

THE WAR

FATHER'S PLEA: DON'T LET MY SON'S DEATH BE FOR NOTHING

The posthumous award of a Gwebi College of Agriculture diploma recently to the father of a graduate gunned down by terrorists, reminded Rhodesians of the poignant letter the parent wrote to "The Rhodesia Herald" shortly after his son's death. It was published on the front page.

The letter was from Mr. Denzil Dunn, of Shamva, who collected the diploma and award for an essay on seed production, from Mrs. Rollo Hayman, wife of the former Minister of Agriculture...

The following is the text of Mr. Dunn's letter:

I planned this letter some weeks ago in an attempt to pay tribute to Rhodesians as a whole, of whatever colour, race or creed. I planned it with pride in the achievements made by us all during the years that this lovely country has borne its very proud name.

I intended drawing attention to the magnificent services we possess, the Armed Forces, the Police, the Judiciary, the Civil Service, and the people of this country who need have no shame in looking back on what has been moulded here since 1890.

KILLED

On Tuesday evening, September 13, my son Billy was gunned down in cold blood by rabid young animals called, for want of a better name, terrorists. He was a lad who, not only I, his father, but I believe all who knew him, were proud to call "friend".

He was the very epitome of young Rhodesian manhood who, after completing his national service as a soldier, recently graduated from Gwebi College and was ready and willing to live and work for his country.

TRANSFER

He was visibly thrilled at his very recent transfer into the BSAP Field Reserve from his Army unit, which would allow him to do his security commitments in the company of those he lived and worked with.

PERIL

He was popular with European and African alike, but unfortunately had not yet been with his new labour force long enough to establish the very close relationships that would have warned him of his dire peril.

That evening, as he returned from his duties irrigating his lands he was captured when armed thugs pushed a brave lady, Mrs. Ogilvy, whom they had captured while she was out walking, at gunpoint in front of his vehicle. His chivalry prevented him from

making a break for it, for I am certain it would have required a terrific struggle for this group of young thugs to capture him without the aid of a hostage.

In a similar manner he was forced to drive slowly behind this gallant lady, who was made to walk at gunpoint immediately in front of his vehicle, to her homestead approximately a kilometre away. There they waited for Mr. Ogilvy to arrive.

Details are not clear but it was obvious that soon after his arrival both men attempted to interfere when one terrorist broke into the house after Mrs. Ogilvy had managed to lock herself in and shooting commenced. The two men were gunned down.

In my grief I am a very bitter person, but I am also a very proud father and a proud Rhodesian. These three fulfilled the tradition set by Rhodesians who came before them — the Pioneers, the Early Settlers, Allan Wilson and his patrol, those servicemen who fell in two World Wars, and those members of the present magnificent Rhodesian security forces — of all races, be it emphasised — who together with the front-line farmers and others living in the operational areas are suffering from the terrorist threat.

RESPONSIBILITY

Billy's mother and his sister have devoted much time and energy helping African people in the medical field, and Billy and I have had good relationships with many thousands of Africans with whom we have lived and worked.

In my bitterness I can still realize that the responsibility for Billy's and Mr. Ogilvy's deaths does not lie with the African people as a whole — there are a host of very fine people among them. But this responsibility does lie with those who in any form have supported terrorism and who have mustered these rabid young animals to commit their

cowardly and murderous deeds.

We have a duty to perform — a duty from which none of us can afford to run. Let us put over our message, loud and clear, that we are going to stamp out the scourge of terrorism in this our country. Let us set an example to the world of our steadfastness, our strength, and our courage, such that the world must recognize our right to continue along the lines stated so clearly by our Prime Minister, Mr. Ian Smith, that government must remain in responsible hands.

RESPECT

I believe the large majority of our Rhodesian people of whatever colour, race or creed, respect the person and not the colour of his skin. It is an accident of timing that has placed the majority of our African citizens in the peasant economy — an economy that is not exclusive to Rhodesia and Africa.

PRIDE

We Rhodesians can look back with considerable pride at what has been accomplished, particularly for the African population, in agriculture, the arts, commerce, education, housing, hygiene and medical care. Racial segregation is on its way out.

JOCKEYING

But we do not respect those leaders, many of them clerics, who have benefited so much from what has been provided for them by Rhodesians, only to see these professional rabble-rousers jockeying for position, seeking political and material advantages for themselves, striving for support from the Owens, the Carters, and the Youngs of this world, to say nothing of the Kremlin and Peking.

What a sordid record of corruption, deceit and double

standards the governments of these people, who presume to dictate our destiny, possess. What utter madness these apparently intelligent men display in listening to, and believing, the blatant lies the nationalist leaders, and such others who bluff the world that they are "Front line" presidents, provide for their eager consumption.

HONOUR

I personally would prefer to be struck down fighting, with honour, than meekly to surrender and to abdicate the responsibilities which are our heritage in this land.

WARNING

And let them be warned—if we do go down fighting there will be few survivors among the present African hierarchy — those who hadn't been gunned down by the thugs supporting their rivals would be a lot easier to find in the comforts they are already enjoying by those of us remaining and forced to fight.

There are alternatives. They must be made to work. Irrespective of Britain, the United States, the so-called United Nations and Organization for African Unity, we must go on wholeheartedly and with a single purpose with the exercises already begun, slowing down from a revolutionary to an evolutionary pace, with no talk of time limits, be they six months or many years.

LEADERSHIP

We must return to the style of leadership which led this country without the use of a gun for more than seven decades. We must use the first-rate professional talents available in all the present machinery of Government.

There is no need for new movements and campaigns — we already have the basic and our Government has proved its honesty of purpose and inten-

tion by accepting the need for a just settlement.

I believe that it is up to us all, Rhodesians of whatever colour, to stand up and show ourselves to support our Prime Minister in his efforts to reach a just settlement in which above all law and order will prevail. We must be strong, if necessary ruthless, in getting rid of those not prepared to conform to the interests of the many.

We must behave in such a manner that we will gather support from black and white Rhodesians alike, so that our strength will snowball and those sitting on the fence will realize that they have no alternative but to join us.

We must let the world know that we are of good heart, that we back the existing Government structure fully in obtaining an evolutionary change for a peaceful solution, and that we will never surrender. We must let the world know that Rhodesians are prepared not only to live for their country but if circumstances so decide, that they are also prepared to die for it.

FORTUNATE

We are fortunate in that we already know how true this is of so many of the splendid men, women and children who continue their daily lives in the operational areas.

There are not many of them running. Let those nationalist African leaders who have created this cancer in our lives, and are already licking their lips in anticipation, realize that they will never get Rhodesia served up to them on a plate.

SACRIFICE

I trust and pray that God Almighty will guide those who lead us, and that the rest of us will have the courage actively to support the moves that are made in His wisdom. If this happens the sacrifice made by Billy, and by so many others in this senseless conflict, will not have been in vain.