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SHALL WE DESTROY  
THE TRANSVAAL REPUBLIC  
AND CAUSE  
Civil War in South Africa?

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That is the question for every man in this country at this moment.

The British Government threatens to carry fire and sword into the Transvaal, and the certain result will be War in South Africa between men of British race and men of Dutch and French descent, now living peacefully together in that country. Such a contest may very probably extend to the Cape Colony and to the native populations, causing unspeakable horrors, the destruction of thousands of homes, and the ruin of the country; and also the possible intervention of those European States that would be only too glad to find an excuse for menacing Great Britain in an hour of danger.

What is the excuse made for such a course of action on the part of the British Government?

Long ago, a little band of emigrants, driven from home by religious persecution, in order to gain the right of self-government, sought freedom and independence in the wilds of Africa.

At the beginning of this century their territory was conquered and annexed by the British Government. A considerable number of them left and went northwards beyond the Vaal River, and the British recognised the independence of the little Republic so formed. Notwithstanding this, in 1877, we annexed their country on false pretences; but it was afterwards restored by that man of true honour and courage, Mr. Gladstone.

Recently the discovery of gold in their territory has brought thousands of "Outlanders," or foreigners, and some of these wish nothing less than to seize the land as it is so rich in treasure. Many of these "Outlanders" are British, and they demand rights of suffrage so as to elect members of both Legislatures in the Transvaal.

The Boers, fearing lest they be swamped by the overwhelming number of these settlers, who differ from them in ideas and traditions, have hesitated to give the suffrage for the First Chamber without conditions of residence, longer in duration than the "Outlanders" like. The vote for the Second Chamber has always been given after two years' residence.

Hence a violent controversy with Great Britain. The Boers have made many concessions and now full political rights can be had on better terms than they can be had in our own country.

Observe! No principle is at stake, but only questions of detail. Surely then this is a case for negotiation and not for war. Great Britain has, on two occasions, formally agreed to leave the Boers entirely independent as regards their home affairs, legislation and administration, while retaining the right to control their relations with other States. We therefore break our word in making these demands and commit a crime in backing them with threats of invasion.

Will the British people allow themselves to be disgraced for ever in the eyes of the world, by thus destroying this little Republic, in order that they may annex their lands and seize the goldfields?

Fellow-countrymen, we entreat you to hold meetings and to protest against so great a national crime as that which is threatened.

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