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Kaunda warns SA: Stay out or . . .

ZAMBIA will call on "foreign countries" for help if South Africa intervenes militarily in Rhodesia.

This threat is given by President Kenneth Kaunda in an interview published this weekend in the German weekly magazine Der Spiegel.

The Zambian President also rejects Mr P W Botha's concept of a constellation of states as "just another colonial approach" and says that, instead, Zambia will reduce its trade with South Africa.

Political Correspondent

In a scathing attack on South Africa's new policy, Pres Kaunda says the "forces of exploitation" wanted to make South Africa the kingpin for operations in Zambia.

"They want to create Bantustans around their place, puppet governments that will be forced to dance to South Africa's tune. We are saying no to this."

Interviewed by Der Spiegel's

Africa correspondent, Paul Schumacher, in Lusaka, the Zambia President says that:

- He will agree to a constellation only when "the racists return power to the people — if everyone, black, brown and white would vote for Botha, we would be happy to join them".

- He will have no choice but to support Bishop Muzorewa — if the elections are genuine and he is satisfied that Bishop Muzorewa is the choice of the people of Rhodesia.

- His former Angolan ally,

Unita, is the "enemy of Zambia". Unip (Zambia's only party) and the MPLA are "sister parties". "Only Unita keeps us apart by destroying the Benguela railway."

- South Africans are "stupid Africans" because they are not "willing to accept Africans from the same motherland".

Asked about the effect of Rhodesian independence on Zambia, he says that "once Zimbabwe is free, and I mean free, not in the hands of some puppet, but in the hands of the



PRES. KENNETH KAUNDA
New threat

patriots who fought for that country's independence", Zambia would have another opening for its trade. It would also anticipate South West Africa's independence and the encirclement of the "racists by truly non-racial states".

Spiegel: South Africa has threatened intervention in Rhodesia if chaos occurs. What would Zambia do in such a case?

friendly countries to come to our aid . . . they will defend our borders and naturally they will help the patriots in Rhodesia afterwards.

Pres Kaunda declined to say which countries he would ask for help.

Questioned on economic ties with South Africa, he said that business between capitalist and socialist countries were common — "just think of the Soviet Union and the United States".

"We have no choice in this matter. The enemy knows this, hence the bombing of our bridges. Just look at the way they bombed our bridges, which enable us to have contact with the outside world through countries other than South Africa or Rhodesia. I call this economic strangulation."

Spiegel: The West German Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, thinks you should trade with South Africa, just like Malawi, without accepting apartheid.

Kaunda: I suppose he means well. We are not saying we will cut off trade with South Africa, but we will be reducing

Maggie and PW: It looks like a meeting



P W BOTHA
Ready to seize
chance of an
official visit
to Britain

PRIME Minister P W Botha is expected to make an official visit to Britain early next year.

Mrs Margaret Thatcher's "encouraging words" on change in South Africa in an address to the Foreign Policy Association in New York are interpreted in Pretoria as a sign that she is clearing the path for a visit by Mr Botha.

There is now mounting speculation in informed political circles that Mr Botha might visit Britain for talks with the British Prime Minister as early as the end of January and before the next parliamentary session.

It is believed that a meeting between Mr Botha and Mrs Thatcher

By FLEUR DE VILLIERS

was one of the issues raised when South African Foreign Minister Mr Pik Botha met Mrs Thatcher in London recently.

Political circles in Pretoria say that both British Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington and the British premier were sympathetic to a British visit by Mr Botha and to a proposed meeting between the two leaders.

The meeting, however, could not take place until after the Rhodesian settlement had been signed and sealed and Mrs Thatcher's visit to the United States this week.

Speaking on the Rhodesian peace settlement in New York she said there was now a real prospect that the

conflict on South Africa's borders with Rhodesia and Namibia would be ended soon.

"This, combined with welcome initiatives in South Africa's domestic policies, offers a chance to defuse a regional crisis and to make progress towards an ending of the isolation of South Africa in world affairs".

Mrs Thatcher's remarks — the most explicit encouragement any Western leader has given Mr Botha's reforms — are believed to be in response to diplomatic complaints from Pretoria that the West has persistently turned a blind eye to domestic change in South Africa and yet expects it to be helpful on Rhodesia and Namibia.

South Africa's attitude to the Rhodesian settlement is perceived in

some British circles as being vital to its success.

Mrs Thatcher's speech was immediately seized on by Mr Pik Botha as "encouraging" and in sharp contrast with the recent spate of UN General Assembly resolutions against South Africa.

The British Prime Minister had now repeated publicly what she had said to him two months ago in London, Mr Botha said.

"She is not the only world leader with these opinions, but she has the courage to say it openly."

A clear indication that Mr P W Botha could shortly follow it up with a visit to Britain is contained in the Afrikaans newspaper, Beeld, which is closely in touch with the Prime Minister's thinking.

In an editorial this week, Beeld

welcomed the Thatcher statement and said:

"There is now very important follow-up work to be done and if the opportunity occurs for Mr Botha to visit, for example, the United States or Britain, he should make use of it."

"It will be a golden opportunity to push doors, which have opened a crack, wide open."

Political sources believe the recent British view of changes in South Africa, followed up by a visit to Britain, could also defuse isolationist views and end the military obsession with the "total war" against South Africa.

Mr Botha was ripe for expansion of the Western view which could tell him that South Africa was not isolated, they said.

AS Christians round the world gather to celebrate the birth of Jesus, once again they recite the story of a child born to a virgin.

The details are familiar, yet fabulous: harkening angels, adoring shepherds, a mysterious star. But is the story true?

To the literal-minded, the infancy narratives of Matthew and Luke are the opening chapters in the official biography of Jesus.

To scholars of the New Testament, however, they are not history at all, but something infinitely more important: symbol-laden stories created to dramatize a deeper mystery — that the Jesus who was born 2 000 years ago was truly Christ the Lord.

Since the 19th century, scholars have sought to isolate "the historical Jesus" from "the Christ of faith" proclaimed in the Gospels. But today, most biblical scholars no longer make such a facile distinction.

For one thing, there are no firsthand written accounts of Jesus' life from which a verbal or visual portrait could be fashioned.

For another, while there were eyewitnesses to his public ministry, it is highly unlikely that any of them can be identified with the authors of the four Gospels, which were written 40 to 60 years after his death.

In their quest for the real Jesus, scholars today emphasize the creative role of the four evangelists.

Each of the four Gospels, they say, presents a different portrait of Jesus fashioned to meet the needs of the community for which it was written and to rebut views of Jesus with which they disagreed.

BY using the modern tools of historical criticism, linguistics and literary analysis, biblical scholars try to distinguish the layers of oral traditions embedded within each Gospel and to confront the essential mind-set — if not the actual words — of Jesus.

"Primarily, the Gospels tell us how each evangelist conceived of and presented Jesus to a Christian community in the last third of the first century," says Father Raymond Brown, a leading expert on the Gospel of John and a professor at New York's Union Theological Seminary.

Nevertheless, New Testament scholars today know more about the Gospels themselves and the milieu in which they were formed than any previous generation of biblical researchers.

In the past decade alone, translations of several ancient texts from the period 200 BC to 200 AD have vastly enriched the biblical trove.

One is the Temple Scroll, longest of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which indicates that Jesus' strictures against divorce and other of his teachings were very similar to those held by the ascetic Essene sect at Qumran.

ANOTHER is the recently translated Nag Hammadi codices, which contain gospels composed by second-century Gnostic rivals of orthodox Christians.

And in the new year, Duke University's Professor James Charlesworth will publish the most complete edition of the Pseudepigrapha, a collection of some 53 texts by Jewish and early Christian scribes, many of which were regarded as sacred books by the Jews of Jesus' time.

Virtually all biblical scholars would vigorously deny that their work undercuts the central message of the Christian faith; that God was incarnate in human form and that He died and rose again from the dead to redeem mankind from sin.

The quest for the real Jesus

By KENNETH L WOODWARD

To call into question some of the historical assertions in the four Gospels is not to dispute their spiritual truth.

What is known about the historical Jesus is that he was born in the last years of Herod the Great and died during the reign of Tiberius Caesar when Pontius Pilate was Procurator of Judea.

He was an itinerant rabbi — his thinking was close to the liberal school of Pharisees — who ate with sinners and publicans, was regarded by some as a prophet and religious visionary, aroused the antagonism of influential Jewish leaders, violated at least some Sabbath laws, entered Jerusalem during the Passover celebration, was interrogated by the Sanhedrin, tried before a Roman court and crucified as a common criminal.

Aside from this bare outline, not much is certain.

THE four Gospels contain individual sayings and stories based on memories of Jesus' earthly ministry, which were transmitted — and inevitably stylized in the process — by the oral traditions of the various Christian communities.

The four evangelists themselves are extremely mysterious figures.

Although there have been many guesses about their identities, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are simply names attributed to shadowy figures who may even have been groups of people, not individual authors.

Moreover, no one has yet pinpointed the Christian communities for which the Gospels were written, though several locations have been suggested.

It has been thought that Mark wrote to a Roman audience, that Matthew and Luke both addressed themselves to people living at Antioch, in Syria, and that John's community was based at Ephesus in Asia Minor.

HERE, in brief, are the different slants of the four Gospels:

MARK: In this, the earliest and the shortest of the four, Jesus emerges as the long-awaited Messiah who redeems the world from Satan's grip by his own Passion and death.

Mark signals his theological intent at the outset when John the Baptist announces the coming Messiah and is shortly "delivered up" to his enemies.

This presages what will happen to Jesus and what Mark himself believes all followers of Christ must expect.

When Jesus begins his ministry, Mark presents him as a stereotypical miracle worker, a stock figure of Hellenic culture familiar to his gentile readers.

His miracles win him little faith. Mark's Gospel is the only one in which those who should best understand him — his family, the scribes and especially his own disciples — all fail to recognize him as the Messiah, or misunderstand his mission.

In the same episode in which Peter acknowledges Jesus as Messiah, for example, his Master repudiates him — "Get behind me, Satan" — for failing to accept that "the Son of Man" has not come to rule the world through personal power, but to redeem it by his death.

Mark's crucifixion scene is exceedingly lonely. None of the dis-

ciples is present. Jesus dies with a cry of ultimate abandonment: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

And it is left to a Roman centurion — a pagan who has watched Jesus die — to profess what the disciples could not: "Truly this man was the Son of God."

In Mark's original conclusion, the disciples are never informed of the resurrection and thus are never reconciled with Christ.

This conclusion has created a major controversy among New Testament scholars. Some point out that verses later added to Mark by another author or authors do indicate a reconciliation in Galilee between the disciples and the risen Christ.

OTHERS believe that Mark's negative assessment of the disciples was intended to shift the focus of Christianity away from the church in Jerusalem, which was identified with the disciples, after that city was destroyed by Roman forces in 70 AD.

But the most radical conclusion is that of Professor Werner Kelber, of Rice University, who believes Mark's disciples were the chief opponents of Jesus, repudiated by him and so not saved.

Mark's point, says Kelber, is that readers of his Gospel were to look to the Cross for salvation and not rely solely on Jesus' miracles and message.

Jesuit scholar John Donahue, of Vanderbilt University, does not go that far, but he concedes Mark is suggesting that knowledge of the historical Jesus is inadequate for salvation without faith in the crucified Christ.

MATTHEW: Here, Jesus is presented as a royal Messiah, the last King of Israel and the Son of God, sent to teach his people as well as to die for them. He is also a remarkably humble king, as Matthew's story of the Nativity makes clear.

Though descended from the royal line of David, Jesus is born not in Jerusalem, but in Bethlehem, where foreign wise men come to worship him.

This kingly image rivals that of Jesus as rabbi, which other scholars of Matthew emphasize.

"In Matthew, Jesus' followers call him Lord and other royal titles," says New Testament specialist Jack Kingsbury, of Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. "Only the Pharisees call him teacher and Judas alone calls him 'Rabbi'."

Matthew's Jesus is particularly antagonistic toward the Jewish establishment: he calls the scribes and Pharisees a "brood of vipers."

In part, these passages seem to reflect Matthew's efforts to distinguish Christianity from rabbinical Judaism, which the Pharisees were developing in response to the catastrophic destruction of Jerusalem.

Matthew's Jesus is presented as a new Moses when he delivers his Sermon on the Mount, one of five teaching discourses in the Gospel.

BUT in Matthew's portrait, Jesus is not just an interpreter of the law, he is the lawgiver and personal fulfilment of Jewish prophecy.

Christianity, Matthew wants to make clear, is a natural, long-expected development of Judaism.

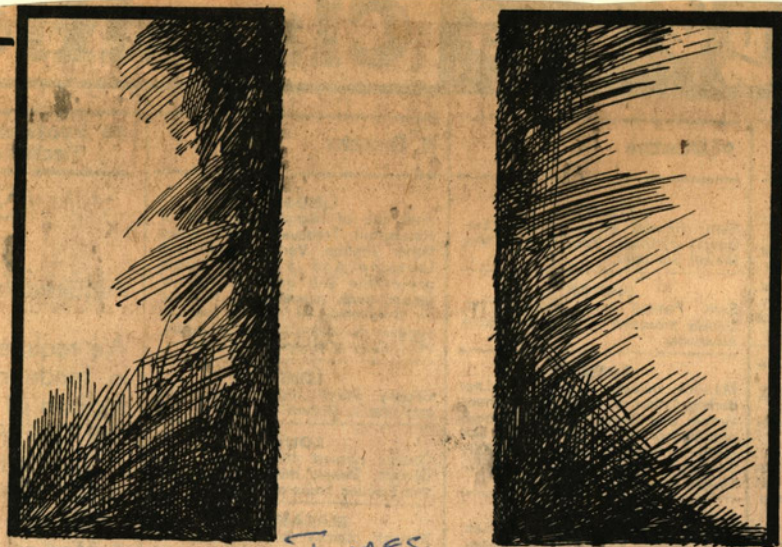
Time and again, the author follows an episode in Jesus' life with an Old Testament quotation introduced by a formula phrase such as, "This was done to fulfil what the Lord had spoken through the prophet."

Matthew's miracle stories, for example, are presented as demonstrations of Jesus' mercy and compassion, rather than as illustrations of his power.

Where Mark's Jesus rebukes the disciples for failing to understand his power to walk on water,

AND A SPECIAL MESSAGE FOR SOUTH AFRICA

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Matthew's Jesus helps the faltering Peter, whose hesitant faith nearly causes the disciple to drown.

LUKE: In this Gospel, Jesus is the innocent saviour of the world, full of forgiveness and love, and the rest follows the literary conventions of Hellenic culture.

Written for a sophisticated genteel audience, Luke's portrait is the first effort to present a biography of Jesus.

Gone is Mark's angst-ridden emphasis on the Cross; in its place is a peaceful universality. Luke not only relates Jesus to events of Roman, Palestinian and

church history, but also goes on to trace his genealogy all the way back to Adam.

In this way, the evangelist locates the words and deeds of Jesus within a scheme of "salvation history", which describes what God is doing — and will continue to do — for man.

Despite this universal framework, Luke's Jesus is very much concerned with teaching Christians how they should spend their lives from moment to moment.

For example, Luke amends the Lord's Prayer so that it asks the Father to "give us each (Matthew says "this") day our daily bread". Elsewhere, his Jesus reminds Christians that they must bear their burdens "daily".

In part, this concern with time reflects the fact that by 85 AD or thereabouts, when Luke wrote his Gospel, the Christians were beginning to realise the Second Coming might not be imminent and therefore were more concerned with the here and now.

Moreover, says Father Joseph Fitzmyer, an international expert on Luke's writings: "Luke is the only evangelist who stresses that Christians have to live ordinary lives, and he has played the Christian message to fit this fact."

BUT the dominant theme in Luke's verbal portrait is Jesus' ready forgiveness of sinners. They love him and he loves them and other social outcasts.

When Jesus works a miracle, the typical response from the crowd in Luke's Gospel is joy, rather than Mark's wonder at his power or Matthew's show of faith.

Luke's Jesus is perhaps best understood in his crucifixion scenes, where the innocent saviour manages to pray for his executioners: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

JOHN: There is no need for a Nativity scene in John; he simply asserts in his Gospel's famous prologue that Jesus is "the Word of God" made flesh.

Thus John's Gospel begins where the others leave off, with the recognition of Jesus as the Son of God. In John, the disciples immediately know who Jesus is.

John's Gospel differs from the three Synoptic Gospels in other ways as well. His Jesus works only seven miracles — none of them exorcisms — preaches no ethical exhortations and issues no apocalyptic warnings about the end of the world.

On the contrary, the kingdom of God has already arrived in the person of John's Jesus, who comes "from above" and therefore speaks with God's authority.

The implications of this sometimes confuse his entourage.

NICODEMUS, a secret admirer, does not understand that disciples, too, must be "begotten from above" — a reference to Divine election that modern evangelists still sometimes interpret, instead, as requiring "born again" experiences.

Jesus' ultimate conflict with the Jews in the fourth Gospel reflects antipathies which were aroused when members of John's community were expelled from the synagogue for professing faith in Christ.

"The key to current scholarly discussions about John is the extent to which conflicts in his own community are superimposed by the author on the struggles Jesus had in his ministry," observes Father Brown, author of the two-volume Anchor Bible commentary on John's Gospel.

Both concerns are reflected in the controversy between John's Jesus and the Jews, who eventually condemn him for making himself equal to God.

Even in his passion and death, John's "Son of God" remains in full control. Unlike the other Gospels, John does not show Jesus

Is there a Gospel truth? As Christmas nears, an examination of the latest theological researches

suffering on his knees in Gethsemane.

Instead, the Roman soldiers fall to their knees when they arrive to arrest him.

And on the cross, Jesus is lucid enough to give John, his "beloved disciple", to Mary, a gesture symbolising that he is leaving behind him a church.

Then, satisfied that his work is done, he announces: "It is finished."

At the very least, then, biblical scholarship has shown that the Gospel writers all shaded the stories of Jesus' ministry according to their own interests and theological concerns.

Today, the search for Jesus is guided by the tentative assumption that scriptural analysis can yield more about him than earlier scholars ever imagined.

For example, after lengthy study of the miracle stories to determine whether they were purely literary inventions, Professor Carl Holladay, of the Yale Divinity School, has concluded that Jesus was indeed a miracle worker and that the miracle stories are authentic.

WHAT'S more, most New Testament scholars believe that at least some sayings attributed to Jesus are authentically his, and a national conference is being planned in which scholars will try to reach a consensus on which passages qualify.

Among the likeliest candidates are Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer, several proclamations that "the Kingdom of God is at hand", certain "aphorisms of reversal" such as Mark's "The first shall be last, the last first", and Jesus' familiar Aramaic word for God — "Abba" or Father — which many analysts believe captures the essence of Jesus' consciousness of his relationship to God.

Who was Jesus?

Mark's Jesus dies alone, feeling forsaken but true to his Father's will. This Jesus will appeal to Christians who embrace life's tragedies with confidence.

Matthew's Jesus dies only to return and promise his guidance to those who follow him. This Jesus will appeal to Christians who find assurance in the church.

Luke's Jesus dies forgiving his enemies, knowing his Father awaits his spirit. This Jesus will attract Christians who have learned in life to trust God by imitating his mercy.

John's Jesus dies in the confidence that he will return to the Father. This Jesus is for those Christians who have travelled the mystical way.

All of these accounts express a truth: none of them is complete. All of these Jesuses are accessible only to those whose faith compels them on the search for "the way, the truth and the light".

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