

1981-09-4

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Ecunews Volume 13/1981

September 4, 1981

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SECTION 1

BISHOP TUTU HITS BACK AT DR. KOORNHOF

JOHANNESBURG - "Is the Minister (Dr. Piet Koornhof) so afraid even of prayer?"

This poser came from Bishop Desemond Tutu, General Secretary of The South African Council of Churches during a Press Conference held at the Council's HQ, Khotso House, Johannesburg.

He was reacting to a statement reportedly made in Parliament by Dr. Koornhof about a "conspiracy" by certain organisations "to encourage squatters to engage in civil disobedience".

The Bishop's remarks were yet another phase in the NYANGA saga. His full statement reads:-

Dr. Koornhof it is reported has uncovered a conspiracy to encourage squatters engaged in a campaign of civil disobedience. He names the SACC and others as involved in this action to encourage the campaign.

He referred in another interview to the money used to feed the squatters who had been deported to the Transkei and to transport them back to Cape Town as justifying the Prime Minister's allegations that vast sums of money had been used to support the campaign of civil disobedience.

Unfortunately for our too humane Cabinet Minister, the money which the Transkei and Border Councils of Churches used as indicated above was used after the Prime Minister's speech. Perhaps Mr. P.W. Botha is clairvoyant otherwise how would he know about the use of money long before it was to be used?

The only other cash the SACC made available to the Western Province Council of Churches to pay bail for most of the 2000 squatters when they were arrested. We were helping to get mothers with children out of jail. If that is a crime, then I readily plead guilty and will do it again given the opportunity. Was it not better for these mothers to be out of jail rather than languishing in jail?

Dr. Koornhof is putting up a pathetic defence for something that even Afrikaans newspapers have condemned roundly as indefensible. He will soon accuse us of influencing Mr. Edward Heath who referred critically to the treatment of the squatters.

/ Dr. Koornhof refers .....

