

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE CHURCH AND THE FEDERATION IN NORTHERN RHODESIA 1950-1963

#### Introduction

The role of the Church in Zambia from 1950 to 1991 can be well understood if one takes a preview of the Church and politics in the decade before national political independence. Major political events were the formation of the Federation, increased political consciousness among Africans, and the establishment of the Lumpa Church. The Federation came as the result of the desire for economic gain by a small white minority who possessed both influence and affluence.

Major discussions that led to the formation of the Federation were illegally conducted without the presence of Africans and without the notification of the British Government. There were mixed feelings over this Federation among citizens across all races and institutions including the colonial Church. Just as attitudes differed so were the reactions. Few Churches embarked on creating critical and analytical minds to take political positions in the future African Government. Others put more effort in producing a healthy and morally sound nation.

Failure of the African National Congress (ANC) to stop the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland from being established resulted into political divisions among Africans. This was the time when Africans realised that they had to fight for political independence on their own without depending on outside help.

Therefore, this chapter discusses the creation of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and its impact on the multi-racial colonial Zambia with its economic,

political and social challenges. How did different people across the nation respond to the creation of the Federation, such as the white led Government, the settlers, the African nationalists and the white led Church from 1950 – 1963. The first section focuses on the debate and the formation of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Lastly, the chapter will review the relationship between the main-line Churches and the colonial government.

### **The Federation Debate**

The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland also known as the Central African Federation was formed on 1<sup>st</sup> August, 1953. It was formed from the colonies of Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.<sup>1</sup> This came about after a number of failed attempts to do so. In the 1920s, there was an idea to amalgamate the British Central African colonies with those in East Africa. Later in the 1930s, the suggestion was to amalgamate Southern Rhodesia with Northern Rhodesia. The British Government was not in favour of either of the suggested developments. Whenever the settlers brought up this issue of amalgamation, it appointed a commission of inquiry to investigate and report, bearing in mind Britain's duty of safeguarding the welfare and interests of Africans.<sup>2</sup>

In 1927, the Hilton Young Commission<sup>3</sup> in which Lord Lugard suggested that the development of the territories should benefit the indigenous population as well as the economic interests of the colonial power. He recognised African interests as paramount, but encouraged settlement by immigrants if their interests did not conflict with those of the indigenous population.<sup>4</sup> The Commissioners considered the policy of the British Government towards both indigenous and immigrant communities which was referred to as “Dual Policy” and “Native Policy”.<sup>5</sup>

The "Dual Policy" and "Native Policy" both required the creation and maintenance of resources for African development. The Hilton Young Commission Report said that this should be the first duty of the government of each territory: only after this should any surplus be used to promote immigrant enterprises. The Commissioners considered that the first requirement was for indigenous communities to have sufficient land to maintain a reasonable living standard using traditional agricultural methods. This land should be reserved for the African population and protected from encroachment by immigrants. They also thought it was necessary to deal with land tenure and anticipated a change from communal landholding to individual tenure. The Commission also considered labour issues, demanding a limit on the recruitment of more than a fixed percentage of workers as migrant labour and insisting on the inspection of work contracts and conditions.<sup>6</sup>

The British Colonial Secretary in the Labour government, J.H. Thomas, refused to amalgamate the two territories. He stated that the amalgamation of the two territories would make Northern Rhodesia fall under sway of settlers in Southern Rhodesia.<sup>7</sup> This was based on what was obtaining on the ground. For example, on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 1931, the British Secretary of State informed both the House of Lords and Governor Maxwell in a telegram that:

Her Majesty's government ... are not to agree to the amalgamation of Northern and Southern Rhodesia. They consider that a substantially greater advance should be made in the development of Northern Rhodesia before any final opinion can be formed as to its future. The European population is small and scattered while problems of native development are in a stage which makes it

inevitable that her Majesty's Government should hesitate to let them pass even partially out of their responsibility.<sup>8</sup>

In addition, the Governor of Northern Rhodesia wrote to the Governor of Nyasaland that a good number of Europeans in Northern Rhodesia wanted the Union of South Africa's policy of segregation and discrimination to be introduced as regards to natives.<sup>9</sup> These two Governors were against the amalgamation of the protectorates with Southern Rhodesia.<sup>10</sup>

Though the settlers protested and held an unofficial conference at Victoria Falls in 1931, the protestations were in vain.<sup>11</sup> The Bledisloe Commission of 1938 confirmed the British government's resentment of amalgamation by declaring that there could be no amalgamation until the settlers' policies on Africans were in line with those of the British government.<sup>12</sup>

The Bledisloe Commission was a Royal Commission appointed in 1937 to examine the possible closer union of the three British territories in Central Africa; Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. These territories were to some degree economically inter-dependent and it was suggested that an association would promote their rapid development. In 1939, the majority of the Commission members recommended a union of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland whose African populations would remain under the British trusteeship. It also proposed that there should be strong economic co-operation between these united territories and Southern Rhodesia, but ruled-out any political amalgamation involving Southern Rhodesia unless its overtly racial policies were changed and there was some form of representation of African interests in the legislatures of all three territories.<sup>13</sup>

The Commission's minority report recommended an early amalgamation of the three territories, despite almost unanimous African objections, largely on economic grounds. The Commission's recommendations were not put in place due to the outbreak of the Second European war, but closer ties in Central Africa were developed during the war. After the war, the white minority administrations of Northern and Southern Rhodesia renewed calls for a union.<sup>14</sup>

When the settlers realised that her Majesty's government would not agree to the amalgamation they began to advocate for a Federation of the British Central African colonies. The Central African Federation originated from the two day unofficial conference of white politicians at Victoria Falls in February, 1949. At this conference, Sir Godfrey Huggins the then Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia talked of partnership in the proposed Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.<sup>15</sup>

The option of partnership was acceptable even to Sir Stewart Gore-Browne, Zambia's foremost settler and long-time politician,<sup>16</sup> whose opposition to the amalgamation was well known. He suggested that a Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland might provide the organisational medium which could both preserve African rights and promote the benefits of economic interdependence.<sup>17</sup> It was perceived that in a Federation each member state keeps some powers and hands over others to a central 'Federal' government.

However, the settlers hoped that by leaving the British administrations in Zambia and Malawi with some of their powers, they would convince the British government that African interests would be protected.<sup>18</sup> Hall called this development at which European ideas progressed in their quest for European domination as "the resistible progress."<sup>19</sup> To most white settlers, the Federation was an opportunity to increase in

both economic and political gain. It was planned that Malawi and Northern Rhodesia would be sources of labour for Northern Rhodesia's copper mines and Southern Rhodesian industries.

Politically, the Federation was promised on condition that "partnership" between settlers and Africans should be established. This meant that Africans would take their full part with the rest of the community in economic development of the territories.<sup>20</sup> White civil servants were eager to promote racial harmony and were trying to wean Africans from the controversial doctrine of racial paramouncy.<sup>21</sup> In addition, the Secretary for Native Affairs, Hudson had made it known to the African Representative Council earlier in 1948 that:

The development of Northern Rhodesia is based on a genuine partnership between Europeans and Africans. The present and future interest of Northern Rhodesia can only be served by a policy of whole-hearted co-operation between the different sections of the community, based on the real interests of both sections<sup>22</sup>.

Among the good number of whites that advocated for genuine partnership with Africans were prominent Church men and others such as Dr. Charles Fisher, Reverend Merfyn Temple, Reverend Colin Morris and Sir Stewart Gore-Brown.<sup>23</sup> Even though, this gives us strong evidence that there were a good number of whites in favour of genuine "partnership" in real sense, it was difficult to eradicate racial discrimination and the colour bar which was strongly pronounced in South Africa and was slowly creeping into Southern and Northern Rhodesia.<sup>24</sup>

Africans opposed the Federation and questioned the idea of partnership and social harmony that was accompanying it. Among these were those that were studying

abroad such as Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula and Hasting Kamuzu Banda. When they learnt of the Victoria Falls Conference of 1949 to which no African was invited, the African elites questioned the “partnership” as it was reported in the newspapers both locally and abroad. Harry Nkumbula and Kamuzu Banda met to express their fears which they later submitted before the Colonial Office in London.<sup>25</sup>

In this document, they argued that the Federation was another form of amalgamation. For the amalgamation and Federation were not in the best interests of Africans. They expressed fear that the South African policy of segregation and discrimination which was already in force in Southern Rhodesia could be extended to Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland if this Federation was achieved. They observed that the larger white population in Southern Rhodesia would dominate the proposed Federation and deprive the Africans of their rights.<sup>26</sup>

Meanwhile, the Northern Rhodesian Government received the news of Nkumbula’s interference against its quest for Federation with bitterness because the British Government highly praised the two Africans. The Northern Rhodesia Government nearly withdrew Nkumbula’s study sponsorship when it learnt of this but it was vetoed to prevent provoked questions in the House of Commons.<sup>27</sup>

Hall records another similar story of Simon Zukas, a civil engineer at Ndola municipality who in his “dangerous” and “provocative” speech said: “You people are Christians and think that reason is more powerful than force. That is wrong.”<sup>28</sup> He said this at a rally in Mufulira, on the 16<sup>th</sup> February, 1952. This was interpreted as inciting people to rise against the government in opposition to the Federation. When Zukas’ office was ransacked by special branch men, they found in his office desk a memorandum headed ‘Ten Points for the Revolution’. He was imprisoned for several

months in Livingstone and later deported to London.<sup>29</sup> Zukas is said to have belonged to an anti-federation committee of young men which included Justin Chimba, Reuben Kamanga and Nephas Tembo that campaigned against the Federation in publications such as *The Freedom Newsletters* and *A case Against the Federation*.<sup>30</sup>

Although Africans were noted to have formally been against the formation of the Federation, among the educated Africans, there were a sizeable number of them in Lusaka and the Copperbelt that supported Federation, but were unable to come out openly for fear of harassment by the African National Congress (ANC) members.<sup>31</sup> Among these were Mansford B.C. Mussah, L.B Ng'ambi, Moses Mwale, and J. Zulu. These names were in the report prepared by Abel Nyirenda of Zimbabwe who was sent to Northern Rhodesia by the Capricorn African Society (CAS) to campaign for the Federation among Africans in 1952.<sup>32</sup> The Capricorn African Society's objective was to further co-operation and understanding among the races, aiming at providing a common meeting ground for the free exchange and discussion of ideas.<sup>33</sup> This could have been the reason as to why some African educated elite came to support the Federation which was meant to foster partnership among races.

At a conference of delegates from Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, held in February 1949, Sir Godfrey Huggins, the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia made the following comments that the native Africans had done nothing for Africa and very little for their own good before the European took charge. He further stated that Africa [continent] could not be left to waste in the hands of the Bantu.<sup>34</sup>



This statement confirmed Bishop May's earlier observations that the average settler did not regard the native as an equal.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, the idea of "partnership" and "social harmony" between the two races was just a mockery, something that was used in order to convince the British government to grant them the Federation of the three states.

When the federation finally came as feared by Africans, they were excluded from meaningful participation in their economies and in making decisions about their future. White settlers in Southern Rhodesia benefited highly from the Federation while Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland gained very little. The Africans in the three states were at the bottom of the ladder and gained even less.<sup>36</sup> The Federal Government dealt with all matters concerning Europeans and economic development which was more inclined to Southern Rhodesia's interests.<sup>37</sup>

British administrations in both Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland were affected in the way the Federal revenue was distributed.<sup>38</sup> For example, Northern Rhodesia produced the bulk of the revenue but she derived no benefits from the Federation arrangements and her money went into the development of economic infrastructure and thriving manufacturing industries in Southern Rhodesia. Southern Rhodesia tapped about £70 million of taxes that the government of Northern Rhodesia could otherwise have used to better the lives of its own citizens.<sup>39</sup> This is proof that Northern Rhodesia did not benefit economically in this Federation. The Colonial Government disregarded development of Northern Rhodesia's man power needs at all levels.<sup>40</sup> This had a serious impact in later years on independent Zambia when skilled European labour left the country.

In terms of “social harmony” as advocated for in the Federation by the Capricorn African Society, Huggins was keen to bring about separate developments for Africans and Europeans. He refused to allow Africans to use “white” entrances to post offices or to expect impartial services on the railways. Both were federally controlled.<sup>41</sup> When questioned in the first Federal Assembly debate by Dauti Yamba, one of the two indirectly elected African Representatives from the Northern Rhodesia, about the federal “partnership” which the British government advocated, Huggins in his response noted:

If this was carried out, it would create so much ill-feeling and so much resentment in the Europeans that we should put back the clock of advancement and cooperation and partnership by at least ten years. It is a very mischievous motion, you cannot expect the European to form up in a queue with dirty people, possibly an old African woman with an infant on her back, mewling and puking and making a mess.<sup>42</sup>

This was just one example of the social challenges that were faced by both Africans and Europeans out of the “partnership” between the races as advocated by those who were in favour of the establishment of the Federation.

The first five years of federal rule saw no important relaxation in the administration of public and private colour bars. Hotels, stores, and private establishments were discriminated. An industrial colour bar prevented Africans from competing with whites for jobs. The civil service remained white dominated. Roy Welensky’s Government of Northern Rhodesia failed to implement the policy of the partnership.<sup>43</sup>

In 1954 William Frank Rendall, a Member for the Ndola Electoral area acknowledged that discrimination of races was necessary because of cultural reasons if one wished to enjoy an intelligent conversation that required a cultural standard of language, even of the accents in talking to one another. He said this in his address to the Legislative Council. He alluded to the fact that Africans had cultural manners like nose pick in public and poor hygiene even in the way they prepared their meals. He said this in answer to Paskale Sokota's question on African advancement as it was advocated will happen under the Federation.<sup>44</sup>

In the above narrations it is clear that the Federal economic, political and social injustices were initiated and supported by the very persons who advocated for the establishment of the Central African Federation, who at the same time were political leaders in the legislative positions of governments and those with economic advantages to protect. Many stakeholders, Africans and some Europeans were disappointed with the turnout of the state of affairs.

### **The varying Role of the Church**

In 1953, some missionaries adopted a neutral attitude or stance on political issues as it was done by the Christian Missions in Many Lands (CMML) and the Catholic Church.<sup>45</sup> According to Mrs. Barker whose father was a missionary in North Western Province, the CMML had nothing to do with the liberation struggles of Zambia. These missionaries did not even allow nationalists to hold meetings in their areas of influence.<sup>46</sup>

In the same vein, the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Church Union which was a worldwide organisation was concerned only with carrying of the gospel to every nation and working under every type of government from the most liberal to the most

rigid totalitarian regimes. The motto of the Church was to render to Caesar the things that were Caesar's and to follow a course of non-involvement in politics.<sup>47</sup> In the SDA Church, there was no place for politics. Therefore, nowhere in the world, was the Seventh Day Adventist Church involved in politics.<sup>48</sup>

In their case, the Dutch Reformed Church supported the discrimination of races which was in line with the political ideology of the Union of South Africa. Towards the end of the colonial period, the Dutch Reformed Church found itself in an awkward position since most of its members were part of the struggle for political independence. The Church was divided on whether it should be involved in politics or not. This was communicated to the Christian Council of Northern Rhodesia by the African Christian Conference in June 1953.<sup>49</sup>

The Jehovah's Witnesses never combined their African and European meetings. They too tolerated segregation on the principle ground that the Witnesses were not to change any of the political policies of this world.<sup>50</sup> The Jehovah's Witnesses were not interested in the political development of the country. Any contribution to political developments if at all there was any in this country must have been indirect.<sup>51</sup>

Some Christians on the Copperbelt complained that both the Roman Catholic and the Free Church clergy first read the Bible but when they preached they soon left the Bible and started talking about Money, Lenshina or the Congress.<sup>52</sup> For instance, the attitude of the colonial Catholic Church in the Federation was reflected in the pastoral letter of Northern Rhodesia Ordinaries' Conference held in Lusaka, in April 1953 and addressed to all Catholic Missionaries and Members of the African Clergy in Northern Rhodesia.<sup>53</sup>

In this letter, the Church talked of Canon 139, paragraph 4 which strictly forbade all members of the Catholic Clergy to assume official functions in the Legislative Body of any state unless they obtained the explicit consent of the Holy See and of their Ordinary[Bishops]. The letter also reflected on Canon 141, paragraph 1 which strongly urged all members of the Catholic Clergy to refrain from taking any part in the internal quarrels of any country and in the perturbations of public order.<sup>54</sup>

In addition, the same letter pointed out that the Catholic Church was not political. It discouraged priests from taking part in the quarrels of political parties so as not to give the impression that they were taking more interest in the things of this world than the advancement of the kingdom of God. That would be the indication that they were not fulfilling the duty of their state of life.<sup>55</sup> The members of the clergy were bound to lead a supernatural life. They were urged to regard all purely human interests as a field which was inferior to their high calling. Above all, they had to avoid all discussions which tended to divide the citizens among themselves; such as political quarrels.<sup>56</sup> The letter forbade every member of the clergy against misuse of the authority attached to the priest's sacred character, or to misuse the influence of the Catholic Action Movements, to purely political purposes and with the view to favouring any political party"<sup>57</sup>.

It appears as though the Vatican (Catholic Leadership) was pressurised by the governments of the world to refrain its (enlightened) clergy from being actively involved in politics. This can be observed from the following statement:

It is also good to remember that, in signing concordats or agreements with the Holy See, many governments have requested that a clause be inserted to forbid

the members of the Clergy to give names to any political party, and to take any active and influential part in the activities of any political party.<sup>58</sup>

According to the above principles, it was the Church's strict duty to keep out of the political quarrels which were dividing the various peoples of Northern Rhodesia with regard to the proposed Federation.<sup>59</sup> The Clergy under the vow of obedience was bound to lead a supernatural life, above politics. It can be said that some of the Church's major benefactors were part of these colonial governments and the Catholic Church depended on these same governments for its stay and influence. This could be a good reason for the Church's strong stance against involving itself in politics even when political evils of the time called for its intervention.

In fact the Catholic Church thought that African political independence could come in the distant future. Most of the Catholic African teachers with influence from the white Clergy were not as well involved in political activities. They showed little interest in the changing political wind of Northern Rhodesia. As a Church, Catholic missionaries were not inclined to train their lay leaders for any liberation from European rule not even for their future independence.<sup>60</sup> According to Hinfelaar the Catholic population of the country was hardly aware of their political and civic rights, and many of them were indifferent to the African Nation Congress (ANC) movement. He went on to state that the Catholic Clergy in Northern Rhodesia did not speak with one voice either did they appreciate African nationalism. Some advised the Church leaders, catechists and teachers not to be members of political parties, while others suspected all political activities to be subversive.<sup>61</sup> In the 1950s, the Bishop of Kasama, Marcel Daubechies lamented that there were not enough educated teachers to counteract the influence of the national political parties which according to him were tainted with Communism.<sup>62</sup>

Therefore, even though some Churches claimed to be one and the same Church for all, irrespective of race, some Churches and individual missionaries came to be closely associated with the white race and the white rulers and could no longer be regarded as the disinterested benefactor or counsellor of Africans. Some clergy were considered to be tools for the government by telling people not to be politically active.

However, the Free Church of Scotland Missionaries took a radical stance. They aimed at bringing about African self governance. These Missionaries aimed at offering good education to fulfil their objective of bringing about radical thinkers among Africans.<sup>63</sup> These Missionaries were of the same group with those at Livingstonia in Malawi. Their main aim was to produce an educated elite group of nationalists that would dislodge colonial rule.<sup>64</sup> To this effect Owen Letcher later gave a warning concerning the evangelisation of Africans that one day there will be some great awakening unless missionaries influence in Africa is checked and that a day will come when the blacks, united to some extent by a common language and a common faith, will rise against the white man.<sup>65</sup> Lubwa Mission was one of the missions at which this Church managed to produce critical young men. These included Kenneth Kaunda the first President of the Republic of Zambia, Simon Mwansa Kapwepwe, Kapasa Makasa, Hyden Dingiswayo Banda, Lameck Goma and Wesley Nyirenda. <sup>66</sup> President Kaunda expressed his gratitude to the mission's education in these words:

We were taught by great educationalists such as my father, Reverend and Doctor David Brown and Reverend Maxwell Robert. Dr. Brown went round for clerical and teaching work. Maxwell later opened up Chalimbana College in Lusaka. These were not simple people but capable men who made learning

very enjoyable. Without education, we were not going to achieve political freedom. The education from Lubwa made us to do what we did towards independence. At the same time, Christ's message made us what we were and what we have been. No matter how little the education was it helped us to organise ourselves politically.<sup>67</sup>

Today the Free Church of Scotland missionaries are recognised as among some of the outstanding political contributors towards Zambia's independent by having offered good education with the intention of using it as the means of dislodging colonial rule. Kenneth Kaunda and Kapasa Makasa worked tirelessly in addressing local people about political awareness and self rule.<sup>68</sup>

Despite the different opinions and attitudes of the Churches' position with regard to national politics were at times a strong force and very influential when they spoke out as one united Church but were weak when their voices were divided.<sup>69</sup> This brings us to the events and situations when the ecumenical Church played a critical political role in colonial Zambia.

### **The Political Role of the Church before the Federation**

The Church's political role in politics can be traced to as far back as 1914. In this year, the missionary groupings came together to form the General Missionary Conference (GMC) which increased greatly the effectiveness of the political intervention of the Church during the period between the wars.<sup>70</sup> This Conference was attended by representatives of the Paris Mission, two Methodist Missions, the Roman Catholic Jesuits, the Plymouth Brethren and the Anglicans. It was the beginning of the Churches' ecumenism or Churches speaking with one voice, as a



united Church. One of its objectives was to watch over the interests of the native races.<sup>71</sup>

This allowed Churches to have a series of conferences held every three or four years which brought about Missionary cooperation in evangelisation. The General Missionary Conference was predominantly protestant. Catholics were welcome and some of the Catholics became very actively involved but they could not accept full membership. The absence of the Roman Catholic Church was even noted at the Lusaka General Missionary Conference of 8-11<sup>th</sup> August, 1939.<sup>72</sup>

The General Missionary Conferences opposed the economic, political and social injustices on behalf of Africans although missionary groupings were later divided in their opinion over the federation. For instance, the 1922 General Missionary Conference which was held at Kafue on July 17<sup>th</sup> to July 23<sup>rd</sup> condemned the imposition of poll tax in order to force Africans to work for the commercial benefit of a white man. They said it was unjust and oppressive since work could only be obtained in foreign countries of South Africa, Southern Rhodesia or Belgian Congo hundreds of miles away from home in order to earn tax money or on the mines of the Copperbelt. They observed that the annual exodus of able bodied men affected the fabric of tribal life and left the villages almost denuded of the adult males indispensable to food production and the labours of the native Community.<sup>73</sup>

At the same time, the 1922 General Missionary Conference passed a resolution calling for the establishment of one or more government colleges or institutions to provide instruction in agriculture, forestry, pedagogy and the duties of chiefs.<sup>74</sup> It was further suggested that these institutions be under the management of a joint

council of nominees of the Administration and representatives of the missions, setting precedence for partnership between the state and Church in education.<sup>75</sup>

This trend continued even when the Colonial Office took over the running of the government in 1924. In that very year on June 9<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>, the General Missionary Conference was held at Kafue where the Missionaries continued to press for the rights of Africans. At this Conference the Government was urged to do more for Native Education. This was because except for the National School in Barotse-land Government had shown no practical interest in the Native Education anywhere else in the territory. The Conference pointed out that all the 500 voluntary schools in the country were entirely sustained by the funds of various missions. It was stated that secular education was the duty of the state. Primary and secondary education was to be undertaken in mission schools with state aid. The higher education was to be undertaken in government schools with mission aid.<sup>76</sup>

It was again the missionaries through the General Missionary Conference who felt obliged to speak on behalf of the unvoiced African people on the issue of amalgamation between Southern and Northern Rhodesia in the late 1920s and 1930s. They expressed fear that the problems of the South African native colour bar could split over into Southern Rhodesia and cross into Northern Rhodesia. Bishop May said in a separate memorandum that:

The average settler does not regard the native as an equal. He repudiates them. To him the native is neither a fellow-worker, a fellow citizen, nor even...a fellow man; and the idea of any sort of trusteeship or responsibility is either foreign to him or laughable.<sup>77</sup>

According to this statement, in Northern Rhodesia there was no colour bar as practiced in Southern Rhodesia. The General Conference drew up a memorandum in which they listed some Acts of the Southern Rhodesia Government which discriminated between races, emphasising that amalgamation would extend those injustices to Northern Rhodesia.<sup>78</sup>

The missionaries again later in 1935 stood as the voice for African interests that spoke out not only to the Northern Rhodesian Government but also to the mother government, namely the British Government. However, their outspokenness did not go without reprimand from political officials. This came after the Copperbelt mine strike of 1935 in which six strikers were killed.<sup>79</sup>

A Commission of Enquiry was appointed to look into the cause of the disturbance by the Governor. Bishop May and the Reverend J.G. Saulby, the Acting President of the General Missionary Conference objected very strongly against the composition of the Committee of Enquiry. They argued that an impartial commission should be appointed for that type of investigation. The Governor of Northern Rhodesia, Sir Hubert Winthrop Young, attended the Conference and reprimanded the Missionaries for associating themselves with Government activities.<sup>80</sup> In reaction to the reprimand, Reverend Saulby said:

We claim the right to criticise when criticism is obviously deserved and our criticism is offered in kindness and with a desire to help both Europeans and Natives and also the Government. We think it does not quite deserve the castigation which it has received this morning<sup>81</sup>

To the 1938 Bledisloe Commission, the General Missionary Conference submitted a memorandum, in which the members spoke against amalgamation of Southern and

Northern Rhodesia. They feared that racial discriminations from South Africa would spread into Northern Rhodesia. They also feared the dehumanising effect of excessive and unjust poll tax that compelled African men to leave their villages for European labour in the distance places. In this memorandum they also noted that because of their continuous and intimate service it was their privilege to speak for the African population of one-and-a-half millions—a population for the most part inarticulate— particularly, although not solely, the peoples who lived in the reserves. They saw the need to do so because all conferences and commissions were exclusively white. The Africans, being unrepresented, were more obviously in need of somebody to speak for them.<sup>82</sup>

A private meeting of the executive members of the General Missionary Conference of Northern Rhodesia, held on the 10<sup>th</sup> April, 1940 in Lusaka suggested that at least one member of the Commission to investigate into the 1940 disturbances on the Copperbelt should be a missionary. It also strongly recommended that at least one suitable African be appointed as a full member of such a Commission, a gesture calculated to inspire the confidence of Africans in the sincerity of the Commission's desire to sift thoroughly and fearlessly all the facts. It urged the Government to give increasing attention to the question of joint race relations between Europeans and Africans, particularly in the industrial areas.<sup>83</sup>

There was another reprimand against the Church in 1943. This time it came from the mine companies of the Rhodesia Selection Trust group that supported the United Missions to the Copperbelt financially. The complaint was that the Missionaries were involving themselves in highly controversial matters affecting native affairs which were not within the scope of Missionary work. In reply the Secretary of the United Missions wrote that:

We should always try to represent the needs, claims or rights of the African workers directly to the Mining companies. But we must claim very definitely that the United Missions to the Copperbelt is interested in all matters concerning native welfare, even if they may be classed as highly controversial. The scope of Missionary activities cannot be limited in such a way as to exclude political questions. We must make it clear that money does not buy our silence in such matters.<sup>84</sup>

These recorded incidents stand as examples that the ecumenical Church intervened in the exploitations and injustices done against Africans. At this point, it is important to note that from 1945 the General Missionary Conference was called the Christian Council of Northern Rhodesia and upon independence in 1964 it was named the Christian Council of Zambia (CCZ).

### **The Church in the Federation**

In November 1951 the Conference of Missionary Societies in Great Britain appealed to the British Government against the Federation. They stated that any attempt to impose such a plan [Federation] in the face of almost unanimous African opposition or even supposing it were ill-informed. This would destroy the basis upon which its success would depend and would set a precedence which would have far-reaching consequences, not confined to British Central Africa.<sup>85</sup>

In June 1952 the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland opposed the Federation and wrote to the British Government stating that:

The General Assembly, noting with interest the movement towards a Central African Federation, but viewing with concern the actual proposals now being made, urge upon Her Majesty's Government that full consideration be given to

African opinion and that no scheme should be adopted without the consent and co-operation of the Africans.<sup>86</sup>

The London Missionary Society in Northern Rhodesia wrote to the *Manchester Guardian* in February 1953 that to ignore the African opposition would be to abrogate all claims to responsible statesmanship. The Federation if enforced now would bring great harm to interracial co-operation of the Africans.<sup>87</sup>

Lastly, the Christian Council of Northern Rhodesia in the June 1953 Resolution stated that:

The Christian Council of Northern Rhodesia recognises that it is primarily the right of every Christian to hold his own views on the issue of Federation in the light of his own conscience, but it wishes to express deep concern that the Government has found it necessary to proceed with Federation while African opinion remains so strongly opposed to it. The Council respectfully requests Government to issue such a declaration of rights for all men within the territory as shall remove all doubts as to their future well-being within the State. The Christian Council hopes that Africans will be given an increasing share in the educational, industrial and political life of the state.<sup>88</sup>

The right of every Christian' also meant the right of every denomination. It can be noted that even though, the General Missionary Conference (or Christian Council of Northern Rhodesia) could not determine the opinions and attitudes of all its membership to allow it to speak as one united Church against the federation. There were individual missionaries that took the bull by its horns in the fight against political injustices.

Among those that showed keen interest in seeing to it that Africans were granted political freedom were some Roman Catholic priests like Patrick Walsh, Bishop Rene George Pailloux, Van Rijthoven, Jean Jacques Corbeil, and Luigi Policarpo. Some of the protestant Reverends were Colin Morris, Merfyn Temple and John Moffat.

Fr. Patrick Walsh came to Zambia in 1946, that same year he was appointed to work as parish priest at Sacred Heart in Kabwe where he was meant to serve the Europeans only but he opted to be involved in the creation of inter-racial dialogue between Catholic members and the colonial administration. He founded the United Northern Rhodesia Association, an inter-racial club.<sup>89</sup>

In 1959, he influenced the Bishops on the publication of a newspaper, "*The Leader*" which first appeared in 1961. This paper offered a voice to Northern Rhodesia's African people to air their views on the colour bar in economic, political and social policies of that time. The paper also carried articles and features on the nationalist leaders and their policies. The white settlers accused the paper of sharing with the nationalists their contempt for anyone and anything not connected with African Nationalism.<sup>90</sup>

Through Walsh's influence, in May 1963, the Jesuits honoured Kenneth Kaunda with an honorary doctorate of laws at the Jesuit Fordham University in New York.<sup>91</sup>

Walsh is remembered by Zambia's first President as a true nationalist. This is what President Kaunda said about Walsh:

He took care of my family when I was imprisoned and sent to Salisbury. He put my children in Catholic schools when I was not even a Catholic. He also brought my wife to Salisbury to visit me. The Inter-racial club that he

organised helped very much in bringing different races together for discussions and often could play tennis together. We met and had drinks together. It was helpful indeed for the discussions were very rich.<sup>92</sup>

In May, 1967, among others, the government awarded a number of outstanding clergy for their outstanding services. Father Patrick Walsh was awarded the Companion of the Order of Freedom.<sup>93</sup>

The Catholic Bishop of Mansa, Bishop René George Pailloux had always shown a keen interest in the opinions of the African leaders and he wanted Catholic Bishops to contribute more positively to the constitutional debates of the late 1950s but with little success. He did not give up but took up another challenge by gathering together a group of educated laymen and women. He encouraged them to take part in the constitutional debates and political developments of the country. He urged them to play an influential role in trade unions and political movements.<sup>94</sup>

In 1957, Bishop Pailloux proposed to the assembly of Bishops that for political as well as religious reasons, African priests had to be made Bishops as quickly as possible. It was he who in 1963, made the first move in the history of the Catholic Church in Zambia by ordaining Fr. Clement Chabukasansha as his auxiliary Bishop. This action made Bishop Adam Kozłowiecki to prepare Fr. Adrian Munghandu in Lusaka for the high office in his Archdiocese too.<sup>95</sup>

In a confidential note to the Monkton Commission of 21<sup>st</sup> January, 1960, Pailloux pointed out that the present system of the Federation had proved inadequate to safeguard the rights of a considerable section of the population. This resulted in quasi-complete opposition to Federation on the part of the Africans. In this note he gave a summary of 17 points on what was wrong with the Federation. These included



the Federal Franchise which was only reserved for whites; discriminations and segregations in residential quarters, restaurants, cafes, hotels, in places of entertainments, in hospitals and clinics, in schools and in prisons including the discrimination in the professions. He further stated that too much of the revenue of Northern Rhodesia went to Federal Schemes outside Northern Rhodesia. Even European businessmen in Northern Rhodesia bitterly complained against it.<sup>96</sup>

He published a book titled *Abakristyani ne Milandu ya Calo: ni Bonse pamo* in 1961.<sup>97</sup> Meaning, Christians and the matters of the World: Involve every one. This book served as an instrument for educating Africans on their political rights and on how to organise themselves politically.

It can be argued that Patrick Walsh and René Pailloux were well ahead of the Catholic Clergy leadership in Northern Rhodesia in interpreting political indicators of the time, to which Hinfelaar says they had a wider vision and worked closely together.<sup>98</sup> These two encouraged the Catholic elite to become involved in politics as much as possible when the other section of the Clergy like the Bishop of Kasama, Marcel Daubechies discouraged them from doing so.<sup>99</sup>

In the northern part of Zambia, Fathers Jean Jacques Corbeil and Van Rijthoven became politically involved in the anti-federation campaigns in Chinsali. In the 1950s, Chinsali district became much politicised. Young men, members of the United National Independence Party (UNIP) campaigned against Federation and demanded political independence. Van Rijthoven and Corbeil were understanding and even became involved in the political struggles for independence.

When the mobile unit of the colonial government police moved through the villages to flush out freedom fighters, the two missionaries protected these men by hiding

them and their families in the mission, sometimes in the empty food bins of the boarding schools. In 1962, when the colonial government later learnt of this, the two were forced to leave the country by their superiors. However, Corbeil came back to Zambia at the request of President Kaunda immediately after independence.<sup>100</sup> As Kenneth Kaunda observed,

They fed us when we were in trouble. When we passed through their area and they looked after us. We really appreciated all the work they did. Fr. Corbeil encouraged us to think properly. He was simply a good man, a good freedom fighter. So as a government, we recognized his contribution to the struggle for independence.<sup>101</sup>

Among the Franciscan priests in Ndola, Fr. Luigi Policarpo was another missionary that Kenneth Kaunda identified as having worked positively in that local Chifubu community during the last decade of colonial rule. Policarpo had come to Zambia in 1953. His first appointment was at Chifubu parish as the first parish priest. Policarpo observed that most of people in Chifubu and Kansenshi were Catholics. It was a stronghold of the United National Independence Party (UNIP). He was in tune with the politics of that time. His preaching was mostly social gospel and sensitised people in politics. In this way he risked his life in siding with Africans against the colonial government.<sup>102</sup>

Policarpo gave advice of unity to the nationalists who became divided among themselves, between the African National Congress and the United National Independence Party. He advised that it was important for them to unite against the common enemy and that the division was not necessary before political freedom. The political parties would be vital after independence. For his personal security,

Policarpo depended on Christians and not the colonial police. At this time, it was not safe for a white man to freely move in Chifubu. Fr. Policarpo was the only white man that cycled a bicycle from one point of Chifubu to another without being attacked or beaten by Africans for he was seen as one of them politically.<sup>103</sup>

It is also important to note that Fr. Policarpo faced difficulties with his superiors especially when Kenneth Kaunda asked him to arrange a private meeting for him to meet Bishop Francis Muzzari. The Bishop was reluctant to allow his Clergy to be politically involved for fear that it would put the Catholic Church in conflict with Welensky, the Governor of Northern Rhodesia.<sup>104</sup> Kaunda noted that “Fr. Policarpo was a person with whom we spoke the same language and worked together. I came to know him after my second imprisonment in Kabompo.”<sup>105</sup>

Other denominations such as the Methodist and the Presbyterians became aware of the political climate for change. This made them start preparing some of their more articulate African leaders for the future demands of political freedom.<sup>106</sup> However, Bishop Njase argued that it was not the gospel values that convinced most of the clergy to strongly side with Africans politically but rather the political wind of change that transformed their attitude to politics.<sup>107</sup>

Colin Morris<sup>108</sup> was a Methodist Minister of the European Free Church in Chingola. He came to Northern Rhodesia from Britain in 1956 at the age of 26. Before he came to Zambia he had done research work in industrial Relations at Nuffield College, Oxford, and was a specialist in labour relations in the British Mining Industry.<sup>109</sup> He was the most hated among Europeans and loved among Africans because he worked hard to help Africans dislodge colonialism. He attacked the Churches in 1958 urging

them to act politically or decay.<sup>110</sup> He preached to the people using the pulpit by pointing out that:

God did not select certain races for his honour, nor did he give it to men as a prize on attaining standards of culture and civilisation. Thus the Divine Seal of their merit as individuals or races because it had been their possession since before they had any merit other than that of bare existence.<sup>111</sup>

Meaning God has never favoured any race or individuals to justify the European attitude towards Africans. Morris condemned the Europeans by stating that there was no Biblical justification for an attitude which assumed that those of God's children with white skins had dignity of Divine creation unconditionally, whilst those with black skins had to prove their worthiness before that dignity was extended to them.<sup>112</sup>

Phiri recorded that in 1957, Colin Morris was a member of the Constitutional Party (Liberal Party) which was led by Alexander Scott.<sup>113</sup> He later resigned from pastoral work and devoted his time to the Liberal Party which advocated for the creation of a non-racial society of all people.<sup>114</sup>

Morris preached the social gospel concerning racial discrimination to more than 60,000 people through the column of the daily press – replying to letters which attacked him on why he used the pulpit to talk about politics. He produced a book on racism which nationalist leaders sold in African shops.<sup>115</sup>

Among the outstanding ministers in the London Missionary Society was John Moffat who played a critical role in the political struggle for Zambia's independence. He was the Chairperson of the Liberal Party which was established on 20<sup>th</sup> October, 1960. He adopted a resolution calling for the end of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and a new constitution for Northern Rhodesia to be effected without

delay. In addition, he influenced the Party's policy by his own theory that political power should be transferred from European to multi-racial local ruling elite. The aim of the Liberal Party as already noted was to create a non-racial society for all people's progress.<sup>116</sup>

However, when militant African nationalists felt the Liberal party constitution did not go far enough to meet their expectations, Moffat was one of those from the European community who thought that the pace of change was moving too fast. He believed that Africans were not yet ready for democracy. He thought the African majority needed time to learn the basics of liberal democracy and the art of governance before they could take over the government.<sup>117</sup>

There was another notable Methodist Minister, Merfyn Temples who was the chairperson of the Capricorn African Society, Lusaka branch from 1956 to 1957, and a member of the Liberal Party known as Constitutional Party in 1957.<sup>118</sup> Later on, from 1<sup>st</sup> February, 1957 to 1958 Temple was the deputy Leader of the Constitutional Party. With sincerity of thought he submitted a written statement to the Monckton Commission to the effect that he did not believe that the Federal government would ever win the confidence and trust of the African people while it boasted of its material achievements and bullied the underprivileged.<sup>119</sup>

Reverend Temple went as far as giving Dr. Kenneth Kaunda a Land Rover to use in his campaigns, relieving him of long distance bicycle riding. To Kaunda, Temple stood for true justice.<sup>120</sup>

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this chapter gives the background to the study of church and politics before and during the Federation in Northern Rhodesia 1950-1963. It has examined

the political activities of the church in the face of economic, political and social challenges related to the formation of the Federal government. It has also analysed the attitudes of some Churches towards African nationalism and the quest for self-government during the Federation of 1953-1963. The chapter has established the fact that some churches and individuals were tolerant of many aspects of the colonial regime by being apolitical in many issues that needed their intervention.

However, the chapter has also revealed that there were also a number of Churches and several Christians who strongly came out in public and genuinely supported the nationalists in their quest for self government. At times, even against the wishes of their Church authorities.

# Endnotes

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- <sup>8</sup> Sec/Ea/9: Passfield to Maxwell, 1 July 1931 (Telegram), in Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa: The Making of Malawi and Zambia 1873 - 1964*, p. 103.
- <sup>9</sup> The policy of South Africa as explained by Hastings Kamuzu Banda and Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula in the memorandum to the colonial office, as quoted in Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa: The Making of Malawi and Zambia 1873 - 1964*, p. 224.
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- <sup>11</sup> Needham, Mashingaidze, and Bhebe, *From Iron Age to Independence: A History of Genral Africa*, p. 173.
- <sup>12</sup> Needham, Mashingaidze, and Bhebe, *From Iron Age to Independence: A History of Genral Africa*, p. 173.
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- <sup>16</sup> Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa: The Making of Malawi and Zambia 1873 - 1964*, pp. ix-x.
- <sup>17</sup> Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa: The Making of Malawi and Zambia 1873 - 1964*, p.217.
- <sup>18</sup> Needham, Mashingaidze, and Bhebe, *From Iron Age to Independence: A History of Genral Africa*, p. 174.
- <sup>19</sup> Richard Hall, *Zambia* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1969), p. 145.
- <sup>20</sup> Hall, *Zambia*, p.146.
- <sup>21</sup> Hall, *Zambia*, p.146.
- <sup>22</sup> This was part of Hudson, the Secretary for Native Affairs' speech addressed to the African Representative Council as recorded in Hall, *Zambia*, p.146.
- <sup>23</sup> Bizeck Jube Phiri, *A Political History of Zambia: From the Colonial Period to the Third Republic, 1890 – 2001* (Asmara: African World Press, 2006), p. 69.
- <sup>24</sup> Robert I. Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa: The Making of Malawi and Zambia 1873 – 1964* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), p. 224.
- <sup>25</sup> Hastings Kamuzu Banda and Harry Mwanga Nkumbula, "Federation in Central Africa", held on the 1<sup>st</sup> May 1949, in Robert I. Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa: The Making of Malawi and Zambia 1873 - 1964*, p. 224.
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- <sup>29</sup> Hall, *Zambia*, p. 154.
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- <sup>32</sup> Phiri, *A Political History of Zambia: From Colonial Rule to the Third Republic, 1880 – 2001*, p. 69.
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- <sup>34</sup> Report of a conference of Delegates from Northern and Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 16 – 17<sup>th</sup> February, 1949 (unpublished typescript), in Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa: The making of Malawi and Zambia 1873 – 1964*, p. 221.
- <sup>35</sup> B 1/3/36: Containing the testimony of Bishop May, in Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa: The Making of Malawi and Zambia 1873 - 1964*, p. 224.
- <sup>36</sup> *United National Independence Party (UNIP): National Parties for the Next Decade 1974 – 1984* (Lusaka: Zambia Information Services 19 n.d.), p. 1.
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- <sup>41</sup> Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa: The making of Malawi and Zambia 1873 – 1964*, p. 255.
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- <sup>60</sup>H. Hinfelaar, *History of the Catholic Church in Zambia 1895 – 1995* (Lusaka: Book World Publisher, 2004), p. 165.
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- <sup>71</sup>Taylor, and Lehamann, *Christians of the Copperbelt: The Growth of the Church in Northern Rhodesia*, p.18.
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- <sup>114</sup>Phiri “Decolonisation and Multi-racial Liberation in Northern Rhodesia: A Reassessment”, p. 27.
- <sup>115</sup>Morris, *The Black Government? A discussion between Kenneth Kaunda and Colin Morris*, p.27.
- <sup>116</sup>Phiri, “Decolonisation and Multi-racial Liberation in Northern Rhodesia: A Reassessment”, pp. 23- 24.

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<sup>117</sup>Phiri, *A Political History of Zambia: From Colonial Rule to the Third Republic, 1880 – 2001*, p. 101.

<sup>118</sup>Phiri, *A Political History of Zambia: From Colonial Rule to the Third Republic, 1880 – 2001*, pp. 69, 71.

<sup>119</sup>Capricorn African Society papers, File No. 128, Memorandum for submission to the Monckton Commission, prepared by Reverend M.M. Temple, Secretary of the United Society for Christian Literature in Northern Rhodesia, in Phiri, *A political History of Zambia: From Colonial Rule to the Third Republic, 1880 – 2001*, p. 105.

<sup>120</sup>Interview, Kenneth Kaunda, Kabulonga, Lusaka, Zambia, 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2006.