentioned in the House.' However, Thomas told them he was satisfied that Tshekedi had acted as an 'upright and straightforward man' throughout his trial and deposition and said he would give Buchanan a letter to Tshekedi to that effect, and would instruct his representatives in South Africa that there was no stain on Tshekedi's character or record. As regards the Proclamations to which the deputation was objecting, on the grounds that they were not in accord with Native law and custom, he said that he had given instructions that as soon as Buchanan and Jennings returned to Africa these were to be reconsidered in consultation with Tshekedi and the other Chiefs.

Buchanan thanked the Minister on behalf of Tshekedi but added that as a South African of British descent he was disappointed. Mr. Thomas asked what he meant.

Buchanan replied: 'I can best explain by telling you of an incident that happened on my return to Cape Town after Tshekedi's deposition. On going into my club a leading South African of Dutch descent called out to me in the hearing of many club members: "Where's your British justice now, Douglas?" I immediately replied: "Just you wait and see." I never doubted,' he told Thomas, 'that when the facts were known to the British Government, Tshekedi would be exonerated and his character completely cleared. It's a great disappointment to me, therefore, that you aren't prepared to clear Tshekedi in Parliament, where he was unjustly stigmatized.' In putting Tshekedi's case, Buchanan concluded: 'Tshekedi was charged with X, convicted for Y, and sentenced for Z, and was not proved guilty of X, Y or Z.' Mr. Thomas did not reply.

No sooner were Buchanan and Jennings back from London than Hertzog, on April 25, 1934, made another forceful demand for the incorporation of the Territories: the position of the Union was fast becoming intolerable, he said, and the relationship between the Union and the Territories would 'more and more assume a less friendly aspect and give rise to feelings of hostility which may
permanently affect their relationship, to the detriment of all concerned." Jennings commented: 'We were only just in time in getting the necessary assurances from the Dominions Office in this connexion. But it will be necessary to keep a wary eye on the subject during the next few months.' 2 (A statement which should more aptly have read 'during the next twenty-five years'.)

This move by General Hertzog was countered on July 16 by Mr. Thomas in a long letter which concluded: 'All our information goes to show that the result of consultation with the inhabitants of the territories with regard to transfer would, at least so far as the natives are concerned, not be likely to be such as to enable transfer... to be proceeded with.' But he made what seemed to the Africans a sinister remark: a form of closer association and co-operation, particularly on economic matters, would, he said, be welcomed.3

General Smuts was adding his considerable influence to the Union Government's case, and in a speech in London in


2 Letter of May 3, 1934,

'U.K. Blue Book Cmd. 8707, pp. 49-53, 116

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November 1934 said that the transfer of the Protectorates had been expected since 1910.

Two months later Tshekedi's first major appeal to the Parliament and people of Britain was given prominence in the British Press." In the South African White Paper2 recording the history of these negotiations between Britain and South Africa it is significant that this statement and a second publication by Tshekedi in July 1935 were the only African representations to be singled out for quotation.

The appeal was an effective reminder of Britain's responsibilities and of the Africans' trust. Tshekedi wrote: 'The contact of the Bechuana people and the English has been one of peace only; it has been a contact of stable trade in the country and missionary work amongst the people, while the early contact of the Bechuana people and the Dutch has been one of occasional visits for barter and hunting and even of fighting between the two tribes. These early battles have not been without a sting in the minds of both these races.'

In support of their continued abhorrence of Union policies Tshekedi quoted recent South African Acts which he said suggested that the Union's policy 'is to have one law for the white community and another law for the native community no matter from what territory'. As for the economic arguments in favour of incorporation, he pointed to colour-bar legislation in the Union protecting whites from black competition. He asked that Britain should seek markets other than South Africa for the Protectorates, and suggested that wages should be raised, because 'all kinds of manual labour is contributed by the native but he is not adequately recompensed for the work he does; many natives are qualified tradesmen, and academically they are fast taking their places alongside men of other races, but the wage they receive does not even justify the expense entailed in obtaining for them
this measure of training. This I ascribe to the fact that his wages are not based on his merits, but are inclined to be based entirely upon the fact that the bulk of his people lead a simple primitive life, and it is concluded that even the persevering native can live likewise; he is thus debarred from improving his position, and I fear the advance” 'Statement to the British Parliament and People.' Published AntiSlavery Society.

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ment of commerce and the internal development of the country is thus being considerably retarded."

His faith in the British system of justice was again apparent in a reference to the Union's break with the Privy Council. 'For judicial and political reasons the natives of the Protectorates cannot be satisfied to lose the privilege of access to this Court of Appeal,' and he mentioned their other privilege, of direct access to the High Commissioner, or the Secretary of State. He concludea that it was useless 'brooding over past failures', and made two requests: for the appointment of an experienced Administration such as could be obtained from the Colonial Office; and for a Commission from England to ascertain the views of the people in the Protectorates.

Lugard and others supported the latter request in letters to the Press and in Parliament but it was not granted. Margery Perham meanwhile had engaged in an argument with Lionel Curtis, who favoured the incorporation of the Territories, and their exchange of letters was published in The Times and reproduced in a book.' In this she described her visit to Tshekedi in Serowe and her discussion of the whole question with him 'on a basis of intellectual equality'. He had quoted the text of Union laws to her and turned open notebooks in which he had extracts from old, Parliamentary papers and other documents. 'Is it possible,' she asked, 'simply to override a man of this kind, refusing to answer either his historical or legal arguments as to the nature of our Protectorate or his objections to immediate incorporation in the Union?'

But so strong was the Union's econorm stranglehold, and so enfeebled were the Protectorates that such enlightened men as Lord Lugard, the Marquess of Lothian, Sir Edward Grigg, the Earl of Selborne, and Leo Amery, M.P., in a deputation2 to the Secretary of State, J. H. Thomas, felt driven to compromise.

They suggested that, instead of a 'simple negative', Hertzog might be offered a transfer by stages with a remodelling of the administration of the Protectorates so that, when it came, the actual transfer 'would be imperceptible to the natives'. Economic development should be stepped up by a British loan, I M. Perham and L. Curtis, ThLe Protectorates. Lionel Curtis was a member of the 'Milner kindergarten' who had helped to frame the Union and who believed in trusting the white man and that if you made a great act of faith in him he would be generous,

2 November 15, 1934.
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repayable by the South African Government on transfer. Lugard enlarged on these ideas in articles in the Manchester Guardian.1 Fortunately for the future of the Territories, Mr. W. Lunn, M.P., who was on the deputation, dissociated himself and the Labour Party from the idea of transfer, and there were a few influential people steadfast in opposition to this weakening of the front. One was Sir Herbert Stanley, former High Commissioner and at that time Governor of Southern Rhodesia, who wrote to Lord Selborne2 firmly rejecting the argument that there would no longer be restriction of cattle and other produce from the Territories if they were part of the Union: he pointed out that even Union Africans were not allowed to send cattle out of the Transkei. 'I have a warm affection for the natives of the Territories, and I should not like to contemplate that the price for the maintenance of cordial relations between the United Kingdom and the Union,' he concluded. Margery Perham was also steadfast and in a moving protest said: 'The time is coming when the opinion of black Africa will be of far more importance than that of white Africa.'3

Opposition to the Union's claims was further strengthened by the view of some authorities that Britain's responsibility was enhanced by the passing of the Statute of Westminster and of the Status Act in 1943, because the safeguards under the Schedule to the South Africa Act were thereby nullified.4 Arising from this assumption, an all-Party Parliamentary Committee under the chairmanship of Lord Selborne, the former Governor-General of South Africa and High Commissioner, maintained that the inhabitants of the Territories were entitled to know the 'permanent and deliberately adopted policy of the Union towards all South African Natives' before it would be reasonable to seek their opinion on the proposed transfer. Professor Berriedale Keith, the noted constitutional lawyer, argued that there was a moral obligation on the British Government to obtain the consent of the peoples of the Territories (and not simply to consult them), before they were transferred because the constitutional position had been changed by these Acts and because Hertzog was committed to the paramountcy of the interests of the white race.1

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The South African Government had been quick to note a passage by Lionel Curtis in the Perham/Curtis book that read:

'Let us face the fact, however unpleasant, that Sir Alan Pim has been able to find no sufficient evidence of a genuine concern on our [Britain's] part for native prosperity and advance. His reports are records of stagnation, a depressing epilogue and commentary on those lofty ideas of trusteeship which the High
Commissioner was instructed by a liberal ministry to express to the National Convention a quarter of a century ago.\(^2\)

The South African Government was further encouraged in March 1935 by a request from European residents of the Tuli, Gaberones, and Lobatsi blocks of Bechuanaland, and by the European Advisory Council, for assistance in effecting transfer of the Protectorate.

In May 1935, General Hertzog was in London and engaged in continued discussions with the Minister. There was still disagreement on what Mr. Thomas had actually agreed to previously, General Smuts having noted that in their talk in July 1933 the Secretary of State had said the Territories should be transferred and that the necessary spirit towards this should be fostered in the inhabitants by British officials. Mr. Thomas, however, maintained that he had said if transfer ever took place, the essential preliminary was the goodwill of the natives, and that the best way of achieving this was by working out methods of co-operation, the closer the better, between the Union Government and the Administrations of the Territories. This dangerous concession was not published until July 1935, in a White Paper which also set out the pledges by which His Majesty's Government was bound, and contained the statement that Britain did not regard the time as ripe for consulting the inhabitants as 'all our information goes to show that at present opinion in the Territories is very strongly opposed to transfer.' The results of consultation would therefore be embarrassing and undesirable from every point of view.\(^3\)

While the dispute was at its height, Tshekedi published two further statements in Britain. His 'Reply to the Propaganda for the Incorporation of Bechuanaland in the Union'\(^1\) contained details of the legislation already enacted or contemplated in the Union for the further restriction of the rights and liberty of Africans. Lord Lugard commended it to the British public as 'brief and temperate'.\(^2\) In the News Chronicle\(^3\) an article by Tshekedi described 'What the Protectorates Fear', as coming under the degrading pass laws and under the hateful ban of the colour bar. In fact, he said, 'our fears are justified by the whole history of the natives of South Africa.' He argued that Lord Selborne's Parliamentary Committee had made a true point in saying that the Statute of Westminster had nullified the safeguards for the Territories. The passing of that Statute, he said, 'has blown to atoms the security of our native lands, upon which every Mongwato, Mosotho and Mswazi has relied.'

At this same time the new High Commissioner, Sir William Clark, handed to the Union Acting Minister of Native Affairs an aide memoire setting out ways in which improved co-operation between the Territories' Administration and that of the Union could be achieved. The principle was to be that the Union, by economic assistance; removal of restrictions on Territories' cattle, and other forms of co-operation, would win the goodwill of the Africans, and the British officials in the
Territories were to expound to the Chiefs and peoples the extent of these benefits. These suggestions had evidently won the support of the Resident Commissioner, Colonel Rey, on the grounds that there was no doubt that it would be of economic advantage to the Natives to go into the Union, while politically, it had practically been promised that they should do so, after consultation. The impression that the goodwill of the Africans of the Territories was to be bought, was intensified when it was announced early in 1936 that the Union had offered £35,000 towards their development. Tshekedi protested strongly on behalf of the Bamangwato and Mr. Arthur Creech Jones, M.P., supported him. That their fears were justified was shown by General Hertzog's explanation of the offer in the Union 'Pub. Anti-Slavery Society.


"July 31, 1935.


s Later Colonial Secretary 1946-50.

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House of Assembly on June 11 and 16, 1936. He said that the Union was expecting to take over each territory as it was 'ripe and ready', and that if this were to happen, the British Government could not be expected to spend money there. 'Then we must spend it there...'. A year ago, he went on, he had been told that in about two years the Union could expect to take the first of the Territories over. This would probably be Swaziland, and Bechuanaland and Basutoland would follow. The £35,000 was the Union's contribution in 'assisting the British Government to bring about a state of goodwill among the natives as soon as possible...'. He added that if the natives did not want to come in, 'then they must realize that the markets of the Union will no longer be open to them'.

There was an immediate outcry in the Protectorates with a sharp reaction in Britain. The Acting High Commissioner, Sir Cecil Fforde, hastily handed to General Hertzog a memorandum virtually repudiating the optimism of his remarks, and saying that as the suggestion of agreement over handover had considerably disturbed Native opinion, and the offer of financial assistance had become linked with it, it would be preferable for the offer to remain in abeyance. General Hertzog thereupon agreed that his statement should be regarded simply as expressing his personal hopes.1 On July 21, 1936, the new Secretary of State, Malcolm MacDonald, gave a firm assurance to the British Parliament that in view of the uneasiness felt by the Native authorities, the British Government had decided it would be preferable to leave the Union's offer in abeyance.2 The immediate danger had been averted. The opposition in Britain, in Parliament, the Press, and among the informed members of the public, was very gratifying to Tshekedi and to the people of the Protectorates. Not so to the Union Government, who even at that time were rather breathlessly complaining that 'owing to the prevalence of fundamental misconceptions and tragic ignorance of the real implications of the Union's policy towards the native peoples of South Africa on the part of a large portion of the electorate and the public press of the United
Kingdom and owing to the systematic dissemination of misleading and prejudiced information by a variety of public bodies and individuals on the same matter
1 OP- cit., pp. 13-1.5.
2Hansard, July 21, 1936.

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both in the United Kingdom and in the Union, there appears to prevail a wholly unjustifiable view that the inhabitants of the Territories in question will not receive fair and equitable treatment from the Union.'1
I U.K. Blue Book Cmd. 8707, p. 83.

CHAPTER 0
Tshekedi and Bathoen v. the High Commissioner
ne Saturday night, towards the end of 1935, a greatly troubled Tshekedi called to see Mr. Burns at his mission.
It appeared that the Government were about to put out a warrant for his arrest because, during the past two years, he had persistently opposed two new Proclamations. At first he had done so by criticism of what he said were unworkable clauses in the Proclamations, but when his constitutionally expressed protests failed, he had firmly refused to comply with the new laws. Burns suggested that he would probably be banished and if so his usefulness to his people would come to an end: he could see no way out except some kind of compromise. This Tshekedi was reluctant to agree with. However, he seemed in some measure relieved by the talk. Burns, much disquieted, next morning called on Captain Nettelton, the District Commissioner (as Resident Magistrates had been retitled), to see what could be done. 'When did the Chief leave you last night?' Nettelton asked. When he was told he said, 'Well, Tshekedi came to me immediately after he had been with you, and I can say to you now that a way has been found out of the difficulty.' He did not say what this was.
By this time Tshekedi was in a train heading south. He was accompanied by his great friend, Chief Bathoen II, the alert, lively chief of the Bangwaketse. These two men, much of an age, who had been installed in their early twenties, had from the start consulted each other, particularly about the administration of their tribes. They had shared many experiences and, however complicated or grave, these had always been enlivened by their sense of humour. Because they often stood together in issues where Tshekedi was in the limelight, some people overlooked the fact that Bathoen was himself a considerable character. On occasion the two men differed, and there were times when Bathoen won Tshekedi to his point of view—an 124

Tshekedi and Bathoen v. the High Commissioner achievement only brought about by cogent reasoning. Not that Tshekedi would admit in so many words that he might have been wrong, but his changed actions would show acceptance of the advice. Usually, however, Bathoen found that he
went thoroughly into all aspects of a problem before thinking out his conclusion and, once arrived at, it was virtually impossible to dislodge him.

In this case, they worked as one. Arrived in Cape Town, they went straight to Douglas Buchanan's chambers. Once again the advocate dropped everything to consult with them, and two other leading advocates, Tom Reay and Graeme Duncan. The outcome was the delivery of a summons against the new High Commissioner, Sir William Clark, on behalf of Chiefs Tshekedi and Bathoen. The summons asked for a declaration of rights and an order declaring the Proclamations ultra vires and bad in law. This had the desired effect of stopping all criminal proceedings against either Chief in respect of the Proclamations. Tshekedi and Bathoen realized the gravity of their action in suing the King's senior representative, but they could see no alternative. Their action came as the climax to a long period of discord between them and the Administration.

The Government's object in framing the Proclamations was to reform tribal administration. This was generally conceded to be necessary. Several great authorities gave advice at the time. Margery Perham, working closely with Lord Lugard, wrote: 'While in tropical Africa at its best, chiefs and councillors have worked in a close and continuous partnership with advisers who give them, though in as unobtrusive manner as possible, a lead in improving and adapting their systems, the Protectorate chiefs have been left, in circumstances of far more bewildering upheaval, with little guidance or supervision, to work a tribal system developed to meet conditions belonging to the beginning of the last century. The restraint, if not the indifference and incapacity, of an earlier generation of officials has been allowed to solidify into a tradition: the Administration have failed sufficiently to win the confidence of the chiefs to make them understand where and how they needed help: and ' Later Q.C. Was leading Counsel in the celebrated 'Coloured Voters' case.

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with every year of stagnation it has become harder to break the spell which inhibits any change. The natives believe that any measure which affects their independent position must be for the worse as weakening them in any future relation to the dreaded Union government.' She saw positive assets that could contribute to a process of reform, for instance, the tribal solidarity of the Bamangwato 'which has so far acted mainly as a shelter'. Its dynamic capacity was still latent, however, and before it could be harnessed to progress, 'a psychological as well as an administrative breach has to be made with the past'.

Another, and one of the greatest assets, lay in Tshekedi, who, she said, was 'an able, devoted, strong-minded, even headstrong young man, who had never been properly handled by the Administration.'

Lugard, echoing these views, made two specific proposals. The first was that village, district and tribal councils should be set up to enable chiefs and people to learn by experience. (In 1957 this was done.) His second proposal was that the Resident Commissioner should visit Nigeria, and Tshekedi and the Basuto
Paramount Chief should visit Tanganyika, to study their systems. (In 1953 three of the Bechuana chiefs eventually visited Tanganyika.)
Recent advances in Tanganyika, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland had emphasized the need for reform in Bechuanaland. As Lord Hailey has since pointed out, the Bechuana chiefs had not gravely abused their powers, and the need was not for a drastic measure of reform but simply for a legal definition of the extent of their powers, administrative and judicial. Improvements in the courts, such as the keeping of records of cases, were also advisable.
During the early 'thirties there had in fact been criticism of chiefs, for anything from incompetence and drunkenness to harshness, and there had been little attempt to discriminate between them. But Sir Alan Pim, after referring to cases of unsatisfactory tax collection and of imposing levies, had praised certain tribes, including the Bamangwato under Tshekedi's leadership. Official praise had also been bestowed on his work.

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Tshekedi and Bathoen v. the High Commissioner during the terrible drought of 1933 when 200,000 head of cattle, half the cattle in Bechuanaland, and hundreds of donkeys died.
Tshekedi arranged emergency measures with the Government to save the people from starvation.
Lord Lugard and Mrs. Hoernlk, the well-known anthropologist at the University of the Witwatersrand, agreed on 'the crux' of the problem—that the African should be given the maximum amount of responsibility in the management of his own affairs for he had borne the whole responsibility before the European came. All these authorities believed that an essential element before reforms could be introduced was confidence between British officials and Africans. It was significant that Sir Alan Pim, appointed by the British Government, recommended the special training of officials, and suggested that in Bechuanaland Resident Magistrates needed particular tact and sympathy in order, delicately and unobtrusively, to undertake the guidance of chiefs who had wide powers but who might be untrained and suspicious. Therefore officers were needed, not only of character and capacity, but with gifts of patience and imagination which, he remarked, did not always accompany administrative ability.'
In the circumstances the attempts to reform the tribal system were doomed to a rough passage. The first warning that chiefs' powers were to be defined, had come from Captain Clifford in one of his arguments with Tshekedi over mining development. Following the Privy Council's suggestions during the Ratshosa case, Lord Passfield had then told Tshekedi that the courts would be reformed. The Resident Commissioner, Colonel Rey, had made the first formal announcement that proclamations were being drafted, to the Native Advisory Council in May 1931, when he gave an assurance that chiefs and tribes would be consulted before
any decision was taken. But it was not until the Council's next sitting, eighteen months later, that he produced the two draft Proclamations. Proclamation No. 74 (Native Administration) required the chief to consult his councillors in exercising his authority: the councillors to be not only those qualified by right of birth but by experience or education. It closely defined the purposes for which the chief might issue orders and generally provided the 'Cmd. 4368.

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The Regent Administration with machinery to intervene in case of trouble between a chief and his tribe. The High Commissioner would have wide powers in refusing to recognize, or in suspending a chief, after public inquiry, and in appointing a substitute if the tribe failed to do so. Another section regulated the chief's use of regimental labour. Proclamation No. 75 defined the constitution and functions of the tribal courts, greatly curtailed their jurisdiction in criminal offences, provided formally for appeals, and provided for records of cases to be taken. In sentences of corporal punishment a limit on strokes was imposed-four for a junior and ten for a senior Tribunal and sentences would have to be approved by the Magistrate. The High Commissioner's approval was required for sentences of banishment or damage to property; the Resident Commissioner's for forcible removal from lands or residence. Sentences of imprisonment and of compulsory labour would be introduced. Tshekedi attended the Native Advisory Council meeting in November 1932 in order to take part in the discussion. He criticized the draft Proclamations on the grounds that they encroached on Native law and custom. At its next meeting in July 1933 he openly opposed them with the support of several other members of the Council.

So the Administration again found itself being 'obstructed' by an opposition led by Tshekedi. Buchanan and Jennings had enlisted overseas support in expressing their criticism of the Proclamations to the Secretary of State in 1933. Once again officials misconstrued the source of the opposition: in his autobiography Admiral Evans put it down to 'the bad influence of Negrophiles, who had their own motives and not the common cause at heart,'1 while Colonel Rey wanted to detach Tshekedi from the influence of the London Missionary Society. This was to underestimate Tshekedi. Captain Clifford, under a similar misconception concerning Buchanan's influence, had made a remark to Tshekedi that elicited this reply: 'Mr. Buchanan advises me on what I ask him to and does not lead me in his advices.' Could the misconception have arisen from a failure to conceive of a relationship between a European and an African where the African was the equal, the friend, even the leader? It was also an underestimation of the London Missionary Society's Adventurous Life, p. 197.

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Society who were not likely to be diverted from helping in what they saw as a just
and reasonable cause. In fact, as before in the mining concessions controversy,
Tshekedi was representing misgivings expressed during discussions with
headmen and in kgotla, though the Raditladi family supported the draft
Proclamations.

Colonel Rey felt that he genuinely had the interests of the Tswana at heart and
was protecting them from their chiefs: therein lay the tragedy, for he failed to
understand, as Captain Clifford had failed to understand, that where confidence
and mutual understanding between Government and the governed were lacking,
changes could only come through patient consultation and discussion with the
leaders. Instead, just as Clifford had done, so Rey tried to impose on chiefs and
people what he believed to be good for them. His paternal attitude defeated his
plans from the start. But the fault lay not only in the official approach: technically
there was an error—the failure to appreciate that, in building up a system of local
rule on a foundation of indigenous institutions, as little change as possible should
be made in their traditional form. Lord Hailey, in pointing this out later, added
that 'all experience shows that so long as the form is respected, there is always a
possibility of making such subsequent changes as experience of the practical
working of the institution shows to be desirable. The extent of these changes will
depend on the measure of popular acquiescence they secure, but the indigenous
institution may, given this measure of acquiescence, be completely modified in
the course of its adaptation to modern purposes without incurring a resistance
which will make its working difficult or infructuous.'1 Because the Proclamations
as drafted did not fulfil this requirement, resistance was inevitable. The
Administration was supposed to have been influenced by the enactments
regulating the procedure of Native Administration in Tanganyika, Northern
Rhodesia and Nyasaland, but there were noteworthy differences, according to
Hailey, in particular in Proclamation 74, which appeared to be designed not so
much for the use of indigenous institutions as agencies for local government
purposes, as in order to provide a means of preventing the misuse of power in the
hands of chiefs.2

1 Lord Hailey, Native Administration in the British African Territories, Vol. V, P.
324. 2 op. cit., p. 219.

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Added to these serious handicaps, this attempt at reform was being made during
the prolonged agitation by the Union Government for the incorporation of the
High Commission Territories. In May 1934, just after Hertzog had made his most
forcible demand and the people were hypersensitive about inroads into their
security and status, some of the Tswana chiefs and Dr. S. Molema asked to
discuss the draft Proclamations with the High Commissioner, Sir Herbert Stanley,
himself. They had been briefed by all the chiefs of the Protectorate at a
preliminary meeting in Dr. Molema's home. In their interview the delegation
repeatedly reminded the High Commissioner that they were not a conquered
people. They criticized the intention to give the High Commissioner power to
suspend and appoint chiefs. Sir Herbert compared this with the Crown's rights exercised in the case of the Speaker of the House of Commons, or by the Lord Chancellor in the appointment of the Lord Mayor of London. Dr. Molem a retorted that this in fact was their point: a chief was not in the same position as the Lord Mayor or the Speaker. 'We are an independent people with our own laws and we should have the full and final power to designate who is chief.' They demanded the right of fair trial before a chief could be suspended. But their fiercest criticism was for the proposed reconstruction of Native courts as tribunals: they resisted every attempt to give officials the right to supervise justice in their own courts, and maintained that the Proclamations were not really based on Native law and custom as they purported to be; in fact, they saw a resemblance to the South African Native Affairs Act of 1927.

After their meeting with Sir Herbert Stanley and some discussion with local officials, the Chiefs believed that their condemnation of the drafts had been accepted. At this stage Sir Herbert was appointed Governor of Southern Rhodesia. Buchanan and Tom Reay, a member of the Cape Bar who also advised Tshekedi on occasion, went to see him off when he left Cape Town early in 1935. They had a most friendly talk before his train left. What Sir Herbert did not mention was that, on the day before, the Proclamations had been officially gazetted. Minor amendments had been made but the main offending points remained. The Native Advisory Council had not met since 1933, and the Proclamations had already been enacted before they could again discuss them at their session in 130

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February 1935. The Council asked for six months’ delay in their promulgation. This was refused. Tshekedi and Bathoen refused to accept the Proclamations and Tshekedi made a last appeal in a petition to the Secretary of State. It was rejected. It should be remembered that running parallel to the opposition to the Proclamations had been Tshekedi's successful opposition to the unsatisfactory proposals for mining development and the 'Evans of the Broke' incident. There had been six years of constant friction. Some of Tshekedi's friends and acquaintances had noticed a change, a hardening in his attitude towards officials: one felt that he had become very difficult and stubborn towards them, and had 'come to look on power as his chief need, and control as his right'. He added, 'Tshekedi has learnt how to be strong, but not yet how to be weak.' This, then, was the background to Tshekedi's and Bathoen's decision to sue the High Commissioner. It was arranged that Buchanan should appear in the case for Tshekedi, and Reay for Bathoen, while Graeme Duncan was junior to both. The two Chiefs claimed that the Proclamations infringed the internal sovereignty reserved to them by treaty with Great Britain, and that they were contrary to native law and custom. They objected that the Proclamations were unworkable, a fact that they had pointed out to the Resident Commissioner on several occasions. Their legal advisers set about ascertaining just what was the law and custom. They spent a fortnight at Kanye, Bathoen's capital, consulting several Chiefs and about four hundred of the wise men. Buchanan would take one custom and ask:
'Who can tell us about this?' Immediately seven or eight men would stand up. Without anybody saying anything, they would look at one another and one by one sit down again until there remained only one. He would tell his tale and Buchanan would test it by asking what would happen if this or that variation of circumstances occurred. When that witness could take the matter no further, or the gathering had expressed dissatisfaction with his answer by grunting, so that he sat down like a shot rabbit, Buchanan asked for further advice. The process would be repeated. The customs are not written, they are not spoken.

The Regent of objectively, but they are known in practice. The investigator has to go into a complicated and collateral genealogical tree to find out what Y’s relationship to X is, and why Z or W is not equally entitled to take X's place. Again, the powers and duties of chiefs, judicial and administrative, are defined and understood by the community in any specific case, but it takes a lot of patient research and testing to formulate them in objective terms as principles of constitutional law.

The trial, in July 1936, caused great excitement in the Protectorate. Burns arrived in Lobatsi, seat of the High Court, on the evening before it was due to begin. He found Tshekedi in good spirits, busy with his secretaries in a room behind a trader's store. In a field nearby were camped about 1,000 men from the Bamangwato and other tribes who had come to hear the case. As the court could only hold a few of them, in addition to the European residents, Press representatives and visiting Chiefs, Buchanan got permission for loudspeakers to be installed outside the court. Throughout the trial, the men squatted outside, listening raptly, and during tea breaks African music poured from the loudspeakers and two old men sang traditional praises of the chiefs. In Serowe the people were meeting daily to pray. At the kgotla, before leaving for Lobatsi, Tshekedi had told them when they prayed not to ask that he should succeed but to ask that what God thought right should be done. 'I am not challenging the Government in order to upset it, but to get justice, and if the Proclamations are right, let them stand,' he said.

Tshekedi was in the witness stand for fifteen hours. His fundamental contention was that the Chiefs had only been invited to make amendments or additions and had never been consulted as to principles. He referred to several statements made in 1885 and 1895 by representatives of the Crown that the British Government would not interfere in Bechuana tribal government, and claimed that the whole question of treaty rights was involved: the effect of the new Proclamations was to take away from them their right of internal sovereignty and to reduce Chiefs to being officials of the Administration. He emphasized that he and Chief Bathoen were not contesting the ultimate authority of the Crown.

Chief Bathoen contended that it was impossible to try cases in accordance with the Proclamations, and various witnesses 132
Tshekedi and Bathoen v. the High Commissioner supported the claim that they violated native law and custom. Counsel for the High Commissioner, Mr. C. T. Blakeway, K.C., denied that the Proclamations conflicted with the treaties, but if they did it was necessary to maintain peace, order and good government. He denied the existence of the customs described by the Chiefs and denied that the Proclamations were 'uncertain and unreasonable'. He also denied the existence of a treaty and maintained that the High Commissioner, under the relevant Order-in-Council of 1891, was only required to treat 'with consideration' native law and custom, and that he had 'respected' native law and custom in the sense in which 'respect' was used.

Buchanan, always popular with the people for his courtesy, friendliness and buoyant sense of humour, delighted the tribesmen by his handling of the case. He was cool, unhurried and, when occasion seemed to merit, sarcastic. One official who had long been in Bechuanaland gave detailed evidence about kgotla procedure, and under cross-examination by Tom Reay refuted various points on tribal custom made by the Chiefs. Buchanan proceeded to cross-examine him and eventually drew from him the admission that he had never in fact attended a kgotla.

In his evidence Colonel Rey, the Resident Commissioner, was asked why he had not consulted the chiefs about native law and custom when the Proclamations were under consideration. He replied that it was obviously undesirable to put anything before them until it had been agreed to by the High Commissioner and the Secretary of State.'

Judge Watermeyer commented that if the tribes claimed internal sovereignty, the Proclamations were the complete antithesis of this, and were 'interference of the greatest magnitude'. The case was resolved by the Crown resorting to a provision under the Foreign Jurisdiction Act, whereby the Judge could request the Secretary of State's ruling on the extent of His Majesty's jurisdiction in Bechuanaland. The Court would be bound by the reply. Judgment was given in November 1936. The Secretary of State, Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, had replied: 'His Majesty has unfettered and unlimited power to legislate for the govern'Cape Times, July 15, 1936.

2 Later Chief Justice of the Union of South Africa.

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The Regent and administration of justice among the Native Tribes in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, and this power is not limited by Treaty or Agreement . ' The Judge stated that this answer was conclusive. Consequently the Court had no option but to dismiss the actions with costs. However, the High Commissioner was ordered to pay the costs incurred during nine days of the trial, as these could have been saved had not the High Commissioner denied the existence of the several native customs set out in the Chiefs’ Declaration.

Buchanan felt that though technically they lost the case, and though Chiefs Tshekedi and Bathoen had to pay large sums to cover their expenses, it was 'more
than a mere moral victory, since the judgment showed that the prefatory statement
to the Proclamations was entirely erroneous and that their terms were nonsensical
and not in accordance with native law and custom.' He added that it had become
clear even to the Administration that the Proclamations could not be enforced as
they stood and the Chiefs and himself were later called in to assist in their
redrafting in accordance with the facts as found by Judge Watermeyer.
Lord Hailey has commented that, looking back on the history
of those years, he could not help feeling that Chiefs Tshekedi and Bathoen had
some grounds for their protest; not because the Government was arbitrary or
unreasonable, but because for nearly forty years no sign had been given of an
intention to make any material change in the procedure initiated in 1891 and, when
the change came, it consequently appeared to be
'an unduly abrupt departure from tradition'.2
1H. C. T. Law Reports, 1926-53.
2 Native Administration in the British African Territories, Part V, p. 222.

CHAPTER i r
'A Qyestion of Personal Relationships'
It is in the nature of indirect rule that personalities usually
hold the key to the success of policies. An official may do well in one tribal area;
in another he can do nothing right; it depends on how he and the chief get along
together. Tshekedi, in his first ten years of rule, had the misfortune to encounter
two senior officials with whom he was constantly at loggerheads. This stimulated
his scepticism of the wisdom, understanding and motives of officials, so that he
became positively suspicious in his dealings with many of them, while a
corresponding suspicion developed on the official side as his reputation for
obstructiveness and wiliness grew and was passed on. Even well-intentioned
officials were sometimes on the defensive before they met him. The attitude of
others is summed up in a reputed assertion by one that 'Tshekedi has got away
with far too much far too often. I'm going to see that he doesn't do so any more.'
Many officials continued to be recruited from South Africa. Some were free from
prejudice, in some it was deeply ingrained if hidden by a veneer of good
intentions.
It was, therefore, a rare flash of inspiration that moved the Dominions Office
when they appointed a new Government Secretary to Bechuanaland in 1936.
Charles Arden-Clarke' was the first official with previous experience of Native
administration to be appointed to the Protectorate, and had served in Nigeria for
sixteen years. He arrived in Mafeking just before the case against the High
Commissioner had been filed to find that, as a result of the virtual boycott by
Tshekedi and Bathoen, things were at a standstill. After the case Colonel Rey was
on leave and Arden-Clarke was therefore Acting Resident Commissioner. He
quickly decided that Tshekedi was the 'lynch-pin'
ISir Charles Arden-Clarke, G.C.M.G.: Nigeria 1920-36, Bechuanaland
Protectorate 1936-42, Basutoland 1942-6. Governor of Sarawak 1946-9,
Governor and Commander-in-Chief Gold Coast 1949-57, Governor General and

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in Bechuanaland and went to Serowe to see him. They liked each other on sight and found each other most reasonable. Together with Captain Nettleton, the District Commissioner, they worked out a temporary compromise on the Proclamations, and later Bathoen and Tshekedi helped Arden-Clarke and a committee of Government, Chiefs and tribal representatives, to devise new Proclamations.'

Arden-Clarke, big, pleasant-looking was not particularly remarkable in appearance or in manner, but his achievements in Nigeria, Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Sarawak will long be remembered. His term as Governor of the Gold Coast was to be spectacular, with the releasing of the prisoner, Kwame Nkrumah, to become head of the legislature. He is a man of few words, a realist, with a sense of humour, direct and firm. (When his junior officials spoke of being frustrated, he said there was no such thing, it was simply an excuse for incompetence.) Suffice it to add that General Hertzog, the South African Prime Minister, complained about the appointment of an official from Nigeria, instead of an official 'more conversant with South African problems'.2 Unlike those officials who found Tshekedi always on the alert, looking behind every proposition to see if there was an ulterior motive or a trap, and resorting to legal advice on the least provocation, Arden-Clarke immediately awakened his wholehearted trust. In turn, Arden-Clarke found that Tshekedi never intrigued nor deceived; that he understood and appreciated the direct approach and was a man of his word, which, Arden-Clarke felt, could be said of few human beings. 'I could, not have asked for a more staunch ally,' he was to say later.

As for the High Commissioner's office, just as they had accepted Colonel Rey's advice and approach, so they now accepted Arden-Clarke's. And young though he was, he was appointed Resident Commissioner when Rey retired in 1937. Previously Tshekedi and Bathoen had been eager to set up proper Treasuries, but had been told that their people were not ready for the innovation, The old system had come in for much criticism: for instance, as long as levies imposed

1 Native Administration Proclamation No. 32, Native Courts Proclamation No. 33, of 1943.
2 Letter from General J. B. M. Hertzog to the Secretary of State, December 29, 1937.

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by chiefs had been paid in cattle, the people had been able to see what happened to the animals, but once cash levies were introduced, in the absence of accounts,
there was no way of checking on the use of the funds. Tshekedi had read about
the system in Nigeria and was convinced that it would be workable locally. Now
with Arden-Clarke it was possible to initiate such a system, with estimates,
accounting and planning, a Finance Committee, paid treasurer and assistants.
(Peter Sebina was appointed Treasurer and Mr. G. Mathiba was also on the
staff.) Tribal courts were reformed, five tribunals being established in Serowe
alone, and case records were kept. Economically, too, there were improvements
for in 1937 there were good crops and, although the Union still imposed weight
restrictions on cattle, the Northern Rhodesian market was opened in 1938. In 1941
the Bamangwato took over the administration of the local Livestock Improvement
Centre. Hitherto the tribe had sold their grain to traders in good years at a low
price, then had to buy back the same grain at a high price in the lean years of
drought. Arden-Clarke and Tshekedi therefore worked out a system of tribal
granaries. Tshekedi started the scheme with produce from the tribe's communal
lands, and appointed Tsoegang Sebina, his former schoolteacher, as grain
organizer. The Veterinary Department launched a cattle guard scheme, and
additional water was tapped to Serowe. In education there was also a marked
development though it remained inadequate and limited to the primary forms.
Added stimulus came from the report of the Advisory Committee on Education in
the Colonies after a sub-committee had visited Bechuanaland in 1937-8. The
Administration formed a Board of Advice on Native Education and among the
Bamangwato Tshekedi inaugurated a School Committee. Tshekedi told Arden-
Clarke about his dream of providing for his people education on the English
pattern. Originally he believed the curriculum should follow that of English
schools but later developed his ideas to include technical subjects that would be
useful locally. After long discussion in kgotla he got the tribe's approval for the
building of a Secondary School and levies were imposed to raise the large sum
required. Arden-Clarke warned him that in setting such an ambitious project, and
in his stern enforcement Native Treasuries Proclamations No. 35 of 1938.

Previously in the tribal administration with Chiefs Khama and Sekgoma.

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of prohibition of liquor (for instance, he turned out a regiment to smash all the
beer pots in Serowe), he was driving his people too hard. But Tshekedi was
making up for the years when one obstruction or another had delayed the progress
of the tribe. One remaining obstacle (apart from the ever-present one of
inadequate funds) was the attitude of the people, Courteous, dignified, loyal they
were, but in a country having an abundance of land, there was little incentive to
exert themselves. He felt it was not enough to tell people to do things, he must see
that they did them. He was the engine, high-powered, non-stop, that drove the
old-fashioned machine that was the tribe. He did not pause to heed Arden-Clarke's
warning.

Because they trusted each other, these two men could disagree hotly and still get
on. Although Arden-Clarke found Tshekedi reasonable and ready to give way or
to compromise when convinced by argument on the general outlines of a scheme,
he could be very obstinate over details; such details were often unimportant—the exact number and composition of the Native courts, for instance, where a few minor adjustments or variations would have helped to placate local susceptibilities. These were occasions that Arden-Clarke recalled to Tshekedi many years after. 'You would suddenly get an almost devilish look in your eyes, Chief,' he told Tshekedi, 'and when I used to see that I would stop in mid-sentence and say—"Well, we'll leave this for the moment and go on in a week's time."' Tshekedi replied, 'Well, when I saw the veins beginning to swell in your neck, and you began fingering your collar, I would do the same.'

The High Commissioner, Sir William Clark, on a visit to Serowe at this time, referred to the better understanding between the Administration and the Chief and told Tshekedi in kgotla: 'A new era has begun and I look for a period of peace and prosperity under your rule.' The long agitation on the part of the Union Government had also quietened down and though the Secretary of State had agreed that there should be a standing joint Advisory Conference, consisting of the Union Secretary for Native Affairs, the three Resident Commissioners and other officials, its concerns were mainly technical, and the people trusted Arden-Clarke to protect their interests.

In this 'new era' there was even a social innovation. To the I Blue Book, Cmd. 8707, p. 89.

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dismay of his officials, and the horror of some wives, ArdenClarke invited all of them to tea with the Tswana chiefs and their followers. However, everybody went, there were no noticeable ill-effects, and the event became an annual one. But the times most appreciated by Tshekedi were those when he and Arden-Clarke went on trek together. Tshekedi would make his camp a little way off and, if invited to do so (he was meticulous in such matters and never went without an invitation), would join Arden-Clarke in front of the camp fire. Several officials have remarked that the trouble with Tshekedi was that he never relaxed, you could not sit down and have a drink with him and get on easy terms. ArdenClarke did not find this: he would sit with his whisky, Tshekedi with his orange juice, and they would discuss many things—tribal affairs, agriculture, education and wild game. Tshekedi, who sent for every new book on Government, administration, politics and economics in the Colonies, as well as sociological and legal treatises, found that with Arden-Clarke he could talk over all that he had been absorbing, and was so profoundly eager to interpret. ArdenClarke asked him where the failure between him and the Administration had lain in the past: 'In personal relationships,' was the reply.

At this time, however, Tshekedi's private life was troubled. But as he was always reticent and the elders of the tribe find the discussion of intimate matters distasteful, some features of the story are obscure. Tshekedi, hoping to reduce the friction between the descendants of Sekgoma I, approached his cousin Bagakgametse, daughter of Moloi Sekgoma. Tshekedi had known her well for nine years and, before Moloi's death, had promised to look after her and educate
her so that he was virtually her godfather. In February 1936 they were married by Mr. Burns, assisted by five other ministers, in the Serowe church. Seretse, a tall, slim boy of fifteen, was best man, and the church was crowded with some two thousand members of the tribe and about seventy European friends. It was soon apparent that Tshekedi’s bride was jealous of his mother, Queen Semane. The chief’s mother is by tradition the most important woman in the tribe and only after her death can the chief’s wife take pride of place.’ In Semane’s case, her I. Schapera, Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom, p. 68.

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The traditional role had been enhanced by her personal qualities. According to Mr. Burns, Bagakgametse’s jealousy was fanned by those members of the royal family who disliked Semane. Even if he realized it at the time, Tshekedi could do little about this as, within a short while of his marriage, he had to go to a cattle post in the north and from there direct to Cape Town to see the High Commissioner and Buchanan about some complicated matter that kept him away for about six weeks. On his return his wife told him that she was pregnant. However, when the child was not born until late in December, it was clear that he himself could not have been the father, and he brought proceedings for a divorce in the civil court. It was granted in March 1937.

Meanwhile he had another cause for deep distress in the illness of his mother. Queen Semane began to tire easily. Though she was not yet sixty she had to give up her work and rest. Soon she was too ill to attend the annual church meeting and instead sent a message expressive of her faith: ‘I hope your work will go forward successfully. Oh, may the work of our God go forward! Everything is conquered by prayer—even sickness; and God's wonders are shown.’ Her illness was diagnosed as a heart disease brought on largely by overwork. But there were rumours that she had been poisoned. Such rumours were not unheard of: when Khama’s first wife had died, and again when Sekgoma died, there were rumours that they had been poisoned. The explanation probably lies in the widespread belief that everything has a cause due to the working out of forces in nature which intend just that effect, or to personal intervention, whether by living people or by the spirits of ancestors. Thus, while the cause of death from a stabbing is obvious, it is felt that death from an internal disease must be due to poison or witchcraft. This ruling out of accident (or in certain respects, luck or chance), and the feeling that there is a power at work that can be controlled if only one can find out how to control it, is an attempt to rationalize a traditional world-view that has its own logic. One Christian scholar has written: ‘Even when the practice of the old ways comes to an end, the world-view which lies behind them remains.’ He adds that ‘certain elements in it may approximate more closely to Biblical insights than does the European world-view.’

J. V. Taylor, The Growth of the Church in Buganda, p. 192, S.C.M. See also 140 'A Question of Personal Relationships'

Tshekedi employed an African detective to investigate the
rumours and as a result his former wife Bagakgametse, and three sorcerers, were tried under the Witchcraft Proclamation. There was no evidence that she had tried to poison Queen Semane. 
She pleaded guilty to having obtained various potions and charms from the sorcerers, and she and two of the men were found guilty of contravening the Proclamation and were sentenced to fines, and were later banished.'
Queen Semane grew worse and was taken to Dr. Molema's nursing home in Mafeking. However, by August 1937, she seemed to be much better and left hospital to stay with the Molemas. On September 1r Tshekedi and his sister, Bonyerile, were preparing for her arrival in Serowe when he received the news that she had died: she had been found sitting on a couch in Dr. Molema's drawing-room, her Bible on her knee. Tshekedi broke the news to Bonyerile.'Mother has left us.' It was a sad loss. One of the officials described Tshekedi as clearly suffering under severe strain, looking very tired and worn. The tribe and the Church also felt it deeply and Burns wrote that without Semane the Church was like a crippled bird. He considered what could account for the development of her rich personality, her influence for good. Doubtless, contact with her husband, Khama, and sympathy with his ideas, enlarged her nature, but he believed it was contact 'with one greater than Khama' that made her great. The Mother of the Tribe was buried on the hilltop beside Khama's grave. During this time the old feud between Khama and the Raditladis had revived and come to a head during a trial in kgotla. Disang (who had been banished by Sekgoma II in 1924), his brother, Lebang, and his son, Leetile, were involved. Tshekedi was very popular at this time so that feeling in the tribe ran high and the Administration was concerned about potential trouble. Over the years the Raditladis had increasingly resented not having the influence and the positions that they felt were their due by reason of their birth and abilities. As happened in most of the affairs involving Dr. A. W. Hoernlk's chapter, Magic and Medicine, in The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa, Maskew Miller.
IA. Sillery, The Bechuanaland Protectorate, pp. 30.-r.

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one or another section of the royal family, the case had ramifications. For instance, Leetile's relationship with his half-brothers came up. They were said to be jealous of him because he was higher-born (his mother having been a Ratshosa) and better educated than they, and was his father's favourite. One of these half-brothers had complained of his father's neglect in a kgotla case and Tshekedi had ordered Disang to make proper provision for all his sons (a decision with which the District Commissioner's court concurred). Disang, angry at what he considered interference in a family matter, accused Tshekedi of being motivated by the old Khama antipathy to the Raditladi house. For his part, Tshekedi claimed that Disang had abused the trust that he had placed in him over some years, and that Disang and Lebang had been secretly intriguing against him.
Witnesses said that they were involved in the agitations of their brother-in-law, Moanaphuti Segolodi, at the time of the Ballingers' visit. Tshekedi recommended their banishment and a Government inquiry endorsed this. They had a long and trying wait in virtual banishment, cut off from their property, before the sentence was confirmed by the Secretary of State in July 1938, on the grounds that they had attempted to subvert the authority of the Chief. Leetile lived in Francistown, the two older men in Lobatsi where they died within a year of each other. (Banishment, preceded by a trial, remained the punishment among the Bechuana for seditious acts or other serious offences against the chief, although under Proclamation No. 75 of 1934 it had to be confirmed by the High Commissioner. It did not carry with it the indignity of a prison sentence, but was a far more severe punishment, usually entailing confiscation of property.)

As Seretse grew older, Tshekedi was becoming increasingly appreciative of his nephew's companionship. He was a father to the boy, proud and protective, and after the death of his mother, had helped to bring him up. Seretse had much the same childhood as Tshekedi except that he went to boardingschool at an earlier age, and was a more delicate boy. On several occasions his health caused Tshekedi anxiety and once, when Seretse had pneumonia, he broke off important talks to go to the boy several hundred miles away at school.

Z. K. Matthews, whom he often consulted, speaks of 142
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Tshekedi's love for his nephew, and the trouble that he took about his education. But his love could be demanding. Tshekedi told the story of finding Seretse, as a small boy, smoking a cigarette behind a bush, and it became clear in the telling that he interpreted this as a challenge to his own authority. For Seretse, who almost worshipped his uncle, it was a burden to feel the intensity of the hopes placed in him, and the height of the standards, and the self-dedication, he was expected to attain from childhood on: standards set by Khama the Great and by Tshekedi himself. At the same time the boy was developing an apprehension of becoming chief: when Sir Herbert Stanley, the High Commissioner, met him at Lovedale school and referred to his future role as chief, he was clearly miserable. However, the time when he would have to take on the responsibilities was still remote. He spent his holidays with Tshekedi who sometimes took him on official trips to Cape Town and Pretoria, and on business trips to Johannesburg. As they rode together round the cattle posts and the lands they became more like brothers than uncle and nephew. Although at seventeen Seretse was big for his age and was maturing fast, under tribal custom he was still a boy and, until his regiment was called he could not formally attend the kgotla. Besides, Tshekedi did not think it necessary to teach him about tribal law and custom until he had completed his education. Meanwhile, there was an inevitable diversion from tribal ways in the colleges of the Union where the outlook was more urban, and politics and nationalism increasingly interested the students. Seretse was too balanced and good-natured to get caught up in the extreme nationalism of some students, but he was beginning to have serious doubts about the merit of chieftainship.
Early in 1938 Peter Sebina accompanied Tshekedi on a visit to his friend, Dr. S. M. Molema, in Mafeking, and from there to Johannesburg. Peter did not know the purpose of their visit. On the first day Tshekedi went to the General Hospital and, when they met afterwards, Peter had never seen his Chief so happy. The next morning Peter met Ella Moshoela, a nurse, a beautiful young woman, grave and attentive, yet evidently with a strong sense of humour.

On their way back to Serowe, Tshekedi at last confided in Peter. 'I want to marry that young woman,' he said.

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'Please do,' was Peter's reply.

Tshekedi had known Ella for some time, having met her in the house of her brother-in-law, Molema. Her father was a minister in the Methodist Church and she had trained as a teacher before becoming a nurse. She belonged to the same Barolong family as the Molemas, grandsons of the Barolong Chief who had founded Molemastad, later Mafeking. Both Molema brothers had qualified as doctors in Scotland, returning to set up large practices of people of all races in Mafeking. Both were married to Ella's elder sisters. The senior, Dr. S. M. Molema, played a prominent part in African politics in the Union, and has been on the African Advisory Council of Bechuanaland since 1922. Tshekedi was marrying into a family with intellectual interests similar to his own and of high birth.

They were married quietly in Mafeking on May 23, 1938, with Seretse, nearly eighteen, as best man. Mr. Burns and the Rev. A. J. Haile took the service.

Ella brought to Tshekedi a calm and strong devotion, and all the love, common sense and courage that marriage to him demanded. She, too, had a lively faith in God. The tribe once more had a Mother.

Tshekedi and Ella lived in the large, cool house against Serowe hill. The garden was shaded by big trees and the lolwapa of their house and courtyard, and of the houses of near relatives, was surrounded by a decorated wall. Nearby were the neat tribal offices recently built by Tshekedi, and the kgotla with its crescent of sturdy camel-thorn logs and its two ancient trees.

A year later their first son was born. Tshekedi named him Leapeetswe—which signifies that jealousy lasts longer even than a stone cooked in fire, a reminder of the feud with the Raditladi house,

CHAPTER 12

The War Years

Nineteen thirty-eight was described as 'the most peaceful and progressive year the Regent and the tribe had known for a long time.'L This was no doubt due to the combination of Charles Arden-Clarke's influence as Resident Commissioner, and to a let-up in the factional disputes of the royal family. Tshekedi, settled happily
in his home life with Ella, pleased with Seretse's progress, concentrated on local
development. For the first time agreements were concluded between the Native
Authority and the traders in the Bamangwato country, defining their rights and
obligations. This was the first year for the Native Authority to organize tax
collection, a highly successful experiment. In 1939, Tshekedi broke with the
tradition established by his father and half-brother and joined the African
Advisory Council, with the agreement of the kgotla.
Progress was cut short by the war. In the Union, on a Saturday in September
1939, Parliament debated whether the country would support Britain or remain
neutral: there was a forceful section advocating neutrality while many of the
Nationalist opposition were openly pro-Hitler. On the following day, Britain
declared war, and General Smuts achieved a small majority in favour of joining
her.
Buchanan, concerned lest Smuts should use the situation to incorporate the High
Commission Territories, went to Mafeking to warn Tshekedi. Tshekedi smiled
and told him that soon after Britain had declared war he and the other Bechuana
Chiefs had gone to their respective District Commissioners and offered their
resources in assisting Britain, even their help in putting down a rebellion in South
Africa should one occur, as had happened in the 1914-18 war. But for some time
nothing happened and Smuts revived their anxiety by asking the British V. F.

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Government's permission to construct airfields in the Territories. He also
suggested that their Natives be encouraged to enlist in the Union Defence Force
Native Military Corps. The Resident Commissioner, Arden-Clarke, said he would
like to take the Chiefs to Pretoria to inspect the conditions; they went, and to a
man refused to have anything to do with the Union Defence Force. Chiefs
Tshekedi and Bathoen, with ArdenClarke's support, initiated the idea of special
corps of men from the three High Commission Territories to be trained with the
British, and as the war spread to the Middle East, arrangements were made to
begin recruiting.
Meanwhile the question of the incorporation of the Territories was dropped for
the duration.
Among the Bamangwato the call-up was preceded by the 'letsholo'-the customary
formal declaration of a state of war and call to arms. Before dawn, on a winter's
morning in June 1941, thousands of Bamangwato tribesmen gathered in the bush,
waiting for the Chief; but Tshekedi was already there, and before sunrise he
addressed them and told them what was expected of the tribe. Some of the other
Chiefs made similar appeals. Within a month there were 2,000 Bechuana in
training at a converted cold storage depot in Lobatsi. As was customary in the
Southern African set-up they were to be non-combatant
-white opinion could not tolerate Africans in any other role. So they flocked to
join as pioneers and guards. They came by cart, on donkeys, on traders' lorries, on
foot, from the remotest scrub or swamp of Bechuanaland. One of the British N.C.O.s with the Bamangwato, C.Q.M.S. W. T. Mansell, observed the pleasure that Tshekedi's last visit gave to the men of three Bamangwato companies who were among the first to leave. Rather than stay in the officers' quarters, Tshekedi shared the food of the ordinary soldier, mainly mealie-meal and soup, and spent the night with his people in their tents.

Certain companies spent four years in the Middle East, constructing defences, roads, bridges, unloading trains and lorries, guarding aerodromes and so on. Some were diverted into combatant duties as anti-aircraft gun crews under the process of 'Dilution'. Bechuana companies were the first African gunners to join the Eighth Army in the Western Desert in 1943, and at dawn, just two years after the tribal gathering when I Ten Thousand Men of Africa, by R. A. R. Bent, p. 4. H.M.S.O. 146

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Tshekedi called his people to arms, Bamangwato and Bakwena troops were among the first to land in Sicily. They were to fight all the way to the borders of Austria. The behaviour of the Bechuanas in Italy was regarded as a tribute to their Chiefs and to tribal discipline, for they were in the unusual position of being a well-fed, well-clothed African people, in a conquering army, among a European nation of starving, threadbare people, devastated by war. They proved to have balance, a controlled tribal pride and internal discipline. It was remarked that, all through their service, however exotic or frightening, their first interest was in home affairs - their family and their cattle. Their letters were full of these concerns and at 'Maitiso', the conversational time before dusk, they would discuss them, endlessly. Sometimes they contributed to a good cause at home, for instance a Bamangwato Company helped in the establishment of a maternity home in Serowe. 1

In 1942 Chiefs Tshekedi and Bathoen, with the new Resident Commissioner of Bechuanaland, Mr. A. D. Forsyth Thompson, visited their companies in the Middle East, to be greeted with singing, dancing and much banter. Altogether the Bamangwato raised thirteen companies, half the total force of 10,000 men from Bechuanaland, and they suffered the heaviest casualties, fourteen out of the seventeen Bechuana killed. At home the tribe contributed £5,200 to war funds, and Bonyerile, Tshekedi's sister, led the women in knitting comforts. One of the officers, Mr. A. Lee-Tattersall, felt that Tshekedi was a symbol for the Bechuana soldier throughout the war. He was not an idol, he was the real Father of his people. The Bakwena Chief, Kgari Sechele, was one of the Regimental Sergeant-Majors. Another was Molwa Sekgoma, Tshekedi's cousin, who received the M.B.E. for outstanding service in Italy. Rasebolai Kgamane, next in succession after Tshekedi, received the B.E.M. for service in the Middle East where he was the only Bechuana R.S.M. during long and difficult years. The official historian described his sense of judgment and even temper, his dignity and modesty, which,
with his soldierly bearing, made him the ideal man for touring the companies and listening to the men's difficulties, and expressing these so that officers could understand the real feeling of their men.2 (Their decoral OP. Cit., pp. 5, 6, 59, 62, 63. 2 op. cit., p. 91.

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tions were presented by King George VI, when the Royal Family visited the Bamangwato, and thanked them for their war effort, in 1947-)

In March 1946 the Bechuana troops returned to the Protectorate. Some of them were met at Lobatsi, Gaberones and Palapye, and some 'dropped off inconspicuously at the wayside halts nearest their homes and made their way home through the bush with their kitbags slung over their shoulders and, as the trains moved on, only the white end of a kitbag could be seen moving on through the trees, as if Africa in her vastness was claiming her own again." Lee-Tattersall, now a Major, returned with his company of 300 men and paid a courtesy call on the Chief. Tshekedi invited him to luncheon, when they discussed the tribe. Tshekedi was very proud of their war record. Sir Charles Arden-Clarke speaks of his 'inspiring leadership' at that time.

At home Tshekedi had been faced with a resurgence of the unrest involving John Mswazi and his followers in the early 'thirties. As he was to be severely censured for his handling of the matter, it is necessary to go into it in some detail. This comparatively small section of the 4,900 members of the Bakalaka clan in the north, again began to agitate for independence. In 1943 Mswazi led a campaign of disobedience to the Chief's representative. He was arrested and sentenced to a short term of imprisonment by the Administration. On Tshekedi's advice, before releasing Mswazi, the Administration warned him that he must remain in the south. He ignored them and returned to his people. Tshekedi immediately informed the Administration who sent a Police Officer, Captain Langley, to the Bakalaka district, where both he and the Chief's representative were assaulted. A joint Government and tribal force was promptly dispatched with an ultimatum to Mswazi to surrender.

This he did and for the third time a Government Commission of Inquiry was held into their grievances. (The previous ones sat in 193o and in 1932.) The Commission reported that the evidence was overloaded with instances of calculated disregard and of flagrant disobedience to the law and customs of the land. It said a factor contributing to the difficulties was

1 op. cit., p. 99.

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the remoteness of the District Commissioner and the Chief in Serowe, and though the existing man had not abused his power or neglected his duties, recommended the appointment of a more efficient and sympathetic Chief's representative.

Mswazi and thirty-five followers were banished, and their property was removed. Although on Tshekedi's suggestion the Commission recommended a communal
fine as a deterrent and a source of compensation for Mswazi's victims, the Administration maintained that banishment was sufficient deterrent.

The British Administration believed the agitation would collapse. Tshekedi did not. He strongly recommended that about 60 of the Mswazi followers, who he reckoned were the real trouble-makers, should be removed to Serowe where they could form their own clan and be under supervision. The Government's failure to take such decisive action might, he warned, result in rebellion.

His advice was not taken and 1946 found the section refusing to pay taxes to the Native Authority. He promptly moved six of the ringleaders and their families and possessions to Serowe, and reported his action to a disapproving Administration, who insisted that the people be allowed to return to the north. Ultimately a tribal kgotla was called by the Resident Commissioner in the Mswazi area, at which he read a Proclamation saying that the Secretary of State had issued an Order that about sixty families were to report to the District Commissioner at Serowe within one month, when a suitable place of residence would be assigned them. Further, that if they did not comply, Chief Tshekedi was to call out a regiment to remove them to such place as the District Commissioner should point out.

Just before the month had elapsed, Tshekedi was served with a Court Order granted by the District Commissioner at the instance of the 'deportees', interdicting him from forcibly removing them. The Administration was not joined as a party to these legal proceedings.

Tshekedi at once consulted Douglas Buchanan who advised him to take no further steps until they had proceeded to the High Court to get the interdict set aside. Meantime the Bamangwato regiment of two thousand armed men, with wagons and oxen to effect the removal of the sixty families, was kept waiting in the Mswazi area. To Buchanan's amazement the Attorney-General indicated that the Administration was reluctant to be a party to the proceedings, and added that if Tshekedi insisted that they join, the formalities would take some weeks. Buchanan replied that, subject to Tshekedi's decision, they would proceed immediately without the Administration, as the position was bound to deteriorate with delay, quite apart from keeping the large tribal force waiting about in the Bakalaka district, without pay. The Attorney-General said that they had arranged for a Union Judge, Mr. Justice Grindley Ferris, to hear the application to set aside the interdict, and that the matter would be dealt with as soon as possible.

Buchanan described what followed: 'Our obvious-and possibly only--case was that we were the chosen instrument of the Secretary of State in executing an "Act of State" and that, under the Foreign Jurisdiction Act, the Courts had no power to interfere. We accordingly asked the Resident Commissioner for an affidavit to that effect. He refused on the grounds that the Administration was not concerned in the litigation. Fortunately Tshekedi had in his possession a letter from a junior official dealing with some incidental matter, but which referred to the Secretary of State's Order concerning what he had to do.

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We attached this letter to Tshekedi's affidavit as corroboration of his bare statement that in acting as he was doing he was performing an "Act of State". When the Court sat, it accepted this position and set aside the Mswazi interdict with costs. Immediately it rose, at the Judge's request, Tshekedi agreed not to take any step for a few days, so as to give the applicants time to realize the seriousness of their position.

Meanwhile, the recalcitrants, now five hundred armed men, were more or less entrenched at their kgotla, awaiting an attack by Tshekedi's regiment. Buchanan said that bloodshed was anticipated, but nothing of the kind happened. He asked Tshekedi the reason. His reply was: 'I put myself in the place of the Mswazis and thought out what would defeat ine without firing a shot.' All the cattle in that area had to be watered from three wells. Tshekedi therefore divided his force into three parts and stationed one round, and in control of, each well. He next sent three unarmed men to the kgotla with the message that no water would be given to any cattle whose owner had not paid all taxes to date. This applied to all the men under arms at the kgotla. That night they and their 150 families, numbering about sixteen hundred people, illegally crossed the border into Southern Rhodesia.

Tshekedi impounded and watered their cattle and took possession of their ploughs. (A normal peaceful migration would have been the subject of negotiation, but as it was the Chief could confiscate property.) As soon as he was satisfied that they were not returning he disbanded his regiment. Another long tussle then developed with the Administration. Without consulting Tshekedi or the Bamangwato tribe, the Administration arranged sanctuary for the Mswazis with the Southern Rhodesian Government and requested him to send their cattle and ploughs to them. Apparently no provision was to be made for the payment of the arrear taxes or for the costs (some £2,000) of the expedition sent to enforce the Secretary of State's Order.

Early in 1948 Tshekedi told the Administration that he was prepared to settle all issues if the expenses incurred by the Tribal Treasury and the unpaid taxes were covered by sale of the cattle. Ultimately the Administration's auctioneer conducted the sale in the presence of its veterinary officers, who kept a detailed list of the marks on the animals and the prices realized in respect of each. After deducting the auctioneer's expenses, the balance was paid into the Tribal Treasury. It was Tshekedi's intention to return to any Mswazi follower who came back, reaffirmed allegiance and paid his taxes, a proportion of the cattle sale proceeds, although under Tribal law it was unusual to return property once it had been confiscated. Over the years more than six hundred people returned, but Mswazi himself, an old man, remained in Rhodesia. Tshekedi believed that had 160 people been firmly dealt with in 1943, the flight of 1,600 people in 1946 would never have taken place. It is interesting to compare the Administration's actions in a similar, though smaller, outbreak of non-cooperation in the Bangwaketse in 1934.--5. There a Sub-Chief of the Bakgatla,
Gobuamang, for some time had been claiming independence. He and his followers defied Chief Bathoen and refused to pay a tribal levy. The Government tried him, and he was sentenced to detention. After his release, he again defied tribal laws and the Acting Resident Commissioner, Captain Riley, was assaulted when he attended a meeting to call Gobuamang to order. Colonel Rey sent a police force to demand

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that the rebels surrender, and sentenced them to a communal fine of 100 cattle. Gobuamang with some of his followers crossed the border into Bakwena country, and settled there. That was the end of that affair.

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CHAPTER 13

The Hereros and Michael Scott

On January 30, 1946, Tshekedi asked Sir Evelyn Baring, the new High Commissioner, to forward a cable to the United Nations urging that South Africa should not be allowed to incorporate the Mandated Territory of South-West Africa. Two days later the South African authorities called many of the Africans of South-West Africa to meetings and asked whether they wanted to remain under the rule of the Union Government, or whether they would like to come under another nation. They were given a few hours in which to reach a decision. The question they put most often to the white officials that day, was whether any change in the administration would remove them 'from under the shadow of the Crown of King George of England'. When the officials assured them that the change implied no departure from South Africa's partnership in the British Commonwealth, the Africans 'declared themselves fully satisfied on this point'.

This assurance was ambiguous to the point of dishonesty in view of the question put, and not unnaturally it served to obtain the required answer from a majority of the African population. Only the Hereros, under their courageous and distinguished Chief, Hosea Kutako, saw through the device and rejected the referendum. Their distress at the prospect of being incorporated in the Union was soon known to those Hereros who had been given sanctuary by Khama in 1905, and to Chief Tshekedi, under whose rule they were living along with Frederick Maharero, the Paramount Chief of all the Hereros. Tshekedi and the other five Bechuana Chiefs considered the situation. They feared not only for the Africans in South-West but, as Bechuanaland abutted for 500 miles on that country, they feared that if South Africa once took South-West she might go on to incorporate Bechuanaland. By the end of 'Union Government, History of Mandate, p. 84.

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April, he had organized and circulated a memorandum from himself and the other Chiefs. They asked the British Government to put this before the Trusteeship
Committee of the United Nations when the question of the Mandate of South-West Africa was considered.

This was one of the first petitions to the newly-formed United Nations. Clearly and ably it set out the case: their fear of the Union, their abhorrence of its policy of racial discrimination, ran through the nine chapters of the memorandum. One fact which they stated firmly, and which has been repeated year after year in United Nations debates, was that the object of the Mandate was to 'promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being and the social progress of the inhabitants' who, according to the Covenant of the League of Nations, were particularly 'the people not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world'. The development of such people was to form 'a sacred trust of civilization'. They pointed out that in this high purpose the Mandate for South-West Africa had been 'conferred upon His Britannic Majesty, to be exercised on his behalf by the Government of the Union. His Britannic Majesty' on behalf of the South African Government had 'agreed to accept the Mandate' and had undertaken to exercise it in accordance with certain provisions. These were promises and obligations that the African people in both South-West Africa and Bechuanaland took seriously, and it was for this reason that the former had wanted an assurance at the time of the referendum that they would remain under the British Crown.

The Chiefs said that as the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund was contributing L2 m. for the development of the High Commission Territories, and as there were prospects of mineral and agricultural development, Bechuanaland was 'at the dawn of an era of industrial development'. This would be 'strangled at birth' if South Africa incorporated South-West Africa, thus almost surrounding Bechuanaland and hindering the long-projected railway through the Territory from the Rhodesias to Walvis Bay.

Apart from their proximity to South-West, the Bechuana Chiefs held that they had a duty to see that the principles implicit in the Mandate were made effective because of the 154

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14,000 Hereros living as displaced persons in BechuanalandThese people had a right to be rehabilitated to a country properly administered. The memorandum told the tragic history of the Hereros and other tribes since, early in the century, General von Trotha had ordered that 'every Herero with or without arms, with or without cattle, will be shot down.' The Germans had almost succeeded in annihilating them: only 15,000 of the 80,000 Hereros survived. During the Great War, when the Hereros helped the South African forces against the Germans, the Governor-General, Lord Buxton, promised them 'the old freedom along with great possessions of land and unlimited herds of cattle,'1 in return for their support. But at the end of the war they saw Afrikaner farmers being settled in their country, and German farmers being reinstated: Afrikaners received nearly 32 square miles per head while about 3 square miles was the average Herero holding. Soon they began to feel the effects of South Africa's policy of white domination: the pass
laws, labour restriction laws, discrimination at all levels, a system which ensured that the Africans remained a labour force for the whites. The case put forward by the Chiefs was supported by four eminent Africans in the Union, all friends of Tshekedi’s: Z. K. Matthews, Professor of African Studies at Fort Hare University College and a member of the Native Representative Council; Dr. A. B. Xuma, President General of the African National Congress; Professor D. D. T. Jabavu, President of the All African Convention; and Dr. R. T. Bokwe. They testified that the South African system was one of oppression and discrimination and Professor Matthews said it would be ‘a calamity’ for Africans in South-West or the Territories if they were incorporated.

The Bechuanan Chiefs asked that the South African Mandate over South-West be revoked, and that it be given by the United Nations to Britain.2

The other Chiefs empowered Tshekedi, assisted by Douglas Buchanan, to represent them in consultations with the High Commissioner and the British Government. Tshekedi applied to the High Commissioner for a priority passage to England to put the Chiefs’ case to the British delegation to the United Union Government official statement to the League of Nations, J928. The Case for Bechuanaland.

After he had been given the British Government's reply, Tshekedi expressed his feeling of frustration in a letter to the Anti-Slavery Society.3 He said: 'I reached the only possible conclusion and that was that South-West Africa, as far as the British Government is concerned, has been given over to the Union Government and that the British Government is not prepared to argue against the demand to be made by General Smuts at the next U.N.O. Conference.' He concluded: 'The guardians of the defenceless and helpless peoples of the world should have the full facts of the case before them before they are persuaded by more powerful sources to make up their minds, and this was my humble purpose in my wish to come to England.'

Lord Noel Buxton pursued the matter further only to be told by the Secretary of State that Tshekedi had no locus standi in the matter.

Not for the first time Tshekedi was stimulated by the opposition. He asked for passages in the Carnarvon Castle, The reply was that the British Government had no cause to suppose that the South African Government's administration as a
mandatory power had been open to criticism. Nor did it feel that the economic interests of Bechuanaland could be adversely affected by the incorporation of South-West Africa.

A member of the Anti-Slavery Society cautioned Tshekedi at this juncture that his insistence on going would prejudice. June 11, 1946.

'Hasard, July 8, 1946.

3June 14, 1946.

The Hereros and Michael Scott arrangements for the economic development of the Protectorate.

He replied: 'It is clear to us from [your] kind representations * .. that you people in England are breathing a different atmosphere to that which we breathe in South Africa and, living under different conditions very unlike ours, are unable to appreciate to the same degree as we do, the fears which are apparent to us here.'

In September 1946, at Tshekedi's request, the High Commissioner met him, Chief Frederick Maharero, and other representatives of the Herero tribe living in the Protectorate, in Mafeking. Chief Frederick, supported by his headmen, expressed his alarm at the possibility of South-West Africa being incorporated in the Union. He had lived in the Transvaal where the conditions were 'intolerable'. Tshekedi pointed out that the Africans in South-West had been wards of the League of Nations as long as the League existed. 'Whose wards are they now?' he asked. Tshekedi asked the Anti-Slavery Society to try to get an assurance that the Chiefs' petition and this further information would be put before the United Nations, but by November, when that organization met, he was more concerned than ever. He wrote to Sir Walter Huggard, Acting High Commissioner expressing unease because 'not only is Great Britain the only power represented at U.N.O. that so far has supported the incorporation of South-West Africa in the Union, but we have had no information that Great Britain has placed the Bechuanaland Protectorate's case before the General Assembly.'

A week later Tshekedi and Buchanan wrote to Huggard exposing a major weakness of the United Nations for 'so long as U.N.O. has no military forces or other means of enforcing its decrees or judgments, just so long is U.N.O. impotent and unable to take any directaction.' (This very fact was to emasculate all the United Nations' resolutions on South-West Africa for the next thirteen years.) They concluded by saying that the way in which the so-called consultation of Africans in SouthWest Africa had taken place, and the obstacles placed in the way of Tshekedi to prevent him expressing the views of his People, only convinced the Native peoples of South Africa that the principle of the United Nations Charter-affirming

'July 15, 1946.

2November 25, 1946.

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fundamental human rights—does not apply to the backward races of the African continent.'

These actions having proved ineffectual, Tshekedi decided to try other ways. Dr. Xuma, the President General of the African National Congress in South Africa, who had supported the Bechuanaland petition, was able to go to the United Nations on behalf of the Africans in South-West Africa. And Tshekedi thought of someone else who might help. Early in 1947 he had received an appeal from some of his tribesmen working in Johannesburg. They were living in appalling squalor in the shanty-town, 'Tobruk', and were being intimidated by a gang who virtually ruled there. There was one white man living in Tobruk, an Anglican clergyman. Tshekedi learned that he was to be trusted, and asked to meet him. The clergyman was sitting in his tent when a young African called him, saying a big chief wanted to see him. He went out into the lane and Tshekedi saw a tall, thin, untidy man in a noneto-clean white cassock approaching his car.

So he and Michael Scott met for the first time. Tshekedi liked the steady gaze of the Englishman, but he was too upset by the surroundings to give much thought to him. For his part, Scott's main impression was of a thick-set, almost surly man, who scowled as they went together up and down the lines of fearful hovels surrounded by cesspools. Scott said afterwards that if he had then known Tshekedi as he later did, he would have realized that this was not a natural expression; it was brought on by the horror of the place, and by Tshekedi's thought: 'this is just what we are not going to have happen in Bechuanaland—this is the enemy of Africa—this result of the evil migrant labour system in a society where the white industrialists regard African workers as outcasts, to be used and then to be shut out.' Tshekedi invited Scott to come and stay in Serowe.

When the Hereros in South-West Africa implored Chief : Frederick Maharero to go to them, and he was too old to do so, Tshekedi at once thought of Scott, The old Chief welcomed the suggestion and Scott was sent for. So began a lifelong search for justice that was to drain his strength and often, almost but never entirely, his spirit. He was to be upheld not only by his own faith, but by the faith of two men, Tshekedi Khama and Hosea Kutako, the Herero Chief in South-West Africa. The story of 158

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Scott and the Hereros has been told in other books. I This can only describe Tshekedi's role and his friendship with Scott, to whom he gave the Tswana name, 'Moretse', the 'Listener'. As Scott went between South-West, Johannesburg, Bechuanaland and the United Nations he constantly consulted Tshekedi. On one occasion towards the end of 1947, with Tshekedi's help, the Hereros in Bechuanaland raised £430 to send Scott to the United Nations. He was about to board a plane in Johannesburg, however, when officials who had been belatedly warned of his intended destination, tried to take his passport away. He refused to give it up but was prevented from catching the plane, so borrowed a car and set
off for Bechuana land, arriving at Tshekedi’s house at 2 a.m. to report on what had happened. The rest of his journey he described in a letter to Tshekedi:

'My passport difficulty you know about. After leaving you that night (but I did not want to go without your knowing the position hence my visit) I had to drive through mud and water and the most dreadful rainstorm. Both rear springs of the car were broken by the time Palapye was reached and I had to leave the car there to be repaired at a cost of Cio. I went on into Rhodesia next morning and reported to the immigration authorities there, giving them an account of my passport difficulties and the attempt to take it away from me. From Bulawayo I chartered a two-seater plane and set off for Kasama whence I had booked a seat on the Mercury air line. We ran into a rainstorm just as we were approaching the Victoria Falls and had to turn back and land in a game reserve at a place called Dett. Early next morning we crossed the Zambesi, landing at the Victoria Falls, and on to Lusaka and N'dola where as we landed a Mercury air line took off bound for Paris. On landing I learned the police had warned the authorities and informed Mercury not to pick me up at Kasama as this was against the terms of their agreement (to pick up passengers en route). Hence the Mercury plane had been rerouted via N'dola and hence probably their anxiety to get away when we appeared on the horizon. I did not learn this at first but only after the aerodrome officer had wirelessed to recall the plane and after he had become less suspicious of me I Freda Troup, In Face of Fear, Faber & Faber; Michael Scott, A Time to Fear, Faber & Faber; Michael Scott, A Time to Fear, Faber & Faber.

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and confided why it was hopeless to go on to Kasama Had it not been for his friendly tip I should have found myself stranded at Kasama. I then took the chartered plane on to Elizabethville and was told I could get a Sabena plane to Brussels the next day. I went and explained the whole matter to the British Consul there and hoped I should be able to get some francs to pay the passage. He could not do this on account of currency regulations and I found the Sabena line absolutely adamant against letting me pay their agent in London in case anything happened to me en route. Meanwhile the charter plane had gone back so I had to find a way of getting back to Rhodesia so as to pay for my ticket to the Sabena agent there (in the sterling area). I told the whole story to two young South Africans who were disgusted at the efforts being made to block the way and they got into their baby Austin and drove me back through squelching Congo mud (even more squelching than yours) to N'dola. There I booked a ticket per Sabena to Brussels, the cost being £43. Charter plane had cost me £80 plus hotel expenses at Dett, N'dola, and Elizabethville, 'I had to wait at N'dola for three days and knowing that the debate in the Trusteeship Committee was on I am afraid I gave way to despair.'

He repeated how much he regretted that despair and breakdown of faith. He was, as he had feared he would be, too late; he arrived in Paris, where the United
Nations were meeting, on the evening that the debate on South-West Africa concluded.

But he lobbied many delegates and went on to London to see some of Tshekedi’s old friends in the Anti-Slavery Society, the Fabian Colonial Bureau, and in Parliament, and he reported at length on their discussions. From the beginning it was his aim to get the Hereros’ own spokesmen invited to the United Nations.

Scott had much in common with Tshekedi: courage, single-mindedness, intelligence, dogged tenacity, and an inability to relax. When he reported back on his return from London, he spent a few days with Tshekedi and Ella and their family: Sekgoma had been born in 1941, Semane in 1943, and Modiri in 1946. Scott felt that Tshekedi wanted to show him a bit of Africa as it was when not under a regime such as that of the Union: he explained that they had a society a good deal more stable and well adapted to African usages than those in the Union. He hoped Scott would look around and see how even a quite primitive society like that of the Bamangwato had within it possibilities of growth and development.

Tshekedi continued to take an interest in the plight of the non-white people of South-West Africa, though now that it was in Scott’s hands, and he himself had increasing problems at home, he played a more passive role.

One need only compare the wretched state of the Africans in South-West Africa with the confident progress of those in Tanganyika to realize the tragedy of their situation. Both countries were Mandates—both should have come under the Trusteeship system. The British Government willingly agreed to this, and has fulfilled the ‘sacred trust’ to advance the indigenous people so that, under their remarkable leader, Julius Nyerere, they have a majority in the Legislature and will soon have self-government. But the South Africans governed for the benefit of the white population so that Africans have no political rights and representation, and live under a system of white supremacy, of apartheid, which denies their human dignity. South Africa has made a mockery of the ‘sacred trust of civilization’.

CHAPTER 14
Khama’s Secret and Tshekedi’s Dream

bina, who worked steadfastly by Tshekedi’s side T’eten tye or more, has described him as ‘a seeker of silences, always in quest for those who saw castles in the air, and then built those castles in reality for his people, so that there appeared to be better schools, modern offices for the administration, a tribal workshop and granaries. It is because he saw them dreaming that we see them wakingi
Sebina said, but added that houses were not the only thing worth building and that, as a result of his study of Lugard's The Dual Mandate and a set of Nigerian law books, Tshekedi had been ready to co-operate with Arden-Clarke in reorganizing the tribal administration.

Tshekedi's library included the works of well-known historians, economists and other colonial authorities, and studies of the various colonial legislatures (including Cyprus and Ceylon). There were books on international, common and constitutional law, on cattle and horse breeding, farming, irrigation, and soil conservation, on co-operatives and on education. One shelf contained Practical Mechanics for All, Practical Plumber and Sanitary Engineer, Fruit Growing, How to Play Association Football, Book of Interior Decoration, and the Book of the Dog. Religious books were alongside Dickens, Victor Hugo and Shakespeare, while modern writers included Churchill, i Toynbee, C. S. Forrester, Ogden Nash and George Orwell. He took a particular interest in the war. In nice juxtaposition on the shelves were Stalin's Kampf, Kingsley's Water Babies, Rauschnng's Hitler Speaks and Admiral Evans's Adventurous Life.

Many books contained careful notes in the margins. His studies stimulated his already fertile mind. Perhaps his experience with Arden-Clarke made him over-optimistic. Perhaps he thought that with the end of the war in sight, Britain would have more resources for a country like Bechuanaland. Anyway, 162

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he produced a series of suggestions for the development of the country but his vision and ideas were seldom welcomed. There were times, however, when his suggestions were being considered but under the system of remote and dual control their acceptance would be so retarded that he would fret and begin to lose enthusiasm.

One project concerned the use of lands that had been communally cleared for special crops to help in the war effort. He suggested how these could be used by the Department of Agriculture as demonstration fields, providing an opportunity for mass education. He considered whether the 'whole farm demonstration'1 practised by individual white farmers in the Union could be attempted in Bechuanaland, but decided it was unsuitable to a communal system2 where cattle posts were separated from agricultural lands, and these from the villages. He therefore recommended as a first essential to improved farming the development of more and better water supplies. The wealthier cattle owners could, with advice, develop their own, but he also urged that individual members of the tribe should form syndicates or family groups to develop permanent water in their particular communal grazing areas, for the use of their individually owned stock. The syndicates could afford the implements necessary to construct dams, and the Tribal Administration could buy and maintain drilling machines, and then hire them out. Once the watering points were established, they could become 'whole farm' demonstration centres for livestock breeding and scientific methods of agriculture. Collective dairying could be organized and pig breeding might be tried to use the skimmed milk. The syndicates could afford good bulls, and could
arrange timely inoculation of the cattle. Another advantage would be the bringing together of the Agricultural and Veterinary Departments with the Bechuana people.
The Administration did not accept this proposal but he himself came to initiate some demonstration lands.


"In the past people had ploughed lands for the ruling chief and headmen, 1%ho provided produce for their people in times of want. Tshekedi introduced another system: the lands were divided between those ploughed by communities (the grain from these providing the nucleus for the tribal granaries) and those ploughed for the personal use of the chief and available for experiments. There were seven of the latter, the largest being sixteen acres.

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A few months later he set out comprehensively his views on the productive development of the Protectorate.' He believed that a carefully planned effort could be made by the British Administration working with the Bechuanaland people, the productive capacity of the country could be enormously enhanced, to the benefit of Britain as well. He supported the case made often during the past forty years for a railway from Southern Rhodesia, through Bechuanaland, to Walvis Bay on the Atlantic. If the various ideas outlined in his memorandum were realized, he said, ample work would be provided for the people so that they would no longer be dependent on migrating to the Union.

'To enable full advantage to be taken of these developments, secondary and vocational education, agriculture and industrial training, in the country itself and for the African people, are essential and should be considered as part and parcel of the development envisaged when applications are made for grants in aid from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund. The idea current in certain quarters that "the African must be - A developed along his own lines, and his education Bantuized" is a primitive. (A remark made some ten years before Bantu education was introduced in the Union.) We feel we must aim at something higher and wider than merely "the effective organization of the Africans' experiences." He quoted Lugard 'There is something fantastically inconceivable about the policy' of keeping the forces and ideas of the modern world out of Africa.

Progress, he said, could not be imposed. 'Understanding by and co-operation of the peoples are essential.' He quoted the Agricultural Adviser to the High Commissioner, Mr. Thornton, who praised the 'large number of cattle of outstanding merit', that the Bamangwato possessed, and warned that these must not be allowed to degenerate. In July 1944 Thornton had suggested a water development scheme,
to be carried out by Tshekedi and his people with the Public Works Department. Over a year later Tshekedi had heard no more about it. De suggested to the Administration that a canned and frozen meat-factory be established in Bechuanaland to export to England, and mentioned also the possibility of exporting wheat to Britain, September 18, 1945.

2 The Dual Mandate, p. 16, 164

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since a small experiment in growing wheat near an area recommended by Thornton had been successful.

He proposed also the training of Africans in the business of storekeeping. 'Any training scheme,' he said, 'must begin in a small way' and 'training should be practical and not merely theoretical.' Several young men selected by the Chief should train under an established trader, who, in consultation with the Chief, would erect and conduct a number of new stores. When the Africans were ready to manage them, a company promoted for the purpose would buy the stores from the trader and sell or lease them to the African manager. Costs and wages were worked out but his discussions with possible backers among the business community in Johannesburg came to nothing. Another of his projects was the introduction of co-operative societies, and he consulted Co-operative leaders in Britain, as well as Tom Reay, the Cape Town advocate, on the business side. Some officials commented that Tshekedi could 'think big' but was an indifferent planner and administrator. However, in the administration of the tribe, his steady work had borne fruit. Sir Evelyn Baring, the High Commissioner, paid tribute to the enterprise and initiative of the Ngwato Native Authority under his leadership and said: 'A real attempt is being made to perform services and to carry out works with funds from the Native Treasury and the Native Authority is becoming a genuine organ of regional self-government and has developed beyond the stage of being merely a salary-paying machine.'

Sir Evelyn's predecessor, Lord Harlech (who had been a most popular High Commissioner), said in a pamphlet on the three Territories published at this time, that while the Basuto were educationally, economically and financially far in advance of the Bechuana or Swazi, 'the outstanding African in the High Commission Territories today is Tshekedi Khama. In intelligence, energy, leadership and general capacity he is an outstanding personality.'

Although Bechuanaland was still known as the 'povertystricken Cinderella of the Colonial Empire', there had been considerable advances since the 'thirties, among them the

' Later Lord Howick.

'African Politics in the High Commission Territories.' South African Outlook, August 1944

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sinking of boreholes, building of two dams and three hospitals, and the improvement of roads and of houses for officials. But in 1941 only 29 per cent of
the children of school age were in schools and often there were oo children per
teacher.
Tshekedi could not help feeling that the Administration were only interested in
officially-initiated schemes, for when he came to put forward his ideas for a
secondary school, he found marked scepticism as to the tribe's ability to build and
look after the school and 'a lack of constructive discussion'. The Department of
Education offered him plans labelled, 'A plan for a Native or Indian School'.
Tshekedi commented: 'nothing irritates the African today more than this
discrimination according to race. We realize that in many cases this distinction is
not deliberate, it has merely become habitual, but we feel that it is time that this
tendency is fought by all concerned.' In any event the Administration were
opposed to the tribe's having a secondary school and thought that the money
would better be spent on 'improving primary education.
In 1944 Sir Christopher Cox, Educational Adviser to the Colonial Secretory,
visited Tshekedi in Serowe. As they talked in the Chief's office with its rows of
books and files, Cox, himself an enthusiast, responded to Tshekedi's eagerness,
and his determination to get something done. They discussed the need to spend
more on education, to raise teachers' salaries, and ': improve the schools. They
compared expenditure in Bechuanaland with that in the Union, to the detriment of
the Protectorate. One of the difficulties was the then orthodox view that
continuous subsidizing by the British Government would in the long run weaken a
country's economy. Another was that Bechuanaland was unique in having had
comparatively little help from missions, education being kept almost entirely in
the hands of the tribes. Though they took a pride in this system and it had a
certain vitality, there were disadvantages: no one was turned away and twenty-
year-old students were mixed with eight-year-olds so that schools were
overcrowded and the j standards lowered. Moreover, such benefits as flowed from
competition between rival missions in providing better facilities were lacking.
Together the two men climbed the steep hill to the Khama :i memorial, Tsheke
di thumbing through Blue Books as he made points or asked questions. He
emphasized the need for Britain 166

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to underpin the development of primary education in the country, and told Cox of
his ideas for a secondary school. Cox sympathized with his insistence that a
secondary school should be built. Tshekedi believed that while it was well to
spread out as far as possible on the primary level, an upward growth was
imperative. If a choice had to be made, then priority should be given to the
upward growth: only thus could teachers, administrators and leaders emerge, and
only thus could an impetus be given to primary education as well.
For ten years Tshekedi had been discussing the idea of the secondary school with
the tribe. He spoke of it in kgotlas in outlying districts as well as in Serowe, until
he knew he had the approval of the whole tribe. He had first submitted an outline
of the scheme to the Administration in 1939, but after much study and
consultation with such authorities as the Oxford University Education
Department, he prepared a new memorandum in i945-'Suggestions for the
establishment of a secondary and industrial school'. In this he expressed his appreciation for all the Administration had done in promoting primary education. His people, he said... 'should be trained to understand their country's needs and resources, and they must be fully capable of providing the needs of a free, responsible self-governing Territory in its administrative, social, agricultural, industrial, and economic life and development and of bearing the main responsibilities and initiative, as is implied in the spirit of Indirect Rule. This would only be possible if the policy of education were such as to provide a sound modern academic training as an integral part of and not as an alternative to agricultural or industrial training.' He was not interested in training people to be simply employees. His object was 'to train a community which will become a worthy asset and an integral part of the economic life and well-being of the Territory.' Ideally, there would be courses in agriculture, animal husbandry, carpentry, building, mechanics, domestic science and mothercraft, shorthand, typing and book-keeping, as well as general academic subjects, all students to be at the same centre, taking a share in the institute's farming operations, so that it would typify a community. This also would make for economy and, for instance, the domestic science students would cook meals while the skilled artisans would do building repairs.

The outlay needed was £100,000 (10,000 cattle) which was raised by levies that Tshekedi had imposed over the years. Men of the tribe agreed to give one beast for every two taxpayers towards the cost and for the school farm. Regiments would give their labour. So intent was Tshekedi on achieving this project for the tribe, that he persuaded Peter Sebina, who had been very ill, to help on the administrative side, although Peter was to have taken six months' sick leave.

The site had long been ready. Khama had bequeathed to Tshekedi the secret of a valley called Moeng. In the wide wild stretches of scrub and camel-thorn country, abounding with buck and guinea-fowl, the valley was completely hidden. Even in mid-winter it would be lush green from perennial springs tumbling down the hillside and running underground. However, although it was only fifty miles east of Palapye it was quite inaccessible.

A different official approach might have aroused in Tshekedi a vision for a Protectorate-wide secondary school in a more accessible place, and might even have obtained a Colonial Development and Welfare Fund grant towards the capital cost. Instead, the lack of interest, alternating with criticism, only stiffened Tshekedi's determination. He had noticed that some of the finest schools in England were in the country and he was c. convinced that the valley chosen by his father would be ideal. The plans for the college were drawn up and Professor Z. K. Matthews was one of the people appointed to the advisory committee. A South African contractor was hired. The tribe had contributed most of the initial £100,000 required. The first task was to build a road branching off from the main road and a regiment of the tribe set about clearing the dense scrub and levelling
the earth. It was a huge venture. In such a dry country the trees and bushes have immensely deep roots, during most of the time the soil is thick and sandy, and in that year there were exceptional rains that left heavy, intractable mud.

Between 1946 and 1948 several visitors to Bechuanaland reported on the progress. Michael Scott saw the hills being drained and a dam being constructed. The road had been made. The Bamangwato regiments had been taught how to make bricks and were hewing pillars in a nearby sandstone quarry, under the supervision of an English stonemason. Mr. Bokwe, an agricultural instructor from Fort Hare, had helped with the

 Pronounced Mo4ng.

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laying out of the lands, and already a large herd of tribal cattle was grazing on the hillsides. Douglas Buchanan, like Scott, was infected by the enthusiasm of Tshekedi and the builders. He described the grassy plain, with football and netball fields in the foreground, and, beyond, the classrooms and dormitories for boys and girls, with large, airy rooms, and good bathrooms. The dining-room, kitchens and staff quarters were, he said, of an equally high standard. Some of the staff were already installed and he described their keen desire to serve to the uttermost in order to make the school 'a Tuskegee of South Africa'.

The Press also took an interest and the Daily Mirror and Johannesburg Star published articles about Moeng, while Martin Flavin, a Pulitzer Prize author from the United States, visited the school and described it in a book' and in articles. He was taken there by the 'gently sensitive' Molwa Sekgoma (Tshekedi's cousin who was to teach there). Flavin asked why the valley had been selected, and recorded the reply and ensuing conversation: 'Well, for one thing, it was beautiful, Sekgoma ventured shyly—or did I find it so?—Yes, beautiful, of course. But still, why here?—almost a hundred miles distant from Serowe, in the heart of the wilderness, in a place so inaccessible, at the very end of nowhere?—There were practical considerations, too, Sekgoma said. The Chief had not selected the location for its aesthetic advantages alone, though they had played a part in his decision. He wanted the school to be removed from outside influences, in a place where the academic life could be uninterruptedly pursued, with almost monastic rigour. And Moeng served this purpose. Also, it was not too remote from the railway line, and this must be considered in the building of it. Finally, and perhaps most importantly of all, there was an abundant source of water, from nearby springs—"fountains" as he called them—on the flank of the mountain.'

The American was impressed by the campus and by the pleasing buildings but, he wondered, as he and Molwa drove away that night, could the school vanquish such enemies as lethargy, inertia and a way of thinking and of life alien to its objectives?

It was not the 'enemies' visualized by Flavin that caused 'M. Flavin, Black and White, p. 72.


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serious setbacks to the project. In June 1948 Tshekedi was told that deep cracks were appearing in the walls of several buildings. He maintained that the buildings must have been wrongly sited on underground springs. The contractor insisted that the trouble was due to bad bricks. Tshekedi at once telephoned Tom Reay, his legal adviser in Cape Town, and asked him to come at once. On Reay's arrival, he was assured by an engineer that the trouble was not serious. Nevertheless, large cracks had begun to appear in two of the buildings and, when Reay stuck his walking-stick into the ground nearby, it sank right down; beneath the sandy surface was deep soft clay.

At this anxious time Tshekedi and the Bamangwato working on the school greatly appreciated a visit from Sir Evelyn Baring, the High Commissioner (accompanied by the Director of Education). Baring afterwards wrote to Tshekedi: 'Do not be too distressed about the troubles . . . all big undertakings have their birth-pains. You have done admirably to have accomplished so much.'

The setback meant that tribal labour had to be kept on the job long after the scheduled time and prolonged consultations were carried on with lawyers and contractors. By October 1948 the emergency rebuilding and delays in brick-making led to an over-expenditure of £8,900. The Administration, afraid of Tshekedi's enthusiasm, wanted to set a ceiling to what they felt was his extravagance. An ultimatum was given: building operations must cease unless an immediate deposit was paid on the £300,000 endowment fund. Tshekedi was shocked: to suspend building at this stage would mean endangering the work and in the end would necessitate more capital expenditure. Fortunately, Anthony Sillery, the Resident Commissioner, agreed to a compromise. Tshekedi was excited by offers of scholarships for Moeng students from British and American universities. 'Man,' he said to Peter Sebina, 'we are getting on; people overseas are interested!' Eventually the legal dispute was settled out of court and the school was opened in 1949 with 122 pupils,

Part III Uncle and Nephew

CHAPTER 15

'This Matter Will Not Please You'

eretse Khama had grown into a tall, well-built young man, intelligent and friendly. His uncle was proud of his progress - at Tigerkloof and at Lovedale he had been head prefect and after matriculating in 1941 had gone to Fort Hare University College where he graduated with a B.A. In 1944, at the age of 23, he was in his first year at the University of the Witwatersrand when Chief Tshekedi and the tribal elders thought that it was time he took over the chieftainship. Seretse had told his uncle that he would like to work under him for two years, learning his administrative and other duties, but Tshekedi thought one year would be sufficient. However, when his return was suggested, Seretse
pleaded for more time and said that he wanted to qualify as a barrister in England. Tshekedi therefore arranged a meeting of influential headmen to consider his nephew's wishes. He expressed his own view, that Seretse was mature enough to take on the chieftainship. Some of them said that had it been Tshekedi who wanted Seretse to go, they would have refused, but as it was Seretse himself who had made the request, they would agree. Tshekedi could see the advantages of Seretse gaining a broader outlook and getting out of the state of isolation that existed among the different races in South Africa, and after consultation with Professor Matthews at Fort Hare, he and the headmen agreed that the young man should go to England, where Buchanan arranged for his admission to Balliol College, Oxford.

When Tshekedi, as usual, consulted the local Administration, they expressed misgivings which aroused from him a warm exposition of Seretse's scholastic record, his character and intelligence, and his interest in tribal administration. He added that Seretse was a man who knew his own mind. The plan was agreed by the High Commissioner who gave Seretse introductions to people in Oxford.

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Seretse set off in October 1945. Tshekedi's pride in him was evident in the letters he wrote to friends and to influential people saying: 'My nephew, Seretse Sekgoma Khama, future Chief of the Bamangwato, has been admitted to Oxford University for study... and asking if they would be so kind as to invite Seretse to their homes.

Seretse was to read Honours in Law, but soon after his arrival he was persuaded by Sir Reginald Coupland of All Souls to consider changing to Modern Greats-politics, philosophy and economics-as Sir Reginald felt that this would provide a broader education. Tshekedi and Buchanan urged him to stick to law, 'a study more suited to the type of work you have been destined to follow.' He wrote to Tshekedi that a compromise had been reached and in the next term he would read law with politics and economics, but if all three became too much, he would concentrate on law. He added: 'I am sorry that you are so far away as occasions often arise when I find myself extremely in need of your advice. I hope I will not continue to make as many mistakes as I have made up to now. I am still feeling awfully homesick.' Tshekedi and Buchanan were greatly dismayed when he reported at the end of his first year that he was not allowed to sit for his examination because, in the confusion resulting from post-war reorganization, a mistake had been made: the course recommended was not recognized for degree purposes. He therefore agreed with his uncle's consistent advice that he study law. He felt for one thing that it would be more useful if, for any reason, he were to lose his position as chief or if his country were to be annexed to the Union of South Africa. He suggested it would be better to do this in London, where, early in 1947, Douglas Buchanan's brother, John Buchanan, asked Walter Monckton1 to sponsor his application to one of the Inns.

Tshekedi and Buchanan kept in touch with friends so that Seretse was invited to their homes and, on his own initiative, he worked as a farm-hand in
Northumberland during one vacation. But life had been lonely during his first
year, until he began to play games when he quickly made friends of his own age.
Tshekedi (who wrote to him as 'Sonny' or 'Phuti', 1 and
1 Later Lord Monckton.
2 The tribal symbol is a form of address for the Chief.
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whom he always addressed as 'Father'), was glad to hear of his progress, and after
two years wrote that it was about time Seretse took on the chieftainship and that,
as this was his final year at law, he must do his utmost to get through his
examination, for when he came home at the end of the year it would not be
possible for the tribe to agree to his returning to England: he might have to
content himself with private study. He asked Seretse whether John Buchanan
could help in arranging his return passage, and concluded: 'When you have
completed your examinations please inform me on which day in December you
will start returning home.' 1 This was in September 1948.

Tshekedi was at the Bamangwato College, planning its opening ceremony, when
an air-mail letter from Seretse was delivered to him on September 20, 1948.
Seretse wrote to say that he was getting married on October 2: 'I realize that this
matter will not please you because the tribe will not like it as the person I am
marrying is a white woman. I do not know what the people will say when they
hear of this. In spite of what they might do or say I shall still return home
whenever you say to serve them in any capacity. I realize that it was my duty to
have asked your consent before I had done this thing but I know you would refuse
and it would be difficult for me to disregard your advice and that is why I notified
you when it was all done. Please forgive me.... Please don't try to stop me, father,
I want to go through with it.' 12

Seretse had known Ruth Williams for more than a year and had proposed to her in
June. The young couple were very much in love. With her he found
companionship and understanding, and a sense of resolution and completeness
that he had lacked.

At first Tshekedi could hardly believe what he read. His imagination had always
been fully concentrated on plans for his nephew in relation to his people. It had
never occurred to him that Seretse, a young man of twenty-seven, might be in
danger of falling in love so deeply that he could put love before duty, or that in
England where there would be few young African women, he might fall in love
with an English girl.

Once he took in the meaning of Seretse's words, he was deeply hurt. He was a
father whose son, always so close to him,
2 Translation from Sechuana.
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had failed to confide in him; who had indeed dealt him a terrible blow. He was a Regent, concerned for the preservation of the chieftainship and the welfare of a whole people. For over twenty years he had laboured to uphold the chieftainship so that his nephew could take it over intact. There had been setbacks—attacks on tribal custom, the poverty and apathy and the conflicts of the 'thirties, the long period of the war only with Arden-Clarke, and recently during the post-war years, had there been comparative calm in which to build. With Moeng College nearly completed, he had seen a hopeful prospect, and was looking forward to Seretse's return when his nephew would take on the duties of chieftainship and he himself would have freedom to concentrate on educational development, on more extensive stock and agricultural experiments.

Now, with Seretse's letter, he saw all this threatened by the very man for whom it had been so arduously preserved. He had no anti-white feeling, but he saw a mixed marriage for a chief in a tribal society as a disaster. His attitude, as he later explained to a left-wing South African who suggested that his opposition to the marriage was based on racial prejudice (an accusation that he was completely unable to understand), was that 'the marriage of a sovereign head of state will always be a concern of the people; it is not enough to contract such a marriage and then to present the people with an accomplished fact.' Firmly and frankly he stated: 'I take pride in my race and in its true culture.'

'With regard to the marriage of a chief's son or heir-apparent to the chieftainship, Douglas Buchanan pointed out: 'Since the reign of George III no member of the British Royal Family in the line of succession can legally marry anyone without the prior consent of the Monarch and Privy Council. Without such consent any marriage is merely morganatic and the children could never succeed to the throne of Great Britain. Similarly the custom common to all Tswana tribes is that in the marriage of a chief or a chief's son the tribe must be consulted and must give their approval. The character, standing and political influence of the section from which the wife was chosen was a prime consideration. It could be a royal section of another tribe. The historical background was that in a polygamous environment there were times when the chosen principal wife of the chief-to-be was only a child, and, according to custom the chief-to-be could in the meantime marry another woman. But it was the children by the principal wife who were heirs to the chieftainship. In recent years, a young chief usually selects his bride himself, but, knowing the custom of his people, he looks for her in a family that fulfils most of the above requirements. Generally there can be no marriage until the tribe has been consulted and their approval obtained. In olden days if the choice of the wife was not accepted by the tribe 176

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And always there was the awareness of South Africa on the borders. He knew from experience and from tribal historians the splits and the feuds that could so easily erupt, causing troubles that might provide the Union Government with an excuse to send in police and troops.
After he had read Seretse's letter, his first action was to try to
postpone the marriage. Seretse, he thought, could not possibly have realized the serious consequences. If he could get him to come at once to Bechuanaland, he could be told, and be persuaded to give up the mad idea. Tshekedi immediately asked the Resident Commissioner to prevent the marriage and recall Seretse from England for consultation in Bechuanaland. He cabled Buchanan to do everything possible through his brother, John, and other friends in England to stop the marriage.

Buchanan cabled to his brother John: ‘Chief authorizes me to urge you to take every possible and impossible step to prevent Seretse from marrying English girl on October 2. Consult Dominions Office re immediate priority air transport for Seretse to Africa. Suggest caution parson who called banns. If Congregational contact LMS if Church of England contact Archbishop. Consider extraditing Seretse. . . . Inform girl's parents of ostracism and misery awaiting her. Such marriage possible cause Seretse's deposition . . .’ John Buchanan at once got in touch with the London Missionary Society. He also sent a wire to Seretse, inviting him to come down to his home in High Wycombe: there was no reply. unanimously, and the young heir nevertheless insisted on going through with the marriage, what might happen was that the influential sections of the tribe would back one of the chief's other sons from a house high in position, who was willing to respect the wishes of the tribe. In this way there were rival claimants to the chieftainship and civil war sometimes resulted. Consent of the father or, if dead, the uncle in charge of the tribe during the minority of the chief-to-be is vital. Once the chief-to-be has made his choice, he seeks the approval of a senior royal uncle who in turn approaches the ruling chief, or points out another uncle who should approach the chief. If the ruling chief agrees, the royal leaders of the tribe are consulted individually. Ultimately, a private official meeting is held at which the decision is taken. If favourable, the proposal is announced in a public kgotla meeting. At any stage of this procedure, if serious objection is raised, the matter can be dropped. Seretse, as the chief's son or heirapparent, would be well acquainted with this customary procedure, in fact but for it he himself would not have been heir-apparent: one of his elder half-brothers would have been.’ (Seretse was aware of the custom, though he had not been formally instructed in it.) 177 M

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Tshekedi cabled direct to Seretse: ‘Your proposal more serious and difficult than you realize. It is surest way of disrupting Bamangwato tribe. You seem to have forgotten that your home is in South Africa not England. Have made immediate arrangements for your immediate return. Get ready to leave moment's notice. I shall only discuss your proposal personally after your arrival here. I repeat your proposal more serious and difficult than you realize. Question of support quite simple can be adjusted here.’

Seretse's first reaction to his uncle's messages was one of surprise. He apparently had expected that, whatever the opposition in the tribe, Tshekedi and Ella would take his part.
Buchanan advised Tshekedi to fly to London but the latter had reached a point of severe nervous tension that threatened collapse and the doctor warned him against going.

Members of the London Missionary Society and 'a couple of other persons of influence' whom Buchanan had put in touch with his brother John, tried to persuade Seretse to postpone the marriage; but all the cables and interviews only resulted in the young couple feeling that people were trying to make them panic and in Seretse, no doubt, feeling a mixture of guilt and defiance. He was now an adult; dependence on Tshekedi was ended; he would no longer be overawed or dominated by him. He and Ruth decided to advance the marriage to September 25. At the last moment, however, the Vicar at Campden Hill told them he had been advised by the Bishop of London that the wedding should not be conducted until he had consulted the Colonial Office.

An appeal from the London Missionary Society to Ruth Williams, that no action should be taken until Seretse had consulted his people, was not answered.

Meanwhile, Douglas Buchanan kept Sir Evelyn Baring confidentially informed of developments in the hope that he would advise the Commonwealth Relations Office and obtain their help in recalling Seretse. On September 29, Tshekedi again cabled Seretse: '... I wish you pay attention to what Commonwealth Office advises you. Your obstinacy can only result serious consequences yourself. Have asked Commonwealth Office arrange immediate return. On no condition can we agree to your marrying an English girl...'. But the marriage had already taken place. As a last resort Seretse and his bride had gone to a registry office. John Buchanan received a telegram: 'Have married Ruth. Do you still want to see me?' He appreciated Seretse's sense of humour.

Waiting with deepening anxiety Tshekedi puzzled over the apparent failure of the Government to appreciate how serious the situation was. He visualized a tribal split and was suspicious that there was to be a recurrence of the Administration's dilatory attitude shown during the Mswazi affair.

The official viewpoint was quite simple: this was a question of a man's private life in which they had no concern. Seretse did not write to Tshekedi who by now was almost in despair, but who had not given up. He had stopped Seretse's allowance before the marriage. After preliminary discussion with the tribal elders he again cabled him: 'Formal signing of document in England does not constitute your marriage. As far as we are concerned no marriage exists. Apparently you took my strong advice for a threat. We accept nothing short of dissolution of that marriage. Our decision firm welfare of tribe paramount in this case.' Seretse sent a spirited reply. 'Tribe and you important to me. Suspension of allowance being felt. Suggest passage for two. Dissolution unacceptable.' At that time Tshekedi reported to Buchanan that there was a 'fixed decision that a Bamangwato English queen is totally unacceptable'. Foreseeing some of the troubles ahead he added: 'From telegrams
and letter so far received I am convinced that Seretse is not alive to this situation. He appears to have convinced himself that the marriage being accomplished everybody will acquiesce but in this he is wrong...' To Buchanan he was able to confide: 'This is a depressing letter indeed but you have known me long enough to believe that I could not easily let the welfare of the tribe go and their status which I have suffered so much to maintain just be blown to pieces by a single thoughtless action of my nephew. You know too how I had built high hopes on this lad.' Buchanan had little doubt that Seretse would be deposed. He replied: 'This is an amazingly awkward position for you personally, and ever since you first took up the chieftainship I have admired the unselfish attitude you have always adopted and the earnest desire you have always shown first to protect Seretse's health and then to be a father to him so as to lead him into becoming a fully responsible, efficient and considerate chief.' The man who had supported Tshekedi in so many reverses, told him, ‘I, therefore, realize perhaps more than anybody else what a smashing of all your ideas and plans this marriage has been and because there are so few who realize this perhaps you will not take it amiss if I offer you my sincere and personal sympathy in the difficult position in which you find yourself.’ He offered any help he could give and urged the Chief to take the tribe into his full confidence 'so that they may realize the tremendous efforts you have made to protect their interests'. Formal discussions among tribal leaders were imminent, and Tshekedi tried to find out what advice Seretse had been given by a Colonial Office official who had belatedly seen him. The Government did not reply.

Towards the end of October 1948, just three years since he had left with such high hopes surrounding his future, Seretse returned, followed by a swarm of newspapermen. He showed no sign of the strain of the past six weeks. He was much more confident and mature, and had lost his old uncertainty about the chieftainship. But his ambivalence towards his uncle had undoubtedly been intensified by their conflict over his marriage. When they met, they were like two strangers; they did not know how to talk to each other. Tshekedi had arranged for Seretse to stay, as usual, in his home, but it was upsetting for them both. Seretse felt that the household, which included Chiefs Kgari and Bathoen, of the Bakwena and the Bangwaketse, was united against him, and when the other men had discussions together without him he found the situation impossible and moved out. Tshekedi felt rebuffed.

A kgotla meeting was held to welcome Seretse back. Buchanan thought Seretse was 'greatly affected' when Tshekedi told him that if the tribe were not unanimous in any of its decisions Tshekedi himself would be obliged to leave the country. Seretse said he had not thought his uncle would take this matter so seriously; he did not want to lose either Tshekedi or Ruth.

The day after Seretse's return Tshekedi was given the ultimatum by the Government in the Moeng College troubles that have already been mentioned: an
immediate deposit must be paid on the endowment fund, or building operations
must be I Letter of October x, 1948,
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'This Matter Will Not Please you' suspended. How could the money be raised at this critical time? Eventually a
compromise was reached and building continued, but the opening of the college
had to be postponed.
On November 13, 1948, the most important Royal members
of the tribe-Seretse's uncles and cousins--were called to a special meeting to
consider his marriage. Tshekedi and the tribe still hoped that he would realize
their strong opposition and would give up his wife. Tshekedi felt strengthened by
a complex legal opinion from Douglas Buchanan suggesting that the marriage
might be dissolved on the grounds that one of the parties came under Tswana law,
the other under English law.
Fifteen people were present at the meeting including Tshekedi and Seretse.
During several hours the marriage was fully discussed but only one person
acquiesced in it. A similar meeting on the next day with one additional Royal
member present reached the same result. At both meetings Seretse stated firmly
that he would not give up the marriage, and argued that his grandfather, Khama,
had not sought consent for his marriage to Semane, nor had Tshekedi done so
when he married the second time. He was told that Khama's marriage was
irrelevant as he already had a son and heir by his first marriage, and it was pointed
out that Tshekedi was only a Regent.
Meanwhile a big kgotla had been summoned for November 15. It went on for four
days and between 2,000 and 3,000 people attended from all districts of the
Bamangwato country. It was more than an ordinary kgotla, it was a meeting of the
whole tribe convened and assembled to deal with and give a decision upon a
matter of paramount importance affecting the welfare and future of the tribe.
Three important Chiefs of neighbouring tribes were present with their senior
headman: Chief Kgari of Bakwena, Chief Bathoen of Bangwaketse, and Chief
Mokgosi of Bamalete. The District Commissioner and the Rev. A. Seager of the
London Missionary Society (Mr. Burns's successor) were there as observers.
Eighty-five people spoke, and at some length. As the meeting went on and Chief
Tshekedi realized that very few people were speaking in favour of the marriage,
he announced that the meeting should give time for those to speak who were in
favour: seven spoke for it, seventy-eight spoke against.
Tshekedi, as supervising Chief, then gave his views, summed
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up and announced the decisions of the kgotla: Ruth Williams was not accepted as
their future Chief's wife; she should be refused admission to the Bamangwato
country; Seretse should remain there and if he left to join Ruth Williams in
England, it would be on his own responsibility and contrary to the decision of the
tribe.
Seretse, not knowing many of the people, had felt very much alone during the kgotla. The virtually unanimous feeling of the tribe depressed him while somewhat relieving Tshekedi's anxiety. Tshekedi hoped that Seretse might be influenced now that he was back among his own people and could observe their feelings; he thought that the disruption he had feared might yet be avoided. At this time, when Michael Scott was given a hearing by the United Nations, Tshekedi cabled to him: 'With God, all things are possible. Silence means no forgetfulness. Thoughts and prayers always with you.'

Tshekedi had occasion towards the end of 1948 to go to Pretoria to see the High Commission staff. W. A. W. Clark, a new Chief Secretary, in charge of the Territories section, had just arrived. He had been warned about how 'impossible' and obstinate Tshekedi could be, but he had an open mind. His rather formal manner tends to hide perceptiveness, and a useful sense of the ridiculous. Clark tells of their first meeting. Tshekedi let off one of his blistering criticisms of the local Administration. Clark let him go on until he made an outrageous remark that was obviously wrong, then intervened with, 'I'm sorry to be frank, but I think that's rubbish.'

Tshekedi looked startled.

'But don't let me stop you now,' Clark hastened to add, 'we can meet after and I'll tell you why it's rubbish.' In a comparatively subdued tone, Tshekedi continued. Afterwards Clark took him to lunch at his home and they became firm friends.

Seretse asked for a kgotla in December to enable him to say good-bye before returning to London. Young men who had rallied to his side were eager to speak for his marriage but Tshekedi said that only members of certain regiments should do so, on the grounds that they were mature and able to give sound advice, much to the young men's annoyance. All the same there was noticeably stronger support for the marriage, which the Government attributed to a growing anxiety that if Seretse were not chief, Tshekedi would be. However, the great majority still expressed opposition. But there was no precedent for coping with such a situation and as only the British Administration had authority over Europeans in, or coming in to, the Protectorate, Tshekedi looked to them to implement the tribe's decision. He recommended urgent action in a situation that was worsening with each day's delay. The Government's attitude was that, even if it had so desired, it had no powers under which a British subject could be prohibited. Another element in this passivity was the native British allergy to acting in a situation which seemed to be drifting quite satisfactorily.
The drift might have seemed satisfactory to the Administration; to Tshekedi it must have been like watching something precious sliding slowly and inevitably towards a precipice, and feeling powerless to prevent the disaster.

There had been times when he and Seretse had exchanged bitter words in the heat of the moment: he feeling hurt and angry at what he saw as a lack of responsibility, Seretse reacting hotly to the repeated suggestion that he should divorce his wife and to what he interpreted as attacks on her. Yet, even at the height of their conflict, the two men were so much en rapport that they could sometimes anticipate each other's actions. The older men supporting Tshekedi were on occasion frank in their reproaches and Seretse turned all the more to those eager to support him against his uncle, whom he now saw as a formidable opponent. The other members of the royal family, who by birth and often by position as Chief's representatives, were leaders in the tribe, took sides. Some in a disinterested manner, others because they saw it as a splendid opportunity to exert their influence.

Meanwhile the rumour was spread that Tshekedi was opposing Seretse's marriage because he himself wanted to remain Chief. Today no one can, or will, say whether this was deliberately initiated. At all events, the rumour was assiduously propagated and at one point forged letters, supposed to come from one of Tshekedi's trusted supporters, asserted that he had designs on the chieftainship. The rumour began to find a ready reception. There are a number of explanations about why this was so. The favourite one advanced by officials, missionaries and Press, was that in driving the tribe too hard over the building of Moeng College, Tshekedi had aroused their resentment to such an extent that they were eager to be rid of their harsh taskmaster. At the time, they say, this was freely suggested by the Bamangwato. But the Bamangwato discount it: the leader of the main regiment working on Moeng speaks proudly of their contribution and of how Tshekedi relied on him personally. He was incidentally one of the most active of the young men who were anti-Tshekedi at the time of Seretse's marriage. He points out that, today, the regiments who worked at Moeng regard others who did not as unfledged. Tshekedi's unpopularity may have been due to the generally puritanical nature of his rule; not everyone shared his strict sense of communal duty or appreciated his rigid insistence on teetotalism. Also, there were many young men who had been to the cities of the Union, and were beginning to chafe against the anachronism of chieftainship. A less personal factor was the universal reaction to any ruler or government after a long period in power. Furthermore, he was only Regent, and could never command the particular uncritical respect felt for a chief. (Another Tswana Regent, Isang Pilane, of the Bakgatla, renowned for the reforms he introduced and the tribe's progress under his rule, was similarly regarded by many of the tribe as being too harsh and demanding too many levies. They had welcomed the installation of their young Chief in 1929, looking forward to an easier time.) Possibly for all these reasons, and because to many it seemed a
logical conclusion, Tshekedi was spoken of increasingly as Seretse's rival. The reverence for the rightful chief began to assert itself.
On January 5, 1949, Seretse returned to England, to be with his wife and to continue his law studies. Not until April 1, 1949, did the Administration communicate with Chief Tshekedi regarding the suggested exclusion of Ruth from the Territory. They said they could not implement the kgotla's decision. Tshekedi and Buchanan therefore called on Sir Evelyn Baring, 184

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the High Commissioner, to seek advice on the constitutional means of enforcing the tribe's decision. They feared that if Ruth entered the country, and were then expelled, there would be riots. They added: 'We wish to point out that the question of mixed marriages is not the issue but the refusal of the tribe to accept Ruth as Queen and the mother of any heir to the chieftainship. . . .
They came away unsatisfied.
It took the Government six months formally to confirm the findings of the previous November's kgotla. In May the Resident Commissioner wrote to Tshekedi and to Seretse that from the personal observations of its officials and from reports received from the tribe itself following the discussions, the Administration was bound to note that the marriage was unacceptable to the great majority of the tribe. He went on to say that the Administration considered that the tribe's decision had been arrived at fairly and without any overt interference. This was small comfort to Tshekedi when it was not accompanied by action or advice in a situation that had considerably deteriorated in the intervening period. Meanwhile the Union Government had passed an Act making marriage between European and non-European a criminal offence.
Throughout all those months in 1949 the British Administration apparently hoped the situation would sort itself out. Its attitude, not unknown in the history of the High Commission Territories, has been described as 'a masterly inactivity'.

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CHAPTER 16
'A Very Disreputable Transaction'
In a final attempt to induce the Government to implement the decisions of the November and December kgotlas, a third kgotla was summoned in June 1949. Seretse, who had been in London writing examinations, was welcomed back some weeks earlier. He had been out of touch and had no idea what to expect on his return.
During six months of confusion the feeling against Tshekedi had been fomented. It was now openly stated that the real reason for his opposing Ruth as Queen Mother was his desire to oust Seretse. People forgot his careful nursing of his nephew, the way in which he had preserved the chieftainship for him, and had tried to persuade Seretse to take it over as soon as he was of age. As feeling rose against Tshekedi, Seretse, a far more likeable man, became even more popular. Almost religious feelings had been aroused concerning the chieftainship itself
On Monday, June 20th, more than 4,000 tribesmen met in Serowe. Again neighbouring Chiefs were present, and Government officials and the missionary. Again the object of the kgotla was to consider the question of Seretse's marriage. Tshekedi, as Chief, greeted the Government's senior representative who had been sent to observe and to report back. Whereupon he greeted Tshekedi as Chief and then continued by greeting Seretse as Chief. In Buchanan's opinion he should have known the significance of this and that Seretse's correct title was 'Chief's son', and so long as Tshekedi was Regent and until the Secretary of State had approved of Seretse as Chief, he remained 'Chief's son'. In the course of a short speech the official said: 'The Bamangwato are here to make another important decision, a very important decision regarding the right of succession to the chieftainship.' He concluded: 'Let there be peace, unity, rain.' Probably he was quite unaware of the effect of his statement.

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There was consternation. Many people believed that he had thereby given official confirmation to the rumour that the chieftainship was being disputed by Tshekedi. One observer felt that this no doubt carelessly worded remark did a lot to precipitate subsequent trouble. After this it became difficult for Tshekedi to try to explain the true purpose for which the kgotla had been summoned. In any event, some men were delighted that the official had given them the opportunity of discussing what was uppermost in their minds, rather than the issue of Ruth's status. Tshekedi took up the challenge. He told the people that Seretse had accused him of striving for the chieftainship and there were rumours, but no one had said it to his face: so there were two questions to be answered, one concerning Seretse's wife, the other, 'my alleged striving with him for the chieftainship'. Sharp exchanges followed between uncle and nephew. On the next day an increasing number of speakers said that rather than lose Seretse they would accept Ruth and, in a round-about way, accused Tshekedi of wanting the chieftainship. Among them were several members of the royal family: Manyaphiri Sekgoma, whom Tshekedi had appointed as chief's representative in Mahalapye, said there had been no official declaration since the December kgotla and he had now changed his mind and would accept Ruth; Serogola Seretse, who had often acted as Tshekedi's deputy, influenced many people when he stated that if Tshekedi wanted to keep the chieftainship he, Serogola, would rather accept Ruth. Tshekedi said that Serogola had spoken what he wanted to hear. At last he was face to face with the accusation. He would answer it on the following morning. On this, the fourth morning, Tshekedi said that it was obvious that the majority were now in favour of accepting Seretse's wife-'my grievance is not the change of public opinion but the manner in which that opinion was changed.' Firmly he recounted the faults in tribal custom in the handling of the case and refuted some of the previous remarks made. He accused Seretse's supporters of using him for their own ends. He concluded: 'Yesterday you saw the grandsons of Sekgoma declaring their intentions to support this marriage; I shall also ask other grandsons
of Sekgoma who oppose this marriage, to stand up.’ And he called to his side the senior headmen who

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continued to support his view of the marriage, and showed them, the mainstay of the tribal Administration, to the kgotla. Among them were the two men who had distinguished themselves in the war, Rasebolai Kgamane and Molwa Sekgoma, and one of the ablest and most respected members of the royal family, old, blind, Phethu Mphoeng, who had led the feud against the Ratshosas, twenty years before.

Tshekedi’s action in calling these men to his side was unprecedented. It was a serious tactical error. Even his friends were dismayed by the increasingly arbitrary manner in which he was handling the kgotla. It was as if he felt desperate. Perhaps he derived a momentary confidence from the knowledge of the loyalty of these nine men, perhaps he felt exhausted by the immense strain he was undergoing, at all events at this point he proceeded to announce a recess for tea. This turned out to be a second error in tactics.

Seretse, who had listened to his uncle’s speech with sinking spirits, went off to get a cup of tea. As he drank it he wondered frantically how he could retrieve the situation. His uncle’s first error gave him the answer—he would also call on his supporters to show themselves, but not just administrative heads, he would put it to the whole assembly. Tshekedi’s second tactical error gave him the time in which to work out his own strategy. As soon as the kgotla reassembled Seretse stood up and made a short speech. An onlooker said that the Khama genius suddenly came out. He made an eloquent appeal to his people and they were swept along. When he finished he called out: ‘All those not in favour of me and my wife stand up!’ About forty people stood. ‘All those in favour of me and my wife stand up!’ The large mass of the assembly came to its feet, with the tumultuous cheer, ‘Pula!’

The subsequent turmoil reduced the discussions to an anticlimax. Chief Bathoen of the Bang-waketse could hardly be heard expressing his distress at the breach of custom, for no one but the presiding chief had the right to put questions to the tribe. Chief Kgari of the Bakwena made a similar comment while two guests—Chief Mokgosi and a representative of the Barolong—urged Seretse to seek Tshekedi’s forgiveness, and Tshekedi to try to understand his nephew’s point of view. The official made another statement: ‘I have heard your decision and shall be returning to Mafeking to report to the

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Resident Commissioner and the High Commissioner and the Secretary of State will also have this information conveyed to him and until His Majesty’s Government has sanctioned it, it is well known that the administration and the affairs of the tribe remain as at present. ... ’ One of the visiting Chiefs had pointed out to the District Commissioner the serious error that had been made earlier and he in turn pointed it out to the Press and no doubt to his senior for the latter
concluded: 'There is one matter that I must mention: it has been said at this meeting that Chief Tshekedi has an intention to oust Seretse from the chieftainship. I wish to say to you that Government does not know any such matters and such a belief among you is quite contrary to Chief Tshekedi's record, and the public services to the tribe, which he always gave in the past, were of the highest order.'

Tshekedi adjourned the kgotla till the following day and requested the Government officials to be present.

One official gave the opinion that the events at the kgotla that day had been an even greater blow to Tshekedi than his nephew's actual marriage. There was a general feeling of satisfaction among officials and tribesmen at the idea of having a pleasant young man in power. Only Tshekedi's wife, Ella, had any conception of what he was suffering at this time. Something of his sorrow, of the humiliation that he felt for his people, were reflected in his remarks when he dismissed the kgotla the next day. Looking round the faces of his people, he said: 'There are two great things concerning a tribal society-these are the country and the Chief. The chiefs die, but the country remains. In my view, Seretse's actions have brought ruin to us .... The first and greatest law that it was my duty to give to Seretse would have been to use the Sechuana expression "The Chief is a servant of his people". The Chief is a man in bondage all his life. With us the Chief must be obedient to his people and must consult with them. I know of many black people even in the Union of South Africa who have married white women but there has been no controversy about such marriages because these people are individuals.' To Seretse he said, 'Your position is different, as you can see yourself the unrest which your marriage to a white woman has created. You were wrong to have married an English woman without our knowledge. The

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young chiefs to follow you will now follow your actions in Bechuanaland, your actions are a great departure from our customs and laws.' Again he addressed the tribe, 'Do not take my remarks to mean that I am still endeavouring to prevent this woman from coming to you. I am only recording my unchanged view, even though I am in the minority,'

To Seretse he gave advice about certain of his supporters, frankly assessing their good and bad points-advice that would have been given privately, 'if I had the privilege of installing you,' but which now must be given publicly. 'Lastly, I say to you, consult with all your assistants but never let them know your inward feeling. Give your views, but do not let them know your deepest thought.' He believed the real reason for the opposition to himself was people's dissatisfaction with the regimental labour system, and his imposition of levies for public benefits. Had he been found at fault he could easily have been banished, but, he pointed out, he was innocent.

He concluded: 'You have put an end to the continuity of succession of the chieftainship of Sekgoma's family. I have now stated my views and I declare that
I am betaking myself from this tribe but I will not ask Government to find me land on which to live. I shall be a subject either of Chief Kgari or Chief Bathoen... (By this he intended to show that he would not split the tribe on any account.) 'I claim no village and no one to accompany me. I am prepared to go away alone. It will nevertheless take me twelve months still to be amongst you, preparing my affairs...

When it was all over, people gathered jubilantly round Seretse to congratulate him. In their excitement was an element of delight at the defeat of the chief who had been feared because he had seemed so strong and invulnerable. Seretse and the Bamangwato, whose welfare had concerned Tshekedi constantly, had rejected him. It was the loneliest moment of his life.

One official regarded the kgotla as Tshekedi's great opportunity in which he failed. Over the past few years he had begun to feel that time was running out; his impatience was increasing and perhaps if he had not become so intolerant of opposition he would have handled the kgotla more wisely. The same official felt that he lost his temper when he realized the strength of his opponents and that it was on the spur of the moment that he decided to leave the country. 'A petty act for 190

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a great man and a man of his calibre' was the official's summing up. But Tshekedi had told Seretse the previous October that if the tribe were not unanimous in its decisions he would have to leave the country.

It has been said that Tshekedi lobbied hard to find supporters to accompany him in his self-imposed exile. The leaders of his supporters firmly deny this. They add that there were men who wanted to go and whom he persuaded to remain at their work.

Peter Sebina, for instance, begged to accompany them. But Tshekedi prevailed on him to remain in Serowe, pointing out that it was essential for the tribe to have his knowledge and experience at a time when these qualities would be lacking. One of Tshekedi's humbler companions was asked by a friend why people accompanied him—had he given them cattle to win them over? 'No,' the man replied, 'we went because he knew how to treat men.'

There was one important defection. Old Phethu Mphoeng, who had supported Tshekedi throughout, joined Seretse's supporters. He was widely respected and this action made a big impression. However, during the weeks following the kgotla, forty-three headmen (including five of the eight chief's representatives) were among those who prepared to go with Tshekedi. They included Rasebolai Kgaamane (next-in-line of succession) and two of Chief Khama's full brothers, but Molwa Sekgoma was persuaded to remain at Moeng College, where he was teaching. It was decided that they should accept Chief Kgari's invitation to settle in his country, because this was the Bakwena and traditionally senior tribe and because the land adjoined the Bamangwato. Tshekedi chose an uninhabited area at Rametsana on the border-about seventy-five miles from Mahalapye and from...
Molepolole. He sent a telegram to Buchanan announcing his decision to leave his own people. 'Be of good cheer,' he added. In a public declaration, he and the forty-three headmen said: 'We have been compelled to take this drastic step not because we do not love the country of our birth, but because we have great concern for the future of the Bechuanaland Protectorate if the manner in which Seretse contracted his marriage with Ruth Williams and the steps so far taken to proclaim him Chief of the Bamangwato-the biggest tribe in the Bechuanaland Protectorate—are accepted as precedents.'

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to be followed in similar matters in future .... It is our express purpose to avoid a division in the tribe, and as proof of our intentions. . . we have not worried the Government to allow us to settle on Crown lands, or to find us land in the Bamangwato country, as has been done in past tribal disputes.'

They reiterated that they had never intended, 'and do not now intend, to challenge the position of Seretse as heir apparent,' but questioned the legality of the steps he and his supporters had taken in their attempt to proclaim him chief and Ruth Williams queen. They asked for a judicial inquiry to declare once and for all the position as regards Ruth and her children.

Tshekedi and Ella and their children (their fifth child, Mphoeng, had been born in 1948), his sister Bonyerile, all his followers and their families, packed up their homes, piled high lorries and wagons and rounded up some of their cattle. They set off across a sandy waste. Throughout the upheaval resulting from Seretse's marriage Tshekedi's great consolation lay in his family. Ella, constant, philosophical, never uttered a word of complaint in all the vicissitudes of their life. Her sense of humour, which was at once innocent and mischievous, was unfailing. To her Tshekedi often unburdened himself, discussing his work, his problems and his ideas, unlike the average Mochuana who regarded such matters as outside a wife's purview.

Tshekedi was still doggedly set on getting a Government ruling on the question of Ruth's status. He was in a highly emotional and frustrated state and did not show his usual discernment. It was one of the occasions when, having fixed on something in his mind, he would pursue it to the end even if, as on this occasion, some of his friends tried to dissuade him. He believed that if tribal law and custom were not to be permanently disrupted, her status in the tribe must be settled and that this could only be done by a judicial inquiry. He and Buchanan accordingly put this request to the High Commissioner on July 7, 1950. They were told that His Excellency would not entertain such an idea, and they were left with the strong impression that Seretse was to be installed as Chief with Ruth as Queen Mother.

Sir Evelyn Baring sent for Seretse at this time. He told him that no decision had yet been taken regarding his installation and they had an informal talk. Yet Seretse came away with the 192

The wedding of Tshekedi Khama and Ella Moshoela with Seretse Khama as best man
Tshekedi in his office
Tshekedi on a farm

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impression that he was to be installed in three weeks' time, and that the High
Commissioner would prefer Ruth not to arrive until after the ceremony. He
therefore cabled her to be ready
to come after three weeks.
On the same day that Tshekedi and Buchanan saw the
High Commissioner the Southern Rhodesian Parliament was debating a matter of
'urgent public importance'. The Prime Minister, Sir Godfrey Huggins, described
the tribe's decision as disastrous' and was applauded when he said he had already
written to the High Commissioner but would send another message to inform him
of the opinion of the House, pointing out how disastrous they thought it would be if 'this fellow' were
allowed to become chief.
Late the following night Tshekedi telephoned Buchanan to say that the High
Commissioner had changed his mind about a commission and they were to remain
over in Pretoria. On the next day they again interviewed Baring who signified that
a commission would be appointed. They pressed for an opportunity of
commenting on the terms of reference before they were finalized and Buchanan
understood that this was agreed to. There was no mention of Seretse's installation.
Meanwhile, Ruth Khama arrived in Bechuanaland in August 1949 and settled
down, without any fuss. Not long after, on September 28, the South African Press
gave a full account of remarks made by the Prime Minister, Dr. D. Malan, at a
meeting of the Nationalist Party at Paarl, when he strongly condemned Seretse's
marriage and announced that he had sent a telegram to the British Government in
which the Union's attitude was stated unequivocally. He was glad that the
Southern Rhodesian Government had done the same.' Malan followed this up
with a statement that he would make a demand for the High Commission
Territories early in the New Year.2
By then, Tshekedi had returned to Rametsana and Buchanan to Cape Town. They
heard no more about the terms of reference of the proposed inquiry until two
months later, when they were shocked to learn that the main issue was: 'whether
Seretse Khama was a fit and proper person to discharge the functions of chief.'
Without waiting to consult
2 October I o, 1949.


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Tshekedi, Buchanan at once wrote to the High Commissioner. In careful, legal
phraseology, he expressed his disquiet that no allusion had been made in the terms
to the 'real and vital issues'-whether the marriage and Seretse's subsequent actions
at the kgotla were contrary to native law and custom. Upon being assured that
these issues would be covered, he helped Tshekedi to prepare evidence. However, Tshekedi felt thoroughly uneasy as he was convinced that the terms of reference were aimed at preventing Seretse from ever becoming chief. He therefore wrote in October 1949 to the Government renouncing all claims to the chieftainship for himself or his children. He received no acknowledgement.

He was appalled to hear from the District Commissioner on October 4, 1949, that 'for the sake of convenience and clarity you will be treated as plaintiff and Seretse Khama as defendant at the inquiry and you will have all the usual rights of a plaintiff in a civil action.' The suggestion that Tshekedi was claiming the chieftainship from Seretse had already brought about a state of tension and emotionalism in Serowe and, far from taking steps to allay this, the Administration had drawn up this provocative formula.

The news of the commission was a complete surprise to Seretse, who could not understand how or why it had come about, until he was told that his uncle was the 'plaintiff'. There were rumours that Tshekedi was inciting people to shoot Seretse and that Seretse would never be chief so long as his uncle was alive: the prospect of his appearing as plaintiff and Seretse as defendant in such circumstances alarmed Tshekedi’s friends and Buchanan applied for him to be heard at Lobatsi, seat of the High Court, instead of at Serowe. Mr. P. Fraenkel, Seretse's local legal adviser, described Tshekedi's petition to be heard at Lobatsi as 'characteristically puerile'. Tshekedi was desperate, he said, and his remarks were those of a disappointed rejected Regent.

The commission, under Sir Walter Harragin, K.C., judge of the High Court, began its sittings on November 1, 1949. The world Press was again well represented, as were local officials and traders. Not many of the tribe attended in Lobatsi. Tshekedi's evidence was summed up in a memorandum. Of the District Commissioner's letter naming him as plaintiff and Seretse as defendant, he said: 'With all respect, I do submit that 'A Very Disreputable Transaction' this places me in a position which is not of my making. I had and have no desire to be a party to any litigation. I have to the best of my ability as Chief of the tribe performed my duty in this unfortunate matter of Seretse's marriage. When the position passed out of my control, through no fault of mine, I decided to leave. It is only because I have been asked to do so, and not as a plaintiff or party to a suit, that I am placing what information I can before the commission of inquiry...' He emphasized that he and his supporters had never intended, and did not now intend to challenge the position of Seretse Khama as heir-apparent to the chieftainship. They only challenged the legality of the steps he and his supporters had taken in their attempt to proclaim him chief and Ruth Williams queen. He continued: 'I would also wish to make clear my own personal position. Rumours have been spread that my actions in this matter are due to a desire to retain the chieftainship by excluding Seretse as chief. It may also be suggested by the same persons that my attitude now before this commission is influenced by the same motive. I have no such motive.' If, in the interests of peace and good order, it were decided that Seretse could not be recognized as chief, he himself as the next in line of
succession could not under any circumstances continue as chief. He wanted to make it clear that his personal position could in no way be affected by the outcome of the inquiry.

Referring to the terms of reference concerning whether Seretse ‘is in fact a fit and proper person’ to be chief, he said that Seretse had disqualified himself by his defiance of native law and custom, leading to disruption of the tribe. He emphasized the vital importance of the chief being a person to do everything to uphold the law, and also to have regard to the interests and well-being of his people: in this case Seretse had prejudiced the position of the tribe in their delicate position vis-a-vis the Union and the constant threat of incorporation.

Having received the memorandum, the commission proceeded to hear his evidence, but to the consternation of himself and Buchanan, when he referred to Ruth’s status, the presiding Commissioner said the matter did not fall within the terms of reference. After a strong protest from Buchanan that in this case they would not tender any further evidence, the Attorney-General consulted the correspondence between them and the

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High Commissioner and agreed that a decision should be given on this issue. Tshekedi, and a number of tribal leaders who gave supporting evidence, were cross-examined by the Attorney-General for the best part of a week. Tshekedi was by this time in a state of extreme tension and the Commissioners found him evasive, with a tendency to reply to their questions with a further question. They were far more impressed when they came to hear Seretse. At first he and his supporters had refused to give evidence, not as an act of discourtesy, they explained, but as a ‘protest’ against the Regent's attitude of refusing to give evidence in the presence of the tribe at Serowe. On November 16, however, Seretse gave evidence at a hearing attended by some 3,000 tribesmen. He was relaxed and spoke firmly. He and Ruth, he said, had married for love. He admitted marrying without the consent of the royal uncles but said he had sought and obtained the forgiveness of the tribe for this breach of custom. He had been properly designated and there was no dispute as to his hereditary right to the chieftainship. With regard to his successor, he said it was premature for the High Commissioner to consider this until a vacancy occurred—this might not be for fifty or sixty years and ‘times may change’. Looking directly at the Commissioners he stated: ‘I claim the chieftainship because it is due to me, and the tribe wants me. My morals are as good as any chief or regent in Bechuanaland Protectorate. My educational qualifications are probably better . . .’ He added that as far as the administration was concerned, he would get advice from men with experience.1 Chief Mokgosi of the Bamalete believed that Tshekedi wished to retain the chieftainship. Chief Bathoen of the Bangwaketse, Tshekedi’s closest friend, said that on no occasion over many years had he observed any desire on the part of Tshekedi to retain the chieftainship for himself, Sir Walter Harragin asked: ‘Is it correct, in your opinion, to say that due to the speech of the Acting Government Secretary and later speakers, the kgotla was stampeded into making a decision
about the chieftainship which was never before it?' Bathoen answered: 'That is correct.' He thought Tshekedi had not checked this because to do so might have caused trouble. Seretse's legal
1 The Star, November 16, 1949.
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adviser called several African witnesses to testify that the attitude towards marriage of chiefs had changed so that wives not approved by royal uncles were in fact accepted.
The hearings ended on November 18, 1949. The Commissioners sent their report to the Secretary of State and the Labour Government. On the official front there was silence. Tshekedi and his followers continued to move back and forth between Serowe and Rametsana trying to assemble some of their herds within reach of their new home. Their main herds would remain in Bamangwato country. They met with mounting opposition from some of Seretse's supporters and the hampering toils of red tape imposed by officials. Meanwhile, the Education Department reported that Moeng College, handicapped by isolation and financial difficulties, had been prematurely opened, and was now suffering from the upheaval in the tribe. The report warned against the 'national pride' of the Bamangwato in the achievement. There had not been much opportunity for Tshekedi or his people to give vent to this national pride, so overshadowed was the realization of his dream by the tragedy in which they were all now involved. Christmas and the New Year passed, and still there was no pronouncement, and still the Bamangwato were without a chief, while Seretse and Ruth continued to live quietly in Serowe.
Without warning, Seretse was suddenly invited to London by the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, Philip Noel-Baker, to discuss 'the future administration of the Bamangwato'. His wife was also invited. Ruth, and Seretse's friends, were highly suspicious. He therefore asked for a guarantee that Ruth would be able to come back but this the Administration would not give, though he was assured that he himself could not be kept out of Bechuanaland. When he reported this to the kgotla it was agreed that he should accept the Government's invitation, but as a precaution Ruth would remain in Serowe. Some people felt it was an unnecessary precaution: after all, a Labour Government was in power, committed to principles of equality and freedom for all races.
In mid-February, Seretse flew to London. Three weeks later, on March 7, 1950, in the flat off the Haymarket provided for him by the Government, he called the Press. He announced that he had been tricked and doublecrossed: the Government
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had offered him £1,100 a year tax free if he would live in England and relinquish all claim to the chieftainship. He had refused. In that case, he had been told, he was banished from his country. The Secretary of State had furthermore asked him not to go to the Press until it could be announced simultaneously in Parliament.
On the following day, the new Minister, Patrick Gordon Walker, who had replaced Noel-Baker when he suddenly fell ill, made a statement to Parliament. He said that His Majesty's Government 'viewed with grave concern the danger which recognition [of Seretse as Chief] would cause to the unity and well-being of the tribe and the administration of the Protectorate', and therefore recognition would be withheld for five years, after which the situation would be reviewed: Seretse and his wife would live outside the Protectorate with 'a suitable allowance'.

The Minister went on to announce that Tshekedi Khama would be exiled 'while the chieftainship is in suspense'. He must live outside the Bamangwato reserve, and would not be allowed to enter without special permission. The District Commissioner would rule over the tribe as 'a purely temporary expedient'. Mr. Gordon Walker assured the uneasy House of Commons that there had been no communication from the South African Government.

Mr. Winston Churchill, leader of the Opposition, set off the prolonged interrogation that followed. He described the method of bringing Seretse to London as 'a very disreputable transaction'.

This was front-page news in Britain and in Africa, the censure emphasizing the 'clumsiness' of the Government and the mishandling throughout of the whole affair. It was indeed a very disreputable transaction but in a far wider sense than Mr. Churchill intended.

CHAPTER 17
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The announcement that he was banished came as a terrible shock to Tshekedi. This was the crowning injustice: the Government, having virtually supported his view on Seretse's marriage, was now punishing him for holding that view, and for standing on tribal law and custom. The banishment order, made under an obsolete Proclamation of 1907, said that the High Commissioner was satisfied that he was 'dangerous to the peace of the Bamangwato Reserve'. At the time the many protests in Britain concentrated on Seretse's case and warm tributes were paid to him and to Ruth for her courage and determination. The banishment of Tshekedi passed almost unnoticed. It might be thought that the sentence of exile was mitigated by his having already gone voluntarily to the Bakwena country. This was not so. He and his followers, though living in Rametsana, had been free to come and go between their new home and the old, and, especially, could look after their herds in Ngwato country. Even more drastic than the physical restriction now imposed by the British Government were the spiritual and psychological effects. Banishment is a grave penalty. The life of an exile is broken, his character may be warped. Besides, the banishment of Tshekedi and Seretse meant that the Bamangwato were deprived of their natural leaders, and the tribe's faith in the British Government was thereby inevitably impaired, if not shattered.
The White Paper issued at the end of March 1950, cast no further light on the whole affair. At one point it said that Tshekedi had asked for the judicial inquiry 'to advise on whether Seretse should be recognized'. It continued: 'Tshekedi and his supporters have never called in question Seretse's claims to the succession . . . what they have objected to is:
1 Comd. 7193.

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Seretse's marriage to a white woman and his suitability while so married to hold the chieftainship.' The judicial inquiry had 'unanimously advised against the recognition of Seretse' and had 'further advised that Tshekedi should not be permitted to return to the Reserve.' Their presence was inimical to peace and good order. (Fifteen months had elapsed since Tshekedi began to warn the Administration that their inaction would result in the disruption of the tribe; now the Government, advised by 'men on the spot', was taking the line that a cooling-off period was necessary if violence was to be avoided.)

The Minister continued to insist that no official representations had been received from the Governments of South Africa or Southern Rhodesia. What of Sir Godfrey Huggins's statement on July 7, 1949, that he had written to the High Commissioner and would do so again? What of Dr. Malan's statement in Paarl on September 28 that 'the Union Government had sent a telegram to the British Government in which the Union's attitude was stated unequivocally'? The sequence of events was significant: fifteen months before, when the tribe had been virtually unanimous in rejecting Ruth as Queen Mother, the Government had said it could not act in the matter. After six months, when the tribe had swung round to acceptance of Ruth, both Khamas had got the impression that Seretse would be installed, then overnight it had been decided that a Commission of Inquiry would be held—not into Ruth's status, as requested, but into Seretse's fitness to be chief. As the tribe became more vociferous in its desire to have both Seretse and Ruth, so the British Government hardened in its opposition. Now it denied that it had been influenced by the South African Government. What, then, had motivated the British Government?

Only a year or so later did the probable explanation emerge. At the critical time, Field-Marshal Smuts, leader of the Opposition in South Africa, had urged the dangers of recognizing Seretse because, as he pointed out, white South Africans were hardly sane on the subject of miscegenation. Therefore if Seretse and Ruth were to be installed, the Nationalist Government would surely demand the incorporation of Bechuanaland and possibly even threaten to blockade the Territories. His own Party would be unable to oppose such a move because of the emotions aroused. The British Government was in the 200 A-

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position of acting on white South African opinion without daring to admit this.
Baring, because of his part, had become an enigma to Tshekedi and Buchanan. They had wholeheartedly admired him in the past, having found him approachable and sympathetic, while Buchanan knew that he admired Tshekedi. Now suddenly he was a stranger. Another highly unsatisfactory matter raised in Parliament was the Government's refusal to publish the findings of Judge Harragin's inquiry. (It has not been published to this day.) Mr. Gordon Walker argued that if the inquiry's arguments were published they would be made use of by Communists all over the world. He reiterated the Government's case. Again the theme of 'Seretse v. Tshekedi' was introduced when he said that the first kgotla was 'overwhelmingly against Seretse Khama and in favour of his uncle, Tshekedi'. The Minister later referred to Tshekedi's 'very great ability' as ruler, adding that he 'had become, as other good Governments. occasionally become, unpopular'. Asked by Fenner Brockway, a Labour M.P., what the Government's attitude would be if a reconciliation were to take place between Tshekedi and Seretse, he said it would be a new factor, involving careful reconsideration of the matter.

In Bechuanaland on March 14, 1950, the High Commissioner and the Resident Commissioner attempted to address the tribe on the White Paper decisions, but the kgotla was most effectively boycotted. Two months later the District Commissioner, who had been appointed by the Government as Native Authority, was shouted down in kgotla. There was a general disintegration with growing lawlessness in the Ngwato country. The people were lost without Seretse, their Chief, the father figure and protector around whom their society was bound to revolve. In its White Paper, the British Government had referred vaguely to a dynastic feud in the tribe, giving the impression that this was between Seretse and Tshekedi and that because of this they must both be removed. No mention was made of the notorious feud between various houses of the sons of Sekgoma I. In removing both the sons of Khama, the Government had left other members of the royal family in control, thus reviving among certain men longdormant ambitions. Some of them were influential headmen; 201

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some had resented Tshekedi's rule. Meanwhile the District Commissioner had appointed the next in line of succession after Seretse, Tshekedi and Rasebolai, a man called Keaboka Kgamane, to assist him as senior tribal representative and senior judicial officer of the highest Bamangwato court of appeal. He had little knowledge of administration or judicial affairs. The courteous, law-abiding Bamangwato, rendered confused and desperate by the loss of their Chief, needed someone less remote than the British Government and the High Commissioner to blame for Seretse's banishment. They turned on Tshekedi. But their inherent respect for the ex-Regent, deterred them from direct action. Ringleaders instead began to attack his supporters, the Rametsanas, interfering with the removal of their cattle. Each side quoted tribal law and custom in justification of their actions; the aggressors claimed that if tribesmen left their country their property must remain
and regarded the continual return of the Rametsanas to look after or remove cattle as provocative. The Rametsanas claimed that voluntary exile differed from exile imposed as a punishment and that they were entitled to move freely and retain their property. In fact, there was no exact precedent; Tshekedi had been the ruling Chief; before, people had either gone peacefully after negotiation with the Chief, had been banished and dispossessed as a punishment, or had fled, leaving their property. Seretse was not present to pacify his followers. But Tshekedi, like his father Khama a century ago, strictly instructed his supporters that they must on no account retaliate. One of his friends believed that, had he not exerted his powerful influence, there would have been bloodshed. As it was, Tshekedi submitted innumerable detailed and lengthy reports on the many cases of attempted intimidation, of incitement to violence against his supporters, to the Administration. The latter's chief concern was to ensure that the Rametsanas kept out of Bamangwato country. They seemed to feel that the best action lay in non-action and seldom responded to the appeals to protect the Rametsanas' property. Indeed, on occasion when friends (including Europeans) visited Tshekedi at Rametsana, they were afterwards crossexamined by officials or police, a process that they could not but regard as intimidation. When Tshekedi found appeals and

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protests to be ineffectual, he warned the Government of the likely fruits of inaction: lawlessness was encouraged and, for the first time, the women, greatly incensed by the loss of their Chief, Seretse, were becoming vocal and in some cases violent.

Tshekedi knew that his people were fundamentally peaceful and loyal and he watched events with despair. For the time being, he had decided against making any public protest about his personal case. He was aware that among some officials there was a feeling of almost childish satisfaction over his 'downfall'. On one occasion this feeling was short-lived: Tshekedi and Buchanan were engaged in discussion with officials when someone referred to the date of the next meeting of the African Advisory Council. Tshekedi remarked, 'It will be quite impossible for me to attend on the 29th.' An official from Bechuanaland quickly cut in with 'Oh, but you're no longer a member.' Buchanan said their faces were a sight to be seen when Tshekedi explained that, though he was no longer a member for the Bamangwato, Chief Kgari Šechele had appointed him as one of the regular representatives of the Bakwena.1 Tshekedi was grateful to Chief Kgari for his confidence and also for his hospitality and support throughout his misfortune. Meanwhile his relationship with Seretse fluctuated. The breach had widened at the end of 1949 when Seretse had been granted an interim interdict against him from removing cattle or disposing of the estate of Chief Khama. However, Tshekedi having produced a copy of Khama's will, a settlement was reached in June 1950. Tshekedi had built up Sekgoma's depleted herds into a fine inheritance for his nephew. Seretse was allowed to return to the country briefly and during the handing over of the cattle the two men journeyed around the cattle posts together.
It was suddenly like the old days, when as brothers they had ridden round the herds, talking freely to each other. Tshekedi wrote to Buchanan: 'Seretse has been to me during our recent trip together my Seretse of old. . .' He added with some amusement that the local officials were greatly perturbed to see him and Seretse coming together. He concluded: 'I think you will appreciate that I am concerned with two things, the welfare of the tribe and my future and the welfare of my wife and children.' He could not restrain a note I Letter to John Buchanan, May 22, 1950.

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of bitterness: 'The latter appears not to play any significant part in the minds of the Government.'

Seretse was confined mainly to Lobatsi, where Ruth had given birth to their daughter, Jacqueline, on May 15. The uncle who had so implacably opposed her as mother of the chief-to-be, was still a stranger to her. One morning she accompanied Seretse to shop in Lobatsi. As they walked into one store, she noticed people staring and felt a sudden hush but assumed this was the curiosity she often encountered. Seretse went up to an African standing by the counter, said 'Hello, uncle;' and, turning to Ruth, called, 'Come and meet my uncle.' Ruth had met many uncles and thought, as she shook hands, that this was yet another, until, instead of greeting her with 'Dumela Mma,' he said 'How do you do.' This, then, was Tshekedi Khama. Later, on the same day, Tshekedi paid his first visit to their house and saw their baby daughter.

After all that had gone before, at their first meeting they could only be like cautious swimmers testing the icy water with a toe. But whatever their previous feelings, they could not fail to respect each other's character and determination.

By this time Tshekedi was putting forward to Seretse the suggestion that he was to repeat on several occasions: believing that the Government would never agree to Seretse's return as chief, he urged him to renounce the chieftainship and to join in a request that they both be allowed to return as private citizens. He was sure this would utterly demolish such a case as the Government had. Tshekedi's friends, Chief Bathoen and W. A. W. Clark, the Deputy High Commissioner, were delighted to see the two Khamas coming together so amicably. But there was some concern when they found that journalists were beginning to nose around: it was important to Tshekedi and Seretse that the Press should not get wind of their imminent agreement as its effectiveness in moving the British Government could easily be destroyed by a false move. On one occasion Tshekedi, Bathoen and Clark were meeting in the District Commissioner's office at Lobatsi, a lonely, dusty building. Clark saw a carload of reporters driving up. 'It's no good going on here;' he said, 'it'll be impossible to have a private discussion now.'

With one accord Tshekedi and Bathoen stood up, said 1 Letter August 4, 1950.

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'We'll fix them' and hurried out. Clark watched through the window as the two Chiefs got into Bathoen's car and drove off at great speed towards the north. Immediately all the reporters piled back in their car and gave chase. Baffled, Clark sat down to wait. Twenty minutes later a broken-down old lorry drove up, a ragged African with a cigarette drooping from his mouth, at the wheel. From the office Clark could hear him arguing with a policeman who was refusing to let him come through the gate. Clark got up to see what the commotion was about and out of the cab of the lorry suddenly appeared Bathoen, while from the back a pile of sacks heaved up and, like a jack-in-the-box, Tshekedi emerged, grinning like a schoolboy.

They had known that the lorry was parked a couple of miles out of Lobatsi, had driven to it, and, before the Press car could reach them, had transferred to it, sending one of the lorry drivers off in Bathoen's car. Tshekedi loved drama; he and Bathoen had enjoyed hugely the sight of the Press tearing after Bathoen's chief-less car.

When the time came for Seretse to return to England in August 1950, Tshekedi drove to Pretoria to ask the High Commissioner not to enforce the banishment order. His request was refused. On the eve of Seretse's departure the two Khamas sent a joint statement to a kgotla of headmen. It was purposely non-committal, only reporting on the fact that they had had talks, and felt that it was not impossible to find 'a basis of co-operation between them and their people and the Government'. They said they had agreed to meet together in London for discussions with the United Kingdom authorities. They called on their respective supporters to come together in phrases typical of Tshekedi's thinking: 'It is not unusual for people to disagree in principles but it is important and vital that such difference of opinions should not interfere with their working and common interest.' Consequently, they called on their people to co-operate with the Government so that a fully representative and efficient Administration run by Africans could be established.

Seretse told his people that it was useless to call him Chief and it was better to regard him 'as an ordinary citizen' living amongst them. He and his wife and daughter then returned to London.

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The Press had already published rumours about their private talks and about a plan that Tshekedi had submitted to the High Commissioner for the joint management of the tribe by Seretse and himself. This urgently requested the appointment of a council of experts (African and European) in Colonial administration, to consult with the Bamangwato over the formation of a workable system of tribal administration. It pointed out that Seretse and he were perhaps the only two people of the tribe who had studied the administration of other colonies, and that it would therefore be in the tribe's interest if they could assist in the creation and working of such a system.
But the really momentous result of their private talks was still a secret. This was an aide-memoire which agreed that they should both give up all claim to the chieftainship for themselves and their children and they should take up with the British Government their case to live in their own country and have the right to sit on tribal councils. In principle a federation of tribes in the Protectorate should be considered; and neither man should stand in the way of the other having access to property in the Bamangwato country. They agreed that these views would not be published without mutual consultation, but that they should pass them on privately to people able to influence the Government, so that an appeal to the Press at the appropriate moment could be prepared.

Tshekedi wrote privately to Margery Perham (at Nuffield College, Oxford), and Michael Scott, saying that careful and quiet preparation of 'the ground' was necessary and any publicity, whether accurate or not, would be damaging. He asked them to urge this on Seretse and his friends. His reasons for fighting the case for Seretse's return as a private person were, he said, fairness to Seretse, and 'a matter of public concern and principles and this is, I have felt serious misgivings regarding the present status and positions of African chiefs. The Government has proclaimed laws empowering them to depose a chief "in the interest of law and good Government"; but nowhere was provision made for a chief to resign voluntarily, and it should be envisaged that 'in this modern world there are chiefs who wish and feel that they could better serve their people in a private capacity.' He asked Miss Perham, with her wide influence in African affairs, confidentially to sound out people with experience about these suggestions.

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Thus came a welcome respite for both men after nearly two years of strain and recrimination between them.

Seretse and his family, who had come through the ordeal of constant harrying by the Press with firm dignity, now tried to make the best of exile, living in a small flat in London while he continued his law studies.

Tshekedi continued the arduous work of establishing a new village in the wilds. Even in exile, his thoughts were always centred on the long-term welfare of the Bamangwato. The London Times commented at this time on his 'deeply thought out schemes for the future of his people' : one a proposal for the draining of the Okovango swamp and irrigation of a wide area, the other for a federation of the Bamangwato with the Bakwena, during the suspension of the chieftainship.'

Tshekedi had sent copies of the scheme for federation to Seretse, to the Government, and to numerous experts such as the Institute of Race Relations in Johannesburg, and Margery Perham in Oxford, asking for their comments. The main objects were to avert the breakdown of tribal unity and the take-over of chief's powers by the District Commissioner. As the Bakwena were the recognized senior tribe, he suggested that the Chief of the Bakwena or his nominee should appoint representatives in each of the eight Bamangwato districts to form a council to administer the tribe through kgotlas. This would not prejudice
the future of the chieftainship, while a federation between the two main tribes of the Protectorate would represent political growth as opposed to the previous historical tendency of tribes to break up into smaller units.

The recipients of the memorandum were interested (though The Times pointed out it could allow Tshekedi to rule under cover of the Bakwena Chief with whom he had much influence), for instance Sir Herbert Stanley, the former High Commissioner, said it favourably impressed him, but nothing further was done as they felt confused by the situation in the Bamangwato country. Sympathetic though his friends in England were, it was difficult to imagine his problems and his feelings, and Michael Scott and Margery Perham had been urging him to come to Britain to discuss these issues of economic and social development in a free atmosphere, remote from tribal controversy.

1 August 22, 1950.

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At Scott's request, therefore, Guy Clutton-Brock and his wife, Molly, drove down from St. Faith's Farm, in Rusape, Southern Rhodesia, to see Tshekedi about a possible visit. Tshekedi was allowed into his country for short visits to inspect his cattle, and the Clutton-Brocks, who had rattled down the Great North Road in an ancient car, found him, quite by chance, having a cup of tea in the Palapye hotel. They reported to Scott what had barely been mentioned in England-things were very tense, the people unhappy and angry, and there was no cooperation with the Administration. Tshekedi, who was 'very anxious' and 'on his toes', had expressed the fear that there would be more trouble, and that the British Government would get fed up with a recalcitrant people, and would be ready to hand the territory over to the Union. So he felt he must stay on the spot and help ease things along as much as possible, and could not contemplate being away for long. In spite of the circumstances, and the brevity of their meeting, they also discussed more general matters. Clutton-Brock wrote that they both agreed 'that in Africa one is living in a country of the blind. Most Europeans, whether officials or farmers or anything else, do not seem to have a clue as to what's happening here or in the outside world. There seem to be quite a lot who know quite a lot about indigenous soil, plants, trees, cattle, but scarcely any who know anything at all about indigenous humans. How should they? They never go near their homes or deal with them in any other capacity except as employees or pawns of the governmental machine.' They considered the possibility of getting leaders, teachers and so on from different parts to meet together. For 'Africans must tell Africans what to teach African children, and African leaders, even in humble spheres, must meet with other leaders, so that they do not lead in isolation without reference to neighbours even quite near. Tomorrow the impact of the outside world will come tumbling in on top of us, and the young Africans must be prepared to meet it with some knowledge.'

Tshekedi's friends in England thought that he was absorbed in a comparatively small tribal issue and had a parochial outlook. But as the tribe had always come first he could not throw himself wholeheartedly into any development until it was
reunited and at peace. He therefore refused their invitations and, because he did not want to complicate matters and hoped his 208

Arriving at Waterloo—met by W. A. W. Clark
Arriving at the House of Commons with the Rev. Michael Scott and the Author

The Amazing Journey—at Southampton with Ella, Leapeetswe and Sekgoma
Seretse and Ruth Khama with Jacqueline and Ian

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own case could be solved by quiet negotiation, he remained silent. But he was finding continued silence almost intolerable. His private, carefully documented protests to the High Commissioner and to the local Administration (a typical one, blunt but polite, was nine pages long) got him nowhere. In case his study and experience could be of use, he set out his views on the forming of councils: on how the District Commissioner could give the people an understanding of the aims of Government. These were ignored although official attempts to get councils established continued to be dismally unsuccessful. It was almost the last straw when, in October, a hut belonging to one of the hostile tribesmen was accidentally burnt, and a rumour that it had been done by one of Tshekedi’s supporters went round. Hearing rumours of reprisals, the police put a guard on Tshekedi’s empty house, the Chief’s house that Khama had built, at night. Nevertheless, four days later, the policeman having gone away at 1 a.m., his house was burnt.

Apart from the damage to the fine old house, Tshekedi lost furniture and personal possessions with a special history in the Khama family. He could get no satisfaction from the police or administration. Still he made no public statement. The pressure of events changed his mind. Reports were coming from England that people were agitating for Seretse’s return as Chief, and Fenner Brockway had asked a question about this in Parliament. Brockway was a friend of Seretse’s, and Tshekedi assumed that this must have been done with Seretse’s agreement. He reacted with a bitter reproach: ‘You have gone back to your claim for the chiefdom,’ he wrote to his nephew. ‘It is clear that you feel that if I were to make the announcement that I have no further objection to raise regarding your marriage this would pave the way for your return, but unfortunately I cannot express a view which is not in accordance with my feelings. . . . In our future should we ever come together again I shall never hesitate to tell you that I disagree with you, merely because I fear to be disliked.’

Their brief reconciliation was not sufficiently durable to survive the mistrust and the resentment that now flared up. ‘You say both you and I have caused the loss of the rights of our people to their land, but I say it is you; it is not me; it is not through the marriage alone but this was followed up by your sowing bitterness and hatred that the people should hate 209

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me, and my property should be confiscated ... Your feelings towards me were revealed in the fact that you are unable to write me a word of condolence in my losses .... 'I promised you that when it came to the welfare of our country I will join hands with you on the basis of the agreement which we signed together. I keep to my promise and if you do not wish to have anything to do with me I will be free to fight my battle alone... I desire to inform you that you will shortly see my views expressed to the public through the medium of the Press. I would not have written anything before consulting with you but you broke the agreement, many false charges have been made against me and I made no reply but the time has come for my version to be known.'

Contrary to Tshekedi's belief, Seretse had not initiated the renewed agitation for his return as Chief. All might still have been saved had Tshekedi's letter, posted by airmail in mid-October, reached Seretse in the five or six days such posts normally take. Seretse would then have had time to reply and to refute the allegation. Tshekedi allowed three weeks and, when no reply came, concluded that all was broken between them and published their private aide-memoire on November 12. The first Seretse knew of this was from a reporter, who knocked on the door and announced it. Seretse promptly denied that there had been an 'agreement' and said it was simply an 'aide-memoire' setting out 'certain lines along which we might work', among them being the possibility of his renouncing the chieftainship. In publishing it without further consultation with him, he said, his uncle had been 'guilty of a serious breach of faith'. Only after this did he receive his uncle's letter. He did not notice the discrepancy in the dates, and it was not until nine years later that he realized that, but for some mischance that delayed the letter three weeks, the renewed rupture with his uncle might never have happened.

Tshekedi was confirmed in his decision to go it alone by the difficulty in looking after his cattle satisfactorily. The visits he had so far been allowed, though they at least proved that he personally was safe in Bamangwato country, were quite inadequate for the supervision of the herds scattered all over the country, or for their removal to the southern part of the reserve where they were to be concentrated. These were partly his own, partly those he continued to look after for widows 210

Appeasing White Opinion and orphans. Unlike Seretse, he was not given an allowance during his banishment and was entirely dependent on his farming. He had recently been refused permission to go into Bamangwato territory to attend to an important transaction involving a deal of several thousand pounds. At this time, early in November 1950, David Astor, editor of The Observer, asked Patrick O'Donovan, who was on a tour of Africa, to make a private visit to Tshekedi. The Observer had taken a special interest in fighting for justice for Tshekedi and Seretse and Astor knew that Tshekedi's friends had invited him to London. In the course of two talks, O'Donovan discovered that Tshekedi was taken with the idea of making a trip to London and would prefer a
brief one soon. There were, however, certain difficulties which might be
insuperable: the chief being the attitude of the High Commission who frankly did
not want him to go to London because they were not anxious for him to meet
Seretse at that juncture. They appeared to fear that the two might present affair
accompli, either complicating the situation still further in the Bamangwato reserve
or settling the problem between them without consulting the Government. They
could not and would not prevent his going if he were determined but, as Tshekedi
said, 'I have to live with them for the rest of my life.' He emphasized that he
would make his own arrangements for the journey, but he hoped a reputable body
would invite him to England. Above all, there must be no suggestion that he was
going at the behest of a newspaper as this might lead the Commonwealth
Relations Office to suppose he was going to agitate, and would impair his chances
of frank conversations with them. O'Donovan reassured him. In a note to Astor,
O'Donovan said: 'People have very mixed opinions about him here-everything
from the biggest rogue in the Bechuanaland Protectorate to the saviour of his
people. Certainly he is the most intelligent and impressive African of any sort that
I have met.'

However, as it was then announced that the Secretary of State would visit
Bechuanaland, Tshekedi decided to postpone his proposed journey until he had
seen Mr. Gordon Walker. A mammoth kgotla was planned in Serowe and a full
dress rehearsal was held under J. A. Germond, the new District Commissioner.
Tshekedi and his supporters had been ordered not to attend-when they protested
they were told that if they

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had applied earlier no doubt arrangements could have been made for their
presence. Mr. Gordon Walker was much impressed by the kgotla of 10,000
tribesmen with Keaboka making a welcoming address for which he had received
official help. Eleven lines of it referred to the tribe's sorrow at the banishment of
Seretse and twenty-three were spent in attacking Tshekedi: 'In the interests of
peace and order we pray that Tshekedi's followers who remain here to taunt and
flout us and our administration, be ordered out of the country.... By our
inimitable restraint we have thus far managed to avoid incidents....'
The Native Authority had spoken along similar lines in the district meetings at
which delegates for the kgotla were briefed. Germond had spent most of his
service in the Protectorate. He had been secretary to Tagart, in the 1930 inquiry
into the state of the Masarwa, and clerk to the Resident Magistrate at the time of
the Evans incident. He was admired by many people as a man of character and
integrity. It was inevitable that he and Tshekedi would clash in a situation where
he was Native Authority upholding Government policy and Tshekedi was striving
against his banishment. Germond saw the exRegent as a threat to his authority,
Tshekedi saw the official 'collaborating' with Keaboka and those descendants of
Sekgoma I who had become his opponents.

Often though he sought the opportunity of confronting the men who denigrated
him, Tshekedi was never allowed to do so. At the separate meeting for him and
his followers he petitioned the Minister to be allowed to return to the territory as a private citizen. If it were suggested that this might lead to disorders, he pointed out that in the four months he had spent there he had moved freely, and that despite provocation he and his supporters had never been guilty of any illegal acts. Their absence was enabling malicious people to interfere with their property. He asked to be allowed to use his knowledge of administration, of animal husbandry and of education in the service of his country. Finally he referred to correspondence between the Minister and the Rev. Michael Scott: the latter had written expressing grave dismay over the deterioration in the Reserve, and particularly the burning of Tshekedi’s house. Gordon Walker had replied:1 ‘I am satisfied that conditions in the

1 December 14, 1950,

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Reserve are reasonably quiet and peaceful. I have had a detailed report from the High Commissioner about the burning of Tshekedi’s house. This seems to have been an unfortunate accident. The High Commissioner points out that Tshekedi has another house in Serowe, thousands of head of cattle, and other property in the Reserve to which ill-disposed persons could have easily directed their attention with far less risk of detection. The house which has been burnt down is that occupied by Tshekedi as Regent, but it is not necessarily his own property. Tshekedi himself said in the past that he would have to vacate it on the return of Seretse. Nevertheless the incident is most unfortunate and the loss of the house with its heirlooms and associations will naturally have caused Tshekedi distress. But it is in no sense evidence of disorder.’

After the kgotla, Gordon Walker invited Tshekedi to London to continue their discussion. (He then returned to London via Cape Town where the South African Prime Minister, Dr. Malan, during a State banquet to welcome him demanded the incorporation of the Protectorates. Gordon Walker’s reply was polite but firm: this, he said, was a subject on which Britain and South Africa disagreed.) Buchanan had been planning to retire but he responded at once to Tshekedi’s request that he should accompany him to London. Tshekedi was on his way to Cape Town when he received a telegram to say that his old aunt, MmaMphoeng, and one of his trusted servants, had been arrested by the police on a charge of arson, and had been put in gaol. MmaMphoeng, one of the royal family, had been the member of Tshekedi’s family who looked after his home in his absence. She was a venerable, religious old lady, fortunately blessed with a powerful sense of humour. It was obvious that the police, who in four months had done nothing about the ‘accidental’ burning of his house on October 17, had been stirred into action by Gordon Walker’s inquiries and now, the moment Tshekedi had left, had arrested two of his own people! Owing to the distances, it was two days before Tshekedi could have them bailed out (at a cost of C300). Always thoughtful for old people and the humble, he was extremely angry and distressed about the position in which the old lady and his servant had been placed. He applied for
permission for her to go to Rametsana, to the care of his wife and sister, until her trial was due. This was 213

Uncle and Nephew flatly refused. At this juncture Tshekedi hired two private detectives, one from Johannesburg and the other from Cape Town, in addition to his attorney from Zeerust in the Transvaal. All this was extremely costly. The case was set down for hearing on March 6, 1951, postponed to the 12th and then to the 20th. However, on March 15 MmaMphoeng and the servant were suddenly notified by the police that the case against them had been dropped. This was only after Tshekedi's Cape Town detective had put a few questions to the Crown witnesses in the presence of the police. Buchanan commented: 'Any fair-minded person realized that this old couple never would have, and never did have, anything to do with the burning of the house.' Yet no prosecution or disciplinary action was ever taken in connexion with their wrongful arrest, and no one was brought to book for the burning of the house.

Thus, since the announcement of the banishments of the two Khamas, the situation had become alarming. This was the result of a wrong policy. Another result is that from the policy-maker down to the officials who have to carry it out on the spot, men are committed to trying to justify that policy. Whether consciously or not they may stifle conscience and better judgment, and in the resulting guilt there is a tendency to denigrate the person suffering under the decision. The impression was given to visitors to Bechuanaland—not by definite allegations but on an 'old boy' basis—that Tshekedi's personal ambitions were beyond control, that he played fast and loose with other people's cattle and that his justice could be influenced by judicious gifts. The curious thing was that almost the only thing for which he was given credit was making the Evans naval expedition look foolish. This was clearly felt to be a British, Victorian and rather amusing thing to have done.

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CHAPTER 18
The Men on the Spot Advise
Tshekedi and Buchanan sailed for England as the guests of the British Government. Their old friend, W. A. W. Clark, now head of the High Commission Territories Department of the Commonwealth Relations Office, and Press representatives, joined the usual crowd meeting the boat train at Waterloo one morning in March 1951. C. W. W. Greenidge, the Pickwickian Secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society, which had lobbied so effectively for Chief Khama in the 'nineties and had helped Tshekedi in the 'thirties, was there despite a streaming cold. I had been working with Michael Scott for the past year and, as he was ill, was waiting to deliver a welcoming note to Tshekedi. He was not at all the elderly, stern unclefigure I had imagined. He looked quite young with purposeful movements: when the Press questioned him I saw what was to become a familiar expression, his eyes had an inward, slightly suspecting look while his brow wrinkled as if he was wondering 'what lies behind
this question?’ before he answered rapidly, with a smile. I hurriedly made myself known to Buchanan and him before he went on to Paddington to meet Margery Perham. There, renewing their friendship of twenty years earlier, they together caught the train for Oxford where he was to stay with her and her sister, Mrs. Rayne.

Tshekedi had always had great confidence in Margery Perham as an authority to whom he could turn for advice. Now he came to know her as a friend. Her deep Christian conviction has, at decisive moments, overcome her academic detachment, and she has played a notable part in fighting for justice in certain African causes. Tshekedi's case was to be one of them.

On the Sunday after their arrival, Margery Perham, Astor, Scott and I met Tshekedi and Buchanan in David Astor's house near Oxford. They related the events of the previous two years, ending with the burning of Tshekedi's house.

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in front of the fire in the panelled hall, with pictures of eighteenth-century huntsmen looking down on us, we listened. Buchanan gave the main account, referring to Tshekedi to fill in some details, and occasionally one of us asked for an explanation. It became clear as they spoke that the Government's decisions had been made in the light of their overriding apprehension of South Africa's attitude, though we had not, at that time, heard about Smuts's influence.

When Buchanan described the agreement reached between Tshekedi and Seretse, that had been so unfortunately disrupted, we seized upon this: here surely was the solution: the British Government could hardly uphold the banishments on the basis given in the White Paper if nephew and uncle presented a joint agreement to renounce the chieftainship and to work together as private citizens in the councils advocated by the Government. We felt immensely confident, Tshekedi, however, was doubtful. He was reluctant to take the initiative. It was partly a matter of pride for he, the father, the senior, and the visitor, expected the younger man to welcome him. But also he wondered whether Seretse would be willing to see him. We reassured him, telling him that Seretse had mentioned to a mutual friend that he was always ready to see his uncle. So we urged Tshekedi to agree, and when he did, Seretse and Ruth were invited to dinner at Astor's house and to stay overnight on the coming Thursday. On the Wednesday they accepted. Tshekedi and I travelled down from London on that Wednesday evening. We were excited at the prospect of the coming meeting. But at the last moment came a wire from Seretse cancelling all arrangements. He had a suspicion that Tshekedi and his friends were engineering something—it had all been such a hurried arrangement and, anyway, he felt it was usual for a visitor to a country to take the initiative in calling on the resident—Tshekedi, therefore, should come to him.

Tshekedi raised the spirits of his crestfallen friends. He would fight his own case on his own ground—it was strong enough and did not depend on Seretse's—'Let things go!' he exclaimed, and Buchanan produced a cliche that was to become a family joke—Full steam ahead!'
Tshekedi and Buchanan moved to the luxurious Government hotel in Mayfair, nicknamed the 'Cripps' Arms'. Scott joined 216

The Men on the Spot Advise them. As usual, he forbade those of us who knew how ill he was to mention this to the people he was helping. We converted Tshekedi's sitting-room into an office, I became his secretary, and there, from early in the morning until late each evening, we produced memoranda on the conditions resulting from the marriage of an African chief to a white girl. At the same time, in a room above, Alan Paton was writing his novel about the forbidden relationship between whites and Africans in South Africa—Too Late the Phalarope.

In the long hours spent in the planning and conduct of his case, I was impressed by the comprehensiveness and sagacity of Tshekedi's mind. As in Bechuanaland, so now in London, he found that many of the points he raised were ignored, and would reiterate them in the hope of eventually getting a satisfactory answer. The interpretation of this tendency, murmured by some officials, was 'persecution complex'.

In these first few days, those of us who had not met him before succumbed to his magnetism. It was, David Astor said, akin to Lloyd George's attraction. Everything around him was exciting; there was a tense feeling and at the same time the reassurance that you were with someone who could cope. You were in the centre of life and this gave you life. This was very necessary because anyone who showed Tshekedi that they were on his side and that of the tribe (the latter was an essential part—he was not interested in help that was simply personal), was driven to the last breath. Yet he drove no one harder than himself. He was to the depths of his being the Father of the Tribe, and that meant all of us as well—and he treated us exactly as he had treated his people. He showed varying degrees of sensitivity, for instance the typist hired for odd jobs was shown great consideration, offered tea, asked whether she was tired. The rest of us, and particularly Scott and Buchanan, were treated like the Chief's representatives and the royal family; we were expected to give ceaselessly and the slightest sign of selfishness was met by a cold stare, but probably only I discovered the latter fact! I also discovered that he had a somewhat Victorian attitude towards women—our place was in the home and he did not quite take seriously our activities in a man's world. (On the other hand, as his hostesses found, he himself was a most considerate guest, making his bed neatly and helping with the washing-up.) 217

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As a preliminary, Tshekedi had written from the ship to the Secretary of State, confirming the fact that he 'would never again accept or undertake the office of the chief.' He felt this was necessary because his several statements to this effect, including a formal communication to the High Commissioner, had not even been acknowledged.

On April 3, Mr. Gordon Walker and Tshekedi had their first talk in the spacious, old-fashioned office of Commonwealth Relations in Downing Street. Gordon Walker had distinguished himself by his work for refugees from Germany in the
'thirties, and in representing the British Government in recent negotiations with India and Pakistan. But he had taken over the Government's policy of exiling the Khamas at a moment's notice, and, based as that was on the advice of the men on the spot, and of the Commission of Inquiry, was confident that it was the right policy. Even so, he could not but recognize the peculiar injustice done to Tshekedi and was prepared to consider his representations. The two men found their first impressions of each other reinforced. The Minister thought Tshekedi a very considerable person but not likeable. Nor did Tshekedi take to the bleak manner of the Minister.

As a preliminary, they agreed that neither should go to the Press 'without due notice to the other'. Tshekedi presented his case, fully documented. The table of contents read:

Summary of Case
Annexure A-The Restoration of the Administration of the Bamangwato country to the Bamangwato people
Sub-Annexure i-The Dynastic Feud in the Bamangwato Tribe.
2-Part I: Opinion re Deportation of a Protected Person from his Native Land. Part II: The Political Consequences of the above Opinion,
3-Present System of the Tribal Government of the Bamangwato People.
4--The Consequences upon a Tribe of the Breaking Down of True African Chieftainship.
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5-Memorandum of Discussions with Tshekedi Khama on 24.10.50.
6-Aide-Mbnoire 14. 1.50.
7-Grounds for Appeal to Interview the Secretary of State i5.1 1.50.
8-A Denial that Violence is likely in the Bamangwato Country should People holding Opposite Viewpoints live together in the Country.
Annexure B-The History of the True Position between Seretse and myself.

In his summary Tshekedi emphasized his belief that the banishment of Seretse had been an act of appeasement to Bechuanaland's 'neighbours'. In giving examples of all that he and his supporters had endured, he said he was simply providing proof that all was not well in the country under the Minister's charge: 'on the contrary, chaos and anarchy reign without opportunity of any recourse to courts of law.' He stated that he and his people, distressed by events, had therefore decided to be reunited with the tribe, to help restore a healthier state. This could be done according to tribal tradition and a new village would be established of which he would automatically be headman. They must have certain facilities, such as a road or nearby railway, a nearby District Commissioner, medical services, water and so on. Seretse's position, he stated categorically, did not affect his own, and his rights must not be made dependent on the Government's decision about Seretse. He also put forward recommendations for the reorganization of the
tribal government, quoting from authorities on colonial and constitutional matters. The Minister, while remaining non-committal, agreed to investigate several points, including the burning of his house.

When Margery Perham and David Astor had a private interview with Mr. Gordon Walker, the Minister stressed the unrest in the Bamangwato, and the need for Tshekedi’s exclusion in the interests of peace. Margery Perham came away profoundly depressed by the sense that the Minister had not understood the human or the political realities behind the situation.

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During April Tshekedi’s few diversions included successful off-the-record talks at lunches with the African Study Group editors and colonial correspondents of the national Press and with Lord Layton and other Directors of the News Chronicle.

He, Buchanan and Scott had private discussions with a number of Labour Members of Parliament. Mrs. Eirene White, the Rev. Reginald Sorensen, James Johnson, Lance Mallalieu, QC., and Geoffrey Bing, Q.C., were among those who clearly expressed dissatisfaction with their Government’s policy. At that stage, Tshekedi thought it unwise to lobby the Opposition, but he made friendly contact with Conservatives Alan Lennox-Boyd,’ Brigadier Toby Loward Julian Amery, and with the leader of the Liberal Party, Clement Davies, Q.C., and Hopkin Morris. Clement Davies, who became a staunch friend, was immediately impressed by Tshekedi’s frankness, but even more by the fact that, wronged though he was, he showed no rancour. In fact, Davies himself expressed more indignation about the injustice than did Tshekedi who was almost detached about it. The hospitality of Lord Addison particularly charmed Tshekedi and Buchanan and they believed him to be responsible for a concession later granted over the site for Tshekedi’s house.

The people who were to found the Africa Bureau a year later were already helping, and the Penguin book Attitude to Africa, with substantial sections by Tshekedi, was simultaneously being prepared. Buchanan wrote of the help given: 'This shows forth the best in English public life. It also paved the way to appreciate the soundness of "the man in the street". To anyone accustomed to the selfishness and crudity of life in South Africa, everyday life in London comes as a breath of freedom. The courtesy of bus-drivers and motorists generally and of persons in queues, the honesty of newspaper buyers in the absence of the seller, compelled Tshekedi to stop and say-as we were on our way across the park to see the Secretary of State and whilst I was expecting some epoch-making statement on high politics"Mr. Buchanan, this is a civilized people in a civilized land and that is what I want for my people some day."

Some of Tshekedi’s friends continued urging him to try and 1934-9 Secretary of State for the Colonies. Later Sir Toby Loward, 1951-7 in Conservative Government. 3 1958 Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies.

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persuade Seretse to fight a joint campaign. To them it seemed an obvious and simple move, and they felt he was obstinate not to do so. Tshekedi, who anyway had originated the idea, could see the advantage to both of them in presenting the Government with a joint case. But it had been an effort to take the initiative in inviting Seretse to meet him and, although he had laughed at the time, he had been hurt by Seretse's telegram. Seretse for his part had a number of advisers who did not trust Tshekedi's friends. So the gulf remained unbridged.

At this stage in their negotiations Mr. Gordon Walker expressed sympathy for Tshekedi's personal position and at his suggestion a draft agreement was worked out between Tshekedi, Buchanan and Clark which gave generous concessions for Tshekedi to visit his cattle posts. The Minister was also sounding him out for work in the wider field of water and ranching development in Bechuanaland. During these discussions it was a relief for Tshekedi to be dealing with someone like Clark, while Clark equally must have been happy to be involved with Tshekedi in negotiations which seemed to hold a prospect of success.

The draft agreement was sent to Bechuanaland. The Resident Commissioner, Colonel E. Bathem Beetham, and the District Commissioner, Mr. Germond, flew post-haste to London. Tshekedi was glad since he thought that at last he would be able, as he had put it, to 'confront' some of those who were upholding his banishment, and argue the case with them before the Minister. (He had a way of using arguments like a general deploys his troops. If he found one was not effective in gaining his point, he would try another, and if necessary another, and as soon as he felt himself being trapped, he would fall back, become vague, and try to make people forget what the argument had been about in the first place.)

But all that he and Buchanan saw of the two officials was their backs disappearing down Whitehall one day. The official attitude was that they had come to advise the Minister, not to negotiate with Tshekedi.

The 'men on the spot', having advised the Secretary of State, departed. Tshekedi was called, and Gordon Walker put a new draft to him. All the promising concessions in the previous draft agreement had been withdrawn. The Minister had 'chosen to follow the advice of the officials in Bechuanaland that Tshekedi must be kept out or there would be serious disorders. He

Uncle and Nephew disregarded a warning that if the reasonable concessions were withdrawn, Tshekedi was likely to reject the inadequate offer, might take his case to the British public, and might even succeed in getting substantial backing and endanger the Labour Government's meagre majority in Parliament.

So the negotiations continued. After five weeks their talks had narrowed down to considering under what conditions Tshekedi could carry on his ranching and farming: he had supplied detailed lists of the twenty areas in which his cattle grazed, and of the bore-holes he had sunk at great cost in labour and money; he added lists of the losses of stock he had suffered at the hands of his opponents. At one point the Minister asked Tshekedi directly how many cattle he had. He got
the response so often accorded to the journalists who repeatedly put that question: there was a pause, then Tshekedi coolly said that with all due respect he was not prepared to answer. Mr. Gordon Walker seemed somewhat taken aback so Tshekedi politely explained that the question was contrary to Native custom and a possible equivalent in London would be if he were to ask a white man how much money he had in the bank. The Minister dropped the subject. Tshekedi could not help feeling that the Government appeared to regard his ranching as a hobby and was not taking seriously the fact that they had cut him off from all means of earning his living: he therefore felt he must strive for the best possible arrangement.

Meanwhile in Bechuanaland disturbances continued and every airmail brought distressing reports to Tshekedi, in his Mayfair hotel. He urged that a Commission of Inquiry be sent out but Mr. Gordon Walker refused. The interests of the Bamangwato were as usual paramount in his mind. He found time to discuss with hospital authorities the training of Bamangwato girls as nurses, and visited the Ferguson Tractor Works in Coventry to see the management about training young men. Another interview was with Sir John (now Lord) Reith, Director of the Colonial Development Corporation. Sir John asked why Tshekedi had not sent in reports on his Corporation's cattle ranching scheme in the Crown Lands, and the abattoir planned for Bechuanaland. Tshekedi replied that he had never been asked. They proceeded to discuss the former. Tshekedi urged a pilot scheme to test the suitability of the area because, although there were keen cattle farmers on all sides 222

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of the Crown Lands, in the particular part chosen there were none. As for the abattoir, he hoped this was not to be an enforced monopoly because Africans already had two good competing markets, in Johannesburg and in Northern Rhodesia. Tshekedi followed up these interviews during a week-end with his old friends, the Burns's, in Edinburgh, by visiting the Animal Genetics Department. He gave much thought to preparing an address on the principles of tribal administration that he was to give at the Royal Institute of International Affairs. Ten minutes before he was due to arrive there I finished typing it and he, Buchanan, Scott and I bundled into a taxi, sorting out the pages as we sped to St. James's Square. A distinguished audience was present. Tshekedi began to read the address. After about ten minutes he came to an abrupt stop. Uncomfortably we realized that he had lost his place. But, with a calm gaze around the audience, he inquired, 'Page 8? Where is page 8?' and Buchanan, rustling through his copy, found it and took it up to him: he read on, unperturbed.

One day at about this time, Sir Christopher Cox, the Educational Adviser at the Colonial Office, was lunching at the Athenaeum with his old friend Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, on leave from the Gold Coast. Arden-Clarke had just become a member and asked Cox whether he would show him round. As they approached a door on one floor Cox explained to Arden-Clarke that this was a quiet room where people could play bridge or, he added, 'If ever you want to intrigue, this is where to come' and he opened the door. Sure enough, round a bridge table sat
three men, deep in conversation. The unusual thing was that one was an African, another a bishop and the third a clergyman. With the opening of the door they all looked round. Just as Cox was thinking 'I know that African's face,' the African saw Arden-Clarke, broke into a delighted smile and rushed over to seize his hands, saying 'It is you! It is you!' It was Tshekedi, and Arden-Clarke was equally delighted. 'I read last night that you were in London and I said at once,' Tshekedi continued, looking round to Cox, 'that I must ring up Sir Christopher and find out your address. I'm so glad to see you.' Then, turning to his companions, Tshekedi said, 'May I introduce you, Sir Christopher Cox, the Bishop of Chichester, the Rev. Michael Scott, Sir Charles Arden-Clarke.' Cox was sure that Tshekedi's reference to himself had been made on the spur of the moment—a suspicion that only increased his existing admiration. Dr. Bell had watched the meeting between Tshekedi and Arden-Clarke with pleasure; the bursts of African laughter were so spontaneous and the exchange of greetings so transparently sincere. He told Scott afterwards that he could remember few incidents which in a flash had been so moving and revealing. For he was watching an exile greeting a senior servant of the Government that had exiled him. Dr. Bell, twenty years before, had expressed his disquiet over Tshekedi's previous banishment; once again he took up Tshekedi's case and made representations to the Secretary of State.

Tshekedi, Scott, Buchanan and I spent so many hours working on the case that our diversions were few. Some of these such as the film, Captain Hornblower, we all enjoyed, but once the others insisted on accompanying me to see a French comedy starring Raimu. After twenty minutes of shufflings and mutterings Tshekedi and Scott got up and walked out. Once Scott chose an Aldwych farce, at a time when the negotiations were particularly difficult and the broad comedy quite failed to distract him and Tshekedi. They nervously worried and whispered about their problems and left in the first interval, Buchanan and I politely keeping each other company to the end.

And one day Tshekedi put on his hat and took a taxi to a modest house in Albany Street. He knocked on the door. Ruth Khama's mother, Mrs. Williams, opened it to see the alarming uncle, smiling a little nervously, on the doorstep. It was Jacqueline's first birthday, Seretse was out, and the house was full of Ruth's relations. Mrs. Williams ushered him upstairs and Ruth hurriedly phoned Seretse to return. The tea party went on, with Tshekedi delighted to see the small girl though she at that time did not reciprocate the feeling. Seretse arrived and the two men talked in a corner, Tshekedi explaining how his case was going. After that, though he made no attempt to renew his earlier effort to reach agreement, he kept Seretse informed of his progress.

On May 1st the Secretary of State set out his proposals. He said he had gone as far as he could to meet Tshekedi's requests. (Twenty years earlier Captain Clifford had used almost 224
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identical words in the Mining Concession case.) The main points were that Tshekedi was to live outside the Bamangwato country, and was to move his cattle to land which the Government would help to develop in the south of that country. He would be allowed annual visits to various cattle posts in this area, and might apply for permission for other visits in exceptional circumstances: he was to select people to act on his behalf in caring for his property in the rest of the Reserve. He must take no part in the politics or administration of the Bamangwato and could only enter the Reserve with permission.

Having enunciated the deprivations, the Minister said this in no way reflected on Tshekedi's record or achievements as Regent-for that he could be justly proud. The Government hoped his abilities and experience would be at the service of the Protectorate.

Tshekedi and Buchanan were angry and upset. The conditions were even more restrictive than they had come to expect in the discussions, and Buchanan wrote to the Minister saying it would be quite impossible for Tshekedi to farm under such conditions. The Government's proposed Press statement was also unsatisfactory, particularly with regard to Tshekedi's exclusion: it stated that this would be for not less than five years, whereas the White Paper had said 'while the chieftainship is in abeyance'.

In response to their criticism the Minister said he would only amend some minor points. It was clear that he would go no further. Tshekedi therefore wrote to explain that he must consult his advisers before making 'such a momentous decision'.

Tshekedi not only had to think of his own and his family's future in the face of severe limitations that gravely handicapped him in caring for his cattle and crops, but he was responsible for his followers. There were also the implications for the tribe as a whole. If he accepted the Government's terms, his liberty both as an individual farmer and as a politician would be indefinitely restricted. He was prepared to accept the latter for a while, provided the terms of access to his cattle were adequate, but they were not. The Government was demanding an undertaking that cattle from his northern ranches would be moved to the south and from this he drew 'the only logical conclusion', that they did not intend ever to allow him back. But he had good reason to appreciate what refusal of the terms could mean: only too well he knew the absolute power of the British Government. As a Mochuana his protected status was neutralized by the Foreign Jurisdiction Act which was so worded that he could be treated as one of a conquered people. As a chief he had twice been deposed and exiled without trial. As an individual human being he was now deprived of all rights. Who was he to engage in opposing this supreme power? Besides, he knew, as his father had known, the friendship of the British people and he did not want to jeopardize what he believed to be a precious asset. But, above all, he must retain the goodwill of the British Government.
because he and his people lived on the borders of the Union, under constant threat of incorporation.

He wanted time--time for a detailed and steady consideration of the pros and cons with his immediate team and with qualified advisers, time for private thought and prayer. He himself was inclined to have done with struggle and accept the crust offered, but some of his English friends felt he had a good case and should fight, if not for the whole loaf then at least for a great deal more than the crust. Douglas Buchanan, however, knew better than anyone what rejection of the Government's conditions would mean to Tshekedi. It was easy for himself and others who would not have to suffer the results to advise Tshekedi to fight; therefore he felt it his duty to advise Tshekedi to accept.

At this point, on May 19, Gordon Walker gave an ultimatum: he must have a specific reply by midday on the 24th or he must assume a negative reply, when the Bechuanaland Administration would have no option but to apply the banishment order in its strictest sense.

Tshekedi, Scott and I were invited to David Astor's home for the week-end so that we could have uninterrupted discussions before Tshekedi took the vital decision. Finally, on the Sunday night, after carefully considering every aspect including Buchanan's advice, Tshekedi decided. He would reject the Minister's terms. He went to bed, weary but relieved. We were also greatly relieved by his decision.

But there was also present a guest whose ignorance of Africa was only surpassed by his ebullience and self-confidence. He spoke to Scott as if he knew the mind of the Cabinet, expressed views on Tshekedi's case with such great conviction that he gave the impression.

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that he knew there was no possibility of the Government offering more generous conditions to Tshekedi. Late though it was, Scott at once suggested that he should go up and tell this to Tshekedi himself, which the eager guest proceeded to do. Tshekedi put down the 'Western' he was reading and listened. The man's arguments were so persuasive that, unknown to the rest of us who had gone peacefully to sleep, the position so hardly gained was completely undermined: Tshekedi had an early appointment in London, and, when we literally awoke to what had happened, he was already away in the train, again in a mood of indecision. We were left to expostulate, furiously but ineffectively, with the good-natured guest who, delighted at what he believed to be a most helpful contribution, listened with hurt innocence.

Fortunately Tshekedi came back to the agreed decision. In this he now had the support of Margery Perham, who was recuperating after an illness in Cornwall, and whom Scott had rapidly visited to bring her up to date.

On May 24 Tshekedi's reply was delivered to the Minister. He said that his purpose in putting his case had been to obtain reasonable opportunity to carry on his business of ranching, his sole means of livelihood. The Government had admitted that he had done nothing wrong and had even praised his record and talked of using his abilities in the service of the Protectorate; it had sympathized
over, but done nothing to alleviate, the disabilities placed on him by the White Paper. Acceptance of the present proposals 'would amount to virtual banishment', and the facilities suggested were quite insufficient to allow for good ranching, while their vagueness would lead to recurring controversies over their interpretation. Nor was he satisfied that the Government was taking effective action to retrieve the tribe from the disruption caused by the removal of effective chieftainship. 'In these circumstances I feel that it would not be right for me to agree, or appear to agree, in an arrangement which would make it impossible for me in any way to assist or advise my people, or to place my long administrative experience at their disposal when they need it.' He threw down the gauntlet with the words: 'Having long ago renounced any claim to the chieftainship... I have no alternative but to claim my full rights as a private individual, not only to continue my personal business of ranching, but to take such part in the political and administrative life of the tribe as is open to any other private individual.'

After the letter had been delivered, Buchanan phoned the Commonwealth Relations Office to say he presumed that no notice need now be given before going to the Press. The official said he would find out and call back. Against what seemed to be an appropriate background of thunder and lightning, Tshekedi had a message from a friend in the Press that all editors had been called to see Mr. Gordon Walker that afternoon. It was not till later, one and a half hours before the Minister's Press conference, that the official phoned Tshekedi to announce it. Buchanan had a streaming cold and we were gathered round his bed, the atmosphere tense from the storm, when one of the Press joined us later and described the conference. The Minister, he said, had made a pretty strong impression, and had stressed the view that Tshekedi's return to his country would be likely to lead to disorders. He had briefly reported on the negotiations, then said that Tshekedi had advanced various proposals for the future administration of the Reserve, including federation with a neighbouring tribe, or division of the Reserve into two areas, enabling his return to the southern portion. The Minister interpreted these suggestions as designed to meet the special position of one individual and his immediate following. He made no reference to Tshekedi's other recommendations for local, Executive and Legislative Councils, and merely said he welcomed Tshekedi's recognition that more representative institutions were desirable. The Protectorate Administration had reported that Tshekedi's return 'would be deeply resented by many people'; there was 'ample evidence that many Bamangwato are very strongly opposed to Tshekedi'. The Secretary of State 'was and is fully satisfied that only in the absence of both Seretse and Tshekedi' could there be any hope of establishing a stable native administration along more representative lines. As Tshekedi had not seen his way to accept the Government's terms, he must arrange for the care of his property by agents: Tshekedi himself would be given permission to visit the Reserve only in the most exceptional circumstances.
The next day Tshekedi met Seretse in Hyde Park, where they were unlikely to be interrupted, to tell him what had happened and what he proposed to say to the Press. At three o'clock in a room in Bloomsbury Tshekedi's Press conference met. On the way there Tshekedi for a moment wished desperately that he had never rejected the Government's terms. He was already weary, and again the endless negative struggle of opposing a Government confronted him—with its drain on his spiritual and physical strength, its worry to his family and friends, and its heavy expense. But the moment passed and Buchanan, who was greatly relieved that Tshekedi had not taken his advice, urged 'Full steam ahead!' Pendennis described Tshekedi flanked by his European advisers, Buchanan and Scott, as a short and sturdy rancher who at first looked like a misjudged man, as he hunched himself over his written statement and haltingly read it aloud. But when questions began, 'Tshekedi at once relaxed, smiled for the first time, opened his jacket, and with thumbs in braces was soon answering his questioners with fluency and precision. . . . Tshekedi's advisers sometimes drew his attention to a point: he accepted or rejected their advice as he thought fit. Clearly he had been running his own campaign.' His statement referred to the 'famous British sense of justice' which he found it impossible to reconcile with the 'arbitrary action of exiling individuals from their country without trial'. The handling of his case had disclosed a very serious situation for Britain and her dependencies 'as it sacrifices Britain's good name and subordinates peoples and private individuals in order to cover up and protect maladministration and inefficiency of ... officials on the spot.' He had been 'turned into the convenient lever' for removing Seretse, and it had been pretended that they were rivals for the chieftainship. He explained the processes which could have dealt with his conflict with Seretse, which only concerned the constitutional status of his wife, and described the South African views in the light of which Bechuanaland officials interpreted British policy. In the confused and lawless situation in which the tribe now found themselves, he pointed out that the only Africans to profit had been the junior houses of the royal family, who had always been jealous of the senior house, and who were now favoured by the officials. He said that Mr. Gordon Walker, during his visit to the tribe, had been impressed by the violent expressions of antagonism against himself, but did not seem to notice that though these men had been able to work the tribe up against him, because of the misrepresentation that he was his nephew's enemy, they had failed and would continue to fail to lead the people into forming Councils.
The terms offered him by the Government were quite insufficient to allow for good ranching and if he had accepted them, he said, he would also have saved the Minister 'from the invidious and public act of renewing the banishment for no good reason'. Commenting on the Government's offer of employment, Tshekedi said he had been quite unable to accept this he was treated as a person dangerous to the peace of the territory, and at the same time was offered the job of adviser to the Protectorate Government on economic development. As for the reference to his suggestions for the future administration of the tribe, Mr. Gordon Walker had taken certain points from their context which unhappily caused misunderstandings about what Tshekedi had proposed: he said the only way to right this wrong would be to accuse him of the alleged suggestions before the people and give him the opportunity of explaining the case just as he had put it before the Minister. But not once had he been confronted with those alleged to be hostile to him.

Michael Scott also appealed to the British public to consider the principles of liberty and good government involved in the banishment of Tshekedi and Seretse, and urged a judicial inquiry into the administration of Bechuanaland.

Buchanan, who was to fly back to the Union on the following day, described a last walk through the park with Tshekedi: Tshekedi asked, 'Do you know, you look a different man from what you did a few hours ago? You look happy and free whereas you were looking miserable. You were doing your utmost to get me to accept terms which you felt were wrong and unfair, but nevertheless you felt it was your duty to urge me to accept them. I saw what was passing in your mind and that strengthened me in my firm stand. Cheer up— you can now go back to Africa whilst I start a political campaign here. If that fails, we'll see what the law can do.'

Buchanan commented: 'That is the joy of working with Tshekedi. He is never beaten. He goes all out on the course he is on, but when that fails, he starts with even greater vigour on the next.'

CHAPTER '9
The Conscience of Parliament

A new phase now began. Tshekedi moved from luxurious Government hospitality to a modest room in a Bloomsbury hotel which he much preferred. Scott and I set up office nearby in the upstairs kitchen of the Friends' International Centre, and Scott lived in the spare bedroom of the kindly Wardens, storing our files under his bed. The two of them went about their lobbying in Westminster and Fleet Street. They would emerge from the Bloomsbury hotel like two moles, one short and thickset the other tall and thin and, heads down, minds intent, they would hurry along, weighed down by brief-cases bulging with memoranda. They were quite unaware, for instance, that the Festival of Britain was on, and were astonished when eventually they were driven along the Thames to see its lights. From the beginning Tshekedi had shown an extraordinary grasp of the British political situation. (After the Evans of the Broke episode, he had become convinced that any African leader whose country's
destiny lay with Britain for some time would be failing in his duty unless he mastered the workings of the British Parliament and system of government, so that, should it become necessary, he could put that knowledge to good use.) He was given formidable support. The national Press was thoroughly disquieted. The Times' called for the restoration of the chieftainship or prompt establishment of a council, and criticized as 'quite unworthy' the attempt to belittle the claims of Tshekedi and Seretse 'as a matter of purely personal interest'. The Observer selected Tshekedi as the subject of one of their 'profiles' and set his and Seretse's cases in the context of Commonwealth and Western defence: the arbitrary misgovernment of Bechuanaland and the sordid story of the exile of two able and honest men, it added, were the result of Britain's 'May 26, 1951.

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confused wish to be friends with the South African Government. The Economist kept up a running commentary: "The sturdy figure of Tshekedi Khama, with the Rev. Michael Scott by his side, has become a familiar figure in the corridors of Westminster during the last fortnight as he has interviewed group after group of M.P.s." 'Public disquiet in Parliament and out, has not been allayed' it reported, and went on, Tshekedi has 'gained in dignity and respect'.2 Margery Perham, describing Tshekedi as 'probably the most intelligent, enlightened and determined chief in Africa', questioned many points in the Government's case. Could not Tshekedi and even Seretse go back, possibly at first for a trial period, as private citizens, with careful preparatory measures, to take part in the new councils, in the planning of economic development or in the long-overdue Legislative Council? The 'elements of timidity and old-fashioned injustice in the present policy' would thus be superseded.3

Seretse, meanwhile, issued a Press statement4 requesting permission to return to his people, in the first place for a trial period, for, he said, his presence was essential if the situation was not 'to go from bad to worse'.

Now that Tshekedi felt free to lobby all Parties, he approached the Conservatives and the Liberals. He had a particularly warm reception from Clement Davies, M.P., and the Liberal Party Council, under Philip Fothergill, espoused his cause after a successful lunch and meeting in the National Liberal Club. Parliamentary questions were drafted, and the campaign in the Press continued with a column-length letter from Tshekedi in The Times.5 He obviously took some delight in rebutting Gordon Walker's case that 1,000 people had told him they 'did not want Tshekedi'. The Minister, Tshekedi said, had omitted several points: 'First, that the people had been previously instructed what to say by the white officials, Secondly, that the speakers did not represent the views of the districts they were supposed to represent. Thirdly, that those who held my view about the marriage were forbidden to attend. ... Fourthly, that those who did attend..., not having heard of

June 9, 1951.

2June 23, 1951.

3 The Times, May 29, 1951,
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this order, were removed. Fifthly, that when I heard of the order myself I made formal application to be allowed to attend and state my views, but was refused permission ... Sixthly, that the meeting unanimously asked for the return of Seretse.

'If, therefore, the Government attach any weight to the unanimous expression of opinion at that meeting, clearly Seretse should have been allowed to return. ...' He attacked the logic of the Government's claim that Seretse and he had been banished so that local councils could be formed: 'Is it going to depose and exile the other seven Chiefs so that councils can be formed in the other seven tribes? Or is it going to invite the co-operation of these Chiefs? Or is it going to wait until internal trouble starts before they form councils in these tribes? Or is it only the members of the Bamangwato tribe and not these others who are to be given "a voice in the management of their own affairs"?' He drew attention to the wider issues: the need to re-examine the Foreign Jurisdiction Act, the lack of a Legislative Council after thirty years' experience of an Advisory Council, and the far-reaching effects of Britain's policy of appeasing the South African Government. He again asked for an impartial inquiry.

Sir William Clark, a former High Commissioner, wrote to The Times' expressing a high regard for Tshekedi's qualities as acting-Chief. But he refuted what he felt to be the contention underlying Tshekedi's letter: that the Commonwealth Relations Office was so deeply concerned with appeasement of the Union that administration of the High Commission Territories should be transferred to the Colonial Office. It was essential, Clark believed, that the British High Commissioner should speak to the Union Government with an intimate personal knowledge of the Territories. (The contrary view was strongly argued by another former High Commissioner, Lord Harlech, in the House of Lords on June 27.) Tshekedi addressed members of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association on his case, under the title 'British Administration in Bechuanaland and its Impact on the African Social Order'. Sir Thomas Moore, M.P., said he had rarely listened to anything more objective and dispassionate.

It was not only his ability in putting his case, and the obvious injustice he had suffered, that were winning him influential 'June v2, 1951.
Bamangwato', and 'private rights had to be balanced against the public good'. Mr. Gordon Walker told the Overseas Empire Correspondents Association that Tshekedi had declined the Government's offer to develop land for him as he did not think it went far enough to meet 'his private and personal interests'. He said he freely admitted that under the offer Tshekedi's 'very considerable property interests' could not have been as 'adequately supervised as if he'd had free movement, but the interests of the tribe would otherwise be impaired. What, the Minister asked, were the considerations of the public good that had to be weighed against 'the personal and property rights of Tshekedi Khama'? Rights, he added, as something of an afterthought, quite legitimate and proper in themselves. The Minister denied that the kgotla of 10,000 he had attended had been stage-managed, and he refused an inquiry as this would arouse fears about Tshekedi's return and set back 'perhaps irrecoverably' the development of more representative administration. He was confident progress would now be made. He was soon to discover how wrong he was in this bold assessment.

A newspaperman came round to see us after the luncheon. He was thoroughly depressed as he felt many journalists had been won over by the Minister's ingenious new theme which had given the impression that Tshekedi was a wealthy, self-seeking autocrat not deserving of much sympathy. Tshekedi listened gravely. Then he suddenly excused himself and left the I hotel lounge where we were sitting. Shortly after I had to fetch-'some papers from his room and found him there, quietly praying. I quickly withdrew. He soon rejoined us, gay and full of plans for a 'counter-attack'.

The morning papers brought reassurance: the Manchester 'June 14, 1951.

Guardian described Gordon Walker's story as 'fantastic'. The evening papers, too-the Evening Standard said 'whether Tshekedi is rich or poor makes no difference to the principle of the case': it was a monstrous invasion of liberty to banish the outstanding African. Tshekedi followed with point-by-point replies to the Minister in a Press statement. One point on which he had reason to feel particularly vexed was the Minister's statement that councils could only be formed in his absence.

Apart from his having been the leading spirit in administrative reforms and in the demand for a Legislative Council in Bechuanaland, he had been the first person to submit a scheme to implement local councils and only through the medium of the Press, he pointed out, had the Commonwealth Relations Office informed him that this was unacceptable. The next shot was fired by Marcus Lipton, a Socialist M.P., not previously conspicuous in Parliament for either his knowledge of, or interest in, African questions. Now he came to the support of his hard-pressed Minister. It seemed, he said, that, in pursuit of his private interests, Tshekedi had proposed the splitting of the Bamangwato territory, or the placing of the tribe under the neighbouring Chief to whom Tshekedi now adhered. 'Surely the well-being of 00,000 people must have priority over the private interests or ambitions of one man.' Tshekedi replied that this was a distortion of facts. But it was not
enough for him to reply reasonably enough that he had never proposed that the tribal area be split in two, only that the Bamangwato who had accompanied him and who paid tax on their 20-25 thousand head of cattle in Bamangwato country, should be represented in tribal councils. It was not enough to explain that the Bakwena were the senior tribe and that his suggestion of federation could facilitate the forming of councils. Nor was it enough to point out that the scheme Mr. Lipton accused him of submitting 'with the purpose of seeking power' had been given not only to the Government, but to Seretse and many others, for their constructive comments, and had been originally mooted to the Commission of Inquiry in November 1949. The misinterpretation had been made, and was to be used against him effectively in Bechuanaland.

One evening Scott returned from hearing Tshekedi address members of all parties in the Parliamentary Commonwealth
1 The Times, June 19, 1951.
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Group on 'The Economic problems of Bechuanaland'. It had been a crowded meeting, and Scott's pale, tired face lit up with excitement as he described the impression Tshekedi had made.

We were told that Gordon Walker was becomingly increasingly alarmed by the number of Labour M.P.s who had heard Tshekedi and been won over to his case and who were threatening to vote for him or to abstain when the question was debated in Parliament.

The Marquess of Salisbury1 (leader of the Conservative Opposition in the House of Lords) and Viscount Stansgate (Labour) had by this time elicited a promise of an early debate in the Upper House. Winston Churchill had readily agreed to a request from Clement Davies that the Opposition should give one of its Supply Days for a debate in the Commons. Davies, Hopkin Morris, Alan Lennox-Boyd and Brigadier Toby Low tabled a motion: 'This House deplores the decision to continue the banishment of Tshekedi Khama from the Bamangwato Territory without hearing or inquiry . . . and calls upon the Government to rescind the order of banishment and allow him to dwell freely within the territory of his tribe.' Tshekedi and Scott had lobbied thoroughly, concentrating on Labour Members as the debate drew nearer. Tshekedi circulated a statement of his case, which included Mr. Gordon Walker's Press statement and his own reply. On the morning of the debate in the Commons there were letters in The Times2 from Margery Perham and Colin Legum (a South African on the staff of The Observer), the former making a reasoned case for an inquiry, and the latter pointing out that the exile of Tshekedi might cause the cutting off of the most important growing point in Bamangwato tribal society, for there had been no more important social and economic development in the Territory than Tshekedi's pioneering efforts. On the afternoon of June 26, Tshekedi, Scott and I arrived at St. Stephen's entrance of the House of Commons. Tshekedi with a smile that was like a flag flying, Scott haggard from the long-drawn-out struggle. We were full of hope because several of the left-wing of the Labour Party had told Tshekedi they would
abstain. What these Members had not had time to tell him was that at the last minute the Parliamentary Labour
1952 Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations. 2 June 26, 1951. 236

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Party had met and the many M.P.s who were gravely dissatisfied with their Government's action had been brusquely called to heel by the Prime Minister, Mr. Attlee, who reminded them of the exile of James II. As a sop to their consciences, Mr. Attlee offered them a kgotla of the Bamangwato to decide on whether Tshekedi should be allowed to return.
The Labour Party had a majority of only six at the time, so it was to be a vote of confidence in the Minister and the Government.
Tshekedi and Scott sat in the gallery known as the Floor of the House, so that they could be accessible to friends who might want to check on points made by the Government, while diagonally opposite them, behind the Government bench, sat W. A. W. Clark and other officials, accessible to answer points made by Tshekedi's supporters. Clement Davies gave an admirable history of the case and reminded the House of the fundamental issue, which had been obscured by the Government's smoke-screen of irrelevancies: 'Tshekedi has committed no crime,' he said. 'He has done nothing wrong. He has never by word or deed challenged the authority of the Government. He has been banished, his home has been burned down, his cattle have been stolen and his property has been damaged. That is the man who won the admiration of all who came into contact with him. He worked steadily and unsparingly for the good of his people and yet without trial, without any charge, that is the man the Government have now banished from amongst his own people.' And he quoted the banishment order, that the High Commissioner was satisfied that Tshekedi Khama 'is dangerous to the peace of the Bamangwato Reserve.'
Mr. Davies raised another matter—the letter that the District Commissioner had written for record purposes, setting out the subjects that Keaboka and his advisers had decided speakers should be confined to at the kgotla attended by Mr. Gordon Walker. This briefly covered acceptance of Seretse's banishment, and the people's acceptance of the principle of councils, and continued: '3. That they ask that Tshekedi be ordered to stay out of the Reserve until such time as the period of Seretse's banishment is over, and that he should be made to appoint an agent to look after his property within the Reserve in the same way Seretse has. 4. It has been said by Tshekedi that the people like him and that it is only his cousins who persuade the Government that he is not wanted in the Reserve. It will be for the speakers to say what the truth is and whether they want him or his heirs as Chief.' It was useless for the Minister to argue that this was simply a record, dictated to the official by 'the leaders'. The wording of the last sentence aroused Lennox-
Boyd's comment in his speech that 'a Government spokesman has encouraged the idea that Tshekedi is still a competitor for the chieftainship', while C. J. Alport pointed out that as the District Commissioner was at the time the Native Authority, his views would carry far more weight than in the past. Julian Amery defended Tshekedi eloquently, quoting Smuts and Michael Scott. The Government's refusal to hold a fresh inquiry because it would bewilder the tribe reminded him, he said, of the argument in the French republic at the time of the Dreyfus case. Tshekedi had been sacrificed to provide the Minister 'with an alibi against the charge that he was appeasing racial prejudices in South Africa' by exiling Seretse. He concluded with a plea that Britain be true to a pledge that Mr. Chamberlain had made to Khama the Great in 1903 'You have been loyal to the King.... You have been friends to the English and the English do not forget their friends.'

Alan Lennox-Boyd criticized the right of banishment 'and many of us do not think there is much purpose in retaining it', while in the case of rustication to another part of a colony, 'we hold that there should be in all such cases a judicial inquiry'. (These were men, incidentally, who were themselves later to support the exile of the Kabaka of Buganda and Archbishop Makarios, and the imprisonment of Dr. Hastings Banda and others, without trial.) The Liberals spoke well and forcefully and the Tories made good use of them to attack the Government. For example, R. A. Butler described Hopkin Morris's speech as 'noble'. The most reactionary speech was made by a Socialist, R. T. Paget, who was congratulated by Julian Amery on his 'high Tory background and philosophy'.

Gordon Walker based his case mainly on his stated conviction that Tshekedi's return would gravely endanger the peace of the tribe. He said, not once but nineteen times, that there was danger of disorders or non-co-operation if Tshekedi were allowed to return. As Amery and others retorted, this must prejudice the decision that the kgotla would reach. The Minister was unmoved by the fact stated by Lennox-Boyd, by Colonel Dodds-Parker and Brigadier Low, that out of twelve months Tshekedi had spent five and a half months in the Reserve without resultant disorders. And the Minister evaded the fundamental issue raised even by Labour Members, that the Government's policy was based on the fear of South Africa. This, as The Economist commented, 'brought into the debate an atmosphere of unreality--indeed of half-truths--which prevented the House from getting to grips with the problem.' The atmosphere of unreality was increased by Gordon Walker's claim that relations between the Bamangwato and the Administration were better than they had been for years and 'there is a great deal of evidence of the happiness of the tribe'. There was naturally much interest in Winston Churchill's
intervention when, as The Times put it, he was 'withering' in his comment on the
Minister's speech and particularly about a telegram that Gordon Walker
dramatically produced in the debate, announcing that it had just been received
from Cape Town. It recorded the view that the tribe would 'scatter' if Tshekedi
returned. When first questioned, Mr. Gordon Walker could not say exactly who
the information came from; but added, 'I have no doubt that these are the leaders
in Serowe' and he reminded Members that Serowe, like Paris in France, had
dominated the tribal area.-Ten minutes later he was more confident and tried
again: 'I have no doubt, from previous experience, who it is. The nine chief
headmen of Serowe have met the District Commissioner, which has happened
often before, and they have in great agitation said to him that they have heard that
this Motion . . . was before the House, that Tshekedi might come back, and that if
this does happen they will scatter.' (These deductions at least made Tshekedi
laugh.) Churchill described the telegram as alarmist and said the
S.953-14’1955-7 Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign fltirs; .954-5
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Commonwealth Rxelatilonl.
2June 30, 1951.
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House should not let itself be 'stampeded and scattered by a message of that kind,
read out at the last moment.' As for the kgotla to decide about Tshekedi's return,
Churchill pointed out that this would be a mob decision, an abhorrent proposal. It
is exhausting enough listening to a debate in Parliament even when one is quite
unconcerned about the issue. What could it have been like for Tshekedi, with his
personal life and his life-work for his people at stake, hearing his case being I
banded about, sometimes superficially, even inaccurately, sometimes sincerely
but ineffectually, occasionally with eloquence? Although we had tried to
anticipate losing the vote, the reality of the debate was exceedingly painful, and
when the three-line whip was called, we waited tensely. The result was 300 to
279: none of the Labour Members had abstained, fifteen Tory backbenchers of
'rigid Tory concepts', according to The Economist, did. Mr. Churchill, with a
grin, murmured A to a Labour member as they passed each other en route to the
Lobbies-'We are both going in the wrong direction.' As Tshekedi and Scott came
into the Members' hall, one Labour Member came forward with a broad grin,
slapped Tshekedi on the back in a jolly way, and said, 'Well, Tshekedi, you've
seen something of our institutions, anyway. Lots of our chaps would have
preferred to be in their Lobby and lots of theirs in ours.' Tshekedi roared with
laughter.
Scott, who was deeply ashamed of this display of the working of the Mother of
Parliaments, says that he has since learnt to understand Tshekedi's laughter,
African laughter, for that -! matter: it is not always an expression of humour, but
sometimes of nervousness and a disguise of sorrow. W. A. W. Clark has
described meeting Tshekedi in the corridor, 'bouncing with laughter'-'Beaten by
the Whips!' he cried. 'Beaten by the Whips!' Our admiration was aroused and
somewhat un' willingly we allowed ourselves to be cheered by his determiina,
tion not to be disheartened and to work hard for a better result in the House of Lords on the next day.

Even so uninhibited a critic of his own Party and of Parliament's failures as Michael Foot has said that this was 'the worst vote I ever cast in the House'.

On the following morning, June 27, the National Executive 'Hatsard, Volume 489, No. 127.

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of the Labour Party continued their discussions. Their uneasiness had not been allayed, and they decided to ask Mr. Gordon Walker for an assurance that Government policy had not been distorted by too great a concern for South African opinion, and that the kgotla would not be prejudiced in advance by his publicly stated opinion that Tshekedi's return would encourage disorder and non-co-operation.

On the afternoon, Tshekedi, Scott and I again entered St. Stephen's door, this time going through to the Lords. Seretse was also present in the row in front of us. It was a much more satisfactory occasion (although it could not be directly effective), not only because of the voting, fifty Tory and Liberal peers for Tshekedi's return and twenty-five Labour against, but because it got to grips with the question and covered the banishment of Seretse as well. Undaunted by the Socialist Whip the puckish Lord Stansgate called for the return of Tshekedi and Seretse, and for an inquiry into the future of the Protectorate. Lord Salisbury tabled a more limited motion-that the banishment order against Tshekedi be rescinded. He based his case on Mvlagna Charta and said the Government's view that Tshekedi's unpopularity justified his banishment was a doctrine familiar east of the Iron Curtain: if accepted in British territories it would undermine the whole basis of our civilization. In his lucid exposure of many unsatisfactory aspects of the Government's case, Lord Salisbury joined Lord Stansgate on the opposite benches in saying this was 'a question of conscience which cuts across all Parties.' The Government's case was lamely put by the Earl of Lucan (who, when out of office, was to be a supporter of many African causes).

Lord Harlech brought genuine passion into the debate: 'As an ex-High Commissioner, I must say it makes one sick to hear the kind of inadequate speech that your Lordships have heard from the Government Front Bench—a sort of departmental brief when a great human and a great constitutional issue is at stake.' He went on, 'I speak with feeling on this matter. I have worked with Tshekedi. I have the greatest admiration for him.' He added that the way in which Mr. Noel-Baker and Mr. Gordon Walker 'have personally treated ' Lord Harlech, K.G., P.C., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for the Colonies 1936-8, High Commissioner 1941-4.

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Tshekedi is one of the blackest spots in the history of the treatment of the African people....'

Speaking with the authority of a former High Commissioner and a former Colonial Secretary, Lord Harlech urged that the High Commission Territories be dealt with by the Colonial, Office and treated with the same policy as Central, East and, West Africa. Lord Hailey concentrated on how the kgotla could be fully representative, and urged the need for councils to be formed. Two particular misgivings were voiced by several speakers—that Mr. Gordon Walker's frequent references to potential disorders would encourage the trouble-makers in the tribe, and that there was little likelihood of the kgotla being truly representative and impartial. Both points were frequently raised in the Press and by Tshekedi and his supporters during the next few weeks. Tshekedi did not like the idea of the kgotla but felt he must accept it and therefore asked to have at least a month in Barnangwato country beforehand. In this he Times supported him and the Minister eventually agreed. 4

Exactly two weeks after the debate in the Commons, the expected disorders broke out in Bechuanaland. Within a few days nearly 200 police had been drafted from Southern Rhodesia to supplement those already in the Reserve, and sixty-five people had been arrested. Tshekedi had in the meantime received telegrams from his followers reporting that meetings were being held in Serowe at which threats were being made against his life should he return. His followers were attacked at his house, in the streets of Serowe, and other villages. The Daily Telegraph reported that a new feature of the disturbances was mobs of drunken women, and that men were being forced to leave their work to attend tribal meetings and take part in hunting down Tshekedi’s men.

In a letter to The Times, Tshekedi reported that the attacks on his followers were a direct result of the untruth that he was returning to claim the chieftainship. This had been stated at a chief’s kgotla on July 5 in Serowe, and similar statements had been made in other areas where disturbances followed. Seretse meanwhile, publicly disclaimed any responsibility for the disorders which, he said, were the outcome of mounting frustration. 2

2July 12, 1951.

The Conscience of Parliament and uncertainty, but the Government refused his offer to help restore law and order. Since July 1949-two years earlier-Tshekedi had been warning the Government of the fruits of failure to check outbreaks of lawlessness. Again he called for a judicial inquiry. He wanted to return; his thoughts were constantly with his people—not only his own supporters, under Rasebolai, to whom he cabled ‘Stand firm’, but with the whole tribe. But he felt he must remain in London for there was still work to be done. Public opinion was growing—the Liberals and the AntiSlavery Society were active and a meeting of more than 900 people, organized by Christian Action, supported Tshekedi’s plea for an inquiry.
Michael Scott had an interview with Gordon Walker and described him as 'nervous but immovable'. Fraenkel, Seretse's lawyer in Mafeking, attended a kgotla on July 16 and announced that the tribe would not hold the kgotla proposed by the Secretary of State because it had decided Tshekedi could not return. Such a kgotla could only be held if their Chief, Seretse, were present. But the Government was adamant. The kgotla must be held. As the Opposition had rejected the suggestion of Members of Parliament attending it as observers, three independent observers would go: H. L. Bullock, former President of the Trades Union Congress; D. L. Lipson, former Independent M.P. for Cheltenham; and Professor W. M. Macmillan, Director of Colonial Studies at St. Andrews University. Towards the end of July 1951 they flew to Bechuanaland.

The unnatural city life, the long hours spent in working out letters to the Press, statements and parliamentary questions, and the endless talking, talking, talking, were wearing Tshekedi down; his face looked puffy, his eyes tired. He came very near to despair, but there were encouraging letters from Ella, and from his sister, Bonyerile, who wrote to me: 'God must love him very much to set him so many trials.' He was delighted to see Chief Bathoen, over for the Festival of Britain, who did some quiet lobbying on his behalf.

Most of the national and provincial papers had carried editorials sympathetic to Tshekedi's case. Within a month The Times had had four editorials on it and had published three long letters from him. In the last he thanked the British people 'for the noble assistance they have given me in my hour of trial.' He said he would report to the people of Africa the relentless attacks of the British Press on the Government, and that more than twelve hours of the time of both Houses of Parliament had been devoted 'to discussing the case of the civil liberty of an individual of a very small African tribe. This,' he added, 'is democracy in action; but in my twenty-two years as an African chief I have seen at first hand how vacillating in its interpretation can be the application of the policy of the British. Government to the native territories of Africa by the "man on the spot".'

There was a last debate in the House of Commons on July 31. It was in the evening, and again Tshekedi and Scott sat on the Floor of the House; this time, diagonally opposite, the official advisers included Sir Evelyn Baring, the High Commissioner, whose appointment as Governor of Kenya had just been announced. Mr. Clement Davies again led and read correspondence between Tshekedi's legal adviser, R. Graham Page, and the Commonwealth Relations Office, in which the former quoted correct procedure for tribal kgotla, while the latter suggested arrangements that were foreign to tribal custom, : A correspondent visiting Serowe had cabled Davies a description of the present state of affairs; there were repeated threats against Tshekedi's supporters who alleged that the Administration had persistently failed to deal with complaints of assault, J, theft and victimization; and Keaboka, the senior judicial officer, had sent an
ultimatum to the High Commissioner, demanding that all Tshekedi supporters be expelled from the Reserve before August 15.

Mr. R. A. Butler referred to the kgotlas already being held at which the three observers were testing local opinion—information received indicated that Tshekedi’s enemies had an unrivalled opportunity to rig the market against him in his absence. Two of Tshekedi’s Labour supporters, E. L. Mallalieul and Geoffrey Bing, raised Seretse’s case as well.

Mr. Gordon Walker rose to reply. The Whips had not been on so that members of his own Party were much less inhibited in their criticism than before, so much so that Chief Bathoerk of the Bangwaketse, sitting beside me in the gallery above, One of Tshekedi’s advisers in the Appeal to the Privy Council in 1931.

The Conscience of Parliament at one point murmured ‘Poor Walker.’ The Minister said it had been made clear again and again that Tshekedi had renounced the chieftainship. As for the kgotla, the High Commissioner could appoint a fit person to call it, but neither he himself, nor the House of Commons, had ‘power to compel people to attend meetings.’ (Bathoen whispered, ‘Oh, I’ll remember that!’) Tshekedi had not wanted to attend the debate, but we had persuaded him, and he was much heartened by it: this time as we left the House the laughter was genuine. Afterwards it was time for him to return to Africa.

1 Hansard, July 3T, 1951.

CHAPTER 2o

‘Can You Trust Tshekedi?’

Tshekedi’s plane stopped down in Holland where he was interviewed by Press representatives. He made a short but remarkable statement, He felt the situation in Bamangwato country had become so desperate after continuous mishandling by the authorities, that he would be ready to accept Ruth as Queen Mother. It was too late. The statement that would once have caused such a sensation passed almost unnoticed.

He arrived back in Mafeking on August 5, 1951, to be met with a message that the Resident Commissioner, Colonel Beetham, wished to see him in Lobatsi. He knew at once that the official was waiting to serve a new banishment order on him. I An old friend, Colin Legum (the correspondent of the London Observer), offered to drive him there. On the way Tshekedi i remarked that, now he was back, he was ready to prepare his case against the opposition in the tribe. He went on to remark, with his half-mischievous, half-sardonic look, ‘I am going to enjoy this interview more than Colonel Beetham.’ When they drew up at the house where the Resident Commissioner was, staying, Beetham came out, polite and smiling, to greet them. Together they went into the house. Tshekedi sensed that Beetham was too ashamed to hand the banishment order to him. He felt he must try to make things easier for the official, so went over, and picked up the order
from the table where I it was lying. When he saw that it was of indefinite duration he began to shake with laughter. Beetham seemed greatly relieved.

Tshekedi affirmed to Legum as they drove on afterwards:
'I have protested to Government and I will go on protesting.' They arrived in Gaberones, another small railway village in the middle of an area of white settlement, for lunch. The only hotel would not serve Africans in the dining-room, and Tshekedi led

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Legum straight to the veranda. Legum criticized this docile acceptance of discrimination to which Tshekedi replied: 'They always serve me very kindly and I don't want to make difficulties for them.' He explained that he must concentrate on the larger issues that he had for so long had to fight and the smaller ones would be sorted out in their turn. Next they went to Molepolole, Chief Kgari Sechele's capital, because Tshekedi said his first duty was to report himself to his Chief. In the presence of Chief Kgari he behaved with the humility of a subject: he took off his hat, held it behind his back and stood respectfully with head bowed; he spoke with deference. Legum observed later that Tshekedi showed a similar deference to other chiefs.

And so, having complied with the white Government's instructions and with African etiquette, he was able at last to rejoin Ella, his wife and children, his sister and his loyal supporters-now 1,200 people. Legum described their home:

'Rametsana-inaccessible as it is friendless-consists of a vague collection of mud and thatch huts sprawled among the leafless camel-thorn trees. The village lies on the unfriendly fringe of the Kalahari desert in the Bakwena Reserve; everywhere sand lies ankle-deep like powdered mud. Tshekedi and his family live in a few mud huts and a one-room prefab. For guests his mild and attractive wife bakes fresh white scones and serves afternoon teas.'

Ella Khama wrote to me at this time: 'God is love. He alone knows our side.' Tshekedi could stay only briefly with his family. The confusion in Bamangwato country was worse confused by the visit of the three observers selected by the Secretary of State. As Tshekedi's opponents, from their stronghold as members of the tribal administration, had shown themselves even more adamant than the British Government, the kgotla that was to decide his future-the sop that Mr. Attlee had promised to Parliament-was cancelled. The observers set off in different directions to attend a series of smaller kgotlas in individual villages. Robert Stimson of the B.B.C., Douglas Brown of the Daily Telegraph and Colin Legum of The Observer, kept up a flow of reports which gave a vivid picture. The majority of the tribe The Observer Foreign News Service, August 15, 1951.

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would not accept a kgotla with Tshekedi unless Seretse returned first and, as their rightful chief, called the kgotla. Legum suspected (as did other non-African observers) that certain of the leaders of the anti-Tshekedi agitation did not want
Seretse back any more than they wanted Tshekedi, as in his absence they had an influence they could never retain in his presence. The tribe 'hadn't a clue' as to the reasons for Seretse's banishment, believing that Tshekedi was responsible for it, and regarding his return as a device by the Government to work him back into the position of Chief. The men were spending far too much time arguing and talking in the kgotla, away from their cattle posts; drinking was on the increase; and intimidation of Tshekedi's supporters made it unsafe for all but the bravest to stand out. As for the Moeng college, Stimson broadcast a sad account: student enrolment was down from 150 to 90, new building had stopped, the school had run heavily into debt and the students were sullen and awkward. He concluded: 'What's happening at the Bamangwato College is typical. Throughout the reserve a number of people are going in fear. Families are split, with here and there even husbands and wives estranged. In the absence of an acknowledged chief, there's no effective native authority, so that the administration of the reserve is creaking badly.'

Legum believed: 'Everyone agrees that if Seretse and -1 Tshekedi came back tomorrow the position would return to normal within a fortnight.' He mentioned the striking, widespread love and affection for Seretse. He noticed that 'the young chaps are happy that they are not forced to work on the roads, to help in building schools, to participate in farming enterprises, etc.' His conclusion, backed up by others, was the certainty 'that the moment Tshekedi appears they will defer to him as in the past. They only feel safe (in threatening him) i when he is not here.' A senior official compared Tshekedi's position with that of Smuts: both were men, far and away above their people in ability, who had been white-anted by: opponents to temporary defeat.

The arrangements for the kgotlas had become familiarly known as 'Keaboka's three-line whip' and the organizers of the, famous kgotla which Gordon Walker had attended during bis visit in 1950 had become known as 'the kgotla-rigging boys'a phrase culled from R. A. Butler's speech. At the several kgotlas early in August 1951, there had been unanimous anti-Tshekedi views expressed.

Rasebolai had not been formally told of the arrival of the observers, while Tshekedi's opponents had been invited to meet them. However, Tshekedi had warned Rasebolai, and the moment he himself returned to Bechuanaland he was able to send a loyal cousin to rally supporters who insisted on attending one kgotla at Sehale. There Lipson, the former M.P. for Cheltenham, found that, though the odds were x8 to 6, the tone of the meeting was quite different from those where Tshekedi's supporters had been turned away, and that both sides behaved with mutual courtesy. But, when he demanded that Tshekedi supporters be allowed to attend another kgotla, he was over ridden by the other two observers, who felt the will of the majority should prevail. It was clear that the observers were not getting on with each other, the climax coming at Palapye where a public quarrel broke out between the trade unionist, Bullock, and the Tory, Lipson, the latter alleging that Tshekedi was not getting a square deal.
The Bamangwato seemed fated to suffer from some extraordinary exhibitions arranged by their rulers—there had been the comic-opera 'Evan's-of-the-Broke' episode, now there were the observers, described by an American journalist as 'the three Marx Brothers', of whom one English journalist wrote: 'they came, they saw, they quarrelled.' Professor Macmillan, redheaded, in khaki shorts with a sweater round his middle to guard against lumbago, spoke of his great forebears the Scots and their role in Africa; the valetudinarian Lipson, impeccable in a white jacket and white stetson, talked of the beauties of Cheltenham and the wonders of British justice; Bullock, tweedcapped, and wearing his trades union badge in his lapel, spoke of the trade union movement of which he was a 'chief'. Of one kgotla Douglas Brown wrote: 'The meeting followed the now familiar pattern. Mr. Bullock repeated for the tenth time his entirely unappreciated jest about being "the only bullock in the reserve on two legs". Mistaking the dignified salutation "pula" for some kind of war-cry, he persisted in shouting it from the platform like a cheer-leader at a cup-tie, to the evident consternation of the tribesmen.'1

A separate kgotla was held for the observers to meet the 'Daily Telegraph, August 1951.

After three weeks the observers returned to Britain where Lipson gave a dissenting report from that of Bullock and Macmillan. These were not published until December 1951, but it was known that Bullock and Macmillan had strongly advised against Tshekedi being allowed to return to the Bamangwato Reserve for, they said, 'on this issue emotions now run dangerously high.' The chiefs, sub-chiefs and councillors of the other tribes in the Protectorate were by this time thoroughly 'alarmed' at the 'dictatorial tendencies of the British Government' in handling the Bamangwato dispute. They expressed this view at a meeting; on August 30 and sent their strongly worded statement to the Resident Commissioner for transmission to the High Commissioner, demanding 'in the most emphatic manner' the return of both Seretse and Tshekedi. They accused the Administration of keeping the Bamangwato divided, and declared that 'the traditional faith of the Batswana [Bechuana] in the justice of the British Government and its respect for human rights, and in the benefits of British protection, has received a tremendous shock which it will take the British Government all its time to restore.' Some members of the Administration tried to get them, individually, to retract the statement. They did not succeed. African
fears were heightened by a renewed demand for incorporation from Prime Minister Malan.
Tshekedi’s efforts to get satisfactory redress through the Administration having failed, he turned to the law and on 4 September 12, 1951, brought a case against Keaboka who, although a figurehead more than a leader, was inevitably a defendant because of his role as senior tribal representative in the Administration. Whereupon the High Commissioner asked ‘Cmd. 8423, 250

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to be joined as co-respondent with Keaboka and the District Commissioner announced that the Government would pay his costs. A few months later, at the request of the High Commissioner, Tshekedi agreed to withdraw the case.
Tshekedi’s friends in England had kept up their pressure on the Government, and he was able at this time to consult Michael Scott who, though unwell, had flown out on behalf of the Anti-Slavery Society in the hope of reconciling the two sides in the tribal dispute. But the visit was cut short by Scott falling seriously ill soon after his arrival and having to return to London. There he interviewed Gordon Walker, and reported back to Seretse and some of Tshekedi’s friends. The only people who could gain from the continued disruption, he pointed out, were those anxious to belittle Britain’s prestige and her competence to handle African questions in territories adjacent to the Union. Only a decision in the sphere of high policy could remedy the situation and delay would lead to greater bitterness and further damage to the moral and political prestige of Britain in Africa.
This situation dragged on until, at the end of 1951, the Conservatives won the election. Would they now keep their promises? Would Tshekedi be given his freedom? He might have made an immediate public demand, no doubt getting strong support from the Parties now in opposition and from the Press. Instead he wrote to his London solicitor, R. Graham Page, on October 30, requesting that he approach the Conservative Government privately to ask about the ending of the banishment. ‘I am suggesting this procedure because I feel the Government is engaged with much more important matters of State at present, and my immediate coming to England may irritate them and may be used by the other Parties for propaganda purposes to embarrass the Government. Therefore, if I can get my freedom without the necessity of coming to England or going to law, so much the better for everybody.’ He was, however, advised to go to London to see the new Secretary of State. I was in Johannesburg at the time and met him briefly to wish him well. He was very tired-I thought near to breaking point-yet he took a great interest in my own mission: a visit to the Hereros and Namas of South-West Africa.

-Meanwhile, Winston Churchill, the new Prime Minister,
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had told his Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, Lord Ismay, that the
Bamangwato problem must be settled urgently. Lord Ismay asked Clement
Davies for his views. 'Send for Tshekedi,' was the reply. He also consulted W. A. W. Clark, head of the High Commission Territories section, who produced
the draft Agreement with Tshekedi that Gordon Walker had once considered. Ismay put aside the document and asked, 'Can you trust Tshekedi?'

'Yes, implicitly,' Clark assured him.
'That's all I want to know.'

Tshekedi arrived in London and went at once to see Clement Davies. He asked a
vital question. 'What is the new Secretary of State like?'

'He's a very fine man,' Davies said.
'But has he an open mind?'

'Yes,' Davies answered.

When Tshekedi heard that he would probably be alone, while Lord Ismay would be accompanied by several civil servants, he asked: 'Would he see me alone?'
Clement Davies questioned the Minister. 'Of course I will,' was the reply.
Davies thanked him and added: 'You realize the position? This man's fate and future are in your hands.'

When Tshekedi went to the Commonwealth Relations Office in Downing Street, he was taken straight in to meet the big, straightforward man, whose rugged features had earned him the nickname 'Pug'. Ismay shook hands and sent everyone except Clark out of the room. He ushered Tshekedi to a sofa and sat down beside him. Within ten minutes agreement had been reached. Tshekedi would be given increasing freedom to look after his cattle in Bamangwato country and, if all went well, would be able to return as a private person. He would, however, be excluded from 'the political life of the tribe'.

After their talk Ismay phoned Clement Davies. 'Tshekedi has just left me,' he reported. 'All you've said about that man L absolutely right. He is quite remarkable.'

Tshekedi's comment was that Ismay had been the first, Secretary of State to treat him 'as man to man'.

In a few more meetings the details were worked out. Lord Ismay then tried to resolve the other half of the problem, and

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sounded out Seretse about renouncing the chieftainship. The Government wanted his assurance before intimating their own intentions; he insisted on returning to Bechuanaland before considering it. There was a deadlock. The Government announced the terms of the agreement with Tshekedi in Parliament on the same day that the observers' report was published (with its advice from Bullock and Macmillan that he should be kept out of his country). The Government statement added that Seretse must remain in exile until the matter was due for review, in about three years' time. The Press welcomed the decision to restore some of
Tshekedi’s rights, but doubted the possibility of settling the troubles of the Bamangwato in Seretse’s absence. Early in 1952 Tshekedi returned to Rametsana. Soon he was given his first permit to visit cattle posts in Bamangwato country. As he had predicted, he met with no trouble. In a village that had been a centre of hotheaded threats against his person, he slept peacefully in his tent. So much for Mr. Gordon Walker’s nineteen assertions in the House of Commons that his return would meet with violence; for the advice of the men on the spot; for the findings of Bullock and Macmillan; for the threats of the faction opposed to him. The District Commissioner, Mr. Germond, was transferred.

On March 27, 1952, the new Secretary of State, Lord Salisbury (Lord Ismay having become Secretary-General of NATO), announced in Parliament that Seretse would never be allowed to return to the Bamangwato as Chief. The tribe must choose an alternative to both him and Tshekedi. A new storm broke out in Britain and in Bechuanaland and the Minister’s offer to Seretse of a job in Jamaica was derided. A delegation led by Keaboka Kgarnane set out for London to protest against this, and against Tshekedi’s return. The delegation found a ready audience to listen to their first plea. Lord Salisbury, in two interviews, listened to their appeal and their statement that attempts to appoint another chief would lead to dissension and ‘far less co-operation’ with Government officials. He told them that the decision regarding Seretse was final and permanent, and that Tshekedi should not have been banished.

On May 20 the delegation returned to Bechuanaland. A week later Keaboka wrote to the High Commissioner (Sir 253 Uncle and Nephew John le Rougetel) declaring that there was to be nonco-operation. He himself resigned from his position of authority. On June x there were new and serious riots in Serowe: stones were thrown at officials and unarmed police, and three African policemen were killed, while three European officers and twelve African police were seriously injured. Police reinforcements were rushed from the other Territories and from Southern Rhodesia. Seventy-five people were arrested and many were, subsequently sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment, Keaboka and four other members of the royal family receiving, sentences of three years. He and all the Chief’s representatives were dismissed from office, their court warrants cancelled. Th kgotla was closed.

Tshekedi expressed his deep distress in a letter to Michael Scott. He concluded: ‘I cannot believe the riot was organized by the tribe . . . all the disorders which have taken place’ amongst the Bamangwato have been the result of the ignorant masses being misled into believing they were acting in support of their chief.’ He had been back in the Bamangwato reserve under permit for three months. He sent his personal observations on the disturbances to the District Commissioner for transmission to the High Commissioner. In the course of these he quoted Churchill’s warning about using kgotlas for mob decisions, and pointed out that the series of kgotlas that had subsequently been organized by the Administration for the-A three observers, had been a novel procedure: administration-‘ of the country had thus been ‘officially given over to mob rule’, and this attitude had
'educated the people to resort to disorderly conduct'. He added: 'The events of the last three years have been confusing, upsetting and distressing. Yet even the passions of the moment have not obscured certain things in my mind. There has never been nor is there now any bitterness in my heart towards my people and the British Government;'.' It is this love and confidence in my people and faith in the-'A British people and their Government which has given me courage to place naked facts before the Government with the-'. firm belief that this disclosure of facts will result in a practical-. administration policy being followed.' He remarked that intwenty-two years of administration he had never had to restorer order with the help of Government police, much less with a Rhodesian military force,

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In London Clement Davies was pursuing Tshekedi's case as assiduously as ever and Chief Bathoen had intervened with the Resident Commissioner, warning him that, as long as the banishment order existed, Tshekedi would fight it. Beetham asked Bathoen for an assurance that Tshekedi was a man of his word. Bathoen replied, 'I am quite sure of it: I know him better than anybody.' At last, on August 30, 1952, Tshekedi cabled Clement Davies and Michael Scott: 'Banishment order revoked. Please accept our thankfulness for noble assistance given.' It had taken nearly three years of ceaseless struggle by himself, by his friends and by some notable public figures, for the injustice against himself (though not that against Seretse) to be almost righted. Almost, because he was still to be restricted from taking part in the political affairs of the tribe, and because it would take a long time to remedy the disastrous effects of Government policy during those years.
And so Tshekedi and his followers made the trek back to Bamangwato country. Tshekedi, liEke Khama, knew the country intimately, and he had chosen a site in the Tswapong district about eighteen miles east of Palapye. In a stretch of lightly wooded land, under the shelter of a steep hill, they built their village. As in Rametsana, Tshekedi was headman of the ward, and many of his followers remained there, while others returned to their former wards. Their return conformed to tribal custom but was sometimes grudgingly received.
Between November 1952 and May 1953 the Administration made several fruitless attempts to get the tribe to choose a chief. The British Government was known to have changed its mind so often that the tribe thought it might well do so again, and anyway they were determined that only Seretse could and should be Chief. Serowe had become dilapidated, the people listless, needing the leadership and cohesion which only a respected chief could give them. The Government sensibly did not persist. Instead, on May 13, 1953, it announced that Rasebolai Kgamane, third in line of succession after Seretse and Tshekedi, would be appointed African Authority in place of the District Commissioner.
In Britain there was some criticism, and in Bechuanaland, 255

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because Rasebolai was Tshekedi's friend and had been his chief lieutenant, he was regarded by some members of the Administration as a puppet, and they suspected that Tshekedi was now intent on working his way back into the saddle. Yet some of these very people were clearly puzzled by Tshekedi and turned to Peter Sebina for elucidation. After much coaxing he informed them, not very helpfully, that Tshekedi was mystery personified and that the closer you got to him the more of a mystery he became. Sebina was astonished when his essay on the theme was circulated among officials. Certain Rasebolai was influenced by Tshekedi, his friend, as well the ablest and most experienced man in the country. But he was no puppet. He had held together the High Commission Territories troops in trying conditions in the Middle East, a big, reassuring man of few words, he was much respected. To assist him he chose thirteen men for their administrative ability: three were Seretse supporters, two neutral and eight Rametsanas. His main purpose was to heal the unhappy split of recent years. The protests fizzled out and the tribal administration began gradually to work more competently. At the end of 1952 Tshekedi and Chief Bathoen of the Bangwaketse were invited to join a mission to investigate the possibilities of economic development of 'one of the world's last empty spaces', the Western Kalahari. It was led by Arthur Gaitskell and Laurens van der Post, and included an American rancher and a Kenya farmer. Gaitskell had been Chairman and Managing Director of the Gezira Cotton Board in the Sudan—a scheme for peasant cotton-growers. He is a civilized man, a 'dreamer, practical enough to give everyday shape to his dreams, whose habitual shyness gives way to a passionate absorption'. when he gets on to his subject. At first Tshekedi said he was too busy moving cattle to join the mission, but agreed with Bathoen to meet Gaitskell and van der Post at Lobatsi for a talk. His first question was: 'Is the product of any ranching project that you have in mind, intended for exporting beef to Britain?' Gaitskell had no idea; as this point had not been raised in the planning. Accustomed to other parts of the continent where Africans were suspicious of being exploited, he assumed that Tshekedi resented the possibility of Britain benefiting from the scheme. To his 256

Tshekedi welcomes Seretse back
(In the background John Millard, the official who knew the secret)
The Serowe Kgotla greets Seretse
L1 10 right: Chief Bathoen, Chief Rasebolai Kgamane, Chief --retse Khama, Chief Tshekedi Khama

Tshekedi watches his men boring for water
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Discussing a problem
i0e.
'Can rou Trust Tshekedi?'
surprise Tshekedi said he hoped it was, because Bechuanaland needed to keep and strengthen contact with Britain. During their talk Gaitskel felt that Tshekedi was sizing him up. At any rate he and Bathoen after all agreed to join the mission. They could not do so immediately because they were hoping at a forthcoming kgotla to draw the two sides in the Bamangwato dispute together. (This they failed to do.) Although both men appreciated the invitation there was, once again, disappointment that African opinion had not been consulted before the mission and its terms of reference had been planned.

Gaitskell has given his impressions of Tshekedi during the tour. He sensed that the Africans they encountered respected and feared the former Regent. 'One thing you could not do,' he added, 'was to ignore Tshekedi. Wherever we went in the farthest Kalahari, people went down on their knees when they saw him.' GaitskeU saw him as a man 'hiding his own thoughts behind a wall of reserve. Of a certain brooding character of the quality of granite: a strong man, not easy to know.' Van der Post believed that this 'brooding' quality was the result of Tshekedi's failure to bring his people together. Van der Post had felt during the Evans incident in the 'thirties that Tshekedi was changing and becoming more disillusioned with the British and beginning to be disillusioned with his own people. He now found a formidable character who had perhaps come to like power a little too much. He believed that Tshekedi was going through the hardest test that a man of his upbringing could be asked to pass.

A few weeks later when Gaitskell drove with Tshekedi and Bathoen to Pretoria, the question of the colour bar came up. Gaitskell had already experienced this when the mission had found they could not lunch together in Mafeking. Having lived together on terms of equality throughout their tour of the Kalahari, it had struck him as grotesque that, in the capital of the Protectorate, they were subject to the South African colour bar. Tshekedi told him that English people might have the impression that things were far better in Rhodesia but, curious as it might seem, this was not so; in some ways it was easier to get along in the Union because there an African knew exactly where he stood. In Rhodesia, just as he was thinking the atmosphere was more liberal, and began to act on that

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Uncle and Nephew assumption, he would find himself thrown back by exactly the same attitude as in the Union, with all the consequent humiliation.

They went on to consider the mission's work. Broadly speaking, it recommended that the Kalahari was an excellent area for ranching and that a pilot farm should be started in the Ghanzi area. Among the drawbacks were the uncertainty of water, the long trek for marketing of cattle, and the fact that crops would not grow there. Tshekedi and Bathoen shared the lack of enthusiasm for the whole project shown by most Protectorate residents: Europeans wished the Government concentrate on improved terms of leasehold in the Gha block while the Bechuana preferred
improved conditions their own reserves. Tshekedi realized that the provision of waterholes in their own areas was not good enough unless was part of a plan for the proper economic use of the land. It was an almost universal experience among pastoral people that, after ten or fifteen years of centering their cattle on a new waterhole, there would be an additional scrap of the world's surface eroded away. What was needed was the controlled system of rotation, but it was difficult to initiate this in a reserve where the land was communally held. Tsheke therefore asked whether the sort of planned ranching proposed by the mission could not be sited on the edge of a tribal reserve. But it was felt that this would be difficult for it would be in the middle of nowhere, and there was no base such as at Ghanzi.

Tshekedi and Bathoen signed the report which was eventually published in January 1954. The British Government accepted the proposal for a pilot scheme and a survey was begun.

Meanwhile, in a debate in the African Advisory Council, Chief Bathoen and Tshekedi were again associated, this time in a strong argument for the political advance of the Protectorate. Bathoen referred to the reply consistently given by the Government to the case for a Legislative Council: the time was not ripe. He pointed out that there were frequent changes in District and Resident Commissioners and as each was appointed-f

I Report of a Mission to the Bechuanaland Protectorate to Investigate the Possibilities of Economic Development in the Western Kalahari, H.M. Stationery Office.

2 The ban against Tshekedi participating in politics was limited to affairs inside the Bamangwato Reserve.

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'Can You Trust Tshekedi?'

he had to consider the whole situation afresh so that there was no advance. He further pointed out that other Protectorates had Legislative Councils: he had met people from those countries and they were no better educated than the Bechuana. 'When Native Treasuries were instituted,' he pointed out, 'some people said we would never manage to run these Treasuries well, but we have managed.' Another representative of the Bangwaketse tribe, Mr. M. C. Kgasa, said that in some cases the aristocracy might hinder progress in government, but in Bechuanaland they were the protagonists of the scheme. A Legislative Council would save time and money, for government machinery would work better, and it would bring about goodwill and co-operation between the races.

Tshekedi said the unexplained delay in creating Legislative Councils in the High Commission Territories was breeding suspicion. Some felt the question was shelved to placate the South African Government. He urged what he had often said before, that only through a properly constituted council could the wishes of the people be assessed should the question of transfer come up. The guiding principle of British policy in backward countries was said to be the aspirations of the African people, but he doubted whether this was so in Bechuanaland, where they appeared to be dealing with the aspirations of official bodies. He instanced the Lobatsi abattoir and the Colonial Development Corporation ranching scheme,
neither of which had been suggested by the inhabitants. They might benefit the Territory but the inhabitants might have had other suggestions. He referred back to Sir Alan Pim's criticism in 1933 of the heavy expenditure incurred by the duplication of staff where a European administration was imposed over an African organization and pointed out that nothing had been done to remedy this defect.

In reply, the Acting Resident Commissioner, quoting a recent remark by the Secretary of State, repeated that the people of Bechuanaland were not ready for a Legislative Council.

Generally in Council debates, if there were disagreement Tshekedi would give way to the majority provided his view was recorded. On the question of the Legislative Council, however, where his stand received warm approval from most members, he was determined and persistent. He 'returned to the attack', 259

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as he put it, early in 1954, when the Joint Advisory Counj (formed in 1951, consisting of eight Africans, eight Europeans' and four officials) discussed his motion calling for a Legislative Council. Once again the issue was postponed by the Residen Commissioner. Another proposal that he urged in the Joi Council was that Development Committees-of offici Africans and Europeans-should be formed, to plan all forms o development for the Protectorate.

Tshekedi wrote to me at this time: 'I am sure you are wondering what has happened to me as I have remained s silent as far as you people are concerned.... I have been ve busy trying to get a firmer footing as also to get a little home fo my wife and family, and a place where I can keep my papei and be able to keep in touch with my friends.' He asked fo information about the case of the Kabaka of Buganda, who ha been banished by the new Conservative Government, and on the African case against federation in Central Africa. H conclude d: The Government policy and intention are, evew today, that I should not take any part in the affairs of my tribe, even on matters of education. However, I am still fighting.'

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**CHAPTER 21**

**The Amazing Journey**

The 'little home' that Tshekedi built for his wife and five children was a modest bungalow set back against the wooded hillside at Piikwe. He planted rose trees in front and fruit trees behind it. On the walls of the immaculate drawing-room he had portraits of his father and his brother, Sekgoma II, paintings of Moeng College and the Khama Memorial by an African artist, and a Munnings reproduction of racehorses from his friend David Astor. His day usually began at dawn. He was barely conscious of the background: the early morning sounds of the village, the reiterated 'cookro6' and 'pietmaya' of South African doves and cuckoos, the intensifying shimmering note of thousands of cicadas. In his office he would work with earnest concentration.

At midday the sun beats down, bleaching the red earth and the grey houses white. A cowbell tinkles; the herd boys call to each other. A small boy, naked but-for a
loincloth, nimbly chases a small calf from the garage where Tshekedi's big American car stands. Inquisitive, hard-eyed goats nose around the loiwapa palisade. Above MmaMphoeng's small clay-walled loiwapa, weaver birds build intricate nests in a thorn tree, until a colony of nine or ten families are flying in and out of their doorways by the time the children gather there for Dikaelo. The gold of the evening sky is smudged with charcoal clouds. Tsheked i's wife, Ella, and his sister, Bonyerile, often attend, and his children, when not away at school, take part every evening, joining the other slight, cotton-clad boys and girls. Now comes the relief of cool air, and the brilliant stars explode from the dark sky. MmaMphoeng, the old aunt who was wrongly accused of setting fire to Tshekedi's house, kneels on the stamped earth and leads the children in prayer and in their singing.

Whatever happened, the people of Pilikwe knew they could look to Tshekedi, always the 'Father', to think and to provid for them. The people working for him would often be given cow as well as wages, and he would not bother to keep a recor His friend, Mr. Mathiba, would be sent to buy meal and flo for destitute people. For the Masarwa women working in house he would buy rolls of cotton from which Ella, his wifei would make them dresses. Servants or friends travelling b train would be driven to the station in his car, and Ella woul provide food for the journey. He was so preoccupied wi thinking for others that his personal affairs were usually in chaotic state.

In June 1954, he was again taking up the case of the thre High Commission Territories. Sir Winston Churchill, the Prim Minister, had recently rejected Dr. Malan's renewed reques4 for their incorporation, and had reiterated the standard reply that they could not be transferred until the inhabitants had been consulted and the British Parliament had expressed i views. Sir Winston's reply brought 'a sigh of relief to the" inhabitants' according to Tshekedi. But, he added, in effect it' simply provided 'another breathing space' and represented the#i policy of procrastination which the British Government hadl maintained for over forty years.

He wrote a pamphlet on the subject for the Africa Bureau4 in London'- in which he pointed out the lack of an effectivel' body to express the views of the people of Bechuanaland whensuch consultation took place. The confusion among the Bama--"ngwato had spread to other tribes. As a result the chiefs alone* could not represent the peoples' views, nor could the kgotlas.: The system of dual administration made it even more compli-, cated, for officials might not accept what a chief gave as the2 unanimous opinion of the people. Therefore no time should be? lost in preparing the people of the three Territories to politically developed and fit for the responsible task of stating! their own case: the obvious
means was the creation currently of local, Legislative and Executive Councils. 2 "h fact that the Territories were the only Protectorates an I Bechuanaland and South Africa. 2 Lord Lugard had advocated tribal and local concils more than " years before. 262

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Colonies without Legislative Councils aroused his 'inescapable suspicion' that their people were being retarded so that they would not appear to enjoy political rights denied to Africans in the Union. The African Advisory Council had functioned for thirty years, the Joint Council of Europeans and Africans for three, and he rejected the Government's excuse that the people were not ready. As for the Government's insistence that local councils must first be established, this had not been done elsewhere, and the proposed local councils were no more than South Africa's Bantu Authorities. They would be 'quite incapable of conducting effective negotiations with the British Government', or of briefing the British Parliament.

Turning to the actual schedule of the Act of Union he made a significant point. Section 150 referring to the Rhodesias has the same permissive phrase as Section 151 on the High Commission Territories: 'The King, with the advice of the Privy Council, may, on addresses from the House of Parliament of the Union' admit into the Union or transfer the government to the Union. Since South Africa had not challenged the Rhodesias joining the Federation, he said, there was no question of the transfer of the Territories being obligatory, as was sometimes claimed. Once again he raised the basic question of the Territories being administered by the Commonwealth Relations Office, which was concerned with relations between Britain and South Africa, rather than by the logical overseer, the Colonial Office. The official explanation was that owing to their geographic and economic positions, the activities and services of the Territories were inevitably tied up with those in the Union. Tshekedi voiced the popular criticism that officials considered every development of Protectorate policy in the light of possible effects on relations with the Union.

He sought clarification of the status of the Protectorates would they develop like Nigeria, or Uganda? Would they remain an African territory but within a neighbouring state? so could the people choose which one? Was it feasible to remain for ever under the Commonwealth Relations Office? 'Until these questions are answered squarely and frankly the destiny of this Territory will continue to be wrapped in mystery and consequently real economic and political progress Will continue to be impossible.' Margery Perham contributed a vigorous foreword supporting his case. 263

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Throughout 1953 he continued to find most irksome the embargo on his taking part in the full life of the tribe. Where should he draw the line? The Ismay agreement, lacking as it did a formal definition as to what was
intended by 'political life of the tribe', depended on goodwill for its interpretation. The moment antipathy or suspicion existed there was bound t be a clash.

By the end of 1953, although the Protectorate had benefite from a new grant from the British Government (,C30,000 fo increased food production and the development of Africa agriculture), the continued division of the Bamangwato Va holding it back. Tshekedi therefore concluded that it was time' he assisted his people in such major questions as education, mineral development and the formation of local and Legislativ Councils. He tried to get a clear declaration on his status from, the High Commissioner, but the latter refused to give a ruling,, saying he relied on Tshekedi's wisdom and discretion.

On November io, 1953, Rasebolai, as African Authority, called a meeting of about a hundred headmen and men of intelligence and education, to discuss the future of Moeng College. As Tshekedi had been mainly responsible for the establishment of the college he was naturally among those,* summoned. For two days they discussed the future of secondary education, in view of the South African Government's policy to exclude High Commission Territories' students from her schools and colleges, and also the possibility of creating Advisory Development Committees in every tribe in Bechuanaland. Tshekedi was among the four Bamangwato representatives nominated to serve on Moeng College's governing body. 7y, Rasebolai duly reported the result of the discussion to the District Commissioner. On December 21 Tshekedi was offi-"cially told that the Government were disturbed to note that ' by attending the meeting he had broken his promise. They required an explanation. This he gave, adding that on three $ previous occasions he had been invited by officials to attend i" meetings of members of the tribe to discuss water, stock and -I other development matters: he could not see the distinction4 and he formally applied to be released from 'these vague andi unexplained restrictions'. So that he could serve the tribe ,:. their non-internal political committees', he asked to be allowed > to take up 'a specific post such as that of tribal secretary'. InIA 264

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conclusion he placed the future of the tribe and the Protectorate against the background of fast-moving world affairs.

'On this ground alone,' he told the Secretary of State, 'it is essential that I should be free to assist my people and place at their disposal not only my humble knowledge of world movement but my contact with men of affairs in many spheres beyond the limits of the Protectorate.' There followed much discussion and correspondence between him and the High Commissioner and other officials; between Clement Davies and other friends in London and the Minister. Meanwhile he was forbidden to attend meetings of the Moeng College Board. Six months later, in May 1954, Buchanan, though gravely ill, was so indignant about the Government's treatment of his friend that he accompanied Tshekedi to see the High Commissioner. Le Rougetel told them that Tshekedi could be the African Advisory Council representative on Moeng College Board or, failing that, that he himself would nominate Tshekedi to the board; but Tshekedi could not
represent his tribe as this would be 'holding public office'. Tshekedi pointed out that the African Advisory Council had wanted to appoint him as their representative but he had refused as that would mean five Bamangwato members whereas he thought it better that a member of another tribe should represent the Council. He added that there was no provision in the College's constitution by which the High Commissioner could appoint him a member of the board. By August Tshekedi had won his point. The new Secretary of State, Lord Swinton, wrote that, in view of his special association with Moeng College, he should represent the Bamangwato African Authority on the board. The Minister said that in spite of the need for him to abstain from the political life of the tribe there was much valuable work that he could do in the Protectorate, apart from his membership of the Protectorate Livestock Industry Advisory Board, and it was hoped that he would serve on a committee to consider amendments to the Native Administration proclamation, and help in the development of water resources for which substantial sums were to be provided. (£1,000,000 was to be spent over the following 4-5 years partly on this but mainly on roads and buildings.) Tshekedi accepted these offers though he did not agree that P65 T

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they were satisfactory. 'I will go on pleading for my freedom,' he told the High Commissioner.

He was constantly concerned about the problem of helping his people over such matters as cattle breeding and the formation of local councils, in view of the restriction on his meeting with them. For example, he was concentrating on the breeding of quicker growing cattle under the conditions of communally owned land; if he succeeded the only way to educate the people would be by demonstrating the cattle at agricultural shows and to follow up with talks to gatherings of interested farmers: but this would not be allowed. He anyway submitted a note on local councils to the Administration 'to provoke discussion', in which he considered the possible system of election and the powers of the councils and of the African Authority.

But most important was the revival of the old and thorny question of mineral development. The South African based Anglo-American Company was reputedly showing an interest in the potential of the Bamangwato country. As in the twenties the tribe was opposed to the idea because of the natural fear of what it had meant to other African people— influx of white settlers, loss of land, and profits not accruing to the African people. They said that they would not agree to any mining unless Seretse was returned as Chief. Tshekedi, now much surer of the tribe's position, believed that he could help to negotiate an agreement so advantageous to it that objections would be overcome. If the tribe did not take the initiative, he feared that the Administration might proclaim the right to reach an agreement on their behalf.

All these problems he put to his friends in England. He added that the attempt to keep him 'spiritually apart' from his people was anyway unrealistic. The Bamangwato African Authorities openly conferred with him. He
knew that some members of the Protectorate Administration had a lively suspicion that he was trying to work his way back into power. One or two officials (and there was a missionary who believed this, too) were convinced that he wanted power for its own sake: he had wielded it for over twenty years and inevitably, they argued, he had enjoyed it and could not now be satisfied to remain in the background. A 'Black Napoleon', one called him, a 'Hitler', said another, and a third contributed 'utterly selfish, and with 266

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a fundamental dislike—perhaps hatred—of the white man'. Tshekedi had no time to worry about what construction was put on his motives. Still intent on getting full freedom he consulted his friends. He felt he would not get satisfaction unless he went to London. What should he do?

He wrote to Scott: 'I am anxious to come to London on a public case, say the question of the Legislative Council, but to come to London to fight a personal case once again is most unpleasant to me. Yet unless I get my liberty to contact everybody freely nobody will fight this case.' He added, 'It is only people like you who have had personal experience of the difference between the British people in England and the British people in the Colonies, who can readily see what is behind all this.' For the time being, however, he insisted that private negotiation was best. But 'should a vigorous fight become necessary then I think it should start whilst I am in England to be available to answer my points.' Anyway he would be busy until well into 1955 on the formation of local councils and the revision of the laws of administration.

At this time he and his people suffered a heavy loss. Their old friend and champion, Douglas Buchanan, died in August 1954 after a long and painful illness. He had known that he was dying and had written the story of his cases with Tshekedi under increasing pressure. His admiration—his love—for Tshekedi had been great. A kind, gentle and lovable man, in his profession he was said to resemble Marshall Hall, in that as soon as he got a case he would wrap himself up in it and fight to the end. Those of the Bamangwato who knew him well regarded him as a father and knew that whenever they were involved in trouble, he would be there to fight their case, or if he felt it was a bad case, he would frankly tell them so. Since their first meeting in 1930, again and again Tshekedi had sent sudden and urgent requests for his assistance. Always he had responded, no matter what the cost and inconvenience in his busy legal and political life. The manuscript on which he worked so desperately was intended to help in achieving Tshekedi's freedom.

Two years later, in 1956, Tshekedi was still restricted. He wrote to Michael Scott: 'Now the Government has brought up 267

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for discussion the subject of mineral exploitation of the Bamangwato country. At two public meetings held on March 7 and 26, 1956, most of the speakers declared that they had no objection to mining as such but wished that the sons of Khama, meaning Seretse and myself, be present to advise them.
The Government had agreed to his assisting in the drafting of the concession but would not allow him to attend any meeting: this he felt to be quite impracticable for 'if I am to negotiate a concession it must be on behalf of the people and I must know their wishes as also to make my own suggestions to them, and to receive their reaction.'

He was quick to advise Clement Davies of the vital fact that African suspicion of mining development had brought the Bamangwato together. The Government, however, seemed reluctant to make the most of this opportunity to reunite the people. Nor had it included tribal representatives in the talks with Anglo-American, in spite of the experiences of the 'twenties and 'thirties. Tshekedi remarked to Clement Davies somewhat wistfully: 'I wish the Government could bear this in mind, that any plan for human progress must, if it is to succeed, evoke the enthusiasm of the people it affects.'

He hoped that the new Resident Commissioner, Martin Wray, would give a more liberal interpretation to the still undefined restraints on him. Over five years the Administration had failed to establish local councils and he was still eager to help. But after six months in office Wray felt that the basic conditions in the Bamangwato Reserve were substantially the same as they had been in 1951. Therefore the restrictions on Tshekedi must be maintained or past difficulties would be revived, Rasebolai's position might be endangered, and Seretse's would seem comparatively disadvantageous leading to inevitable agitation for his return.

Tshekedi's tactics with officials emerge clearly from a report of two discussions in June 1956. At the first talk, through careful negotiation he achieved the compromise that he could be co-opted when the tribe discussed such matters as education or water development. It was suggested that he should ask the Resident Commissioner's permission whenever he wished to take part in a tribal meeting. At the second talk, he tentatively inquired what his position would be if, for instance, he wanted to organize agricultural shows or school committees in a certain area. (One can imagine the officials withdrawing in sudden wariness - here was a new issue: having got the thin end of the wedge in, this man was giving the wedge another hard shove.) After some debate it was agreed that an extension of Tshekedi's activities as village headman or cattle post owner to more general activities in the neighbourhood needed further consideration. Tshekedi proceeded to ask whether, instead of having to get the Resident Commissioner's permission every time he wished to take part in a tribal meeting, he could have free action, subject to the official's right to stop him at any time. (A good thwack on the wedge - this was asking for a major amendment when it was not yet known whether the High Commissioner and Secretary of State would agree to suggestions made at the previous talk.) He also asked whether, if he were engaged in negotiations on mining development, he would be allowed to refer back to the
tribe certain matters of principle. He pointed out that he had done so in the past. However, officials thought there might be objections to this. Tshekedi had already declared his intention of seeking interviews with the High Commissioner and the Secretary of State. He had come to realize that he had an ace up his sleeve. The Administration were evidently eager to conclude a mining agreement, while the tribe refused to discuss it unless both Khamas were present. From statements in Parliament it was obvious that Seretse would not be allowed back as Chief. Why not revert to the plan that he and Seretse had discussed in 1949? This was for Seretse to renounce the chieftainship and for them both to agree to work together for their tribe as private citizens.

A new force, the Labour Party, was coming round to this point of view. Once out of office, it had faced the issue of the banishment of Seretse squarely and had joined the Liberal Party in consistently agitating for his return as Chief, and had announced that if it returned to power, it would end his exile. It had sent its Commonwealth officer, John Hatch, to Bechuanaland for a first-hand report. Before leaving London he had been advised by a Whitehall official that the most fruitful line would be Seretse's renunciation of the chieftainship and his willingness to return as a private person. In Bechuanaland he had talks with some of the leading men in the tribe, including Tshekedi, and suggested that there should be a round 269

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table conference in London with Seretse, Rasebolai and Tshekedi present, and that they should afterwards meet with Government representatives. In August 1955 a Labour Party deputation to the Minister for Commonwealth Relations had pressed this scheme but the Conservative Government had rejected it.

Hatch nevertheless persisted, Tshekedi pointed out that to achieve the return of Seretse and the unity of the tribe, it would be absolutely essential to carry the British Government with them. Hatch seemed to think that the reversal of British policy in allowing the Kabaka of Buganda to return to his country gave a precedent but, Tshekedi said, he himself felt this might well make Seretse's return more difficult, for the simple reason that if irrevocable decisions were constant being changed, it would become impossible for the ruling pow
to make any firm decisions. He explained that in his campaign in 1951, for several months he had sought to negotiate with the.
Labour Government and to work with the Labour Party. Only when this had failed, had he turned to the Opposition.

Parties and to the British public. The present Conservative Government had repeatedly stated that Seretse could never be-

chief, but he felt it had not entirely closed the door on the question of his return to Bechuanaland as a private citizen:-nor should it be given any grounds for doing so. He believed, as he bluntly told Hatch: 'What you suggest is that we musti' start
right off by joining hands with the Labour Party and fighting the Government. This would be wrong and may be fatal.'

Tshekedi set off for London in July 1956 on what one official describes as a most amazing journey. The Administration understood simply that he and his wife were taking their two elder sons, Leapeetswe and Sekgoma, to school. But he had the 'bargain' clearly conceived in his mind, and had discussed it secretly with Rasebolai and a few members of the royal family, as well as one official, before leaving. The only way to achieve tribal unity, to establish councils, and have the settled conditions in which mining negotiations could be conducted, was, for the Government to agree to Seretse's return as a private citizen, and Tshekedi believed that his nephew would now be, ready unconditionally to consider such a proposal.

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Once again there were reporters and photographers awaiting the boat train at Waterloo, and I was there to welcome him and his family. He replied briefly to the journalists' questions and would only say that it was a private, family visit: which it certainly was. He paid a courtesy call on the Secretary of State. As he was leaving he mentioned that he would be seeing his nephew. Early in August the Government repeated its decision to maintain the ban on Seretse's return—whether as Chief or private citizen. But it was about to be confronted with an entirely new situation. Tshekedi had been to see Seretse. The following morning he called on Clement Davies in a state of great excitement. 'I have seen my boy,' he exclaimed, 'I went there last night.' Davies asked, 'Where is he?' 'Waiting outside,' was the reply. 'I'm going to bring him in.' For Davies it was a most moving moment. He knew that at last uncle and nephew were together again. Tshekedi had already discussed the situation with Michael Scott whose help he asked in drafting a statement to put before Seretse. Scott and he met in his Bayswater hotel, writing it out on hotel notepaper. He took it to his nephew and together they prepared their final joint statement.

Soon after, Tshekedi went to see Lord Home to sound him out and to ask for full freedom for his nephew and himself as private citizens. Scott and I accompanied him as far as St. James's Park. We wished him well and sat watching the stocky, indomitable figure walking off towards the Commonwealth Relations Office. He found the Minister non-committal. In fact, Lord Home welcomed the new development of Seretse's unconditional renunciation and the Khama's joint proposal. The Cabinet was consulted. There followed a series of talks in which Seretse and various officials joined, and of which Rasebolai was kept fully informed, until on September 26 the Government announced its new policy: 'The Earl of Home, the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, has, at their request, received Seretse Khama who is living in England, and Tshekedi Khama, his uncle, who was on a visit to this country from the Bechuanaland Protectorate.
Seretse Khama and Tshekedi Khama handed to the Secretary of State a document signed by both in which Seretse

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Khama formally renounced for himself and his children all claim to the
Chieftainship of the Bamangwato tribe, and Tshekedi Khama, who had previously
renounced for himself and his children all claim to the Chieftainship, reaffirmed
his renunciation.
Both Seretse Khama and Tshekedi Khama expressed the hope that Seretse
Khama would be allowed to return to the Bamangwato as a private person and that
both he and Tshekedi Khama would be permitted to take part in the political life
of the tribe. Each of them undertook to co-operate fully with Rasebolai Kg amane,
the African Authority appointed by the High Commissioner.
In these circumstances Her Majesty's Government have decided that Seretse
Khama should be permitted to return to the Protectorate as a private person and to
take his family with him. The Resident Commissioner is being instructed to:
inform the Bamangwato tribe of Seretse's renunciation and of the Government's
decision. Her Majesty's Government have accepted their assurances of co-
operation and agree that both Seretse Khama and Tshekedi Khama should, on
Seretse's return, be free to play their part in the affairs of the Bamangwato.
In furtherance of the policy of Her Majesty's Government a Tribal Council of an
advisory nature is to be established for the Bamangwato. Rasebolai Kg amane, as
the African Authority, will be Chairman of this Council when it is established.
Both Seretse Khama and Tshekedi Khama have declared that they are in full
agreement with the establishment of a Council and will lend their full support to
Rasebolai Kg amane in his capacity as Chairman.
'It is the earnest hope of Her Majesty's Government that this settlement will
enable the Bamangwato to forget their differences and to unite in working for the
progress and well-being of the tribe and the whole of Bechuanaland.'
The long exile was over—Seretse could return to his own people; Tshekedi
after immeasurable frustration and hardships could once again give freely of his
experience, ability and energy, to the Bamangwato.
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Seretse, Tshekedi and Rasebolai with John Buchanan
'1
LU-.t
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Guy Clutton-Brock and Tshekedi

Serowe
I 1-
The Kgotla (in the background, Bamangwato tribal offices Khama Memorial hill)
eretse had been living in exile for more than six years. This account has naturally concentrated on the effects of the British Government’s policy on Tshekedi and, in the background, on the tribe. Unhappy as these were, there had been a further consequence—however generous or competent Britain's colonial policy might have been in certain other areas, there had been always the flaw: ‘What about Seretse Khama?’ Now at last the wrong had been set to rights. The news that he was to return home was met with huge relief in Britain as well as in Bechuanaland. From South Africa came only a limp protest from some Nationalist newspapers. Unfortunately there was an unseemly jostling by one or two members of the Labour Party to take credit for the achievement. Tshekedi himself was not concerned, but his friends, concerned to straighten the record, agreed that Michael Scott should write to The Times. He said:

'It is only fair to the principals concerned—to Seretse and Tshekedi Khama—to point out that the initiative in reaching this agreement was their own, and that Tshekedi Khama came to this country before the debate on the subject took place in the House of Commons, and that he did not come here as the result of any pressure exerted on him by any political party. Tshekedi Khama has, in fact, advocated an agreement such as that which has been reached ever since his own and Seretse's banishment. The fact that this has now been reached is due as much to the efforts of those Liberal and Conservative M.P.s who have interested themselves in the matter as to anyone else. There were also Labour Members who were deeply conscious of the wrong that was originally done when their Party was in power. 'But principally the settlement has been brought about by the good sense and restraint of Seretse and Tshekedi Khama themselves. It would be a pity if this case were not put on record as an example of an achievement made possible in Africa in spite of party political differences here."

Officials in Whitehall and in Bechuanaland were well aware of the part Tshekedi had played. The official who thought journey so amazing listed his achievements: ostensibly he had gone to England to see his sons into school; in fact, he 'fixed' Seretse's return, began talks with a mining company, consulted legal and geological advisers on mineral development, interviewed technicians who might be willing to go out and work for the tribe, discussed the next steps in pressing for a Legislative Council, and, of course, saw his boys into school. The foundation for the talks with the mining company was laid even before Seretse's return was assured, so confident was Tshekedi of the strength of their joint case. He had heard that the Rhodesian Selection Trust was a more enlightened company than Anglo-American, and he asked to meet Sir Ronald Prain, the
Chairman and the man largely responsible for their policy. On August 7, John Buchanan (Douglas Buchanan's brother) therefore invited Prain, Tshekedi, Michael Scott and A Lord Addison (who had intervened with the Government over Tshekedi's banishment in 195) to lunch in the City. They discussed the potentiality of mining development in Bama-: ngwato country. Tshekedi asked Prain's advice: he wanted the kind of mineral deal which would give the tribe European technical advice and yet retain some interest on a long-term basis for the tribe in whatever minerals might be found and -" exploited, so that his people would be part-owners and AY managers of their own minerals in the long run. Prain outlined two or three ways in which such an objective might be achieved, and explained how these things were done in the, metal world.

When they were almost finishing lunch, Tshekedi turned to *W. him and asked, 'Would your companies be interested in making an agreement?'

Prain was taken by surprise; his advice had been given, without a thought that Tshekedi might wish to enter into agreement with his group of companies. He said that R.S.To. 4 would be interested, but emphasized that Tshekedi ought not to feel that he was under obligation even to discuss the matter with them. There the matter rested and Tshekedi proceeded to September 28, 1956.

'Let Us Work Together' to consult legal and technical experts recommended by friends in the mining world.

Next he was ready to concentrate on personal matters. He had decided to bring his sons, Leapeetswe and Sekgoma, to school overseas, partly for the academic advantages and partly to enjoy contact with other races. He chose a Roman Catholic school in Southern Ireland because there they would be more remote from possibly unsettling influences in English cities, and because they could have some grounding in agriculture.

Although he had been brought up in the Congregational Church, he had no sectarian feeling and to him Christianity was Christianity whether Nonconformist or Roman Catholic so long as it was practised in everyday life. He and his wife accompanied the boys to Ireland where they visited friends of David Astor's-Peter and Christabel Bielenburg and their three sons. They stayed in the rambling Irish house with its glorious view across the fields and hills of County Carlow, and Tshekedi enjoyed inspecting the farm. The two families became firm friends.

Bielenburg was one of the group of distinguished Germans who had opposed Hitler inside Germany and been imprisoned in a concentration camp. When eventually Tshekedi and Ella deposited Leapeetswe and Sekgoma at Rockwell College in County Tipperary, they were as content with the character of its staff and the beauty of its setting, as they were with the Bielenburgs, who virtually became foster-parents to the boys. From then on, the two African schoolboys, at first shy and unsure of themselves, spent every possible week-end or holiday with the Bielenburgs and were soon known as 'Peachy' and 'Sekky' and were on friendly terms with all the neighbourhood at Tullow.
Back in London, Tshekedi and Ella stayed with Seretse and Ruth and the two families celebrated their forthcoming return to Bechuanaland at a party given by David and Bridget Astor. Colin Legum and three of us from the Africa Bureau-Michael Scott, Jane Symonds (who had borne the brunt of the secretarial work), and I-were the other guests. Tshekedi had been made a President of the Bureau, along with former 'ice-Chancellors of Oxford and Cambridge Universities, Roman Catholic, Anglican and Methodist church leaders, and Professor Arthur Lewis, the West Indian economist. The Bureau-an all-party organization under a Conservative

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chairman, Lord Hemingford-had been formed by Scott and several of the people who had helped Tshekedi in 1951: it was largely as a result of our experience in fighting the campaign with him that we had seen the need for an organization detached from any political party, providing a platform and political lobby, as well as a means of educating British public opinion.

On October 10, 1956, came the great day of Seretse's return to his people. Tshekedi and his wife had gone back in time to be with Rasebolai Kgamane, the African Authority, and the wildly excited crowds that greeted Seretse. It was an overwhelming moment for both nephew and uncle. Seretse proceeded to tour the country, explaining his renunciation of the chieftainship to the tribe, and asking for their co-operation. Unspoken was the knowledge that they would continue to address and respect him as Chief, just as they addressed an respected Rasebolai and Tshekedi as Chiefs, while in their hearts it would always be Seretse whom they regarded as the Chief, although in fact he would be a private citizen. He told the great kgotla that gathered to hear him in Serowe, 'I say to any man who thinks he will make me Chief that he will be wasting his time. I am not a man who says this today and that tomorrow.' There were certain people who had said that as soon as he landed in the Reserve there would be conflict, he added. 'Let us disappoint such people.'

One tribesman set the tone for the coming months. He commented: 'What we were fighting for is here in front of us. What else, therefore, is there to be fighting for? The chieftainship passes. Chiefs die, but the country does not die. Let us work together. Friends I have not visited during all this time of Seretse's absence I shall visit now.'

Soon after, Seretse's wife and children, Jacqueline and Inu, joined him in a house in Serowe that Tshekedi had given to Ruth. There they lived until they could build their permanent home.

These were the first steps in healing the schism that for eight years had rent the Bamangwato. In all the history of the royal family, there had been no dispute so disastrous as this one. The leaders of the factions were quick to accept the changed

1 Report by Cyril Dunn, The Observer.
situation. (There had been a last flare-up just before Tshekedi’s departure for England, when some of Seretse’s supporters had accused Rasebolai and headmen loyal to Tshekedi of a reign of terror. One or two Members of Parliament had taken up the allegations without ascertaining their accuracy, but a Government inquiry had exonerated Rasebolai and the tribal administrators.) So the reunification of the tribe was begun.

Tshekedi, with his own freedom restored and with the return of his nephew, was able to concentrate again on constructive work for their people: and, now that he was no longer Regent, protecting the status of Chief for his nephew, nor an exile, fighting to return, his own people found him more relaxed. Van der Post said of him at this time: ‘T.K. was a person with enhanced personality and curiously very much more like the young man I had known twenty-two years before. Old enemies and old friends in the royal family began to work together in positions of authority: Leetile Raditladi, whom Tshekedi had banished in the ’thirties, was welcomed back and was to become secretary of the tribal council; Manyaphiri Sekgoma, a leader of the anti-Tshekedi agitation, was a member of Rasebolai’s administrative team, as was Molwa Sekgoma, the cousin who, for his fidelity to Tshekedi, had been dropped from his teaching post at Moeng College. Bamangwato who had left Serowe began to return and to rebuild their houses. Along the rough, winding main road and the tracks between homesteads, outside the post office and stores, there was renewed activity. Rasebolai’s quiet, kindly wife, Bobone, kept the Chief’s lolwapa and the kgofla grounds in excellent order, and the spirit of the capital revived.

This for Tshekedi was only the beginning. Tribal affairs were in confusion and, with his restless drive, he strove to make up for the eight lost years. Rasebolai and Seretse relied considerably on his experience and his judgment while he, in his turn, found the more relaxed approach of the others helped to counteract his almost obsessive concern with detail.

They began to restore the life of the tribe on three fronts: economic, political, and administrative.’ A committee of twelve men, including themselves and three officials, was formed to frame proposals for a tribal council to put before the Bamangwato some 110,000 of whom 3,000 are European, and Bamangwato some 10,000.

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the tribe. Tshekedi wrote to Clement Davies on February 18, 1957, that ‘the happy Bamangwato political situation, which you have played no small part to bring about, has continue to grow.’ Rasebolai, of course, was to be Chairman of the Council. But there was a hiatus over the election of the Vice Chairman: the Bamangwato on the committee wanted him to be elected by Council members; the officials insisted that th deputy African Authority should automatically be appointed. This was believed to be an official device to keep out eith Khama. Only after eight months and intervention by Clemenr Davies was the point resolved: the
Vice-Chairman should be elected by the Council. Tshekedi proposed Seretse for the office, and was unanimously supported by Rasebolai and other members. This incident typified the continued lack of confidence between the local Administration and Tshekedi. The suspicion on both sides went deep and had grown over the years. The return of the Khamas had turned out to be one more victory on his part, and some officials seemed to fear an ulterior motive in whatever he initiated. His objects were clear, but because of the lack of confidence could only be achieved by his old tactics of patient, reiterated demands, followed, when necessary, by appeals to his friends in London to intercede with the Secretary of State.

No sooner had this question been satisfactorily settled, than a new problem arose and once again the Administration was faced with what it felt to be an intricate political issue that must be carefully considered on each level in turn before any kind of decision could be reached. The Bamangwato Council unanimously supported Seretse's proposal that Tshekedi should be appointed Secretary of the tribe. The High Commissioner and Resident Commissioner, after seven months' consideration, questioned the wisdom of an appointment which might disturb the balance of the settlement under which Tshekedi and Seretse had returned. Rasebolai was sure the appointment was one that would make the tribal administration more efficient, and would promote unity rather than disunity. By the end of August 1958, the matter was still simmering and Tshekedi wrote to Clifton Davies: 'For my part I have many a time informed my friends in England that the real trouble was that it is the Protectorate Government itself which does not want me to have any say among my people, and not the people themselves. The Protectorate Government does not really want any views from me on matters of fundamental importance, such as mining or political rights of the people, to be considered as official, they want to be in a position to officially ignore them where they may be awkward to reply to; and they know my people will never dismiss very lightly anything I say.' There was no conceit in this latter remark, only a statement of an obvious fact. He concluded: 'I am really tired of these personal fights, and I would this endless opposition of the Protectorate Government could cease and save me this mental vexation.' Eventually, in September, the Government accepted the appointment.

Bamangwato local councils, under the leadership of Subordinate African Authorities (formerly known as Chief's representatives) had been formed at the end of 1957 and were working well: the other tribes were to follow suit. Parallel with these administrative reforms, the three Bamangwato leaders worked for economic development. By March 1957 they had already followed up Tshekedi's tentative approach to Sir Ronald Prain and reached agreement in principle with the Rhodesian Selection Trust. There was the inevitable delay while the Government considered the draft agreement: consultations through the normal channels: London, Pretoria, Lobatsi, Francistown, Serowe, and Salisbury;
with everybody in on it—Government, politicians, administrators, financiers, mining men, and the tribe's representatives. In February 1958 Rasebolai, Seretse, and Tshekedi went to London to further the matter. Tshekedi acted as the principal spokesman, and in the two years over which the consultations extended, three men of very diverse personality and background formed their opinions of him. Robert Clarke, a partner in one of the biggest legal firms in the City of London, particularly noticed his ability to see the other man's point of view. Clarke felt that the suspiciousness of officials arose out of their fear of what they saw to be 'Tshekedi's 'machinations', which led them to put up barriers against him and his ideas. Dr. Mackay, geologist, tough but friendly, with thirty-five years' experience of business transactions in Africa, found Tshekedi brought out the best in people. He could only assume that the reason why many officials did not share his admiration was that the normal nature of their duty limited them to dealing with people mostly inferior to themselves in education, so that they could not adjust them; selves to the high standard of Tshekedi's intellect.

Sir Ronald Prain, the Chairman of one of the great mining companies, said of Tshekedi: 'In the negotiations in 1957 it was very marked how he would insist that his colleagues should stand by whatever had been agreed. I felt that I had to respect at all times the fact that I had been brought in in the first place' to advise him. He had placed in me a certain confidence and I felt that I was in a position of some trust... ' Prain found* Tshekedi extraordinarily interesting, 'by any reckoning an, extremely outstanding man', and appreciated his sense of fun.* Prain felt that they got on to a basis of complete confidence 'both ways', which is unusual even between two Europeans.

Towards the end of 1958 the three Bamangwato leaders and their advisers decided that the only way of concluding the mining negotiations was by having a round table conference of all parties. In December 1958 the meeting took place. Only one point remained outstanding and after six months the Government's approval was received.

Meanwhile there were other economic reforms afoot. During their visit to London early in 1958 Tshekedi took the opportunity to represent the discontent of himself and a number of the leading traders and ranchers with the abattoir at Lobatsi. In interviews with Lord Reith and other senior members of the Colonial Development Corporation he, Seretse and Rasebolai argued the case for an inquiry into the cattle industry of Bechuanaland and advocated that the abattoir should be run on co-operative lines. (For two years the C.D.C. had been considering ways of making public participation possible.) Several months later they were rewarded by the visit of the Colonial Office expert on co-operatives. The northern ranchers, :f,, who produced about half of the Protectorate's ,500,000 cattle, were also eager to have an abattoir in Francistown (to save the heavy railage to Lobatsi in the south) and a public 'meeting of protest was held in October 1958 which, together with discussions that Tshekedi initiated with a firm of Johannesburg financiers, and pressure in the Joint Advisory Council and
Livestock Advisory Board, helped to further their case. In April 1959 it was announced that a new company, enabling 'Let Us Work Together' public participation, would be formed to take over the assets of the abattoir.

As for the general economic development of the Protectorate, a Government White Paper issued in 1955 had admitted previous shortcomings and planned a five-year programme under Colonial Development and Welfare costing CI,300,000. The emphasis was laid on soil conservation, water supplies, roads, and educational and social services. In his capacity as Tribal Secretary, Tshekedi sought an adviser and manager for the tribe's Public Works Department, and received information about tax and revenue in various parts of Africa in order to compare the arrangements in Bechuanaland.

The major political objective over these years was the establishment of a Legislative Council for the Protectorate. Soon after Seretse and Tshekedi returned from London in 1958, they and Russell England, Chairman of the European Advisory Council, initiated a motion in the Joint Advisory Council calling for the establishment of a Legislative Council. Tshekedi said it was significant that both Africans and Europeans had raised the issue. He reiterated some of his previous arguments made in Council debates and his publications, and urged the need for Bechuanaland to develop her own political ideals and emerge from a political wilderness. He quoted Margery Perham: 'The experience of the Colonial empire shows that stimulus was from the centre to the districts. To develop local government in a political vacuum is like expecting planets to revolve without the sun. Nor, in the sudden, headlong acceleration of political development among dependent people, are those ideal, leisurely programmes practicable. Administrators need to develop a political sense which warns them in good time when they are no longer in control of all the events in a given situation.' He also raised the question of whether Bechuanaland should be a federal or unitary state and if, 'as some of us wish, there is to be one nation', a common citizenship should be fashioned to create a bond between races and between tribes. In his speech, Russell England said that race relations in Bechuanaland were better than anywhere in the world. He

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put forward a proposal for a separate Governor, directly responsible to London, because the High Commissioner's office had little time for the Territories. In London, the Africa Bureau supported this move by sending a deputation to see the Under-Secretary for Commonwealth Relations, Mr. C. J. Alport, before he set off to visit the High Commission Territories. We argued against the Government's case that local councils should precede a Legislative Council, for in all other Protectorates and Colonies the opposite practice had been followed. Furthermore, we pointed out, the majority of Legislative Councils had been established many years ago in Gambia in 1888, Gold Coast 1850, Kenya 1906, Nyasaland 1907, Uganda 1921. Mr. Alport noted our recommendations but did not comment. However, it was becoming clear that the British Government was at last groping towards a positive policy for the three Territories. This was undoubtedly the result of the trend of world opinion and a reaction to the increasingly intolerable policies of the South African Government: Strydom had followed Malan, and Verwoerd followed Strydom, each man introducing harsher measures than his predecessor. The plight of Africans in the Union was arousing ever more responsible condemnation from the outside world, and British rule in the Territories was in the limelight. A programme of economic development in Swaziland, the return of Seretse to Bechuanaland, and the constitutional talks taking place in Basutoland with the objective of forming a Legislative Council, proved that at last Britain was coming to accept full responsibility for the future of the Territories. At the beginning of 1959 the appointment of Sir John Maud, as High Commissioner for the United Kingdom in South Africa and for the Territories, set the seal on this change of policy—if one can so describe the evolution from a state of having no policy to a state of seeming to have a definite and constructive one. Soon after Maud's arrival in South Africa he visited the three Territories. Tshekedi personally supervised the preparations in Serowe, carefully draping the Union Jack over a table. After he had talked with the new High Commissioner, he remarked, 'Ah, someone with sense!' The tribe accorded Maud their traditional welcome. Rasebolai, African Authority and Chairman of the Tribal
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Council, gave an address that reported on past and futures development. 'It may interest Your Excellency,' he said, 'to know that in the procedure adopted in the creation of the Council, special effort was taken to adhere as closely as possible to traditional custom and usage, where political representation is not based on the material wealth and education of an individual alone but partly on his standing in the social structure of tribal units occupying different areas. In the framework of this Council we have attempted to build a democratic institution on the natural political organizations understood by the masses. This organization is merely a social cohesion which has grown from the domestic units of a family to the loyal groups of related and unrelated families to one common head. Nations have grown up from this single process of family evolution. Thus the very small tribe known as the Bamangwato' sees itself today as a proud family unit of the people of Great Britain and with them acknowledging one great "headman", the Queen of England, as their Sovereign ruler, to whom over seventy years ago our loyalty and continues to be pledged...' He expressed gratitude for the Government provision of a Teachers' Training School at Lobatsi and for 73 per cent of the recurrent expenses of the Moeng Secondary School, and other "grants towards education. He gave details of how much more needed to be done when only a third of the children of school-going age were at elementary school and where the staff was inadequate and poorly paid. The Bamangwato Tribal Treasury allocated 40 per cent of its expenditure to primary education, 29 per cent to Public Works and 18 per cent to Administration. He described the need for agricultural education at various levels, and for improved marketing facilities for cattle. With regard to communal land tenure, he said that any requests from the trading community for individual tenure would meet the strongest opposition from the tribe. He concluded: 'Social problems, like enemy fortifications, can be by-passed but they rarely surrender unless they are attacked.'

A new Resident Commissioner arrived in Mafeking: Pete Fawcus, young, intelligent, open-minded, and sensitive. Several changes were made in the Administration. It looked at last as if the tribe was well and truly on its feet again.

CHAPTER 23

New Projects

Tshekedi was now able to attend to the wider issues that his friends in England had for so long advocated. In 1957 he was appointed a member of the Council of Europe Study Group for the Development of Africa and went to Strasbourg for one of their meetings. Arthur GaitskeU had been invited to represent Britain and he in turn recommended Tshekedi and one or two other Africans. Their discussions centred in devising a system of international co-operation for the development of Africa built around collaboration on an equal footing between African countries and member countries of the Council of Europe. Their aims were to help to raise the standard of living in Africa; to promote dynamic indigenous economies, to
ensure the participation and training of Africans at all levels, adapting local structures and taking into consideration local political conditions. The principles that Tshekedi had so often enunciated in a parochial context were thus defined and discussed in a world setting: though against this background his experience was limited. The group's consideration covered international investment projects, bilateral public aid, technical assistance, immigration and trade relations. Most of the other members had specialized knowledge of economics and a much wider experience of world affairs than his own. It was a novel experience and there were times when Gaitskell noted his obstinacy. The secretariat, who liked him very much, described him as a 'solid' person.

Towards the end of 1957 the study group recommended to the Council of Europe the establishment of what might be called a 'Colombo Plan' for Africa. This was accepted but the Foreign Ministers shelved it on the grounds that the time was not ripe.

During his brief visit to Strasbourg Tshekedi took the opportunity to visit a local farm owned by a member of the secretariat. Just as his father had visited farms near Coggeshall, in Essex, in the 'nineties, so he was always eager to see how other people farmed, whether in Strasbourg, in Eire, in Buckinghamshire where he stayed with the John Buchanans, or in Berkshir where he visited the Astor racing stables and farm.

Tshekedi's ideas for the development of representative form of government in a changing African society were set out in an address given at the Africa Bureau Annual General Meeting in 1956. The address represented the man. His theme was that 'no difficulties or past misunderstandings are devoid of solution if there is one common approach to the problem-the identification of mutual human interests even if we belong to different races and nations.' In considering the great contribution made by missionaries in the past he said: 'It is common belief that something has gone wrong somewhere in Africa in the factor of human relationship between different races .... Africa still' has open fields for missionary educationalists; medical missionaries; missionary agriculturalists; missionary engineers and even missionary politicians.' No doubt he had John Mackenzie, and Jennings, Scott and Clutton-Brock, in mind when he wrote the latter phrase. (Incidentally a decision had been taken by him, Rasebolai and Seretse that henceforth any denomination would be welcome provided its representatives built, schools or hospitals.)

After considering the confusion arising from conflicting policies of colonization he went on to political development. 'We in Africa pay visits to your country,' he told the audience, 'and watch with a critical and admiring eye the enforcement of the principles of democracy in your own home; but we compare this with your colonial policies of administration -S practised abroad and we wonder why this British sphere of democratic influence in administration is in practice taking so long to reach the Colonies and Protectorates in Africa.'

In those territories (white or black states) that had been
entrusted with political responsibility he said he felt the pace might be hastened but it should be a case of hastening slowly, for there was a vital need to develop administrative experience before self-government was granted. 'We who come from the smallest of your Protectorates and who constantly harass (289)

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officers of the British Government... with demands for taking more part in the government of our country, simply raise this issue for representative administrative systems as quite distinct from responsible government: the idea of responsible government being completely beyond the horizon of our political vision.' He suggested that what might be necessary was 'a new principle in Colonial government policy, where members of all races can have equal opportunity to take part in the government... from any stage of its political development...' He described the breakdown in the system of 'indirect rule' so that today it bristled with more disadvantages than advantages. 'In theory the powers of the chief and his headmen and those of the senior civil servant and his staff are clearly defined; yet in actual practice there is the danger of the functions overlapping and difficulties arising where the chief had decided to exercise his discretion, which was, in effect, opposed to official advice. Such difficulties have sometimes led to a sharp conflict with the supreme power and a chief's action has been construed as an act of disloyalty, resulting in disciplinary action being taken against him with far-reaching consequences.' His friends in the audience knew what had prompted these measured words—Tshekedi's long conflict with certain officials in the 'thirties, and his other unhappy experiences. The application of the principle of 'indirect rule', he pointed out, depended on the ability of the chief and of the senior British official. For this reason he did not agree with the accepted British colonial administration's principle of trusting 'the man on the spot'. 'I have come to the conclusion that a little more interference from the British Government and public can go a long way towards solving the problems of administration in these colonies.' Behind these words lay the drama of his successful appeals to Britain: to the Privy Council, to the Government in the 'thirties, to the Opposition and public in 1951.

'Indirect rule' should be developed into some other form of government. It seemed that the African system of government and its chieftainship was being developed along the Westernized concept of constitutional monarchy and its democratic system of government. (He had carefully studied the classic example of this in Buganda, where the Kabaka's role had been adapted.) He himself was not convinced that this was practicable: perhaps

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it had served as a temporary expedient. But he warned that in; such a case it might be wise 'to think hard and to find out if there is any alternative policy whilst there is unity-rather than to wait, leaving solutions to chance.' (The heeding of such a warning might have eased the continued upheaval in Buganda...') Tshekedi's
reason for this view, he said, was the confusion in the conceptions of monarchy and chieftainship. In fact, 'constitutional monarchy is associated with the political government of a nation, whereas chieftainship is merely concerned with the administrative functions of a tribe.' Chieftainship had existed throughout the world and it had died out under the stress of the political necessity for small clans to be merged into bigger units. So, naturally, tribalism and with it chieftainship, would die in the political growth of Africa. It seemed unnecessary to try and perpetrate the institution where it had ceased to be respected. (He had been conscious of the anachronism of chieftainship long before his own renunciation but at that time had been bound to preserve it for his nephew.) He continued: The African system of administration, being elastic, allowed the development of the council system which did not exclude the chief from the body of government. He made a final point about chieftainship. 'The love, honour and reverence the chief receives is due not to his personality, but to the office. Unselfishness should be the motto each chief should take to heart, and he must constantly guard himself against the exploitation of the faith which the people have in him. He must not regard this as a sign of political superiority above them.' Young, educated chiefs were in a unique position to use their privileged influence to help in 'the development of progressive leadership', and in the people progressively taking part in the government of the tribe.

Economic development was his next subject. He said there was a growing feeling in Bechuanaland that, 'whilst every effort is being made to work for us, little attempt is shown to work with us.' He asked whether 'the use of these noble fund (the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund) would not go very much further in the colonies, both materially and politically, if serious attention is given to the creation of development committees in the colonies, these to have the joint membership of the officials and the public representatives?... I feel that before colossal sums of money are spent on the territories, the British Government would insist that each territory should prepare and produce a written plan of development, covering all phases of the development required, and for such a plan to be carefully scrutinized by responsible officers of the Government, perhaps fewer misfortunes might occur. Any scheme created by the people themselves has very much more value to them in stimulating their initiative and enthusiasm.'

All these factors and the question of economic development by commercial companies, emphasized the need for developing representative councils in the Protectorates. Once Legislative Councils were established in the High Commission Territories, he said, the natural political sequence would be for them to have a Federal Council to formulate proposals 'for a definite status of the administratively united Territories.' In conclusion, he referred to the prevailing political ideologies offered—democracy or communism. He asked, 'Has Africa no political ideology to offer?... Has African tribalism, which is developing communal responsibility, whilst retaining chieftainship not merely as the symbol...
of sovereignty but also as the nerve centre of political organization, no chance for survival and development?" He reminded Westerners that to many people in tribal societies the concepts of aliens looking after their political interest, and of franchise qualifications being based on wealth and education, were absurd. To them the duty of each person was to other members of the family. This was their conception of democracy. He suggested that the British Government should initiate a conference of delegates from many parts of Africa, to discuss the serious problem of suitable franchise qualifications for the plural societies of Africa. He wondered whether a solution might be found in the concept of different franchise systems for the two main races. To fellow-Africans he said, 'the evolution of our political policy which can be suitable and can be intelligently understood by the masses of our people is in our hands.' Two leading factors, he added, were the political position of a chief and of a prime minister. Perhaps he foresaw Ghana's problems when he concluded: 'Today is the most critical period of the political life of black Africa; the transitional period of government from the old to the universally accepted idea of democracy, and the situation needs most careful handling. I plead for the genuine co-operation of our chiefs and our rising political statesmen, and in this I know that many leaders of Africa are one with me.'

We in England were accustomed to Tshekedi the politician and the campaigner. We only caught glimpses of the rancher and farmer and family man. I was therefore delighted to see him, so to speak, in the round, during a visit to Pilikwe in the winter of 1957. For the first time I began to understand something of the problems of Bechuanaland, particularly those of communications. In that vast country, almost three times the size of Britain, there are only 1,000 miles of road, most of these concentrated on the eastern border. Tshekedi and his wife, Ella, took me to the lands. Even this habitual journey was uncertain over the rough tracks and if there was a breakdown the lorry had to be towed by an ill-spared truck to the garage, several hours' drive away in Serowe. Once arrived at the lands, the lolwapa was a pleasant sight. Neat huts, well-spaced, were encircled by a paling fence. The kitchen was a thatched roof over a big oven where women were gathered to prepare the evening meal. Ella and I shared a comfortably-furnished hut, heated by a brazier of glowing coals.

After a hot bath in a tin tub, I joined her and Tshekedi outside the hut, beside a crackling fire. This was the day for Ella to pay the men working on the lands. They came in twos and threes to sit on the stamped earth, talking in low voices as they waited their turn. Ella consulted lists of names, sorted out the cash she had brought and heaped it in little piles before us. It became too dark to see and Tshekedi held a torch for her. As she read out the names the men came up, one after another, both hands outstretched in the customary gesture of acceptance, to
receive their money. When there was no more small change, there was a lull while a boy ran with pound notes to the hut of a man who stored cash under his bed. The next morning Tshekedi showed me his new Dutch barns where grain was stored, the water-boring machine, and the lands that were being cleared. This was an even more onerous task than the clearing of tracks: there could be no bypassing of the deeper roots that thrust down into the dry ground. Each stump had to be separately dug up, sometimes burnt out, and painfully the square yards of dry bush were won over for ‘Political Change in African Society by T. Khama.

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cultivation. I was interested in Tshekedi's relationship with his people. I had read the allegations about his being a tyrant and watched him with the workmen and his servants. They were respectful but not submissive, responding to his remarks and exchanging banter. In the Khama household, though Ella was firm with the girls, there was laughter and a friendly atmosphere. As for my own relationship with him, this had been slightly changed by the fact that I had been ill and had not yet recovered my previous energy. I therefore saw another side of him—ensuring that I had adequate rest, cushions in the lorry, the most comfortable chair. He took me on a round of visits—to the District Commissioner and the missionary, to Seretse and Ruth who were building their new house on a hill outside Serowe—the first house of their own and a symbol of their hard-won security. Seretse was popular with the Administration for his balance, his forgiveness and his sense of humour. We went on to Rasebolai and his wife, and back to Pilikwe, to Bonyerile, Tshekedi's sister, a stately woman of great beauty with a rich laugh and a husky voice.

In 1958 Michael Scott and Guy and Molly Clutton-Brock visited Tshekedi and Ella. It was Scott's first visit since 1951 and he remained only briefly to see representatives of the Hereros and to discuss with his friends a village development project that had its origin in a paper Tshekedi had written in 1948. This had so appealed to Clutton-Brock that he had at once written to Tshekedi to offer to work in the tribe, but with the troubles nothing had come of the idea. Instead, the CluttonBrocks had gone to St. Faith's Farm in Southern Rhodesia where they helped to establish the sort of non-racial community development scheme that Tshekedi and Scott had envisaged for Bechuanaland. They worked with the villagers and were assisted by young people from Britain. Molly had set up a physiotherapy clinic for babies. Soon after their short visit to Pilikwe, Tshekedi went to St. Faith's with Colin Legum, who was visiting Central Africa. He was deeply impressed; by the co-operative methods and the village industries, but most of all by the fact that the men of the village, who had previously joined the stream of migrant labourers to the cities of Rhodesia and South Africa, were now back on the lands, taking part in the richer life developing there. This was of particular relevance to Bechuanaland which still suffered an annual exodus of 293

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some i 6,000 men seeking work in the Union and other countries.
At the end of the year, Guy and Molly Clutton-Brock returned to Pilikwe for a six weeks' visit. Clutton-Brock saw something of Tshekedi’s ideas in action in the setting of the tribe's highly organized social system—perhaps too highly organized in its provision of social security which may explain why African tribes for so long remained static in their development. Tshekedi as headman was an example of the leader not being too far removed from his people. He was always available to them. When he came home, perhaps late at night, there was a group of men and sometimes women to see him and talk and he was never at ease until he had gone to them. Early in the morning there would be some more. He would join them under a tree, perched on the edge of a camp chair, fly whisk in his hand, obviously more at home there than anywhere else. (One of the sentences in Bertrand Russell’s Authority and the Individual that he had carefully marked read: ‘Democracy, whether in politics or in industry, is not a psychological reality so long as the government or the management is regarded as “they”, a.. remote body which goes its lordly way and which it is natural to regard with hostility. . . .

21) And the people clearly felt free to talk with him despite all the signs of respect such as the custom of going down on the knee before him. Clutton-Brock found that in ordinary conversation Tshekedi only listened so long as a real point was being made, and then he delved to the heart of it; but the moment anything irrelevant or superfluous was added his attention went at once. He would start looking around, probably see someone to whom he wanted to shout a message, or even walk away leaving the person talking.

The Bamangwato, Clutton-Brock noticed, had an air of independence and self-confidence. But like most Africans in southern Africa they lived in a sort of tension between two worlds. ‘They believe,’ he continued, ‘in their traditional way and love it; they believe that it is good, economical and right for the people. Yet they are faced with the challenge of a reinforced concrete civilization and feel the urge to show that they can enter into that too. If the Bamangwato could build a modern society straight out of tribal organization it would be an important development. But how difficult to do, right on the borders of industrialized South Africa: and how difficult

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when the families spend their time divided through the year, at the village, their arable lands, and their cattle posts, each perhaps fifty or eighty or more miles apart. Yet a more settled and intensive life would have to come for the people to build up their own society and not just drift to the Union and regard Bechuanaland as an old-age pensioners’ reserve.’ Of course the system could be attacked for being feudal. Tshekedi and other leaders were served by many, in their homes or on their lands, who in return were given security, and help where needed in cash or kind, but seldom a regular wage as employees. The tribe continued to depend on regimental labour for public works. Younger men increasingly criticized the system but how else could the heavy burden of developing the country be reduced? How else could roads and dams be built, and erosion countered? If the
tribal treasury were to pay for these works there would be a considerable increase in taxation.

Clutton-Brock and Tshekedi discussed the village development project at length. Tshekedi would start off with big ideas and then they would get down to where they could actually start: some small lands ploughed by the tribe, a little butchery, a cattle spray race, and so on. Rasebolai and Seretse had already given their approval to the idea and the Administration were sympathetic.

In between visits to the lands and cattle sales, the CluttonBrocks enjoyed getting to know Tshekedi's family and Seretse's, including twin babies called Tshekedi and Anthony. At Pilikwe they attended the funeral of the son of the village storekeeper—an Afrikaner. Many relatives came from the Union. Tshekedi explained to them that the father was one of the community so the grave was dug and the funeral arranged by the people of Pilikwe, and Afrikaners and Bamangwato mixed together around the grave without any self-consciousness. Afterwards there was a tea party in the parents' house to which Tshekedi, his family and friends went. The Clutton-Brocks, much moved, felt that this was the way people ought to live and die in that part of the world.

Their holiday over, and having arranged to return to Pilikwe in 1959, the Clutton-Brocks set off for Rhodesia. As soon as they crossed the border Guy Clutton-Brock was arrested and detained under the emergency declared after disturbances had taken place in Nyasaland. Tshekedi was upset about 'the uncalled-for misery', and he continued to look forward to the day when his friends could come and work with him and the people of Pilikwe. (He incidentally had shown a passing interest in the Federation for he was drawn to the federal concept and promises of a multi-racial state. But as time went on and he saw that those promises were not being fulfilled his interest waned.)

Another visitor to Pilikwe was the distinguished African professor, Z. K. Matthews, who had come through the anguish of a two-year treason trial in South Africa. With his wife, he stayed with the Tshekedi Khamas. He was happy to see how completely the differences between Tshekedi and Seretse had disappeared. He left Bechuanaland believing that there was a great future for the Bamangwato with Rasebolai, Seretse and Tshekedi working as closely together as they were. He felt that with his experience of men and affairs Tshekedi, of course, was the king-pin in the machinery—twenty years earlier ArdenClarke had described him as the lynch-pin—and that all of them were just getting into their stride so that soon Bamangwato affairs would be on the crest of a wave of development that would change the face of the country and the condition of the people.

CHAPTER 24
'I Have Won a Victory'

uring the first few months of 1959 Tshekedi's friends
were delighted with reports of progress in Bechuanaland. The Bamangwato Council was working well and the district councils, with fifteen Subordinate African Authorities appointed by Chief Rasebolai Kgaman as African Authority, though not yet fully democratic, were bringing up younger, more intelligent men able to criticize. Under the new system it would be easier to replace inefficient men and possibly the intriguing of certain houses of the royal family (that somewhat resembles what goes on in the corridors of the House of Commons except that it takes place behind huts near the kgotla and is a good deal more intense) might find a healthier outlet.

The tribe's new General Purposes Committee might prove to be extremely valuable and might be instituted in other areas. The agreement with the Rhodesian Selection Trust was about to be concluded, though the Company made it clear that prospecting was a difficult process in such a vast underdeveloped country and people should not be over-optimistic. Things were beginning to move in the right direction for the reorganizing of the abattoir. The new administrators in the Protectorate remarked on the outstanding quality of some of Tshekedi's cattle (he had produced stock that matured in half the time that its prototype required).

Moeng College was running better and, subsidized by Government, was serving the whole country. Only time would show whether he had been right to insist on its being built in so remote a valley where staff and students are subject to the strains of isolation. There had been a slight improvement in the field of education as more parents employed herdsmen at cattle posts, thus enabling their sons to go to school, and as various denominations planned three new secondary schools. However, 297 rears of Reconstruction only two pupils had matriculated in 1959, and none the previous year, primary schools were greatly overcrowded, and teachers' salaries pitiful. A sphere in which Government and certain missions had achieved considerable advances was in medical services: from 75,000 out-patients in 1936 to 200,000 in 1946; to over half a million in 1956; from 40 health centres (including a few hospitals) in 1955 to 63 in 1959; while the high average of bed per 500 inhabitants had been reached.

Basically though, the country remained poor, with the annual threat of drought, and Tshekedi hoped that the World Bank, or . United Nations Agencies, would make possible the spectacular water development programme that alone could lift the country from its chronic condition. Such recent territorial development as there had been, according to one senior official, was due to the impetus given, by Tshekedi, principal architect of the plan for the return of 7. Seretse, and the discussions that he, Rasebolai and Seretse had initiated in London in 1958.

Another most important step forward came with the British Government's announcement in April 1959, that a Legislative Council would be formed. Tshekedi was as active as ever. At Easter he greatly enjoyed a visit to the Rand Show with his cousin, Molwa Sekgoma, to buy bulls for himself and for some of his trader friends. While staying with Dr. Ellen Hellmann, the President of the
South African Institute of Race Relations (of which he had long been a member), he discussed with her the question of the High Commission Territories in general, and the state of the Union.

By this time I had been working for some months on the manuscript that Douglas Buchanan had left—the original record of their cases together had grown as I approached the many people who had been associated with Tshekedi, and delved into files and newspaper reports. Tshekedi had promised to work on it with me as soon as he could find a breathing space. In May I wrote and asked whether he could at last fit me in.

On May 22 came a cable from Guy Clutton-Brock: 'Tshekedi seriously ill. Arriving London with Ella for treatment.'

It was utterly unbelievable. But soon came confirmation in all the evening papers: Tshekedi had a serious kidney disease; doctors in Southern Rhodesia had suggested his being flown to London in an attempt to save his life.

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It appeared that he had not felt well for some little while but had said that a man of his generation in Africa had no time to go to doctors, until he had been forced to go to hospital.

The doctor had told him he must remain there, he had replied that he had not the time, had gone off on some urgent duty, and within a few days had been forced to return. Soon he was sent to Bulawayo, and from there to London. One of his doctors who had observed his health for many years believed that the cause of the illness was a combination of physical and mental strain and worry, and long years of overwork.

Several of Tshekedi's closest friends were away from London and I arranged to go to the airport with Peter Kuenstler, who was concerned with the Village Development Project. The official whom I phoned to discover the time of the plane's arrival seemed surprised that Tshekedi had friends in London: it was Tshekedi who was coming, he said, was I sure I hadn't made a mistake and confused him with Seretse? No, I assured him, I knew it was Tshekedi.

I felt sick with apprehension, watching the plane land, straining to see the remote figures emerging, until finally Tshekedi and Ella came down the steps and were helped into an ambulance and driven across the tarmac. We were called to meet it and I went inside, full of fear, to find him looking crumpled and as if he didn't know what had hit him, while Ella smiled confidently. Once the greetings were over, it was Tshekedi who gave the instructions: 'Follow us to the Clinic, please.' When we arrived there, he was helped into a chair and wheeled in, to be greeted in the doorway by two huge bouquets of flowers from friends. There was a slight lightening of his expression. Soon after we were called into his room to find a different man sitting in bed in cream-coloured pyjamas, smiling and full of life. The flowers were lovely and the sun was out. The official from Bechuanaland who had met him said he was lucky to have come on this particular day, two days earlier it had been freezing. At once Tshekedi was on to the question of the weather in Bechuanaland which led on to cattle sales. 'Ah,' he said, wagging his
finger in a typical gesture, and grinning, 'just wait till I'm out of here; I'll be down at the C.R.O. to worry you all about the abattoir,' and as always when he said something provocative, his shoulders began to heave and out came the old laugh. We all felt reassured: here

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was the Tshekedi we knew. David Astor, Colin Legum and Dr. Mackay, who visited him in the next twenty-four hours, -z could not believe there was anything wrong with him, so powerfull did he look and so animated were their conversations with him and Ella. But on the second day, a Sunday, when his old friend from Tigerkloof, the Rev. A. J. Haile, visited him, there i had been a slight relapse and he sat limply against the pillows, .. his eyes dark and listless. Mr. Haile took his hand and we prayed together: 'Oh Lord, we need him, the tribe needs him,:.Africa needs him. We believe You will restore his health.'

Over the next few days there were frequent ups and downs and I medical euphemisms encouraged us in our optimism. Tshekedi ., dictated many letters and I wrote others for him: to Margery Perham about the promised Legislative Council, to Sir John Maud thanking him for a cable of encouragement, to experts : about the abattoir, to the many old friends in Britain and in Africa who were writing, cabling and phoning. Flowers poured .‘ in, and Seretse's mother-in-law, Mrs. Williams, several friends and technical advisers visited him. He particularly enjoyed a visit from Charoux, the sculptor who had done a bust of him in 1951. Charoux, huge, dishevelled, humane and humorous, with his hat slightly askew, put on a marvellous performance worthy of a great clown, and lifted Tshekedi from a state of suffering and depression into fits of laughter. Constant visitors were Chief Bathoen's son, Seepapitso Gaseitsiwe, and the future Chief of the Batawana, Moremi, both studying in London. He asked often for Michael Scott, away in Germany, and when he arrived, reacted happily. Ella was always there, staunch, loving, humorous. Sometimes he would call to her in her adjoining room in the early hours of the morning. 'Mma, it is light, come on, come and talk to me.' 'Oh R.ra, it is still too early,' but she would join him and they would read one of the Psalms together, or quietly sing a hymn. The disease had affected his eyes so that reading was impossible but he was amazingly patient. One morning, however, when I went in I found him sitting in an armchair, looking like a neglected small boy on the verge of sulks. 'Ella went out hours ago,' he said, 'what can have happened?' I discovered that she had gone in search of peaches, the one food he could enjoy. I said she was probably window shopping and we joked about it. Soon she returned and triumphantly produced four peaches: there had 300

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been none in the neighbourhood and she had gone across London to Harrods. Anxious messages came from Seretse followed by the announcement that he would fly over in a week's time. Leapeetswe and Sekgoma arrived from Dublin to their parents' great joy. Tshekedi was extremely proud of them-he had been away
so much, fighting his campaigns for justice during their childhood, or they had been at boarding school—but he had always appreciated their company and taking them to cattle posts or the lands. One day when Leapeetswe went off to Colin Legum's house to do some studying, his father said, 'I am very pleased with him. It shows character and good sense to be thinking of studying now.' But the boy could not continue to concentrate as his father's condition began to deteriorate. Early one morning Ella phoned me: 'Bring the boys and Michael right away.' I sent for them all and hurried to Tshekedi's bedside. I was shocked by his appearance: his nose had been bleeding badly and his eyes were not focusing. 'What do I look like?' he asked.

'You look as if you've been in a prize fight,' I joked.

When Scott arrived, Tshekedi called to him, 'Mary says I look as if I've just won a prize fight. And that is what I believe I have done.' During the night he had had a strange experience of time standing still and had come through a vision. He believed he had passed the worst, that he would not die but might go blind. 'But,' he added, 'the boys will always be there for my guidance.'

'However,' he continued, 'it may not be entire blindness but it seems I will not get my full sense of seeing back. If that is the verdict I will be grateful to Him because all my work has been helping my people. I am thankful. Far from getting me down, the illness has been an encouragement to me.'

He proceeded to talk to Scott and the boys: 'I could not sleep and so I thought I would send for you and the boys and have a chat and out of it guidance may come.' To Scott he added: 'You are one of the Bamangwato, because of this I am glad to have come to England for treatment.' It was the highest praise he could bestow. 'The biggest fight of my career you fought,' he added.

Scott spoke for all Tshekedi's friends in England. 'The 301 Years of Reconstruction thought of your patience, your endurance, the organization you have set up out there, have inspired us here.'

This was on June 2, the day the Bamangwato Tribe and the Rhodesian Selection Trust signed the mining Agreement. Throughout the day Tshekedi's thoughts often centred on Serowe, where the ceremony was taking place, and he wished he could have been there. Rasebolai Kgamane signed for the Tribe, Sir Ronald Prain for the Company, and Seretse Khama was one of the witnesses. A copy of Prain's speech was sent to Tshekedi and was read to him. It was, Prain had said, an historic occasion because it marked the successful completion of negotiations between an African tribe and a European company. Here were two groups of people of widely differing background, inspired by a common purpose in Africa—a negotiation conducted freely and willingly. He concluded: 'It is a cruel blow which has deprived Tshekedi of the opportunity of being present on an occasion for which he has worked so hard and so sincerely and which represents the outcome of negotiations in which he has taken a leading part.'
That day, like Tshekedi himself, I believed that the worst had been passed. The relief was intense. He would recover—of course he would. He was so strong and there was so much for him to do.

But the next day the doctor told Scott and Astor that there was no hope. There would be increasing periods of coma which might last a few days or a few weeks. They were asked to break the news to Tshekedi. He was sitting in an armchair and they sat down on either side of him. David Astor tried, in careful phrases, to lead up to the truth. He had not said much when Tshekedi put a hand gently on his knee: he understood. They told Ella and the boys. Seretse was urgently sent for and the news was cabled to Bonyerile, Tshekedi’s sister who throughout his illness had been leading the women in prayer. Tshekedi wished he could see all those who had been his opponents, to show them that—he bore no resentment.

On Friday the 5th he began asking for Seretse—for a day, and a night, and a morning, every now and then he would ask, 'Has he left yet? 'When will he arrive?' 'Ask B.O.A.C. if he's on the next flight.' We tried to explain that Seretse could not possibly arrive for at least another day. The nurse tried to persuade him to take a sleeping draught but he was adamant: he feared he 302

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might not remain alert enough to welcome Seretse and tell him what he wanted to say. She tried again: the doctor, she told him, had insisted. 'Nurse,' he replied, 'the doctor and I do not see eye to eye over this matter,' and he proceeded patiently to try to explain. He won. So he held on until midday on Saturday when we sent for Astor and Scott. The three of them were left alone together. Although he was exhausted and spoke with difficulty, he managed to talk to them. After some serious remarks about his sons' education, he suddenly added, in stern tones: 'Astor is a fanatic.' A pause. Astor looked startled but decided this must be delirium coming on. Then—'Scott is a fanatic.'—Astor found this more comprehensible. Then, in a voice breaking into glee—'There are three fanatics in this room!'

But he was too tired to say all he had wanted to, and by the time Seretse was due, he was like a giant, slowly, slowly drowning in a sea of coma, and the moments of struggling to the surface became fewer. Yet when Seretse walked in, he rose to the surface and with a smile greeted him: 'I am glad you have come. Let's forget the past and start afresh.' Seretse brought with him the mining Agreement so that Tshekedi, too, could sign as a witness. It was his last signature.

Still, there were moments of brightness and, in one of these, I felt I must get through to him my deep admiration. I said: 'You know, the more I work on your book—' He interrupted with 'The more you learn?' 'No,' I replied, 'at least, that, but also, the more I respect you.' He laughed and said confidently, 'We will work on it together.' Then he called his sons to the bedside.

'Rra?' they asked.

'I want you to listen carefully. You are to be the guests of Mr. David Astor in the hotel. You are not being the guests of a Mongwato, but an Englishman. In Ireland you stay with a German family, in London you have stayed with Colin Legum
who is South African. There is no such thing as race. All these people are our friends. I want you to remember this.'

'Rra,' Sekgoma replied eagerly, 'that is just what I was saying at school to a Nigerian who said he didn't like white men.'

That day and the next there was a stream of visitors. Christabel Bielenburg, from Ireland, Ellen Hellmann, over from Johannesburg, and Colin Legum. W. A. W. Clark, the

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official of whom Tshekedi had said in 1951, 'he was the one official of any help to me whilst I was in London'; of whom Buchanan had said in Pretoria in 1950, 'he is the only live wire at this end. With him away I just don't know what will happen here.' Mr. C. J. Alport, the Minister of State, who came from Colchester at Tshekedi's request but found him unable to talk, only able to register appreciation. The Earl of Home, the-, Secretary of State, several old friends from the London Missionary Society, and Sir Ronald Prain. He could still flicker in his recognition and gratitude.

Scott was by now staying in the Clinic. Ella seemed tireless, ... her love and faith only growing with the demands made on them. Only once, on the Tuesday, did she slip out for half an hour's walk, leaving his nurse and me there. He was much stronger and brighter and could put his handkerchief in his pocket though he still repeated what had become a habitual movement: with some difficulty he would lift a hand, study it as he turned it round, and then would let it drop with a clicking noise of his tongue, as if thinking 'how feeble, how useless, and there is so much to do.' Once I caught his glance through the coma as he was doing this and said firmly and clearly, 'It is all right, your sons are your hands now' and he gave a sharp nod and fell back. Then he began to ask for Ella. Suddenly she came in. His face lit up with a wonderful broad smile, he sat up, and cried 'Ella!' He said he had made peace with his Maker, and he felt ready to go. Three times on this day he insisted on being helped to stand on his own two feet and, the third time, he said confidently, 'I have won a victory.' For the first time in days he ate well in the evening, patting his stomach with satisfaction and saying proudly, 'I am overfed.' Seretse came in to say good night. When Leapeetswe and Sekgoma called in at 10.30 p.m. they found us all in buoyant mood. Tshekedi, sitting up against his pillows, announced: 'I think it would be a good position if we all sat round and had a cup of tea.' It was so spontaneous and comic that we all, himself included, burst out laughing. And we all sat round and had a cup of tea. The boys left and I decided to stay with Ella. He was so much stronger and so gay that Ella, Scott, and I felt a surge of hope. Scott said a prayer by his bedside-it was almost inaudible but Tshekedi heard and said firmly, 'Amen.'

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An hour or two later there was a collapse; Ella sent for Seretse and the boys and together we watched Tshekedi slowly die.

It was a few minutes before 3 a.m. on Wednesday, June io, '59.
Some of us have to come to terms with inexplicable cruelty or stupidity in nature and life. I have therefore tried to draw some comfort from a theory that there is a force of evil, which resents courage and faith and greatness, as it did in the case of Job. Early on it had singled out Tshekedi and time after time had assaulted him: there had been factional disputes, official obstructions, exiles, against a background of the country's poverty and the threat of the Union. It was his fate never to enjoy the fruits of his work: after the struggles and disappointments of the 'thirties there were halcyon months with ArdenClarke, broken into by the war; and just as he was beginning the post-war reconstruction, his nephew married; now again he was not to see the results of the rebuilding following on Seretse's return. Despite all the assaults, he had kept his faith in God, had fought back, and triumphed. The force had therefore chosen a last, fatal, attack, and the strong man was brought low. Yet, until his voice was but a crackle, he had sung bits of his favourite hymn:

'Thy way, not mine, 0 Lord,
However dark it be;
Lead me by thine own hand,
Choose out the path for me.'

He had joked with his family and friends. He had declared his readiness to go, and, without resentment, freely, he gave himself. Once again, it seemed to me, he had triumphed: as he had said, when he stood for the last time, he had won a victory.
The news of his death brought quietness to Serowe, and the people who for many years had been divided in their feeling for Tshekedi, were united in mourning him. Many people, even those who had disagreed violently with him, recognized that he was a great man and that the tribe could hardly be the same without him. It seemed as if those who had been most against him, felt this even more strongly than those who had supported him. Peter Sebina wrote that this was an 'insupportable and touching loss'—'a loss keenly felt even by those we did not expect to be so touched.'

British statesmen, politicians, officials, missionaries, African nationalists, journalists, magnates, technicians, joined with Tshekedi's family and friends, in a memorial service at St. Martin-in-the-Fields. Chief Leabua Jonathan from Basutoland read the lesson, Mr. Haile, of the London Missionary Society, assisted the vicar, and the Rev. Michael Scott gave the address.

On June 17 the funeral took place at Serowe. Tshekedi's second son, Sekgoma, described how thousands and thousands of people had flocked to Serowe, so that the village was overfilled. 'But it is quite quiet,' he added. Up to the stronghold of the Khamá Memorial hill, the procession went. There Tshekedi was buried, behind the graves of his father and mother. Seretse quoted the last words Tshekedi had said to him: 'It is finished. Let there be peace.' He was speaking not only to his nephew, but to the descendants of Sekgoma I, and to the Administration.
The phuti above Khama's grave stands, delicate and noble, under the immense blue sky. Far below are tidy homesteads fenced by sticks or bright green hedges,
each built near a shady tree. Cocks crow, children call out, a cow bellows. People shout greetings. A small boy in a loin-cloth half walks, half dances down a sandy track. Women in bright dresses with buckets of water on their heads pass between the huts—one in scarlet, another in puce, a girl in turquoise blue. Men in khaki and brown gather round some cattle. Someone starts to sing. Beyond it all the limitless scrub fades into the horizon, to the line of undulating hillocks ending in the twin hills of Serowe. This is the country, these are the people, Tshekedi loved.

EPILOGUE
by MICHAEL SCOTT

Tshekedi Khama's death has been hailed in this biography as a great victory for Tshekedi Khama, as indeed it was a conquest 'by strength and submission'. But it was also an acceptance of the consequences of a ceaseless battle against almost insuperable forces in which there was the interplay of politics and economics with the more subtle human vices and virtues which these call forth.

In his last hours Tshekedi was deeply conscious of all that had been left undone, and to one at least who stood at his bedside during his dying moments, after he had insisted on getting out of bed to address his last words to those concerned, there was also a sense of futility, as if what was happening was almost an eccentricity in the scheme of things—a meaningless accident destroying so much that was of value and had taken such long and painful efforts to create. Now, just as it was about to succeed, to flower and bear fruit in Africa, it was cut off.

As he lay there after his last laboured breath, his body still looking strong and robust as ever, it seemed to be more than the death of a person. It was also the loss of a vital factor in the shaping of Africa's future and the rethinking of Africa's and Britain's relationship with one another.

If life is like a great symphony there must be discords inevitable to the mighty theme of creation but this death seemed more like a violent interruption as though something had suddenly cut off a Beethoven symphony in the middle, leaving a silence not of serenity but of unfulfilment.

But perhaps this account of Tshekedi's life will achieve its purpose if it helps administrators in Africa and policy-makers of the future to understand the complexities of an awakening Africa, and if it helps Africans too, amidst all the stresses and strains of their own time of deliverance, to realize what a great contribution Tshekedi had to make to the growth and development of the 'African personality'. His combination of strength and tolerance, of good humour and reason, are qualities surely indispensable to the future of civilization in Africa and in the world.
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BAMANGWATO LINE OF CHIEFS SINCE c. 1817
A'ole: Only the names of those wives who feature in the book are included.
KCARI
(c. 1817-c. 1826)
N
KOAMA II
(c. 1833-c. 1834)
I
MACHENG
(1857-8: 1866-72)
I
KOARI
SEKGOMA I
(c. 1834-57: 1858-66: 1872-5)
I

KGAMA III
(1872 and 1875-1923)
(w. Bessie)
I

SLKGOMA II (1923-5)
(w. I Tebogo)
SLRJY "s:
(w. Ruth Williams) II

AN TSIEKEKI ANTHONY
KGAMANE
(w. Semane)
Tsi-KEKEDI (1926-49)
(w. Ella Moshoela)
LEAPELETSWE SEKGOMA MODIRI MPH0ESNG
I

GO RE WANG
(1925)
RASEBOLA1 (w. Bobone)
I

TSAMETSE
I I A-I
KEABOKA APELE
I
KAELO
SETHUMLE BAROI3
II
GAGOITSE.(E GASEEIALWE (192(,
NNAI.ANG
I I
REZISI I NG SII-ROoUL.A
I I
LEDIRETS. LEUTLWETSE
I
TAU
I
I' !