

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY  
INTO THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

HELD AT PRETORIA

ON 1 SEPTEMBER 1982

CHAIRMAN:

THE HONOURABLE MR JUSTICE C.F. ELOFF

COMMISSIONERS:

MR S.A. PATTERSON

MR T.L. BLUNDEN

PROF. P. OOSTHUIZEN

MR F.C. BARRIE

CHIEF INVESTIGATING OFFICER:

ADV. K.P.C.O. VON LIERES SC

INVESTIGATING OFFICER:

ADV. ETIENNE DU TOIT

SECRETARY:

MR M.L. MARAIS

ON BEHALF OF COUNCIL

FOR THE S A C C:

ADV. S. KENTRIDGE SC

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LUBBE RECORDINGS (PRETORIA)

/Idem

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VOLUME 2

(p 55 - 90)

CHAIRMAN: We commence today with the open sessions of the Commission of Inquiry regarding the South African Council of Churches. I intend first of all to read the terms of reference into the record. They are:

"To inquire into and report, and if the Commission deems it desirable, to make recommendations on -

- (a) the inception, development, objects and any other aspect regarding the history and activities of the South African Council of Churches, including the way in which it functions and is managed; 10
- (b) the way in which, the purpose for which and the organisations and persons from and through whom the South African Council of Churches and persons connected with the South African Council of Churches and persons connected with the South African Council of Churches solicited or solicit or obtained or obtain money or valuable assets;
- (c) all money and valuable assets that were or are received by the South African Council of Churches and the persons connected with it; 20
- (d) the organisations and persons from or through the agency of whom and the way in which such money and assets were or are received;
- (e) how and for what purpose such money and assets were or are disposed of by the South African Council of Churches and the persons concerned;
- (f) in the case of such money and assets having been paid over or made over to someone else 30

by/...

by the South African Council of Churches, and the persons concerned, how, to or through the agency of whom and for what purpose the money and assets were paid over and made over and how and for what purpose the money or assets were or are being ultimately used; and

(g) also any other matter pertaining to the South African Council of Churches, its present and past office bearers and other persons connected with the South African Council of Churches, 10 on which the Commission is of the opinion that the report should be made in the public interest".

Before I call on counsel to proceed with the leading of evidence, it might be appropriate to let it be known that the sittings will be in public, except if due to very special circumstances, I find that the hearing in public of the evidence of a particular witness or portion of that evidence is not necessary or desirable. I am not presently aware of any special circumstances relative to any witness to be called, and the guiding policy will be to conduct an open hearing. 20

For record purposes I note the presence today of Mr K von Lieres, who together with Mr E du Toit was appointed to assist the Commission inter alia in the adducing of evidence.

I have decided to accord the South African Council of Churches the first opportunity of presenting evidence, and I express the wish that it should call a witness or witnesses to deal with certain specific issues, namely, on the following matters, as background to the matters to be investigated by the Commission: 30

(a)/...

- (a) the origin and historical development of the South African Council of Churches;
- (b) its aims and objectives in historical perspective; and
- (c) the structural development of the organisation to date.

I now call on counsel for the South African Council of Churches to proceed.

MR KENTRIDGE: May it please you, M'Lord, Gentlemen of the Commission. I am appearing for the South African Council 10 of Churches, with My Learned Friend, Mr Solomon, and we are instructed by Mr Oliver Barrett of Bowens, attorneys of Johannesburg, and we are here in response to Your Lordship's invitation to the South African Council of Churches, and Your Lordship and the members of the Commission will know that the South African Council of Churches has filed a memorandum with supporting documents, and it is in amplification of this memorandum that we at Your Lordship's invitation propose to lead evidence today. I would like to say, M'Lord, that the South African Council of Churches appreciates 20 the fact that the Commission has given it and will give it, as you have made clear to us, every opportunity to lead evidence and to make submissions on the subject matter contained in the terms of reference.

The first witness whom I propose to present to the members of the Commission will be the General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches, Bishop Desmond Tutu. Before calling Bishop Tutu, I am instructed by the South African Council of Churches to make clear to Your Lordship and the members of the Commission the Council's attitude 30 and/....

and approach to this Commission.

M'Lord, as appears from the first page of the memorandum which has been submitted to you, when the Prime Minister last year publicly stated his intention to appoint a commission to investigate the Council, the praesidium of the Council, notwithstanding its very real reservations as to the motives of the government, decided that it would in no way obstruct any judicial commission appointed to inquire into its affairs, and after this Commission was duly appointed and its terms of reference gazetted, the South African Council of Churches decided that it would co-operate with this Commission by making available all documents required by the Commission and by presenting evidence, and as Your Lordship will be aware, the Council has in fact followed out that decision, not only by producing the documents requested by the investigating officers and accountants which you appointed, but by giving those officers any explanations which they required of any of the documents which they asked for, and we would like to say, M'Lord, that on the whole I think we can say that this has been done as a matter of co-operation and without any undue friction. As you know, there were from time to time certain difficulties which you yourself have smoothed over, and we would like publicly to acknowledge your personal assistance in this regard, and to record with appreciation that you personally have always made yourself completely accessible to the South African Council of Churches and its legal representatives to deal with any difficulties which either we had or we thought we had. We do appreciate that. We would like to say so.

We particularly want to say this, and not only

of/...

of you, Mr Chairman, but of the other members of the Commission, because the South African Council of Churches has not concealed the fact that it has regarded the government's decision to appoint this Commission with considerable scepticism, and with regard to the South African Council of Churches' attitude to the government's decision to appoint this Commission, we want to make a very, very clear distinction between the South African Council of Churches' attitude to the decision to appoint the Commission on the one hand, and on the other hand its attitude to this Commission itself, and I want to make it clear that the two things are quite distinct, and it is necessary for me to do so because when witnesses from the Council give evidence, you will hear that they do have a certain attitude to the decision to appoint the Commission, which is quite different from its attitude to the Commission itself, and if the members of the Commission are not yet - some of them - aware of it, they will be made aware in the course of the evidence, that over the years members of the government have made what the Council itself would regard and describe as severe and indeed unbridled attacks on the South African Council of Churches and its senior officials, and you will hear, if you have not yet heard, M'Lord, and members of the Commission, that these high personages have accused the South African Council of Churches, among other things, of using its funds deliberately to ferment unrest and even subversion in this country. It has been accused of association with unlawful organisations and even accused of support for terrorism, and the South African Council of Churches has said, and will say again before this Commission, that

these/...

these allegations are simply untrue.

You will also hear, M'Lord and members of the Commission, that it is the attitude of the Council of Churches that if there were any evidence to support serious allegations of this sort which have been made against it, then there should have been a prosecution of it under the numerous security laws of this country.

Now M'Lord, we are also aware that it has been suggested that the appointment of this Commission was called for by reasons of complaints about the financial administration and the handling of funds of the South African Council of Churches. Now, you will hear in due course that the South African Council of Churches is the first to acknowledge that all has not been well in the past with its administration. But we shall say that apart from the fact that its accounts are audited regularly by auditors of standing, it took the further step of appointing a senior accountant to carry out an independent investigation into its finances, and as you will also hear, M'Lord, the Council of Churches has gone even further: before the appointment of Your Lordship's Commission had been announced, the Council had decided to appoint its own commission of inquiry with the fullest access to its officials and to its documents, and as you probably know, this commission was to be under the chairmanship of Mr W H R Schreiner SC, a senior member of the Johannesburg Bar, who I am sure is well-known to many members of the Commission, and it is and will be the contention of this Council - and this is of some importance, in view of the fact that amongst your terms of reference is the power to make recommendations, and that

is/...



is why I raise this matter, it is and will be the contention of the Council that to the extent that its financial administration has to be put in order, it itself is able to put its own house in order, and is in the process of doing so, and it will be its submission that as far as its finances are concerned, it was unnecessary to have a commission such as Your Lordship's to inquire into its finances, and we say this, M'Lord, without any disrespect to the members of the Commission, who we accept will perform their mandate to the best of their ability. But we are going to make the 10 submission, and it will be said by our witnesses, that in so far as finances are concerned, steps and adequate steps have been taken in that regard.

In this connection, M'Lord, there is something else which I should perhaps say, which I say from a legal point of view: your Commission has been appointed under the Commissions Act of 1947, with the powers set out in that Act. As Your Lordship knows, in terms of that Act, the government or the Minister or the State President - to be constitutional about it - has got the power to vest cer- 20 tain commissions with certain powers, when they are appointed to deal with what the Act calls a matter of public concern. Now, we will submit to the extent that it may be necessary, that the aims, objects, activities of the South African Council of Churches - call it what you will, that these are not matters of public concern in terms of the Commission Act; they are matters of concern to the member churches of the Council and to the donors to its funds, donors to which it refers as donor partners.

Now, M'Lord, although this is the belief and 30 submission/...

submission of the South African Council of Churches, it will nonetheless continue its - with its decision to give all information and assistance possible to this Commission, and its books are open to this Commission, as they have been to others. We are putting witnesses before you and if there are other witnesses who you think could assist you in giving evidence on the terms of your mandate and your terms of reference, I am instructed to tell you that these witnesses are always available without any need to issue subpoenas on them.

Now, Mr Chairman, notwithstanding the accusations 10 which have been made by the government and others hostile to the Council of Churches, we want to make it clear that the Council does not come before this Commission in any defensive posture. It does not believe that it has anything to apologise for, and I am glad to place on record publicly, on behalf of the Council, that you as Chairman have assured the Council's advocates and attorneys that the Commission does not regard the Council as a defendant or an accused before it, however the government may regard it. Unfortunately, M'Lord, as members of the Commission will be aware, 20 we have on behalf of the Council expressed some disquiet to you from time to time that not the Commission itself, but a particular officer appointed by the Commission, whom I do not consider it necessary to name at this stage, has given, not only public but also private expression to his own preconceptions, if I may call it that, about the South African Council of Churches. He has done so in his personal capacity and in his capacity as a member of the Steyn Commission on the Media, and I want to record it, M'Lord, that you have been good enough to make it clear to us that 30  
this/...

this officer's views are not in any way to be taken as the views of the Commission, and will not influence the Commission, and I take it, M'Lord, that you speak for the Commission as well as for yourself when you gave us this assurance, and I want to say, M'Lord, that Your Lordship's assurance in this regard has been of great value to the South African Council of Churches. The South African Council of Churches has appreciated Your Lordship's assurance, and this dissociation from the views previously expressed by this officer.

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Now, M'Lord and members of the Commission, in view of the fact that this full memorandum has been placed before you, it does not seem to me that there will be any great value in my so to speak opening the evidence or trying to outline with the witnesses will say. If Your Lordship thought it would be of any assistance, I would so so, but as I understand it, the evidence which you have called for and requested, is really in amplification of what has been set out in that memorandum. That being the case, what I now propose to do is to ask Bishop Desmond Tutu to come forward to the witness box. I do not know, M'Lord, whether it is your intention to swear the witnesses or not, but I understand that one way or another there is no objection to whatever your Lordship may decide.

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I take it as a matter of practice that as the evidence will be somewhat lengthy, the witness will be allowed to be seated. I call Bishop Desmond Tutu as the first witness on behalf of the South African Council of Churches.

Just one other thing I would like to say: Your Lordship has suggested that evidence be given on

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certain/...

certain aspects of the case. Bishop Tutu will give evidence largely on what one might call generally the aims and objects and activities of the South African Council of Churches.

We are going to call another witness, who will deal in more detail with the history of the South African Council of Churches, and we will then also call a witness who will deal with the organisational structure. There will obviously be some overlap, but that basically is how we are going to do it.

DESMOND BILO TUTU, duly sworn states: 10

MR KENTRIDGE: Now, M'Lord, I shall in due course have certain specific questions which I would like to put to the witness by way of producing his evidence for you, but what I have asked him to do is to give Your Lordship and the members of the Commission his own preliminary statement of how he - what he conceives to be the aims and objects of the South African Council of Churches, to explain its activities and what the South African Council of Churches regards as the reasons and justifications for its activities, and Bishop Tutu, I would now ask you to do that. --- M'Lord and 20  
members of the Eloff Commission, I want to start by expressing the appreciation which our advocate has already done, of the South African Council of Churches to the Commission and its officers in their dealings with the Council. They could very well have ham-strung our operations by for instance taking away our books and records. In stead they examined our records in such a way as to dislocate our work as little as possible. For this we are grateful.

Secondly I want to indicate briefly at the beginning, what I hope to elaborate in the body of my submission. 30

My/...

My purpose is to demonstrate from the Scriptures and from hallowed Christian tradition and teaching, that what we are as the South African Council of Churches, what we say and what we do, that all of these are determined not by politics or any other ideology. We are what we are in obedience to God, and in response to the gracious Gospel of His Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We owe ultimate loyalty, not to any human authority however prestigious or powerful, but to God and to His Son our Lord Jesus Christ alone, from whom we obtain our mandate. We must obey the 10  
divine and word whatever the cost.

Everything we do or say and everything we are must be tested by whether it is consistent with the Gospel of Jesus Christ or not, and not by whether it is merely expedient or even acceptable to the government of the day, or whether it is popular. To understand the nature of the Council, its aims, objectives and activities, requires that you appreciate the theological *raison d'etre* of its existence. Without this biblical and theological justification you will almost certainly misunderstand what we are 20  
about. Consequently, I want to underline that it is not the finances or any other activities of the South African Council of Churches that are being investigated. It is our Christian faith. It is the Christian churches who are members of the South African Council of Churches who are on trial. It is our Christianity; it is our faith and therefore our theology that are under scrutiny, and that the central matters at issue are profoundly theological. As a Commission you are being asked to determine whether our understanding and practice of the Christian faith 30

can pass muster. We are under trial for being Christian and that by a government which claims to be Christian. It may be that we are being told that it is an offence to be a Christian in South Africa. That is what you are asked to determine, and that is a theological task through and through.

I will show that the Bible describes God as creating the universe to be a cosmos and not a chaos; a cosmos in which harmony, unity, order, fellowship, communion, peace and justice would reign, and that this divine intention was disturbed by sin. The result was disunity, alienation, disorder, chaos, enmity, separation and that in the face of this God then sent his Son to restore that primordial harmony to effect reconciliation. 10

By becoming a real human being through Jesus Christ, God showed that he took the whole of human history and the whole of human life seriously. He demonstrated that he was Lord of all life, spiritual and secular, sacred and profane, material and spiritual. We will show that Scripture and the main stream of Christian tradition and teaching know 20

nothing of the dichotomies so popular in our day which demand the separation of religion from politics etcetera. These I will demonstrate are deeply theological matters which affect the nature, work and attitudes of the South African Council of Churches. Our God cares that children starve in resettlement camps, the somewhat respectable name for apartheid's dumping grounds for the pathetic casualties of this vicious and evil system. The God we worship does care that people die mysteriously in detention. He is concerned that people are condemned to a twilight existence as 30

non-persons/...

non-persons by an arbitrary bureaucratic act of banning them without giving them the opportunity to reply to charges brought against them. I will show this from the Bible.

I might add that if God did not care about these and similar matters, I would not worship Him, for He would be a totally useless God. Mercifully He is not such a God.

I will show that the central work of Jesus was to effect reconciliation between God and us and also between man and man. Consequently from a theological and scriptural base, I will demonstrate that apartheid, separate 10

development or whatever it is called, is evil, totally and without remainder, that it is unChristian and unBiblical.

It has recently been declared a heresy by a world body of responsible Christians, a body to which the White Dutch Reformed Churches belong, and which can therefore not be dismissed as a so-called left-wing radical body, unless you want to use these epithets of the NGK and NHC as well since they have been hurt that their membership of this august body whose President will be present today, has been suspended. If anyone wants to show me that apartheid is 20

Biblical or Christian, I have said before, and I reiterate now, that I would burn my Bible and I would cease to be a Christian. I will want to show that the Christian Bible and the Gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord is subversive of all injustice and evil, oppression and exploitation and that God is on the side of the oppressed and the down-trodden, that He is the liberator God of the Exodus, who leads His people out of every kind of bondage, spiritual, political, social and economic, and nothing will thwart Him from achieving the goal of the liberation of all His people 30

and/...

and the whole of His creation.

The South African Council of Churches and its member churches we will show are not a tuppenny halfpenny fly-by-night organisation. We belong to the Church of God, a church that is found universally spread throughout the face of the whole inhabited universe. That is what the Greek word from which we get 'ecumenical' means. It is the Body of Jesus Christ, of which we are members, and it is a supernatural, a divine fellowship brought into being by the action of God Himself through His Holy Spirit. It is not a merely 10 human organisation that is limited by national or ethnic boundaries. It transcends time and space, race, culture and sex, nationality, and all the things that men sometimes think are important. I am a Bishop in the Church of God. That is what was pronounced over me when I was consecrated, so that I am a Bishop of the Church when I go to Timbuktoo, when I go to Korea. I am a Bishop of the Church even in Russia, and in the United States. We belong to something which includes the living, in what is called the church militant, which includes the dead, in what is called the 20 church quiescent, which includes the saints in glory in what is called the church triumphant. Theologically I have brothers and sisters whom I have never met physically, and will probably never meet, but ontologically we are one in our Lord Jesus Christ, and I know that they are upholding us with their prayers, with their love, with their caring concern, even now. Some of your investigating officers will know this from their recent visit to the United States.

Because of this theological fact of the nature of the church we express our oneness in all kinds of ways; 30

in/...



in our prayers, one for another, in making up what is lacking in the resources of another church and so on. When one church gives to another church, either personnel or material or money resources, that is in fact nothing remarkable. It is as it should be. It is an expression of Christian fellowship, of koinonia in our Lord. We might want local churches to be more self-supporting, but it is no aberration for a more affluent part of the church to give of its wealth, of which it is only a steward on behalf of God, from whom all things come. It gives and it receives. There is 10 the mutuality of giving and receiving as of a loving family. Those who criticise the SACC for depending so greatly on overseas support, show their woeful ignorance of ecclesiology, the theology of the nature of the church of God, when one part suffers, so the Apostle tells us, the whole suffers with it, and when one part rejoices, the whole rejoices with it.

Thirdly, M'Lord and members of the Commission, I have already said, we owe our ultimate loyalty and allegiance only to God. With due respect, I want to submit that 20 no secular authority nor its appointed commissions has any competence whatsoever to determine how a church can be church, nor what is the nature of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When secular authority tries to do this, then it is usurping divine prerogatives, and the prerogatives of the church itself. With respect, we do not recognise the right of this Commission to inquire into our theological existence, and therefore into any aspect of our life as a Council, since every other aspect of our existence is determined by theological facts, as I have already pointed out. Only our member 30 churches/...

churches can call us to task. If we have contravened any law of the country, then you do not need a commission to determine that. There is a whole array of draconian laws at the disposal of the government, and the courts of law are the proper place to determine our guilt or innocence. This Commission, M'Lord, with respect, is totally superfluous. We have agreed to appear before it only because we have nothing to hide, which does not mean that we are infallible. Our written submission to the Commission acknowledges that we are fallible and have made mistakes. Equally, we have taken steps to correct those mistakes, but it is our member churches and not the government or any other secular authority who are the proper judges of that. And to reveal that we are sinners as if some major scientific discovery was being made is to become quite ridiculous in Christian terms, for it is to labour the obvious. We are always justified and we are always sinners. We depend not on our goodness, but on the gracious mercy of God. And again the government or any other secular body has no competence whatsoever to pass judgment on this. God alone can do that, and when the government usurps God's prerogative, then it becomes not just wrong, but blasphemous.

The government appointed this Commission for a reason that is perfectly obvious and totally unsubtle. It has used commissions before to deal with awkward customers. I do not impugn the integrity of Your Lordship's Commission and its members in any way, but I want the government to know now and always, that I do not fear them. They are trying to defend the utterly indefensible. Apartheid is evil, and as vicious as Nazism and Communism, and the government/...

government will fail completely, for it is ranging itself on the side of evil, injustice and oppression. The government are not God; they are just ordinary human beings, who very soon, like other tyrants before them, will bite the dust. When they take on the SACC, they must know that they are taking on the church of God, and those who have done so in the past, the Neros, the Hitlers, the Amins of this world, have ended up as I have said before on another occasion, as the flotsam and jetsam of history. Christ has assured us that His church is founded on a rock, 10 and not even the gates of Hell can prevail against it. The resurrection of our Lord and Saviour declares for all to know that life will triumph over death, that light will triumph over darkness, that goodness will triumph over evil, that justice will triumph over injustice, and that freedom will triumph over tyranny. I stand before you as one who believes fervently what Paul wrote when he said, "If God be for us, who can be against us".

In the constitution of the SACC, which is document no 2 of those submitted to the Commission, page 1, under 20 the heading Paragraph 3 Objects, we read:

"The principle objects of the Council shall be -

3.1 to foster that unity which is both God's will for all mankind and His gift to the church"

and the quotation goes on. But I want to point out that this first object permeates all the other objects as stated in paragraphs 3.2 to 3.5, reflected in expressions such as 'to co-ordinate the work in Southern Africa of churches, to undertake on behalf of churches joint action and service, and to encourage joint action and service, to do 30

all/...

all such things, to encourage all such things, calculated to reduce divisive factors by developing dialogue with people of other faiths and ideologies'. It can be said that the search for the unity of the churches and of human kind is therefore a central concern of the South African Council of Churches, but is unity a central Biblical concern, or is it just peripheral to the life of faith, something to be engaged in as an optional extra by those who are temperamentally suited to do so? I want to show, M'Lord, that the SACC and its member churches have their agenda and 10 their programmes in this matter, determined by what the Scriptures have revealed as the will of God; the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. I want to stress that this concern for unity is not something that was introduced by the ecumenical movement in the churches from its inception. No, the Scriptures declare that unity, the unity of the entire creation, was God's intention from the very beginning of creation, and the SACC is caught up in a divine mission; it is a fellow-worker with none other than God Himself. It is an agent of the divine mercy and compassion and 20 concern, not just for the world, and not just for human beings, but for the whole of God's creation.

Let us start at the beginning, where the Bible seems to start, and that is with the creation of all there is. We find our sources in the sublime stories contained in the first 11 chapters of Genesis. Some have sought to dismiss these stories as myths, meaning that their truth content was no more than that of fairy tales, but those who do so are dull, unimaginative souls who would ask Wordsworth writing about a host of golden daffodils dancing in the 30

breeze/...

breeze, say, which band was playing and who were their dancing partners? No, in these chapters we have the evocative, imaginative, highly symbolical language of poetry, conveying to us some of the most profound theological - or if you like, spiritual and existential truths about God, about ourselves and about the rest of God's creation, and no advances in technology and science will be able to produce anything to contradict those truths. True science cannot contradict true religion.

The first creation narrative reaches its climax 10  
in Chapter 1:26 of the book of Genesis, in which we have  
these words:

"Then God said, let us make man in our image and likeness to rule".

Human beings are created, so St Augustin tells us, by God, like God, for God, and God creates man to become His viceroy, his representative to rule over the rest of the creation on God's behalf. In older times the emperor's statue received the same honour and respect as the emperor himself, and represented him where he could not travel in his vast 20  
domains. That is the high privilege bestowed on each human person, male and female, because the passage goes on, "God created man in His own image", in the image of God He created him, male and female, He created them. But each human being is God's own representative, God's own viceroy or ambassador, and no mention at this point is made of race or nationality or colour. It is the fact of their being created by God, that endows them with this infinite and eternal value, but not also that they are expected to rule - to rule the fish in the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, 30

all/...

all wild animals on earth and all reptiles that crawl upon the earth. They are called upon to rule over the rest of God's creation on God's own behalf. So already in these early verses of the Bible we get definite adumbrations, foreshadowings of the Kingdom of God, about which the New Testament is so explicit and to which I want to refer later.

May I point out that the Biblical author depicts the primal state of affairs as being such that harmony, unity, fellowship and friendliness abound, for when God has created all there is, God saw all that He had made, and it was 10 very good. Poetically and symbolically - and this is an important point to make here - this is expressed by saying that every living creature at this stage of God's creation is vegetarian. There was no blood-shed in God's creation, according to His will and intention. There was no blood-shed, not even for blood sacrifices. According to this Biblical narrative, nature was not yet <sup>red</sup> ~~red~~ in tooth and claw.

The second creation story is the one that speaks about the idyllic paradise of Eden in which Adam and Eve lived happily. There was abundant food; Adam was cal- 20 led upon to name the animals, to demonstrate his hegemony over all creation; Adam and Eve are depicted as innocents abroad, walking about, not ashamed of their nakedness, communicating directly with God who visited them as a man visits his friend, according to the Scriptures, they describe God as walking in the garden in the cool of the evening. The animals did not prey on each other. The lion gambolled with the lamb. The picture we have is of a creation at peace, abounding in harmony, in unity and fellowship, that this was God's intention for the entire universe, because 30  
unity/...

unity means peace, means prosperity, means fellowship, means justice, means wholeness, means compassion, love and joy and all of these other things; conveyed in the virtually untranslatable Hebrew word 'Shalom'. It was a condition in which God's will was being done, in which His laws were being obeyed.

Then the Bible declares that things went horribly, badly wrong, because sin entered God's good creation. There is no speculation in the Bible about the origin of sin. We have what could be called a phenomenological account 10 of what followed in the train of sin. The primal unity which we have just been describing, was disrupted; where there had been unity, there was now disunity; harmony was replaced by disharmony. There was alienation and hatred and enmity, fellowship and communion were destroyed, and not just human kind was affected. The rest of the creation fell with human beings, and we hear this in the description of what happens: the ground will grow thorns and thistles for you. There was murder and death, war and strife. Cain murders Abel, as a consequence of the primordial sin. 20 Now Adam is warned that the snake will bruise his heel, and he will crush the serpent's head, and the Genesis stories culminate in the shattering story of the tower of Babel, where human community and fellowship become impossible; human beings can no longer communicate with one another, because God has confused their languages and people are torn apart. That is the ultimate consequence, according to the Bible, of sin. It is separation, it is alienation, it is apartness. It is a perverse exegesis that will hold that the story of the tower of Babel is a justification for 30

racial/...

racial separation, a divine sanction for the diversity of nations. It is to declare that the divine punishment of sin has somehow become the divine intention for human kind, and that is a position the Bible would not support. The entire situation after the disruptive consequences of sin at the end of the story of the tower of Babel, is a situation crying out for reconciliation, crying out for atonement. Now, the word - the English word 'atonement' also separates out into 'at-one-ment', meaning the 'at-onening', the reconciling of those who are separated, who are divided. 10 Reconciliation means recreating friendship. It means bringing together, uniting those who were formerly at variance, who were formerly enemies, who were formerly alienated.

The story of the Bible, M'Lord and members of the Commission, could be said to be the story of God's movement, of God's mission, to restore the harmony, the unity, the fellowship, the communion, the community which were there at the beginning when His rule, His reign would be acknowledged once again. This is the divine movement and the activity in which the South African Council of Churches and its 20 member churches are involved, as the Council prays and works for the unity of the churches and of human kind. The Scriptures reveal on occasion a kind of nostalgia for paradise lost in a paradise regained. In many of the Biblical descriptions of the age to come, called the Messianic age after the word 'Messiah', meaning God's anointed representative who it was believed would inaugurate God's rule, God's Kingdom. We hear echoes of the time of the beginning, so in Chapter 11 of the book of the Prophet Isaiah, we hear this description of the Anointed One, this Messiah, this 30 expected/...



expected representative through whom God would effect His rule. He shall judge the poor with justice and defend the humble in the land with equity. His mouth shall be a rod to strike down the ruthless, and with a word He shall slay the wicked; round His waist He shall wear the belt of justice and good faith shall be the girdle round His body. Now, the words that I want to aver to are the following:

"Then the wolf shall live with the sheep and the leopard lie down with the cat; the calf and the young lion shall grow up together and the little child shall lead them; the cow and the bear shall be friends and their young shall lie down together; the lion shall eat straw like cattle; the infant shall play over the hole of the cobra and the young child dance over the viper's nest. They shall not hurt or destroy in all My Holy Mountain, for as the waters fill the sea, so shall the land be filled with the knowledge of the Lord". 10

That ends that quotation. Noting this particular characteristic of as it were, looking back in this prophetic looking forward, Herman Gunkel, a German Biblical scholar said: "Endzeit ist Urzeit"; the end time is as the time of the beginning, and so God sent His Son to effect reconciliation, to bring about the at-onement, the atonement that would achieve the unity, the harmony, the peace, the justice, the fellowship, the friendship, the compassion, the wholeness which were God's intention for His creation from the beginning, and so in 2 Corinthians Chapter 5, at verse 19, St Paul is able to say: 20

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world, the whole/... 30

whole universe, to Himself"

and Jesus speaking about His coming crucifixion declares  
in the Gospel according to St John, Chapter 12 at verse 32:

"And I shall draw all men to myself when I am lifted  
up from the earth"

underlining that His chief work in the salvation of the  
world would be a uniting, a reconciling one, and we must  
recall that Christian tradition referring to Christ's robe,  
the one for which the soldiers threw dice, speaks of it  
as symbolising the unity of the church, and that was 10  
why it was not torn into portions to be shared amongst the  
soldiers. It symbolises the unity of the church and so  
also of all human kind. And in St John's Gospel is to be  
found what tradition speaks of as the Highpriestly Prayer  
of Our Lord, as recorded in the 17th Chapter of that Gospel,  
and the heart of that prayer is the petition that His fol-  
lowers will be one, with an incredible kind of unity, that  
it should reflect the unity that subsists as between the  
Father, God, and His Son, and so at verse 11, Jesus is re-  
corded as praying: 20

"Holy Father, protect by the power of Thy name  
those whom Thou has given me, that they may be one  
as we are one"

and going on, at verse 20 through to 23:

"But it is not for these alone that I pray, but for  
those also who through their words put their faith  
in me; may they all be one, as Thou, Father, art  
in me and I in Thee, so also may they be in us, that  
the world may believe that Thou didst send me. The  
glory which Thou gavest me, I have given to them 30

that/

that they may be one as we are one, I in them and Thou in me; may they be perfectly one, then the world will learn that Thou didst send me, that Thou didst love them as Thou didst me".

And so we hear that the unity for which Christ prayed, is not for merely pragmatic reasons, such as that it is more economical to have one church building rather than several serving the same community and locality, but because a divided church is a scandal, making it difficult for people to believe the Gospel of God's love. The SACC is concerned 10 for unity in all its aspects, because it exists to proclaim the good news of God's love for His world, for which He gave His only begotten Son, and it is in obedience to the commission that Our Lord Jesus Christ gave to His disciples prior to His ascension, as recorded in the Gospel according to St Matthew, Chapter 28. Jesus says:

"Full authority in Heaven and on earth has been committed to Me. Go forth therefore and make all nations My disciples; baptise men everywhere in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy 20 Spirit and teach them to observe all that I have commanded you, and be assured I am with you always to the end of time".

It is because, as St Paul declares in a portion from which I have already quoted; from first to last this has been the work of God, this reconciling. He has reconciled us men to Himself through Christ, and He has enlisted us, His followers, in this service of reconciliation. What I mean is that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, no longer holding men's misdeeds against them, and 30

that/...

that He has entrusted us with the message of reconciliation. We come therefore - we, frail, fallible, sinful creatures, we come therefore as Christ's ambassadors. It is as if God were appealing to you through us in Christ's name, we employ you, be reconciled to God. We are engaged in the ministry of proclaiming the love of God for all His people through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ Our Lord, and to proclaim the message of reconciliation, which is another aspect of unity, of peace, of harmony, of justice, of compassion, of love, of brotherliness. That is 10 why in its organisational structure the SACC has a division of mission and evangelism, which was established to help the churches in their proclamation of the Christian Gospel through word and deed, and to show the concern the SACC has to wean men and women for Christ, so that converted by God's Holy Spirit they would accept Jesus and acknowledge Him as their Lord, Master and Saviour.

M'Lord, we are concerned for justice, but that is no merely humanistic concern. It is a profoundly Biblical concern, as the quotations I have alluded to, indicate, 20 and we are also concerned and work for reconciliation. The SACC does have a division, called the division of justice and reconciliation, to work for real peace, founded on true justice, for brotherhood, not only in our land, but throughout the world, and I will return to this later.

St Paul's works are quite indignant, when he thinks the unity of the Christian community has been jeopardised or undermined, in his first letter to the Corinthians. He is supposed in fact to be responding to questions that the Corinthian church had asked, but because of the 30  
disquieting/...

disquieting news of sections and divisions in the church, which Paul had received, he spends the first six chapters dealing with this matter of divisiveness, before he deals with their other problems in the next nine chapters. That is strange conduct, unless unity was of paramount importance, and he stresses that the church is the body of Christ, endowed with different spiritual and other gifts, what are technically referred to as the 'charismata', having different limbs and organs, and these different limbs and organs have different functions, but all designed to function for 10 the good and the benefit of the whole. This is underlined in Chapters 12 through to Chapter 14 of 1 Corinthians. Paul stresses the unity, the harmony, the oneness; it is a body in which the natural distinctions of race, of status, of sex, of culture, are of no moment any longer. They have been transcended in Jesus Christ Our Lord, and so we hear him say in 1 Corinthians Chapter 12 at verse 12 and 13:

"For Christ is like a single body with its many limbs and organs which, many as they are, together make up one body. For indeed we were all brought 20 into one body by baptism, in the one Spirit, whether we are Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free men, and that one Holy Spirit was poured out for all of us to drink."

And he uses much the same kind of language in his epistle to the Galatians, at Chapter 3 verses 26 and following verses:

"For through faith you are all sons of God in union with Christ Jesus, baptised into union with Him, you have all put on Christ as a garment. There is 30

no such thing as Jew and Greek, slave and free man; male and female, for you are all one person in Christ Jesus".

My Lord, this was what attracted the first converts; when they saw this amazing spectacle of Christian koinonia, Christian fellowship, communion, and they were led to exclaim how these Christians love one another. St Paul exhorts the Christians to have the mind of Christ in Philipians, in order to maintain this precious thing, this unity.

In the epistle to the Ephesians its author, possibly Paul or someone who thought as Paul, we learn what the Scriptures, even in the New Testament, consider to have been God's intention from the beginning. Ephesians Chapter 1 at verse 9:

"God has made known to us, His apostles, Jesus Christ's followers, His hidden purpose. Such was His will and pleasure determined beforehand in Christ, to be put into effect when the time was ripe"

namely that God's intention was that the universe, all in heaven and in earth, might be brought into a unity in Christ, again a returning to that primordial time of the beginning, when according to the Biblical narratives God and human beings and all of His creation had an undisturbed harmony, peace, unity. And St Paul at Romans Chapter 8 verses 19 and following says:

"For the created universe waits with eager expectation for God's sons to be revealed."

It was made the victim of frustration, not by its own choice but because of Him who made it so, yet always there was hope because the universe itself is to be freed from the

shackles/...

shackles of mortality and enter upon the liberty and splendour of the children of God. Up to the present we know the whole created universe groans in all its parts as if in the pangs of childbirth.

M'Lord, what I have just been describing from the Scriptures is the divine movement, the divine activity, the divine mission in which the SACC and its member churches are caught up. It is to demonstrate in our lives that the Jesus whom we worship as Lord and Master, has as Ephesians declares, broken down the wall of partition which 10 separated Jew from Gentile. Ephesians Chapter 2, from verse 11, we hear these words:

"Remember then your former condition; you, Gentile as you are outwardly, you, the uncircumcised, so-called by those who are called the circumcised, but only with reference to an outward right, you were at that time separate from Christ, strangers to the community of Israel, outside God's covenant and the promise that goes with them. Your world was a world without hope and without God, but now in union 20 with Christ Jesus, you who once were far off, have been brought near through the shedding of Christ's blood, for He is Himself our peace, Gentiles and Jews."

He has made the two one, and in His own body of flesh and blood has broken down the enmity which stood like a dividing wall between them, for He annulled the law with its rules and regulations, so as to create out of the two a single new humanity in Himself, thereby making peace. This was his purpose, to reconcile the two in a single body, to God through the cross on which He killed the enmity. So he came, 30

this/...

this Jesus, and proclaimed the good news; peace to you who were far off, and peace to those who were nearby, for through Him we both alike, Gentile and Jew, have access to the Father in the one Spirit. That is - Jews, Gentiles, are no longer aliens in a foreign land, but fellow citizens with God's people, members of God's household. You are built upon the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets, and Christ Jesus Himself is the foundation stone. In Him the whole body, that is the whole building, the whole church of God, is bonded together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in Him, you too are being built with all the rest, into a spiritual dwelling for God. Those are tremendous words. This movement .. (INTERVENTION) 10

CHAIRMAN: Forgive me, Bishop, may I interrupt you? We will now take an adjournment for quarter of an hour, and you will continue your evidence thereafter.

THE COMMISSION IS ADJOURNED

ON RESUMPTION:

BISHOP TUTU: Thank you, M'Lord, I have just been quoting from Ephesians Chapter 2 verses 11 to 22, and have said that these are tremendous words about God's intention and what He will achieve, has achieved in a sense, in Our Lord Jesus Christ and in the church of God, in that this is the divine movement in which the South African Council of Churches and its member churches are caught up. This movement, this divine activity is for bringing together, for uniting, for reconciling, for at-onening. Teilhard de Chardin, the French Jesuit Palaeontologist, spoke of much the same thing when he said, that the whole of creation was moving as from a point ~~alpha~~<sup>alpha</sup>, a beginning point, to its goal through/... 30



through what he called its Christification in the point omega, the end point. The only separation, M'Lord, the Bible knows is that between believers on the one hand and unbelievers on the other. Any other kind of separation, division, disunity, in the view of the Bible is of the Devil. It is evil and it is from sin.

Do I still need to demonstrate what I had said I would want to do, that apartheid is evil? After all that I have said about the centrality for the Bible of unity and reconciliation. I believe I still have to carry out at least my promise. Apart from anything else, apartheid is evil, for our churches, for the South African Council of Churches, for at least three reasons: first, the Bible declares right at the beginning - and I have quoted from that part of the Bible, that human beings are created in the image and likeness of God. I showed why this fact endows each person with a unique and an infinite value; a person who according to Our Lord, has the very hairs of his head being numbered, and Our Lord the Good Shepherd says that each person, because of this incredible value they have, is known by name, not as a statistic, but is known by name by the Good Shepherd, and what makes any human being valuable therefore? It is not any biological characteristic. No, it is the fact that he or she is created in the image and likeness of God. Apartheid exhorts a biological quality which is a total irrelevancy to the status of what determines the value, the worth of a human being. Why should skin colour or race be any more useful as a criterion than say the size of one's nose? What has the size of my nose to do with whether I am intelligent etcetera? It has

no more to do with my worth as a human being than the colour of my eyes. Secondly, the chief work that Jesus came to perform on earth can be summed up in the word 'reconciliation'. I have already demonstrated that in what has gone before. He came to restore human community and brotherhood which sin destroyed. He came to say that God had intended us for fellowship, for koinonia, for togetherness, without destroying our distinctivenesses, our cultural othernesses or what we like to speak of in this country as our identity. Apartheid quite deliberately denies and repudiates this central fact of Jesus, this central act of Jesus, and says, we are made for separateness, for disunity, for enmity, for alienation, all of which we have shown to be the fruit of sin. 10

For this reason alone apartheid is totally unChristian and unBiblical, for it denies, not just a peripheral matter, but a central verity of the Christian faith. Prof Du Randt in his response to Prof J Heyns' article in Stormkompas on page 22 and the following page says:

"Die feit dat die onversoenbaarheid van mense nie by die kerke verbygaan nie, is meer as net 'n ongelukkige toedrag van sake. In die grond van die saak het ons hier te doen met 'n weerspreking van die wese van die kerk. As ek Efesiërs 2 reg lees, waarin die apostel Paulus handel oor die middelmuur van skeiding wat in Christus afgebreek word, dan is alreeds die blote bestaan van die kerk 'n ontkenning van die kunsmatige en ideologiese skeiding van die mense. Hoe is dit nog moontlik dat binne kerklike kringe sodanige skeiding voorgepraat en -gelees kan word 30

as die wil van God en in ooreenstemming met die Evangelie? Dit is die verdienste van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk in Suid-Afrika dat hy op die sitting van sy Sinode in 1978 in Bel Har die probleem van die Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing herlei het tot sy teologiese kern, die versoening. Die besluit lui:

'Die kerk wil dit as sy oortuiging uitspreek dat die apartheidsbeleid en/of afsonderlike ontwikkeling soos deur die owerheid gehandhaaf, in 10 stryd is met die Evangelie -

1 omdat teenoor die Evangelie van Christus se geregtigheid op die versoening van die mens met God en met sy medemens, die gedwonge skeiding van mense op grondslag van ras en kleur ten diepste gebaseer is op die oortuiging van die fundamentele onversoenbaarheid tussen mense wat op so 'n wyse geskei is;

2 omdat die sisteem wat uit so 'n beleid na vore kom, noodwendig moes lei en gelei het tot 20 'n toenemende polarisasie tussen mense, veral omdat die praktyk onteenseglik aangetoon het dat binne die sisteem een bevolkingsdeel, naamlik die Blankes, bevoorreg is en dat daar gevolglik nie voldoen is aan die Evangeliese eis dat geregtigheid aan almal sal geskied nie, en

3 omdat daardeur nie alleen die menswaardigheid van die nie-bevoorregte bevolkingsdele nie, maar ook die menswaardigheid van almal 30

wat daarby betrokke is, aangetas is'.

n Mens kry soms die indruk dat diegene in byvoorbeeld die NGK wat wel van bogenoemde besluit weet, dit te ligtelik afmaak as net nog n voorbeeld van n kerklike besluit teen apartheid, maar die teologiese implikasies van hierdie besluit kan nie geignoreer word nie. Daardeur word n diep indringende vraag gestel aan dié kerk of kerke wat reken dat die genoemde beleid op een of ander wyse teologies gestut of gesteun kan word. Hierdie kerke, en saam met hulle alle 10 kerke, word gevra na die waaragtigheid van hulle eie kerkwees in Suid-Afrika".

Thirdly, when moralists are uncertain about the moral quality of an act, an attitude, an event then they will ask, what the consequences of a particular act or policy or whatever are, if the consequences are <sup>evil</sup> ~~easy~~, then the act being evaluated is declared to be <sup>evil</sup> ~~easy~~. Apartheid treats human beings, God's children, as if they were less than this. It manipulates persons and treats them as if they were means to some end. Emanuel Kant declared that a human person is 20 always an end, never a means to an end, never something that can be used. The cost of apartheid in human suffering and anguish is incredibly exorbitant.

I said that in the Old Testament, M'Lord, we already had foreshadowings of the teaching about the Kingdom of God, for instance in men acting on behalf of God to rule over all creation. It was God's intention to rule as sovereign Lord, and in His Kingdom He was absolute ruler and that He demanded undivided loyalty to Himself alone. That is why Israel, His chosen people, are constantly castigated 30

by/...

by God's spokesmen, the prophets, for their disloyalty, which is likened especially in the book of the prophet Hosea, as adultery, since Israel is married to God alone. The devil and the powers of evil have used that God's rule and as it were, God had permitted them to set up their counter kingdom. This world is in the power and control of the evil one. Consequently there is evil, war, disease, death etcetera. God's children, many of them, are held in bondage and in shackles by the evil one and his ~~millions~~<sup>minions</sup>. But God, it was believed in Old Testament times, would intervene through his 10  
Messiah, the long expected one, the anointed one, and when He came, He would inaugurate the Kingdom of God. It is this long awaited one who is referred to in that quotation from Isaiah 11, to which we have already referred; it is He who will be imbued with God's Spirit, and Christians,  
2 we, the SACC, its member churches, believe that this promised Messiah has come in Jesus Christ Our Lord. We believe that God has intervened decisively in and through Jesus Christ, who is very God Himself, and yet who became a real human being in the act of stupendous divine condescension 20  
called the Incarnation; God becoming man. By this act God declared that human history is important, and that all of human life is important. God declared that He is a jealous God, brooking no rival whatsoever. "I am the Lord your God, and you shall have no other gods beside me". But he was - he is the Lord of all life. When Jesus came and found people who were sick or hungry or naked, He did not send them away with a pious, "We will pray about it". No, Jesus fed the hungry; Jesus healed the sick; Jesus cleansed the lepers; Jesus drove out demons. 30

And/...

And in doing all of these things, He was demonstrating the presence of His Father's Kingdom. You will recall when John the Baptist is in prison, he sends messengers to Jesus, asking, are you the one whom we have been expecting? And Jesus answers, in a way that we would not have expected. He says to those, in Chapter 7 of St Luke's gospel, at verse 18 and following verses:

"Go and tell John what you have seen and heard, how the blind recovered their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead 10 are raised to life, the poor are hearing the good news and happy is the man that does not find Me a stumbling block".

He pointed to a thing that He was doing, including physical material things, here and now, as being the signs of His Father's Kingdom, all these things were thoroughly religious and spiritual, but many of them were so physical, so material, so profane, so secular, and Jesus in His first recorded sermon, according to St Luke, at Chapter 4, applies to Himself words out of the book of the Prophet Isaiah, as words 20 aptly summing up His mission, and you will recall, He comes as - armed with the Spirit which He had received at baptism, and which had sent Him out, not into a cocoon, but to engage in mortal combat with the devil, and He returns from this strife with the devil, so He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up and went to synagogue on the Sabbath day, as He regularly did, He stood up to read the lesson and was handed a scroll of the Prophet Isaiah; He opened the scroll and found a passage which says, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me", and so he has 30

sent/...

sent me to announce good news, good news especially to the poor; good news to proclaim release for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind; to let the broken victims go free, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and Biblical scholars all point to the fact that the year of the Lord's favour is the jubilee year when Israelite slaves must be set free, when the land must also be set free to show that Israel depends entirely on God, and that all comes from God and belongs to God, and there is no spiritualising here. It is release for prisoners, good news, when a person is sick, good news for that person is not to say to them, well, God loves you. Jesus said, good news for a sick person is that they are healed. Good news for a hungry person is not to tell them that there is a tremendous scientific discovery which is going to make it possible for you to eat at some future date. Good news is bread for this hungry person here. I want to underline that these are thoroughly political, thoroughly mundane things. If we are to say that religion cannot be concerned with politics, then we are really saying that there is a substantial part of human life in which God's reach does not run. If it is not God's, then whose is it? Who is in charge, if not the God and Father or Our Lord Jesus Christ?

On the church and politics we could say much, much more. Is it not interesting just how often people and churches are accused of mixing religion with politics? Almost always whenever they condemn a particular social political dispensation as being unjust. If the South African Council of Churches were to say now, that it thought apartheid was not so bad, I am as certain as anything that we would

not be finding ourselves where we are today. Why is it not being political for a religious body or a religious leader to praise a social political dispensation?

I need to point out that in the Old Testament God was experienced by the Israelites in the event of the exodus, first. That was how they came into contact with God. They were at the time just a rebel of slaves. They did not encounter God in some religious event such as a sacrifice or at worship; He revealed Himself in helping them to escape from bondage, and what could be more political than 10 helping captives to escape? And it is this political event of the exodus which becomes the founding event of the people of God. It becomes the paradigmatic event of the Bible, so that, looking at what God did in the exodus, they extrapolate backwards and say that a God who did so and so, must clearly be the God - the Lord of creation, and they can extrapolate forwards and say, God who can choose a people in this way, must be a God who has a purpose for them, and that is why we have said at the beginning that God has taken human history seriously, unlike the nature gods. And 20 when God redeemed us in Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, it was not through a religious event. No, it was through an act of execution, used against common criminals, a judicial event that it would be sanctioned, not by the ecclesiastical leaders, but by the political ruler in Judea in the day.

I want to quote some strange words. I will explain afterwards where they come from, M'Lord. I start on a paragraph 2 and the heading is Rest in the Status Quo:

"The other extreme however is still more fatal 30  
to/...



to the church's effective witness to the world, and that is acquiescence in unjust conditions. Silence may never be kept about the social implications of the Gospel of Christ. There can be little doubt that the present low level of the spiritual life is in no small measure due to the dilution of the eternal principles. The whole church longs and prays for a revival, but is it psychologically sound to expect enthusiastic, joyful spiritual life among those living in misery, hunger and privation? Moses and Aaron also claimed to quicken new hope and courage in the hearts of their enslaved people, but what do we read in Exodus 6:8? But they did not listen to Moses on account of the despondency and cruel bondage".

Paragraph 3, The Charge against the Church:

"The strongest charge against the church is born exactly out of the conception of many that she has not grieved over the ruin of Joseph, but acquiesced this in the conditions of injustice, exploitation and coercion. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1931 made a survey in a last suburb of Berlin among a thousand former members who had left the church. Not one of them recorded objections against the doctrines of the church as a reason for cessation. The great charge was that the church had no eye or ear for justice or for the oppressed. The church identified only with those on the sunny side of life, who pledged their support, not high moral ideals, but self-interest dominated attitude. The church was on the side of the vested interest of ruling classes/...

classes in stead of rebuking or condemning their despotism and injustice, she admonished the poor and oppressed to be docile, to bear their hard burden patiently, to hope for better conditions in the hereafter, to suffer the ills of the present in order to receive the heaven of the future. Our church in South Africa must honestly face the charges brought against her. She is too much inclined to demand support and respect of members on account of past services to the people. The city labourer wants 10 more than this. The past leaves him cold. He wants to know what the church does for him here and now. In former hears the reverence in respect of which the church was regarded, silenced her members even though they differed from her, but now the city dweller is much more critically inclined, and he is more candid to air his grievances. One of the most hopeful signs in our cities is that the church is so close to the working classes. Today she is almost exclusively supported by the labourer, by the low- 20 paid person. These constitute her office bearers and her best members".

Paragraph 4:

"There are weighty reasons why the church cannot stand aloof from the labour struggle.

- (a) The first is because her own future is concerned with this matter. The working class will always predominantly stay in urban areas. If the church loses her influence over them, she misses her calling; she misses her opportunity to 30  
plead/...

plead their cause with the affluent and to interpret their views to others; she misses the opportunity to act as their parent and protector. If she loses their loyalty and trust, if she loses exactly that class out of whom she was born, and to whom her founder belonged. If she only becomes the religious community of the higher ranks and classes, she can be assured of a peaceful yet certain death.

- (b) The second reason is that the church takes 10 up a unique position in the life of the people. It is difficult to conceive of a united leadership to protect the workers. We must look for a body that is in no ways compromised to one or other viewpoint. The only one is the church because she rises above politics. She also enjoys the trust of the people. They are already very bridle-shy of others who pose as friends but always harbour ulterior motives.
- (c) The third reason is that it is in the in- 20 terest of the spiritual case of the church itself and that she also caters for the social and economic interests of the workers who are so much exploited and extorted.
- (d) The fourth reason is that the Christian doctrine is the best antidote to capitalism on the one hand and Communism on the other. Both pay homage to a pure materialistic ideology, while Christianity proclaims the eternal truth, that man cannot live by bread alone but by God's word. 30

(e)/...

(e) The fifth reason is that conditions in South Africa are still redeemable. The Christian churches in Europe for many years showed no sympathy towards socialism; they preached loyalty to the King, the indispensibility of class divisions, submission and patience. The socialists continuously clashed with the churches' protection of the existing established social order and with their conservatism. The result was that the church was succeeding generations 10 that were suffering the castigations of an atheistic socialism. Too late she awakened to the realisation of how much right and fairness in the mist of excesses the workers had on their side, and today we find a disillusioned and penitent church that must accept the fact that she has in a large measure lost her hold on the working classes. Our present working class in South Africa still has an inborn respect for the church, which accounts for much in spite of attacks 20 on religion from many sides. If he now feels convinced in his heart that his church is one with him in his legitimate striving of the justice and protection, a new gratitude, love and loyalty towards the church of his fathers will inspire him. The inherited respect must be supplemented and strenghtened by actual experience of the church's support and assistance, or else it may totally disappear in the second and third generation of workers. At this stage

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the absolute division between the new materialistic ideology and the old religion can still be avoided. The bitterness of their struggle has not yet eaten so deeply into the heart of our working classes as in other countries. The church is still near them, among them, and co-operating with them, but what is required is the impression, the certainty among them that she is a positive support in their struggle. They have not gained this impression to the full". 10

Now, that is not a statement by the SACC. It is a statement made by the Dutch Reformed Church, published in a book entitled "Kerk en Stad". It was in preparation for the Volkskongres in July 1947. It is quoted from a paper that was delivered by Ds Dawid Botha, the Moderator of the Sendingkerk. The paper, The Kingdom of God and the Churches in South Africa, delivered at the National Conference of the SACC in 1980, and Ds Botha said, what remarkable language this is, it is bound to warm the hearts of all supporters of the liberation theologies, and he goes on to 20 say:

"In a most outstanding paper read by the Reverend C D Brink at the Volkskongres, the case is put even stronger. He said:

'The aim of the church is to bring about social justice. Justice must be done to the poor and oppressed, and if the present system does not serve this purpose, the public conscience must be roused to demand another. If the church does not exert itself for justice in society, and 30 together/...

together with the help she can offer, also be prepared to serve as champion for the cause of the poor, others will do it. The poor have the right to say: I do not ask for your charity, but I ask to be given an opportunity to live a life of human dignity'".

That is a White Dutch Reformed religious leader. I do not know whether those who accuse us of being political, will say about - that that was true of the Dutch Reformed Church as well.

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Our God does not permit us to dwell in a kind of spiritual ghetto, insulated from real life out there. Jesus used to go out and be alone with God in deep prayerful meditation, but He did not remain there. He refused to remain on the mount of transfiguration, but descended to the valley beneath to be involved with healing the possessed boy. He was the man for others; prodigal in the giving of Himself, precisely and only because He was a man of prayer, a man of God. That is our paradigm. He did not use religion as a form of escapism. That is why He could say, we must love God and we must love our neighbour as well, quoting from the Old Testament. There were two - these were two sides of the same coin. The one without the other was unacceptable. Love of God was authenticated and expressed in and through love of our neighbour. This is what is often referred to as the vertical dimension; our relationship with God and the horizontal dimension, our relationship with neighbour, in our Christian faith.

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The first epistle of St John is quite firm and unequivocal about this aspect of Christianity. Just hear

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these words from 1 John 3:15-18:

"My children, love must not be a matter of words or talk. It must be genuine and show itself in action. This is how we may know that we belong to the realm of truth. The man who does not love is still in the realm of death, for everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and no murderer as you know, has eternal life dwelling within him. It is by this that we know what love is, that Christ laid down His life for us, and we in our turn are bound to lay down 10 our lives for our brothers. But if a man has enough to live on and yet when he sees his brother in need, shuts up his heart against him, do not let it be said that the divine love dwells within him"

and at Chapter 4:19-21:

"But if a man says, I love God while hating his brother, he is a liar. If he does not love the brother whom he has seen it cannot be that he loves God whom he has not seen, and indeed this command comes to us from Christ Himself, that he who loves God 20 must also love his brother".

And in the epistle of St James, Chapter 1:27:

"The kind of religion that is without stain or fault in the sight of God our Father is this, to go to the help of orphans and widows in their distress and keep oneself untarnished by the world"

and at verse 14-17 of Chapter 2 of the same epistle:

"My brothers, what use is it for a man to say he has faith, when he does nothing to show it? Can that faith save him? Suppose a brother or a sister 30

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is in rags with not enough food for the day, and one of you says, good luck to you, keep yourself warm and have plenty to eat, but does nothing to supply the needs, what is the good of that? So with faith; if it does not lead to action, it is in itself a lifeless thing".

Our Lord has shocked many religious people by his parable of the last judgment, which is found in the Gospel according to St Matthew, in Chapter 25, from verses 31 to the end.

I will not quote, for here he provides a list of things 10 which the doing or the omission of determines whether we qualify or do not qualify for heaven, and the things he mentioned could not by any stretch of imagination be called religious in the narrow sense; it is feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and those who are imprisoned; thoroughly mundane secular activities, and he goes on to say, that to do them to the least, the despised ones, is to do it as to Himself. Here he identified God firmly to the down-trodden, the oppressed, the marginalised ones, and he is only being true to the nature of God 20 as revealed in the Old Testament. The Old Testament prophets, speaking on behalf of God, rejected the elaborate religious ceremonies of his people. Why? Because they dealt unjustly with the poor and the powerless. Listen to some of the scathing words that come from the prophets, in Isaiah 1 at verse 10 and following verses:

"Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom; attend you people of Gomorrah to the instruction of our God, your countless sacrifices; what are they to Me, says the Lord. I am sated with the whole 30 offerings/...



offerings of rams and the fat of buffalos; I have no desire for the blood of bulls, of sheep and of he-goats. Whenever you come to enter My presence, who asked you to do this? No more shall you trample my courts, the offer of your gifts is useless; the reek of sacrifice is abhorrent to Me. New moons and Sabbaths and assemblies, sacred seasons and ceremonies".

I cannot endure, I cannot tolerate your new moons and your festivals; they have become a burden to Me, and I can put up with them no longer. When you lift your hands out- 10  
spread in prayer, I will hide My eyes from you. Though you offer countless prayers, I will not listen. There is blood on your hands. Wash yourselves and be clean. Put away the evil of your deed, away out of My sight. Cease to do evil and learn to do right. Pursue justice and champion the oppressed; give the orphan his rights and plead the widow's cause.

At Chapter 58:

"Why do we fast, the people ask, if Thou does not see it? Why mortify ourselves if Thou payest no 20  
heed?"

God answers:

"Since you serve your own interest only on your fast day and make all your men work the harder, since your fasting leads only to wrangling and strife and dealing vicious blows with the fist, on such a day, you are keeping no fast that will carry your cry to heaven. Is it a fast like this that I require? A day of mortification such as this, that a man should bow his head like a bull rush and make his bed on 30

sack/...

sack cloth and ashes? Is this what you call a fast? A day acceptable to the Lord? It is not this that I require of you as fast. To lose the fetters of injustice, to untie the knots of the yoke, to snap every yoke and set free those who have been crushed. Is it not sharing your food with the hungry, taking the homeless poor into your house? Clothing the naked when you meet them, and never evading a duty to your kinsfolk? Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and soon you will grow healthy 10 like a wound newly healed. Your own righteousness shall be your vanguard and the glory of the Lord your rearguard".

And just one more of the prophets; Amos 2:6 and following.

"These are the words of the Lord. For crime after crime of Israel I will grant them no reprieve. Why? Because they sell the innocent for silver and the destitute for a pair of shoes. They grind the heads of the poor into the earth and thrust the humble out of their way. Father and son resort to the same 20 girl, to the profanation of My Holy Name. Men lie down beside every garment seized in pledge and in the house of their God, they drink liquor got by way of fines".

Chapter 5:7:

"You that turn justice upside-down and bring righteousness to the ground, you that hate a man who brings the wrongdoer to court and loathe him who speaks the whole truth, for all this because you levy taxes on the poor and extort a tribute of grain from 30 them/....

them, though you have built houses of hewn stone, you shall not live in them. Though you have planted pleasant vineyards, you shall not drink wine from them, for I know how many your crimes are and how countless your sins. You who persecute the guiltless, hold men to ransom and thrust the destitute out of court, at that time therefore the prudent man will stay quiet, for it will be an evil time."

Chapter 5:21:

"I hate, I spurn your pilgrim feasts. I will 10  
not delight in your sacred ceremonies. When you bring  
your sacrifices and offerings, I will not accept them,  
nor look on the buffalos of your sacred offerings.  
Spare me the sound of your songs. I cannot endure  
the music of your loots. Let justice roll on like  
a river and righteousness like an ever-flowing  
stream".

Elijah, the prophet, denounces the King Ahab, because the king's wife Jezebel had caused the judicial murder of a nonentity, Naboth, because the king wanted Naboth's vine- 20  
yard. On behalf of God Elijah speaks up against this tyrannical act. The prophets of God are deeply involved in politics because politics are the sphere where God's people demonstrate their obedience or their disobedience.

The prophet Nathan rebuked King David, not for a so-called religious misdemeanour, but for the political act of causing the death of Bathsheba's husband.

Our religion is concerned about the here and now, because that determines to a large extent the hereafter. Time in the Hebrew Christian understanding has eternal 30  
significance/...

significance, and that is why human lives and human decisions are important. All life belongs to God. The Christian faith believes that God uses ordinary things, ordinary material things, water, wine, bread, oil, as vehicles for God's spiritual grace and divine life, as for instance in the sacraments of the church. So that our religion is a religion that is incarnational through and through. William Temple, the great Archbishop of Canterbury, referring to this quality of the Christian faith, said:

"Christianity is the most materialistic of the great religions". 10

We declare that we believe in the resurrection of the body, and not in the immortality of the soul, as for instance the ancient Greeks and the Romans would have done, because for us, as we are told by Paul, the body - this material thing - is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Christians are not dualists, are not those who are speaking about a pyre in the sky when people die, after all, a post-mortem is an oddity.

We believe that all of God's created universe, 20 material and spiritual, counts for us. The whole of life is important, political, economic, social, and none of these aspects is untaxed by religion as we understand it. It is part of God's mission and purpose for His world to bring about wholeness, justice, good health, righteousness, peace and harmony and reconciliation. These are what belong to the Kingdom of God, and we, the SACC, the churches, are His agents to work together with God as partners, to bring - to pass all that God wants for His universe. He showed Himself as a liberator God, when he found a rebel of 30 slaves/...

slaves in bondage. Then because He is that kind of God, He set them free, as the God of exodus, who takes the side of the poor, the weak, the oppressed, the widow, the orphan and the alien. That is the refrain you get in the book of Deuteronomy, the exhortation: look after the widow, after the orphan, after the alien, because they represented in their society a class of people which tends to be marginalised. They tend to be pushed to the periphery. They tend to be pushed to the bottom of the pile. They are the left-behind, as someone put it. They are pushed to the end 10 of the queue. Our God cannot help it, when He encounters injustice, oppression, exploitation, then He takes sides. He is no neutral God, and I am not saying this, He takes the side of the weak and the oppressed. I do not say this; these are not my words. I have shown it from the Holy Scripture.

Where there is injustice, exploitation and oppression, then the God of the Bible - then the Bible are subversive of such a situation. Our God unlike the pagan nature gods, is no God who sanctifies the status quo; no, the Bible 20 indicates that He is a God of surprises. His name is an enigma. I shall be what I shall be. We can know who He is, by the things that He does in human history. He is the God of surprises who uproots the powerful and the unjust to establish His Kingdom, and we see that in the entire history of Israel.

I want to say what I said before on another occasion, that the Bible is the most revolutionary, the most radical book there is. If a book had to be banned, then it ought to have been the Bible, by those who rule unjustly and 30

as tyrants. Whites brought us the Bible, we Blacks, and we Blacks are taking it seriously. We are involved with God in His activity to set us all free, set us all free from all that enslaves us, from all that makes us less than what He intended us to be. He sets us free to enjoy what St Paul calls the glorious liberty of the children of God, and all our work, M'Lord, is consistent with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Gospel of God's love, the Gospel of God's compassion, the Gospel of God's reconciling and forgiving grace, and so we have a home and family life division, which 10 is concerned about the sanctity of marriage and family life. Is that not something pleasing to God in a country that has Family Day as one of its national holidays, and also one of the highest divorce rates in the world. We are involved in this division with the causes of and the likely remedies for juvenile delinquency and illegitimacy. The division is concerned about the status of women and their role in ministry in church and society, so that they are not seen as failed men, as some second-class citizen, where the first-class citizens are male chauvinists, but that they are 20 persons in their own right, with a personhood that is measured by nothing less than the mature personhood of Christ Himself.

In this division we have a health educator who seeks to help mothers in depressed communities, teaching them, proper feeding and health care. It is all to do with the wholeness of the Kingdom of God. Our division of inter-church aid is deeply involved with community development schemes, helping people to feed themselves and to become more self-reliant. We provide relief in doing - in 30 drought-stricken/..

drought-stricken areas, in other areas of natural and human disaster. We found funds from the worldwide church, through the World Council of Churches, to contribute R10 000,00 to the Laingsburg flood disaster fund, which was for all races, not just for Blacks. We help to provide boreholes in arid areas, and encourage amongst other things garden projects. We supply blankets to the needy, the infirm and the aged, especially through funds we get during the August month of compassion, sponsored by this division, when we enable Christians throughout South Africa to put into action their 10 words about their love for their neighbour and their concern for the poor. Can anybody rightly describe the work I have so far described as anything but truly Christlike and obeying His command to love our neighbour as ourselves? Could anyone in his right mind want to criticise this or any other of our work as destablilising? Are we not helping to establish healthy community in the more just society, that is truly democratic and non-racial? We in the SACC do many things that in more normal countries would be the responsibility of the state. For instance, each year we help 20 to educate one thousand pupils, a batch of new pupils each year, at high school in rural areas, and we give one thousand new bursaries every year for university and technical education; in other socities we would be lauded for this outstanding work. In our beloved country we are vilified, we are harrassed, we are abused. Mercifully we do none of all of this work in order to be praised by men. We do it because, M'Lord, we are under divine constraint. As St Paul exclaimed of himself, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel". Woe are we if we do not obey that Gospel, to 30

serve/....

serve God and Christ, by serving God and Christ in the one that Our Lord Jesus Christ called the least of his brethren.

We help to diffuse an explosive and volatile situation through our unemployment project, in a time of high unemployment. The SAAC is engaged nationwide in encouraging the unemployed to be involved in self-employment and self-help projects, and yet we are accused of undermining the stability of society. In fact in the Black community we have been accused on the other side for delaying the bloody revolution through these self-help projects. Again I want to say 10 we play to no gallery. We do what we believe is right, and in accord with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In obedience to Christ's command, we care for political prisoners, detainees, banned persons, as well as for their families and dependents, especially through our dependents conference. We help to arrange for family visits to political prisoners on Robben Island and in other farflung places. What is so sinister about that? Why are our dependents conference workers so often detained by the police? Yet we are determined to continue with this and similar work, for we would 20 much rather obey God than man. Why are we in the SAAC treated as if this country was somewhere behind the Iron Curtain, and Christians must behave as if they were conspirators, when what we are doing is in fact above board and out in the open, for everyone to see.

M'Lord/...



M'Lord, I operate a fund called the Asingeni Fund, in my total discretion, from which, amongst other things, I pay the legal costs of people charged with political offences. I should in a normal country be praised for helping with the administration of proper justice, since we claim that it is the right of each person to have the best defence possible. If it is a crime to do all these things, I am more than happy, and indeed I would be proud to plead guilty to that crime, but I want to declare here as forthrightly as I can that we will continue to do this work, come 10 hell or high water.

Let me refer again to our division of justice and reconciliation. It tries to keep the public and the churches informed on sensitive and critical issues, such as nationalism, foreign investment, uprooting and dumping of people in forced population removal schemes, the Mixed Marriages and Immorality Acts, the Bantustan policy, political ideology such as Marxism, Communism and so on, and we are heavily involved in matters of justice, a Biblical concern as we showed, because we believe that real reconciliation 20 can never happen before justice is established. We showed that the Bible and the God of the Bible were destabilisers where injustice, oppression, alienation held sway. The SACC is basically law-abiding, fundamentally, and concerned for justice and peace and reconciliation and unity, but in a real sense, because we are opposed to injustice and oppression, and we will always be, no matter what anybody gets to do, we cannot support a system where these are found, and to seek to change such a system, even by reasonably peaceful means, is to be a destabilising factor in such a 30 society/...

society. We want to dismantle apartheid, and the perpetrators of apartheid do not like that at all. They could hardly regard us as being blue-eyed boys, could they? Because the privilege they enjoy as a result of apartheid is threatened, and so we see this total onslaught of the apartheid machinery turned against the SACC.

We are concerned to work for a new kind of South Africa, a non-racial, a truly democratic and more just society, by reasonably peaceful means. We as a Council have declared times without number that we deplore all forms of violence. 10 We have said so. We said we are opposed to the structural and legalised violence of an unjust system; the violence to maintain an oppressive social political dispensation, on the one hand, and we are equally opposed to the violence of those who would overthrow the state. But we have also consistently warned that oppressed people, or people who believe themselves to be oppressed, and I happen to be a member of that part of the community, and I would say that I know that I am a victim of the most vicious system since Nazism, that oppressed people will become desperate, 20 and desperate people will use desperate methods.

We have a commission on violence and non-violence, concerned about the increasing militarisation of our land. We believe that conscientious objectors should be given alternative forms of national service, as in most normal societies. We are distressed that conscription is going to be extended, an escalating defence budget has in fact meant less and less and less real security in our land, and there will be no real security in South Africa until the real problem is tackled. We told that to the government, and 30

that/...

that is the question of political power-sharing by all the peoples of our beloved country.

We believe - and we believe fervently - in negotiation, in discussion, in dialogue. That is why in 1980 we had discussions with the government, which we initiated, in which we were trying to prepare the ground for when the government could meet with the authentic leaders of all sections of our South African society, and for us Blacks it would have to include those who are political prisoners on Robben Island, whom we regard as our leaders and elsewhere, 10 and people in exile. It is to hide our heads in the sand, to think that other people appointed by government would be our authentic leadership, and that is why we still call out of this deep concern for dialogue, for discussion, for negotiation, we call for a national convention, and I need to point out that it was the government through the Prime Minister who broke off the negotiations, the discussions, that the South African Council of Churches and its member churches had begun with government.

Now, how can we be accused of being the ones 20 who seek confrontation? I myself believe in dialogue, in meeting. I have spoken at all the Afrikaans university campuses, and I want to tell you, M'Lord, that I did have an extraordinary experience at the University of the Orange Free State, but still I went, and I spoke. In fact, I have spoken at all White university campuses in this country. The only one that I have not visited, is the University of Port Elizabeth. I have spoken also to some mainly Afrikaans organisations and groups, such as Peil 2000 and Polstu. That could hardly be the attitude of someone out for 30 confrontation/...

confrontation, could it? Many in the Black community ask me why do you still waste your time talking to Whites? And I tell them that our mandate is Biblical. Moses went to Pharaoh several times to give him God's message, to Pharaoh, even when Moses knew, having been told by God beforehand that his mission was a futile mission. The prophets addressed the kings of Israel time and time again, because theirs was to deliver the Divine Message faithfully, even if that message was going to be rejected.

The national conference of the South African Council 10 of Churches in June of this year declared apartheid a heresy and said, we should have no further dialogue with the Dutch Reformed - the White Dutch Reformed Churches until it denounces apartheid as evil. This resolution as we are well aware, has since been affirmed by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, whose newly elected president is present here, but I want to tell you, M'Lord, that we reached this point only after several efforts on the part of the SACC to hold out a hand of fellowship to the NG Kerk. In 1978 when I came as general secretary of the SACC, I found a letter 20 that my predecessor had written to Dr O'Brien Geldenhuys, who was then its ecumenical officer and later its chief executive officer, asking the Dutch Reformed Church to appoint an observer who would be free to attend all the meetings of the SACC's executive committee and participate fully and freely. I found no reply to that letter, and so I reminded my friend, Dr O'Brien Geldenhuys, and he subsequently replied to say that the Sinod of his church had turned down our invitation. Then the SACC said no, let us try some more, and so we wrote to the Dutch Reformed Church and said, 30

please/....

please, do not let it be an official observer; let it be an unofficial observer; he can sit here, and we do not want it to be a mutual arrangement. We do not ask him to appoint or allow someone from the SACC to sit on your meetings. He wrote back to say that even this invitation had been rejected. But nothing daunted, we went on; we invited them to participate in a consultation on racism in 1980, at Hammanskraal. They did not even reply to my letter, except by statements in the press, and the consultation at Hammanskraal was quite angry at this action of the Dutch Reformed Churches, but 10 I told them, I told the consultation and asked its permission, I said I felt that I was under divine constraint to write to the NGK saying that they should please forgive us of the SACC and its member churches for anything we had done to hurt them in the past, but that we believe that nothing substantial would happen in this country to change its unjust structures, unless that powerful, that mighty church were to be involved. A small delegation from the Dutch Reformed Church came to see me in what they said must be a totally confidential meeting. So we have tried to engage them 20 in dialogue, and we have been rebuffed. What more could we do? We are sad at what has happened to them in Ottawa. We do not gloat, and we continue to pray for their conversion, because, this is my pet theory, once an Afrikaner sees the light of Jesus Christ as other people see it, there is no stopping him, for there are no half-measures with him. When an Afrikaner is committed, and committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then he is committed to the hilt. We of the South African Council of Churches belong to the Church of God, the one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. What 30

it/...

it means is that we belong to something quite tremendous. Those who are for us, are many times more than those against us. We belong to this remarkable fellowship so that we can receive a letter, as we have done, from a Lutheran pastor in Alaska, two, three years ago, assuring us that he and his congregation in that way away - almost Godforsaken place one would say, except that there is the church, assuring us that he and his congregation are praying for us. When I lost my passport for the first time, I was overwhelmed by messages of sympathy and support from all over the world, but nothing touched me more than to get from the Sunday school children at St James Madison Avenue in New York, which I believe some of your investigating officers visited, what the children called passports of love, which I pasted up on the walls of my office. How can anyone range himself against this international, this global, this global fellowship? 10

I want to stress what I said in the preamble: the church is made up of frail, fallible human beings, so for the SACC. In the New Testament we hear Our Lord's parables of the Kingdom as consisting of wheat and tares. That is a picture too of the church, which is an agent for the Kingdom. The church is the home of sinners and the school for saints. We always marvel that God can want to use such unworthy creatures as we know ourselves to be. His treasure, St Paul tells us, is held in us, who are but earthenware vessels, so that the abounding glory should belong rightly where it belongs, not to us, but to God. 20

I have shown that the teaching which we proclaim, which is under scrutiny by this Commission, is based squarely/... 30

squarely and truly on the Bible. But it is also in line with the teaching of the church of God throughout the world. It is a fact of life, that can be noted by anyone who has eyes to see and does want to see, who is not biased, that the South African Council of Churches enjoys the support of the overwhelming segment of the Christian community in the world. I am not aware that for instance the Dutch Reformed Church which supports apartheid, enjoys even a fraction of the support we enjoy. I am not boasting; I am just stating a fact. In fact some people criticise us precisely 10 because we have this support, expressed in money gifts to us. It is possible of course that the Dutch Reformed Church could be the proverbial Johnny who alone is in step, with the rest of the world being out of step, but I think most reasonable people would say this was highly unlikely. There is no total onslaught on the Dutch Reformed Church that I am aware of. Why do we enjoy such world-wide support? It is possible to deceive some people all the time, but surely we could not be endowed with the ability to deceive such a large body of responsible and mature Christians for 20 so long. We have operated and we continue to operate openly. We report regularly to our member churches, through our national conference and at every quarterly meeting of our executive committee, on which the churches are represented, and they have on the whole been satisfied so far. We do not operate secretly, and yet there are private, secret societies in this land which are alleged - I do not know whether this is true, which are alleged to exercise an enormous influence on some churches and on political leaders, and yet such secret societies are not, to my knowledge, 30

investigated/...

investigated. We do not receive funds clandestinely. They are recorded openly, and yet there are organisations, even religious organisations, some of which were involved in the Information scandal, which have received clandestine funding, and were set up precisely to undermine a legitimate body such as the SACC, and those sinister organisations are not investigated and continue with impunity to spew forth their poisonous filth. A bank recently lost over a million rand through the malfeasance of one of its employees. The Court found that she had in fact been assisted by other bank of- 10  
officials, and yet I have not heard that that bank which deals with far more of the public's funds than the SACC could ever hope to do, I have not heard that that bank is being investigated by any commission. Why not, if we are?

We are told that we do not enjoy the support of the churches in South Africa. That statement may be true, to some extent, if we mean by South African churches the White part of the church. In our membership by and large, White Christians form only 20% of our constituency. The Black membership forming nearly 80% of our constituency, can 20  
be said without fear of contradiction that that part of the church supports the SACC to a very considerable extent. But even if this were not the case, our Lord has warned us that we must beware when all men speak well of us.

The SACC has acted as mediators in labour disputes, and did so successfully in the Fattis and Monis strike. The SACC dreaming about what this country has it in her to become sponsored, what was called a pilgrimage of hope, consisting of young people, and not quite so young people, 144 of them, who went on a pilgrimage of hope, children of all 30  
races/...



... races, first to the Holy Land, then to Switzerland, then to Taize, whose message church is called the Church of Reconciliation, and is packed to the rafters with young people from many parts of the world who rough it, and we said, we are hoping by this that we are demonstrating to South Africa our hope that these young people roughing, loving, playing, praying together, will come back and be able to demonstrate that the church of God is a fore-shadowing, a first fruits of what South Africa will become-

I think it is important to state that we in the SACCC believe absolutely in the centrality of the spiritual; we are not just a bunch of activist, do-gooders engaged in the social gospel. I said that we had as our example and paradigm the Son of God Himself, who spent whole nights in prayer, had retreats, and then concerned Himself to meet human need. What we do and say stem from our encounter with God and Our Lord Jesus Christ, at worship, in Bible study, in meditation, and in the eucharist. M'Lord, you will not find any SACCC staff members in their offices if you came to Khotso House at half past 8 every morning, because we are in chapel, every day, and every Wednesday at lunch time we also have prayers for justice and reconciliation in our land, and some of us have a fast on Thursdays for the same purpose. Once a month we have a eucharist according to the rite of one or other of our member churches. In our two-day quarterly executive committee meetings, we start on the first day with a substantial Bible study, and have a eucharist with a homily on the second day. Both the executive and non-executive staff have an annual week-long retreat. We have a daily eucharist, substantial/...

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substantial daily Bible studies and quiet, as features of every one of our national conferences, before which I wrote to religious communities in this country and abroad, asking for their prayers for the conference, which is thus surrounded by a considerable volume of prayer. As a Bishop of the church, I am under obligation to pray the office of the church twice a day, so that you will know that I do pray at least twice a day, and even if I have given the impression to some people that I am a politician trying very hard to be a Bishop, I want to say that for me the most important - the 10 most cardinal fact about our life is the spiritual - that encounter with God in prayer, in worship, in meditation. I am sorry to reveal this secret part of our lives, which Scripture exhorts must not be paraded before men. I have been compelled to talk about it, to show that we try to be persons of prayer, people who try to wait on our Lord. We may not always hear Him aright, and often perhaps when we hear what He says, we do not like what He is asking us to do, but I want to assure you that we are not politicians. We are attempting to be devout Christians, and speaking 20 for myself, I want to say that there is nothing the government can do to me that will stop me from being involved in what I believe is what God wants me to do. I do not do it because I like doing it. I do it because I am under, what I believe to be the influence of God's hand, and I cannot help it; I cannot help it when I see injustice, I cannot keep quiet. I will not keep quiet, for as Jeremiah says, when I try to keep quiet, God's word burns like a fire in my breast, and they are free to do whatever they wish, what they wish to do with me. But what is it that 30

they/...

they can do ultimately? The most awful thing that they can do is to kill me, and death is not the worst thing that could happen to a Christian.

Our Lord has tried to weld us into a family; people of different races, who demonstrate, however feebly and fitfully, what this beautiful land can be, if only we could begin to treat people as persons created by God in His image, redeemed by Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. What a wonderful land it would be, and we believe that it will happen, in fulfilment of that magnificent vision 10 in the Revelation of St John the Divine, Chapter 7 at verse 9:

"After this I looked and saw a vast throng which no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes, peoples and languages, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were robed in white and had palms in their hands and they shouted together: 'Victory to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb', and all the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, 20 and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God crying 'Amen, praise and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honour, power and might be to our God for ever and ever. Amen'".

Of course, it cannot happen without suffering and anguish. Jesus did not promise His followers a bed of roses. On the contrary, and central to it all was the inevitability and unavoidable nature of suffering. It could be said from this that a church that does not suffer, cannot be the church of Jesus Christ. I do not mean we should be masochists. 30

Suffering will seek us out. It is part of the divine economy of salvation.

Interestingly enough, M'Lord, in the Anglican calendar this week we are bidden to think of the church as the suffering community, and this is the special prayer for this week:

"God Our Loving Father, You gave Your only Son to die, to suffer and to die for men. Grant that when we are found worthy to endure suffering for Christ's name, we may rejoice in our calling and be enabled to bear our part in completing His sufferings for the sake of Your church". 10

We are not to be surprised at suffering that comes to us because of witnessing for the Kingdom of God and for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Listen to these words of Our Lord:

"If the world hates you, it hated Me first, as you know well. If you belong to the world, the world would love its own, but because you do not belong to the world, because I have chosen you out of the world, for that reason the world hates you. 20

Remember what I said: a servant is not greater than his master. As they persecuted Me, they will persecute you. They will follow your teaching as little as they have followed Mine. It is on My account that they will treat you thus, because they do not know the one who sent Me".

And in Matthew Chapter 10:17-22:

"Be on your guard, for men will hand you over to their courts; they will flog you in their synagogues and you will be brought before governors and kings 30

for/...

for My sake, to testify before them and the heathen, but when you are arrested, do not worry about what you are to say. When the time comes, the words you need will be given you, for it is not you who will be speaking. It will be the Spirit of your Father speaking in you. Brother will betray brother to death and the father his child; children will turn against their parents and send them to their death. All will hate you for your allegiance to Me, but the man who holds out to the end, will be saved". 10

God's purposes are certain. They may remove a Tutu; they may remove the South African Council of Churches, but God's intention to establish His Kingdom of justice, of love, of compassion, will not be thwarted. We are not scared, certainly not of the government, or any other perpetrators of injustice and oppression, for victory is ours through Him who loved us.

I end, M'Lord and members of the Commission, with all this in mind, what are we to say, if God is on our side, who is against us? What can separate us from the love 20 of Christ? Can affliction or hardship, can persecution, hunger, nakedness, peril or the sword? We are being done to death for Thy sake all day long; the Scripture says. We have been treated like sheep for slaughter, and yet, in spite of all, overwhelming victory is our through Him who loved us, for I am convinced that there is nothing in death or life in the realm of spirits of superhuman powers, in the world as it is or the world as it shall be, in the forces of the universe, in heights or depths; nothing in all creation that can separate us from the love of God in Christ 30

Jesus/...

Jesus Our Lord. Thank you.

THE COMMISSION IS ADJOURNED

THE COMMISSION RESUMES AT 14h00:

CHAIRMAN: Mr Kentridge, does that complete the evidence of the Bishop?

MR KENTRIDGE: Well, that completes what I will call the Bishop's general conspectus, but as I indicated this morning, M'Lord, if Your Lordship would allow me, there are one or two specific aspects which I would like to put to the witness.

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CHAIRMAN: Please carry on?

MR KENTRIDGE: I wonder if the witness could have before him a copy of - is that the memorandum you have?

Bishop Tutu, there are one or two aspects, both of what is in this memorandum and of your evidence this morning, on which I should like to ask you some questions, so that you can give your replies to the members of the Commission. Both in the memorandum and in your evidence this morning, you had a number of things to say about the system of apartheid and the attitude of the South African Council of Churches towards it, and you did make a reference to certain resolutions of the Council in that regard. In particular, by way of reference, I understand that there was a resolution on this matter which was Resolution No 22 of the National Conference Resolutions 1982, if I show this to you, will you be able to tell us whether this resolution was actually passed? --- Yes.

It was? --- Yes.

Now, that document is in fact a copy of the resolutions placed before the National Conference in 1982? --- 30

Yes/....

Yes.

And it may be useful, M'Lord, if I could put that in.

CHAIRMAN: We will number the exhibits numerically. This will then be EXHIBIT "1".

MR KENTRIDGE: Just give me the date and the title again please, for record purposes? --- It is the - the title is the South African Council of Churches National Conference Resolutions 1982, and the specific one mentioned here is Resolution No 22.

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Resolution No 22. May we have that in?

CHAIRMAN: Yes, it will be received as an exhibit.

MR KENTRIDGE: Now, again, Bishop Tutu .. (INTERVENTION)

MR VON LIERES: M'Lord, could we number that SACC 1, EXHIBIT "SACC 1", because we have already prepared a number of exhibits and the numbers may be confusing.

CHAIRMAN: Very well.

MR KENTRIDGE: Now, Bishop Tutu, it has been suggested in certain quarters, which we need not identify for the moment, that the opposition of the South African Council of Churches to apartheid is really too extreme, and I know that it has been suggested recently that those who have condemned it as heretical or sinful have ignored what someone described as the rich fruits and blessings which apartheid has brought to the Blacks in South Africa. Are you aware of such statements which have been made? -- Yes, M'Lord.

I think you have reacted to them on behalf of the South African Council of Churches? --- I have done so, yes.

Well, I would like to ask you directly to - from the point of view of the South African Council of Churches, has/...

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has the Council ignored what has been called these rich blessings which apartheid has brought with it? --- I would want to say, M'Lord, that when something is evil and it happens to have something slightly positive about it, then that positiveness does not in any way mitigate the evil. If somebody runs a brothel and says that some of the takings from the brothel are used for scholarship bursaries, that does not make the brothel any better. We in the Council have striven to be as positive as we could, when the government have done what we believe is praiseworthy, then I have on behalf 10 of the Council been one of the first to send congratulatory telegrams to the authorities.

Can you think of any such occasion? --- Yes, when Dr Koornhof reprieved Crossroads, I sent him a telegram. When the Prime Minister made his "adapt or die" speech, I sent him a telegram congratulating him on his courage.

Well, that brings me to another question which arises, and that is of your attitude, that is to say the South African Council of Churches' attitude to the government. The South African Council of Churches has been described by some 20 as anti-government. What would your comment be on that? --- The South African Council of Churches is not a political organisation. It is an organisation that is for South Africa, but one that is totally opposed to apartheid. It is anti-apartheid; it is not anti-South Africa, and it would not have gone to hold discussions with the government if all it was setting out to do was to be obstructive.

I wonder whether in that regard you would mind turning to page 10 of the memorandum? And I would like you to look at paragraphs 28 and 29, which are headed The 30



Nature of Reconciliation. Would you just cast your eye over them to refresh your memory? --- Yes.

I would just like to draw your attention in particular to the last section - the last sentence on page 10, which reads:

"The reality of evil is such that reconciliation without confrontation is not possible".

Is this to be read as meaning that the Council seeks confrontation with authority? --- Not at all. I have already referred to our concern for dialogue, negotiation, and 10 have kept advocating a national convention, and seeing that it was important for the authorities to try to come to the negotiating table before it was too late, but having said that, we need to point out that the cross of Jesus Christ is God confronting evil and demonstrating evil for what it is, revealing the awfulness of sin, and we cannot without prostituting the term, the notion, the Christian idea of reconciliation, think that we are talking about reconciliation when we are dealing merely with a patching up and pre- 20 tending that things are other than they really are. We say that real reconciliation cost God the death of His Son, and that reconciliation is not an easy option as against confrontation.

Among the things which you have spoken about in your evidence and which are mentioned in this memorandum, is - to which you have devoted some attention, has been this question of what is called the resettlement of sections of the population? --- Yes.

That is sections of the Black population. The South African Council of Churches appears to have devoted a 30

good deal of attention to that. Is that correct? --- That is correct.

Now, I would like you first to tell His Lordship and the gentlemen on the Commission, what is it you are referring to when you speak of this resettlement, and then to explain the SACC's attitude to it? --- Resettlement is the term that is used for the forced - normally the forced removal of sections of the Black community from what could be called their traditional homes, where a family was able to live together where they were often able to make  
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a living and removed in order to make way for the dictates of apartheid through the Bantustan policy, removed very many times from these homes and dumped as if they were not human beings, dumped in arid areas and at this point there have been nearly 2 million people who have been moved in this kind of way, into camps in the Bantustan areas which are referred to as resettlement camps, and in these areas often the only thing they find is a tin latrine, and they have to start from scratch to try to put together a home, and often there is no work available near this camp and  
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therefore the breadwinner has to become a migrant labourer in the White man's city, and that means that Black family life is being undermined by a system which the Cape Sinod of the Dutch Reformed Church described as a cancer in our society, the migratory labour system.

Now, have you personally visited any of these resettlement areas? --- I have visited quite a few.

Can you just mention a few names? --- I have visited Glenmore just outside Grahamstown; I have visited Tembasa just outside Kingwilliamstown, and have visited Sada,  
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Ilinge/...

Ilinge and Zweledinga outside Queenstown.

In these camps, did you find conditions which enabled the people in them to lead a decent life? --- I was deeply distressed at the conditions under which people lived. They were not conditions such as one would wish on one's worst enemies.

Now, as you are aware, the South African Council of Churches has made a film which has been made available to the Commission; in that film there is - certain of these areas are shown on this film, and you have certain 10 things to say about them in that film? --- Yes.

M'Lord, I understand that you do have that film, and that film would further illustrate what this witness is now saying. In addition the South African Council of Churches has published a little book called Black Uprooting from White South Africa by M Nash. Are you aware of that book? -- I am aware of that book.

Does that also illustrate the concern of the South African Council of Churches? --- It does so eloquently and scientifically. 20

I do not know, M'Lord, whether this book has yet been made available to the Commission.

CHAIRMAN: I cannot recall for the moment.

MR KENTRIDGE: Rather than put it in formally as an exhibit, may we make a copy or copies available?

CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR KENTRIDGE: Then I hope it is not necessary for me to read out passages into the record.

Now, Bishop, apart from speaking out against this uprooting, has the Council done specific work in and 30  
in/...

in connection with the so-called resettlement areas? ---

Yes. The South African Council of Churches obeying the mandate of Our Lord to show compassion for the least of his brethren wherever they might be, has known that it was under constraint and had an obligation to serve those who were suffering, and so the South African Council of Churches has provided for instance the bursaries that I have referred to, for schooling for the children in these areas, through our inter-church aid division we have an agricultural adviser who has been going round trying to help people 10 in these arid drought-stricken areas, trying to help them to raise food to feed themselves; we have also tried to provide income-generating projects, self-help projects, community development projects; you have sewing groups who try to put together articles that they will then try to sell for money prices, people involved with making leather goods, shoes, and we have also tried to get bore-holes in many of these areas, through a scheme which the inter-church aid division has been responsible for. These would be just some of the things that we do, despite our being 20 totally opposed to the Bantustan policy, but Christ calls us to serve him in serving the least of His brethren.

In this connection, I would like you also to turn to page 44 of the memorandum. This is a section of the memorandum, as you will see from page 42, which deals with Mission and Evangelism. Now, I want to draw your attention to Clause 2.7 and 2.8. You recollect that? --- Yes.

2.7 deals with the Ministry to Refugees, and it refers to a resolution of the - which was tabled at the National Executive Meeting of the SACC on 25 February 30

1981, in which there was discussion of a ministry to refugees from South Africa in neighbouring territories. I wonder if you could tell the members of the Commission what the thinking was behind such a mission? --- The motive behind all of this is again a thoroughly theological concern, that the church has a responsibility for its members wherever they may be, and the plight of refugees has always been a concern of the church worldwide, but we believed that it was imperative because many of those children were either members of our member churches or they were 10 the children of such members, that the gospel of Jesus Christ constrained us to minister to them just as much as we through our churches minister to the Defence Force in providing chaplaincy ministry.

And what has the SACC itself done with regard to the mission to refugees? Does it actually carry it out itself? Or if not, what does it do? --- I need to say that some of our member churches already carry out this ministry on our behalf, because they are ecclesiastical boundaries, as I tried to point out in my earlier submission, do not coincide with geographical or political boundaries, for instance the United Congregational Church of South Africa has parts of itself as it were in Botswana; the Church of the Province of Southern Africa includes Lesotho and Swaziland and Mozambique, and therefore already a ministry of sorts is being carried out by our churches, but what we have done so far is first to have asked a staff member of the SACC to collect as much information as he could on the state of the refugee situation as it were in neighbouring countries, and then have established what 20 30

has.../

has come to be called the churches' standing committee on ministry to refugees, of which the current chairman is Dr Mgodjo, the President Elect of the Methodist Conference of South Africa, and its Secretary is the Right Reverend Francois Bill, Moderator of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

Incidentally, I see from page 70 of the memorandum that the SACC provided aid for the Lesotho refugees in Bethlehem? --- Yes.

Something else, if I can go back to page 45, 10  
to which I want to draw attention, is in clause 2.9 of the memorandum; it says there that in 1980 the SACC National Conference directed the division to embark on a fund-raising campaign among South African Christians for the boat people, and this fund-raising effort brought in R4 250 000,00 for the more than a quarter of a million Vietnamese boat people. Why did the SACC embark on that campaign? --- The South African Council of Churches belongs to the Church of God, which is spread throughout the world, and wherever there is need, the church is under obligation to try and 20  
help to meet that need, and we are not directed or motivated by ethnic or political or other such concerns. It is human beings, God's children in need, and we wanted to demonstrate in a concrete although a small way, that we do belong to this worldwide community.

Would you turn back to page 13 of this memorandum, and look at the last paragraph on that page, paragraph 44, where you are dealing with the church, and if you look particularly at the second-last sentence on that page, which reads that it - that is the local church - also includes 30

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a concern and care for the physical and social need of its own members and those outside its membership. Now, you know it is said by some - I do not know whether it will be said by anyone who comes before this Commission or not, but it is said by some that a church's function should be to look after its own members and not non-members. What is your feeling about that? -- No, that is a theology that our churches in the SACC would repudiate quite completely because the church exists not for itself; it exists, someone put it - it exists for those who are not members 10 of the church.

Now, one of the subjects in connection with which the South African Council of Churches and you as its General Secretary have been attacked from time to time, is in connection with what some people call Black theology? --- Yes.

Now, if I can just interpolate here, M'Lord, as we are giving evidence first, we obviously have no way of knowing, and probably even the Commission itself does not know whether any would-be witness is going to come before you to make any point of so-called Black theology in the SACC. So all I want to get from the witness now is, if you are asked about that, you are prepared to deal with it? --- Oh, I will be quite ready. 20

Now, I do not know, M'Lord, whether Your Lordship would want the witness to say anything about it now?

CHAIRMAN: I think that we will - the best way of dealing with this, will be for us to make arrangements for Bishop Tutu to come back to deal with that in the event of somebody dealing with it, or in the event of some literature 30 being/...

being handed to us on that.

MR KENTRIDGE: Which you want dealt with?

CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR KENTRIDGE: I am indebted to you for that indication. Then we will not take up time with it today.

There are certain matters of a different sort to which I now want to turn. I take it that you are aware, Bishop Tutu, that in the report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Media, presided over by His Lordship Mr Justice Steyn, there is a chapter - or there may be a couple 10 of chapters in which the South African Council of Churches is dealt with in some detail and to some length? --- I am aware of this.

Now, one of the things which is said at pages 571 to 572 by the members of that commission giving their report, is that there can in fact be little doubt, so they say, that the World Council of Churches and its close affiliate in South Africa, the SACC, are actively engaged in violently anti-South African left-radical liberation politics, which include open support for the terror 20 attack on the RSA, an attack they seek to sanctify by the invocation of the theology of revolutionary liberation. Now, there are a great many allegations in that one sentence. On behalf of the SACC, what would you say generally about that accusation? --- The accusation which is put out as facts, is totally untrue, and when this report came out, M'Lord, I would have wished to sue, if that had been possible, because this - it was a putting together of untruths.

Well, let us take these one by one; first, that you are actively - that is the SACC, are actively engaged 30

in/...



in violently anti-South African politics? --- That is absolute nonsense, because it is quite untrue. We do the opposite. We are not involved in politics in the first place, M'Lord.

And what about being anti-South African? --- We are passionately - many of us, most of us, all of us, passionately in love with this country. We are totally opposed to apartheid. That will not change. We are anti-apartheid, but very much pro-South Africa.

Well, it may be that the writer of this equate 10  
being anti-apartheid with anti-South African. What would you say to that? --- I would have hoped that a judicial commission would have been a little more careful in its use of language.

Now, the next epithet used about the SACC, that it is engaged in left-radical politics? --- I have already said that we are motivated by our obedience to Our Lord Jesus Christ, and that everything we do is to determined by our religious faith, our relationship with Our Lord Jesus Christ. It has got nothing to do with politics 20  
and we are not involved in politics in a party-political sense. We would be involved in politics only in so far as religion deals with the whole of life. We do not believe in the dichotomies, in compartmentalising life, but what is being said there is totally untrue.

Now, what about this epithet 'radical'? --- I would like to say that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is radical from the Latin that means it goes to the roots. When Jesus says, unless you are converted and become as a little child, you cannot enter the Kingdom of God, He is not talking

about/...

about peripheral things. He is going to the heart of a human being's existence, and He is going therefore to the root of what determines who we are and what we are, and in a sense He is radical.

What about the suggestion that the SACC is left-wing? --- I am left speechless, actually, which is an achievement, because I do not know how in fact to respond to something that is so blatantly untrue.

Well, there is a reference here to liberation politics, whatever the writers may mean by that. Does the South African Council of Churches sometimes speak of liberation? --- We speak of liberation, yes, because the Bible speaks of liberation. The God of the Bible comes on the scene for the Israelites, certainly first as a God who liberates, who sets free, and the theme of liberation is one that runs right through the Bible. I will give only a few examples. Leaving out the Old Testament and coming to the New Testament, because some people think that there is no that in the Gospel of Jesus Christ; Jesus is the Greek form of the same name that belongs to Josuah. Josuah is he who led the children of Israel from the wilderness across the Jordan into the promised land, and so we are expected, especially in the Gospel according to St Matthew, which was written for a Jewish audience, to hear echoes of the Old Testament, that the typology which is found in the Old Testament, finds its fulfilment in the New, and Jesus, especially the Gospel according to Matthew again, is seen as the New Moses, for He too ascends a mountain as Moses ascended a mountain; Moses ascended a mountain to give the people the Decalogue, the so-called Ten Commandments/...

Commandments, the command of God, the law of God, and Jesus gives what some has seen as His new - the sermon on the mount, and He speaks about the conditions that make people belong to the Kingdom of God. Jesus speaks of Himself as a ransom. Now, this may be seen perhaps as a figure of speech, but when do you use a ransom? You use a ransom when someone has been kidnapped, and it is paid to release a captive who has been kidnapped, and Jesus is not using merely a figure of speech. He is speaking about the cost of what He has come to do here. In the Gospel according 10 to St Luke, in the account of the transfiguration, we are told there that Jesus spoke with Moses and Elijah, and it is only St Luke who tells us what the subject of their conversation was, and St Luke says that their conversation dealt with the salvation which he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem, and now it is interesting that the Greek word that is used for what he is about to accomplish in Jerusalem, is "exodos". Now, that cannot be just a coincidence. It is meant to recall to those who have that kind of memory, the fact that this is what God did; God participated 20 in an exodus event which was a liberatory event, and at many points in the Scriptures you hear Paul say, you have been bought with a price; you have been bought, or one Peter speaks about the fact that we have been bought, not by gold or something that perishes. We have been bought by the precious blood of the Lamb. We have been bought. We no longer belong to ourselves.

Thank you, Bishop. Now, the next statement which is made is that the South African Council of Churches as it is said here, was engaged in politics which include 30

open support for the terror attack on the RSA. Has the SACC given any support to the terror attack on South Africa, whether open or clandestine? --- Nothing of the sort has happened. We have on the contrary, as I indicated, given our statements in which we said we were opposed to all violence, including that kind of violence.

Now, can you think of anything the South African Council of Churches will have said or done which gives any rational justification for this finding that it has supported the terror attack on South Africa? --- I do 10 not have a very good memory, but even my poor memory cannot - I cannot for the life of me find out what the basis of that particular scurrilous statement is.

Well now, one of the other things that is said by the same gentlemen who put their name to this report, at page 685, it is a comment on something that you said about demolition, and it is said that it is impossible to reconcile those views of yours with your - that is the Bishop's - open strong and oft repeated support for the armed liberation struggle of SWAPO, the ANC and PAC. Have you sup- 20 ported armed liberation struggle of those organisations? --- I have done nothing of the sort. If I have, I presume that I would have been charged long ago under the security laws of this country.

Why should this - do you know of any reason why this should have been said about you by these gentlemen? --- It is in my view part of a campaign of vilification. I cannot - I really cannot credit that a judicial commission could in fact do something that was so utterly irresponsible.

Well, at page 575 there is a paragraph 28 at 30

which/...

which the members of the Steyn Commission - they give it the heading Corrosive Influence of the WCC and SACC, and they speak of the dangerously negative and divisive attitudes that influence the World Council of Churches and which the World Council has succeeded in instilling in its local equivalent, the South African Council of Churches, and the example that they give is your - from your address to the National Conference of the SACC, during the first week of May 1981, where they say you called for the perpetrators of apartheid to be excommunicated from the churches, and they say that you were thereby seeking to have separate development, as apartheid is now officially called, branded as heretical. Now, the accusation there is that the World Council of Churches has instilled a divisive attitude into the SACC, as illustrated by that statement of yours. What would you say to that? ---- The SACC is an autonomous body. We are - we hope always those who wish to stand under judgment, only of the word of God. We do not kow-tow to anybody; we do not curry favour with anybody, and that means anybody. We take our instructions from only one source: Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Gospel, and we have - I tried to show, and I am willing to give many other examples of how we have tried to be part of God's movement for reconciling, for bringing together, but we do not reconcile on the basis of a lie. We will not have unity at any cost. We have striven to speak to the perpetrators of apartheid, and tried times without number to make them aware of what we believe to be the errors of their ways, but we are following a Biblical precedent ; in fact we are following what Our Lord

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Our Lord says in St Matthew's Gospel, that you should go to your brother, if there is anything between you and him, to alert him of this and try to bring about the reconciliation, if that fails, then bring your brother to a group of fellow-believers; if that fails, then the brother who refuses to be reconciled, must become to you as one of the tax gatherers and unbelievers, and that is not done lightly. When I made that suggestion, the churches actually did not accept it. The Conference did not accept it. It was my own expression, and it was only last year - 10  
this year at this year's National Conference that the resolution No 22 was passed, which as I indicated, has been as it were, endorsed by a very responsible and august world body.

Well, I do not want to refer you particularly to any other of these choice extracts from the Steyn Commission report in which the South African Council of Churches is attacked; if any of those are put to you by the authors or anyone else, you will deal with it?--- Oh, I certainly shall. 20

Let us just - let me just stay for a moment with the World Council of Churches. The SACC I understand it, is an affiliated member only? --- We are an affiliated member only, because it is only churches, not councils, that can become members of the World Council of Churches.

And what is, as distinct from the perception of the Steyn Commission, what is the South African Council of Churches' perception of the World Council of Churches? What sort of body do you see it as being? --- I see it as a tremendous instrument in the hands of God who work/... 30

work for the unity which is God's intention and God's gift, not only to the church, but to the whole of human kind and indeed it is God's intention for the whole of Christianity, and the whole of His creation, that the World Council of Churches has given opportunity to nearly 300 different denominations, to come together, representing people who come from all kinds of countries, countries behind the Iron Curtain and so on, and it is one of the sadnesses, speaking for myself, that South Africans by and large have been denied the experience of participating in meetings of the World Council of Churches. . . . When you see unfolded before your eyes the kind of world community God would wish us to have, the World Council of Churches has a wide range of views within it. There are tensions, and when people speak of it, they speak of it as if it were some monolithic structure. The range of views is a wide spectrum, ranging from some of the most conservative socialled evangelical groups, to those in Latin America who espouse the theologies of liberation. It is a humbling experience to be able to meet at some of these gatherings. Some of the world's outstanding theologians, because some people in this country think of the World Council of Churches as if they did not know any theology. They think of the World Council of Churches as something that did not even know how to pray. I just want to refer to a conference that I attended in Bangkok, of the Commission for World Mission and Evangelism. It was the first such conference at which there was a room set aside for when members could forget all the hullabaloo of discussions and debate and be able to go and be quiet. We were

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surrounded/...

surrounded by Buddhist temples, and Buddhist meditative people. Perhaps that was one reason, and it had an influence on how the conference was held, but I have deemed it a great privilege to have sat at the feet of outstanding theologians, such as Jurgen Moltmann. They are not - these are people out of the first drawer; it is not tuppenny halfpenny - you know, unsubstantial people. It is people - it is a body now that is being led by the primate of the Church of Canada, and if anyone wants to say that Ted Scott is a fire-eater, he is an undisciplined and undevout 10 man, then I am sorry for them, for they have not met Ted Scott.

Now, you have had personal exposure then to the World Council of Churches? --- I have.

And have other members of the South African Council of Churches? --- The President of our Council particularly, during the time when I have not been able to travel, has had moving experiences attending the meetings of the Central Committee, and he gave us some tremendous accounts of for instance the meeting in Dresden in East Germany. 20

Now, your perception and the South African Council of Churches' perception of the World Council of Churches, does not seem to be shared by the gentlemen who put their names to the Steyn Commission's report, because they refer with apparent approval to this description:

"The World Council of Churches is a combination of nitwits and some very clever leftist revolutionaries" which the Commission actually underlines. What do you feel about that description?--- I just wish to expose them to a meeting with Dr Phillip Potter, and apart from 30  
encountering/...



encountering his massive intellect, they would be surprised, particularly White South Africans, they would be surprised at the warmth of this person.

Who is he? --- Dr Phillip Potter is the Methodist - the Black person who is the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches.

And so the South African Council of Churches remains an affiliated member of the World Council of Churches? --- We will always do so, until it is made utterly impossible for us to do so. We do not, M'Lord, claim that the 10 World Council of Churches is infallible. They would be the last people to make that claim for themselves. They have made mistakes, but which body made up of human beings, frail human beings, would claim that it had never made mistakes?

Now, let us come to an issue there, which has drawn particular criticism. I think it is well-known that over the past years the World Council of Churches has made a - some donation to the African National Congress? -- Yes.

And that has been described as aid to terrorists? 20 --- Yes.

How is that perceived in the World Council of Churches to your knowledge, that donation? --- That donation in the perception of the World Council of Churches, and I think in the perception of most Christians around the world, is seen as an act of solidarity, and it is a donation that is made for humanitarian purposes, to organisations such as the ANC which are engaged in combating racism, and it is made not from the general funds of the WCC, nor in terms of the particular programme, the programme to 30

combat/...

combat racism. It is made from a special fund to which the donations are specifically ear-marked.

By the donors? --- By the donors.

Now, another thing that has drawn some criticism similarly in South Africa is that when the civil war was still carrying on in Zimbabwe, it was announced I think that some donation had come from the World Council of Churches to the Patriotic Front. Were you aware of that? --- I was aware of it. It happened when we were attending the Lambeth Conference in England. 10

And what was the nature of that donation? --- The donation I think was in the sum of something like ..

(INTERRUPTION)

THE COMMISSION IS ADJOURNED

ON RESUMPTION:

MR KENTRIDGE: Bishop, when that intervention came, I think I was asking you about the World Council of Churches' grant to the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe, or Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. -- Yes.

And I was asking you whether you knew about it? 20

--- Yes.

You say it happened when you were at a conference?

--- The announcement came when we were at Lambeth conference of Anglican Bishops in England, in 197 ..

And do you know what the scale of the grant was? ---

I think it was of the order of about say US \$78 000.

I think so. This is ..

Do you know what it was for? --- For humanitarian purposes, to be determined by the recipients, but it would be that it included things like medical care and 30

supplies/....

supplies, education and things of that order.

Now, these grants we have mentioned, this one to the Patriotic Front and the one to the African National Congress, how do they figure in the general scale of World Council of Churches' activities? --- One is often surprised how amounts have a significance that bears no relationship to their actual quantum, but because at the same time as having given \$78 000 to the Patriotic Front, the World Council of Churches through its other agencies had made grants to the churches in then Rhodesia, amounting to 10 well over R1 million.

Grants for what purposes? --- For education, for community development, for assistance to communities seeking to develop themselves and things of that order, helping in the rehabilitation and so forth.

Now, Bishop, while we are dealing with the question of funds, I want to ask you something about the source of the funds of the South African Council of Churches. You have already said in your evidence that these funds come openly and the donors are known? --- Yes. 20

Now, you have also mentioned the fact which is referred to in the memorandum at page 26, if you would turn there, it is a matter which you dealt with in your evidence this morning. You said that you found it natural and not unnatural that the South African Council of Churches received considerable donations from abroad? --- Yes.

And here at pages 26-27 you deal with it? --- We do that, yes.

Now, I know that one of the questions which has been raised in this regard is, why you do not collect more 30

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in the way of funds in this country? -- Yes, first of all I need to note or bring to the attention of the Commission that most churches, I think, apart from perhaps the White Dutch Reformed Church, on the whole still receive a fair amount of financial and other support from overseas. This is certainly true of the Church of the Province of South Africa; it receives assistance in the form of personnel; it receives money assistance, so that it is not peculiar to the SACC as such; it does reflect a condition that is found amongst its own members. That would be one 10 thing. The second is that the large - a large part of the membership of the South African Council of Churches is from the most economically depressed community, part of our South African society, the Black community. Thirdly it would be true to say that because of its prophetic ministry in South Africa, the South African Council of Churches is not surprised that there is generated around it a fair degree of hostility from White South Africans, not all of them, but most White South Africans look upon the South African Council of Churches as the organisation they 20 most love to hate. But I mean, a fourth point is one that we must keep coming back to, that we belong to the Church of God, and we do not apologise for the fact that we do receive, as I tried to point out, we do receive this substantial support from overseas. They believe that there is something maybe intangible that they receive in this relationship.

Well/....