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FRONT COVER / VOORBLAD

The World Council of Churches, the biggest and most comprehensive Church gathering in the world is meeting in Nairobi for its fifth Assembly from 23.11.75 to 10.12.75. Eight of the 271 member Churches are coming from S.A. The theme of the conference is: "Jesus Christ frees and unites". May the Spirit of the Lord guide the gathering.

Die Wêreldraad van Kerke, die grootste en mees omvattende kerkvergadering in die wêreld vergader te Nairobi vir sy vyfde Algemene vergadering vanaf 23.11.75 tot 10.12.75. Agt van die 271 lidkerke kom van S.A. Die tema van die konferensie is: „Jesus Christus bevry en verenig". Mag die Gees van die Here die vergadering lei.

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THE COMPREHENSIVE TASK OF THE CHURCH

If one looks at the situation in Southern Africa to determine the influence of the church in relation to the historical passage of events, one come to realize with some sense of shock that the influence of the church has at best been indirect. In Mozambique the church under the present dispensation has encountered opposition. One must first study the situation very carefully to determine whether the church has not itself been to blame for the limiting of its influence. Has the church really been as involved in the gospel of justice and renewal as it should have been, or is it now paying the price of the neglect of its duty in this regard? In Angola it is clear that the church has not given the necessary guidance and direction in the existing situation.

In South Africa too the influence of the church is as a rule reduced to matters of minor or only incidental importance to society. The historical passage of events as well as the ordering of society usually by-pass the orbit of the direct influence of the church. Why is this so? Is it rightly so? What can be done to rectify this way of life?

The answer to the first questions is that the church itself is in great measure responsible for the fact that life is so compartmentalized and that the church has had as a consequence to confine itself to its own demarcated sphere of influence. Usually this sphere of influence comprises the individual and inner life of man and is orientated to the life hereafter. That this latter is an important aspect of the work of the church is not denied, but to allow the role of the church to be seen in so circumscribed a sphere is a serious misrepresentation of its real task.

The community, the fellowship of men, society itself, are also an expression of the image of God as is the individual in his relationship to God and in his interpersonal relations. Political actions, for example, are pre-eminently *human* actions and consequently the gospel is directly relevant in this sphere as well as in other human spheres. What then does the gospel really mean for society if it does not have ethical, spiritual, social and political meaning?

Neither is the question merely what the meaning of the gospel is *for* the world since that would place the world, society and politics — even *humanity* itself — in an isolated position at the very centre. The question is rather: what is the gospel's interpretation of the world? In other words how does the gospel see the nature and meaning of society, politics and the design of life? This question places life in all its aspects within the framework of the Kingdom of God. The gospel restricts man's authority in all spheres of life to a relative authority subordinate to the ultimate authority of God. No decision of man, whether it be in the political, church or social

sphere, may be regarded as a decision of the highest authority. It must always be tested against the gospel, having the Messiah-King as supreme authority and subject to Him. The measuring-rod of the Kingdom must provide directives, — guide-lines — for humanity in all the contexts of life.

And this is precisely the task of the church and theology to work for the establishment of the Kingdom of God in the world. In His sacrifice of reconciliation Christ did not merely fulfil the covenant; he established the Kingdom of God in the world. His work is primarily in the historical field. From the proclamation of the Kingdom the church issued forth. What is of importance here and what the church in South Africa, it would seem, frequently loses sight of, is that it is God's will that His Kingdom be established *in the world*, in the community and society. To that end Christians and the church must work together for the transformation of the world into part of the Kingdom of God.

Utopia or Asceticism ?

Because under the present dispensation the devastating effects of sin must still be reckoned with, one cannot think of the Kingdom in Utopian terms. Nevertheless the Kingdom of God has come upon earth through the action of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the work of Christians, and even though this "coming of the Kingdom" is as yet incomplete, it will not permit the church to deviate from its allotted course or to confine its task within the limits of the inner life of the individual man and the life hereafter. *The pursuit of Utopia which presumes that the Kingdom in all its perfection can be set up in this life, has slain its thousands, but church asceticism presupposing that it is not the task of the church to transform this life has slain its ten thousands.* "And if the salt has lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" The church must keep vigil constantly to ensure that it does

RESIGNATION OF EDITOR

With a view to becoming a full-time student in theology as from the end of the year I have decided to resign as editor of Pro Veritate and study secretary of the Christian Institute. The December Pro Veritate will D.V. be the last which I shall issue. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the readers of Pro Veritate most cordially for the support and encouragement, as well as the criticism, which I have received during a period of editorship of more than four years. I would also like to say a special word of thanks to the directors of Pro Veritate and my colleagues on the staff who gave me such whole-hearted co-operation.

not succumb to the temptation of trying to set up the kingdom in the service of the church; it must make quite sure that the church always remains in the service of the coming of the Kingdom in this world. The injunction always remains in force that the church must not work towards bringing life in general under the domination of the church, but rather towards bringing the world in every aspect under the sway of the Kingdom.

What does this mean in the language of the day in South Africa? What is the Kingdom's message to the church in the present situation?

1. People, overcome and rendered helpless by fear of a future which holds the threat of large-scale, bloody confrontation, must be recalled to the source of reconciliation, justice and love, recalled to the cross whereby Christ has triumphed over hostility, injustice and hatred. There people, however diverse they may be, can find one another, and by the grace of God, live together in peace and justice.

2. Détente, peace abroad or at home, can only succeed and be supported by *all* if it is based on God's right and justice. According to the gospel God vindicates the rights of the poor, the suffering, the rejected, the exploited, those deprived of rights, the powerless whoever they may be (black, white or brown) over against the rich, the powerful, the exploiter, the abuser, the unfeeling, the selfish.

In this threatening explosive situation the church must constantly give witness to the existence of a third possibility, viz. the Kingdom which has its being in "justice and peace". If the policy of political détente does not succeed, violent confrontation is not the only remaining alternative. There is a third way open: a goal of peace based on *justice for all*.

The church will have to witness to both sides: against the sins of those who mis-use the capitalist system to enrich themselves more and more and abuse their power to maintain their own rights to the utmost over against the poor and those who have been deprived of their God-given rights; on the other side too the church must witness against the sins of those who advocate chaos, bloodshed and murder, and who exploit the grievances of those deprived of their rights for the purpose of bringing about insurrection and violent revolution. It must be shown that a bloodthirsty man would like to obtain power to misuse it.

3. The church with its glad liberation tidings of the Kingdom, must become purposefully involved in the political problems of the people in South Africa. The church must take action with scientific objectivity and evangelical bias towards justice whether it be on behalf of the protection and safeguarding of the minority groups, such as e.g. the Whites, or whether it be on behalf of the political rights of the Brown people or the Black people in the cities. Because people can only "meet" God in their every-day lives and can only live for Him in their every-day life, — and not in some beyond this-world or "spiritual" life — it is inevitable that the Gospel must be expressed in the political and social decisions and policies and in the work of every day.

The Church is always involved in politics

Will this action not mean that the church loses its identity in politics? Or, if it is not actually swallowed up, that it will

at least result in schism and conflict in church and society? Which church and which group must finally be followed?

The church must realize that in any case it is a part of society and this means that whether it will or not, it is always and inevitably involved in politics, whatever standpoint it chooses to adopt. Even a decision not to express opinions about affairs of the moment, or as a church not to be concerned in social problems, is in itself a specific political decision, namely, *for* the support by tacit approval and irresponsible indifference to the prevailing situation or *status quo*.

As long as the church remembers that society and politics must be seen in the light of the Kingdom — in the light of God — and not the other way about, the church will not be involved in mere petty politics. As long as the gospel and the Kingship of Christ constitute the starting point, the norm and the focus, politics, the state and society will remain the servant, the subordinate, and will not become a "god" before which the church must bow down and idolize.

A wise state would welcome the purposeful involvement of the church because it represents a dimension of life to which no other section of society can contribute. The voices which will be heard from the various churches and groups will — from different angles and in many varied ways — witness to the glory and righteousness of God as did the writers of the Bible. And just as in the Bible a line is drawn between the true and the false prophets, so again with the Gospel as measuring-rod, such differentiation will be made in this instance too. Whatever the outcome we know that the church's message cannot be ignored for with it we would lose our final hope of peace, reconciliation, justice, freedom and joy.

— Roelf Meyer

GOD GREETS US ... IN BITTER SUFFERING

'By gracious powers so wonderfully sheltered
And confidently waiting, come what may,
We know that God is with us, night and morning
And never fails to greet us each new day.

Yet is this heart by its old foe tormented,
Still evil days bring burdens hard to bear,
O give our frightened souls the sure salvation
For which, O Lord, you taught us to prepare.

And when the cup you give is filled to brimming
With bitter suffering Lord to understand,
We take it thankfully and without trembling
Out of so good and so beloved a hand.

Yet when again in this same world you gave us
The joy we had, the brightness of your sun
We shall remember all the days we lived through
And our whole life shall then be yours alone.'

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer

(translated from German; written shortly before his death in gaol).

DIE OMVATTENDE TAAK VAN DIE KERK

As 'n mens na die situasie in Suider-Afrika kyk om vas te stel wat die invloed van die kerk is met betrekking tot die historiese verloop van sake, kom 'n mens met verbasing agter dat die kerk se invloed hoogstens 'n sydelingse is. In Mosambiek het die kerk in die nuwe bedeling die wind van voor gekry. 'n Mens sal die situasie daar eers deeglik moet bestudeer om vas te stel of die kerk nie self die oorsaak van die beperking van sy invloed was nie. Was die kerk wel met die evangelie van geregtigheid en vernuwing betrokke gewees soos wat dit hoort, of het hy daarmee versuim sodat hy nou die prys daarvoor moet betaal? In Angola is dit duidelik dat die kerk nie rigting aan die situasie gegee het nie.

Ook in Suid-Afrika word die kerk se invloed in die reël gedegradeer tot die minderbelangrike en die bysake in die samelewing. Die historiese verloop van sake en die inrigting van die lewe geskied gewoonlik buite die kring van die direkte invloed van die kerk. Waarom is dit so? Is dit reg so? Wat kan gedoen word om dié opvatting te wysig?

Die antwoord op die eerste vrae is dat die kerk self in 'n groot mate verantwoordelik is dat die lewe in kompartemente verdeel word en dat die kerk dan ook sy eie afgebakende terrein ontvang waar sy invloed moet geld. Gewoonlik is dié terrein die individuele en innerlike lewe van die mens en dit hoofsaaklik met betrekking tot die hiernamaals. Dat dit 'n belangrike aspek van die taak van die kerk is, word nie ontken nie, maar om die kerk se rol hoofsaaklik daarin te laat opgaan, is beslis 'n vertekening van die kerk se taak.

Die gemeenskap, die samelewing, die maatskappy is ook uitdrukking van die beeld van God soos die enkele mens in sy verhouding tot God en in sy intermenslike verhoudinge. Politieke handeling byvoorbeeld, is *menslike* handeling by uitstek en gevolglik het die evangelie ook vir hierdie terrein sowel as ander menslike terreine direkte betekenis. Wat beteken die evangelie dan eintlik vir die samelewing as dit nie etiese, mistieke, sosiale en politieke betekenis het nie?

Die vraag is ook nie net wat die evangelie se betekenis vir die wêreld is nie, want dit plaas die wêreld, die samelewing, die politiek, ja, *die mens* te veel in die middel punt en op sy eie. Die vraag is eerder wat die evangelie se betekenis van die wêreld is. Hoe sien die evangelie met ander woorde die wese en sin van die maatskappy, die politiek, die vormgewing van die lewe? Dié vraag plaas die lewe met al sy terreine in die raamwerk van die Koninkryk van God. Die evangelie beperk die mens se gesag op alle gebiede van die lewe tot relatiewe gesag onder die finale gesag van God. Geen besluit van die mens, of dit op politieke, kerklike of maatskaplike terrein is, mag as die hoogste gesag beskou word nie. Dit moet altyd aan die evangelie, met die Messias-koning as opper-

gesag, getoets word en daaraan ondergeskik gestel word. Die Koninkryk se maatstawwe moet riglyne vorm vir die mens in al sy lewensverbande.

En dit is juis die taak van die kerk en van die teologie om mee te werk aan die oprigting van die Koninkryk in die wêreld. Christus het met sy versoeningsoffer nie net die verbond vervul nie, maar veral die Ryk van God in die wêreld bevestig. Sy werk is primêr op die veld van die geskiedenis. Uit die proklamasie van die Koninkryk kom dan ook die kerk voort. Wat hier van belang is en wat die kerk in S.A., so kom dit voor, dikwels uit die oog verloor, is dat dit vir God gaan om die oprigting van sy Ryk *in die wêreld*, die samelewing, die gemeenskap. Daaraan moet die Christen en die kerk meewerk, naamlik aan die transformasie van die wêreld tot deel van die Ryk van God.

utopie of askese?

Omdat in hierdie bedeling met die verwoestende uitwerking van die sonde rekening gehou moet word, kan daar nie utopies oor die Ryk van God gedink word nie. Tog mag die onvolledige koms van die Ryk deur die arbeid van die uitgestorte Gees en die Christene nie die kerk van koers laat verander om hom slegs op die hiernamaals en die innerlike lewe van die enkeling toe te lê nie. *Die utopiese strewe, asof die Ryk in hierdie lewe volmaak kan kom, het sy duisende verslaan, maar die kerklike askese, asof die kerk nie hierdie lewe moet omvorm nie, sy tienduisende.* En, as die sout van die aarde laf geword het, waarmee sal dit gesout word? Die kerk moet gedurig waak dat hy nie voor die versoeking swig om die Koninkryk in diens van die kerk te probeer stel nie, maar hy moet toesien dat die kerk steeds in diens van die koms van die Koninkryk in die wêreld staan. Die opdrag bly dan staan dat die kerk nie moet werk vir die verkerkliking van die lewe nie, maar vir die wêreld om op alle terreine onder die Ryk te kom.

BEDANKING VAN REDAKTEUR

Met die doel om vanaf die einde van die jaar voltyds in die teologie te studeer, het ek besluit om as redakteur van Pro Veritate en studiese-kretaris van die Christelike Instituut te bedank. Die Desemberuitgawe van Pro Veritate sal D.V. die laaste wees wat ek sal behartig. Graag wil ek van die geleentheid gebruik maak om die lesers van Pro Veritate baie hartlik te bedank vir die ondersteuning, samewerking en ook kritiek wat ek gedurende die afgelope meer as vier jaar ontvang het. Vir die direkteure van Pro Veritate en mede-staflede wat so hartlik saamgewerk het, wil ek 'n besondere woord van dank uitspreek.

Wat beteken dit in die taal van die dag in SA? Wat is die Koninkryksboodskap van die kerk vir die huidige situasie?

1. Die mens wat deur vrees vir die toekoms met die uitsig op 'n dreigende grootskaalse bloedige konfrontasie oorval en lamgeslaan is, moet teruggedroef word na die bron van versoening, geregtigheid en liefde waar Christus alle vyandskap, onreg en haat oorwin het — die kruis. Dáár kan mense, hoe verskillend hulle ook mag wees, mekaar vind en deur die genade van God in vrede en geregtigheid saamlewe.

2. Détente, vrede na buite of binne, kan alleenlik slaag en deur *almal* ondersteun word as dit op God se reg en geregtigheid gebaseer is. Volgens die evangelie handhaaf God die reg van die arme, die lydende, die verworpene, die misbruikte, die regtelose, die magtelose, wie dit ook al mag wees (swart, wit of bruin), teenoor die ryke, die magtige, die uitbouter, die misbruiker, die ongevoelige, die selfsugtige.

Die kerk moet gedurig in die dreigende plofbare politieke situasie getuig dat die Koninkryk, wat in „geregtigheid en vrede” bestaan, die derde moontlikheid is. As die beleid van politieke détente nie slaag nie, is die tweede moontlikheid van gewelddadige konfrontasie nie die enigste moontlikheid wat oorbly nie, maar daar is 'n derde weg oop: 'n Doelwit van vrede wat op *geregtigheid vir almal* gebaseer is.

Die kerk sal na beide kante moet getuig: Teen die sonde van dié wat die kapitalistiese sisteem misbruik om hulleself meer en meer te verryk en hulle mag misbruik om hulle eie regte ten volle te handhaaf teenoor die armes en dié sonder hulle basiese Godgegewe regte. Aan die ander kant ook teen die sonde van dié wat chaos, bloedvergieting en moord voorstaan en wat die griewe van die verontregtes uitbuit om tot opstand en gewelddadige revolusie oor te gaan. Dit moet aangetoon word dat 'n moordlustige mens ook maar die mag in die hande wil kry om te misbruik.

3. Die kerk, met die blye bevrydingsboodskap van die Ryk, moet doelgerig betrokke raak by die politieke probleme van die mense in SA. Die kerk moet met wetenskaplike objektiewiteit en met evangeliese partydigheid vir geregtigheid, optree, of dit gaan om die beskerming en beveiliging van die minderheidsgroepe, soos bv. die Blankes en of dit gaan om die politieke regte van die Bruinmense of die Swartmense in die stad. Omdat die mens slegs vir God in die alledaagse lewe kan ontmoet en *daar* vir hom lewe, en nie in 'n buite-aardse of „geestelike” lewe nie, moet die evangelie ook in sy politieke, sosiale en maatskaplike besluite en beleide en arbeid uitgeleef word.

Kerk is altyd polities betrokke

Sal bogenoemde nie die kerk in die politiek laat opgaan nie? Of as dit nie daarin sou opgaan nie, sal dit nie ten minste skeuring en tweestryd in die kerk en samelewing tot gevolg hê nie? Na watter kerk en groep moet uiteindelik geluister word?

Die kerk sal moet besef dat hy in elk geval deel van die samelewing is en dat dit beteken dat hy, of hy wil of nie, noodwendig altyd in die politiek betrokke is, selfs al neem hy watter standpunt ook al in. Selfs 'n besluit om nie uitsprake oor sake van die dag te maak nie, of met die probleme van die samelewing op kerklike wyse betrokke

te raak nie, is ook 'n beslissende politieke besluit, naamlik *vir* die ondersteuning, deur stilswygende goedkeuring en traak-my-nie-agtige onverskilligheid, van die heersende situasie of status quo.

Solank as wat die kerk onthou dat die samelewing, die politiek in die lig van die Koninkryk, ja in die lig van God gesien moet word en nie andersom nie, sal die kerk nie in politiekery opgaan nie. Solank as wat die evangelie en die Koningskap van Christus die uitgangspunt, die norm en die sentrum bly, sal die politiek, die staat, die samelewing die aangesprokenes, die diensknegte bly en nie 'n „god” word waaronder die kerk ook sal moet buig en daarin opgaan nie.

'n Wyse staat sal doelgerigte betrokkenheid van die kerk alleenlik verwelkom omdat die kerk 'n dimensie in die lewe indra waar geen ander afdeling van die samelewing 'n bydrae kan lewer nie. Die onderskeie klanke wat van verskillende kerke en groepe gehoor sal word, sal soos die Bybelskrywers die heerlijkheid en geregtigheid van God van verskillende kante en op talryke wyses betuig en soos wat daar tussen ware en valse profesie in die Skrif onderskei moes word, sal daar nou ook, met die evangelie as maatstaf, onderskei moet word. In elk geval kan die kerk se boodskap nie gemis word nie, want dan word die finale uitsig op vrede, versoening, geregtigheid, vryheid en blydschap ook gemis.

— Roelf Meyer

THE RAINBOW

Bright arc of promise
Sign of a new world order
Above the darkness.

— Margaret Malherbe

THE CHURCH IN THE URBAN-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

brian johanson

The more I have grappled with the problem posed by the subject the less confident have I become of providing an answer; and the more I have admired the courage and dedication of those who are willing to give themselves to finding ways of actually meeting the challenge.

The theme does not in itself suggest a problem. The church can be found in the urban-industrial areas of our country. But it is the closer investigation of the fact that does raise questions. How effectively, or meaningfully, is it there? Is it meeting the actual, existential needs of the people living there? Is the church succeeding in 'turning that world upside down'? In short, is the church really being the church in this modern sociological context? The answers to these questions tend to take a consistently negative tone, not entirely or absolutely, for then perhaps we could well surrender to despair. The church shows signs of being able to serve the needs of all men everywhere—but changes and adaptations are needed.

I. PROBLEMS SURROUNDING THE CHURCH

These are not necessarily problems to those who are thinking about the church, but they are the type of problem encountered by the average Christian, and also church leaders who have strong interests in the existing order of things.

1. *The problem of inherited concepts of the church*

Most churches would like to believe that their forms of organisation and patterns of church life are derived from the New Testament. Naturally there must be some grain of truth in this, or the idea would not persist so doggedly, but it is quite clear that it cannot be a literal and exact truth.

In fact the debate over the years concerning the 'true' church serves only to emphasise the fact that the issue is wide open to doubt. The debate has led to such subtle distinctions as drawing a difference between the visible and the invisible church. Once this has been conceded then anything is possible—for what is not true of the one can be easily said to be true of the other. But can the church ever really be said to be 'invisible'? If it is not made up of visible, physical, solid men and women, what is it? A distinction has been drawn between the concepts of the church as event and institution. The church does not exist; it happens. Just as the Word of God cannot be captured, formalised and imprisoned within two covers, so the church cannot be contained within four walls or any other structure. But is it possible to resort to any absolute discontinuity? Is there not some positive form through which continuity manifests itself?

Nevertheless, in the minds of many, there is no real problem. The church is seen in its institutional forms and functions. Church headquarters, cathedrals and chapels tend to be a sufficient guarantee that it is there. And the important thing is that it should propagate itself by growing larger and needing bigger headquarters, more church buildings and better attended services, with more people standing up and singing hymns and going through the liturgy prescribed by the liturgical committee.

And in the urban-industrial context, this *is* a problem.

2. *The problem of inherited forms of church life*

It is true that pastors have preached against the idea of equating being a Christian with conforming to certain rituals and attending certain services. But for some reason or other the message has not got across. Is this because what they did spoke more loudly than what they said? That is, have church leaders not placed such a great deal of emphasis on the church programme of meetings that what they have said about the Christian in the secular world has hardly been heard? Beyond the exhortation to be honest when doing a deal? if possible? To such a degree is this true that if people for various reasons cease to attend the church services they are left to feel that they have fallen from grace, they are out of fellowship, they are lost to the church. When what has happened is that they have become disillusioned with the *forms*, and have found the church unable to open up new forms suited to their needs and questions.

In the urban-industrial context, with the emphasis on action and physical creation there is something anachronistic about getting dressed up to go through a ritual which has virtually no contact with the realities of life. It need not be this way, as Coventry cathedral has shown, but by and large it is. And these inherited forms constitute a real problem, and it will take courage and determination and imagination to create new and appropriate forms of church life, related to the new situation.

3. *The problem of inherited dogmas*

Here we are in a more delicate area, for many would feel that no finger may be laid on the deposit of truth handed down to us. This can only be believed and repeated. It cannot be questioned. And many do just this: when it comes to the Apostle's creed on a Sunday morning they will swallow hard and say it, perhaps hesitating at points where they feel it very hard to say honestly "I believe". There is no doubt a valid and important place for the presentation of the teachings of the Christian faith, but the issue here is rather with the way in which this is done.

Cerebral conformity tends to be made the prerequisite to church affiliation. Intending members are required to declare that they have accepted the truths taught them.

But is this what Jesus did? A fresh look at the way in which he built up the nucleus 'church' around himself might suggest something very different indeed. The invitation to trust Jesus Christ and the requirement to believe certain things have been too closely identified. The result has been that the church instead of preaching a gospel that sets men joyfully free, has presented a law which has shackled their minds and stifled initiative. It is true that large numbers of people have accepted this, many even gladly, but it is because human nature fears the risks of liberty and prefers to know where the marked boundaries are.

II. PROBLEMS SURROUNDING ATTEMPTED SOLUTIONS

Because the problems outlined in the first section are real problems, there have been many attempts to overcome them. By and large they have not succeeded because they have not been deeply rooted in the church itself. The solutions have been attempted by individuals and groups of Christians, who have for their courage had to work on the edge of the church and under constant threat of censure. Consequently what we have here are solutions and tensions.

1. *Church and para-church*

Christians have experienced disillusionment at many points in the history of the church and have broken out into new models of church organisation and enterprise. Many modern faith missions began outside formal church structures, as did monastic orders and revivalist movements. These have either been absorbed within the church in due course or disappeared. There are para-church groups and organisations of many kinds throughout the world today, but they exist in an uncertain relationship with the traditional churches, because the latter are not quite sure what status to accord them. They are 'doing a good work', but they are not 'church' because they do not conform to the traditional definition of the church.

2. *Formal church life and informal Christian celebration*

Here too, the phenomenon of unstructured worship and celebration is not new. History has many examples, but the church has tended to react negatively towards them. For example, the celebration of communion in places and ways not in keeping with those approved by the church, either in its regular practice or accepted exceptions, raises many objections. A crowd of university students celebrating communion in the bicycle sheds with a loaf of bread and a bottle of wine could not be taken seriously by the traditional church and in all probability would be condemned. At the very best, it would

be irregular, bearing no comparison in value and importance to the correct celebration in the church building.

It is true that churches have at times engaged in experimentation, in order to perpetuate themselves, but the attempt is normally made in terms of their own traditional norms and forms. So, a lunch-hour meeting with businessmen, or a beach service for children, would have as their assumption that those influenced or won over to the church would show up in some formal Sunday school or church service, sooner or later. If this did not happen, the endeavours would be 'wasted'. Such activities could not be 'church', because again the traditional definition would not be met.

3. *Credal affirmations and discipleship*

The church has always been suspicious of those who claim simply to be followers of Jesus. The individualism of "I can worship God in nature" is perhaps rightly suspect, but the proposed alternative that God can only be worshipped in the context of the true (traditional) church should be equally suspect. The fact that the church has experienced more splintering and division over *dogmatic* issues ought to have given pause for thought and reconsideration. What should have priority: dogma or discipleship? The church still looks suspiciously on movements that gather people together simply on the grounds of their being Christians, without any credal tests. Once again there are such groups, and they are tolerated because they may be functionally useful, but not if they operate 'in competition with' the traditional church. In order to belong to the church, the churches would maintain that people must subscribe to a creed of some description (which denomination is chosen is not very important—although "one's own" would be the obvious choice—but it must be *a church*, as traditionally understood).

III. SOME FURTHER PROBLEMS

These two streams are likely to continue, but the traditional church concepts are likely to retain the ascendancy for the time being at least because in them there is considerable strength. They have the stability of centuries of history, and the resources of enormous wealth tied up in extensive property holdings.

So that if there is any validity in seeking for genuinely new concepts of the church, which will be accepted by the traditional church; for new styles of life and worship which will be accepted as valid substitutes for the traditional forms; for far greater tolerance and acceptance in the realm of doctrinal formulations; these endeavours will have to be made by the traditional churches themselves, or they will at any rate have to be accepted by the traditional churches.

It is certain that this will not happen overnight, but it is equally certain that endeavours must be made in this direction. The necessity is underlined by the questions with which we started: what is the significance of the church in the urban-industrial context of our cities?

IV. WHY THE CHURCH NEED NOT FEAR

"Whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake, he will save it." This probably holds for the church today. It need not fear loss; it need fear only the desperate attempt to hold on to itself. If it sees shrinking church attendances, diminishing budgets, lessening influence, more complaints and greater uncertainty, this may point only to the possibility of a new beginning.

Modern theology has said a great deal about the church, and yet what it has said is not really new. But the traditional church needs to listen to the many voices which have said in many places, many languages, and in many ways: *the church is mission*. And if it is not mission it is not the church of Jesus Christ. It can be supported with ample quotations from theologians to the left and theologians to the right, and many in the middle. The church lives in its obedience to Christ to be there for others.

All that the church need fear is the refusal to be itself. But that it must fear. It is tempting to speculate about what would happen if every church door were locked, and all Christians were told that they must rediscover themselves in new ways and forms and that the mere revival of old patterns was prohibited. Would the church then perhaps discover what it should be doing today? The possibility must be allowed that the real church, the true church is not in the traditional forms, structures, or institutions, or at any rate that these are not the essence of the church. The possibility must be granted that these structures, forms and dogmas may be inhibiting the church from fully being the church. But having discovered the truth about itself the church will really find itself, will perhaps, like the son in the far country, 'come to itself', and so enter a new phase of joy, celebration and effectiveness.

V. A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

I use this idea consciously and deliberately. The great 'voyages of discovery' were news to the old world. The worlds discovered already were discovered so far as their own inhabitants were concerned. But what is more important: they were only voyages of *discovery*; not of creation. What was found was already there, and had been there all along!

The church in some parts of the world is being more adventurous in this respect than here. But let that simply be an inspiration to us. What then is needed?

1. *A systematic research project*

This project may already have been started, and aspects may have been covered, but a commission from the churches should be set up to do two things:

1.1 *A sociological study*. The methods available today have achieved a high degree of sophistication making it inexcusable any longer to rely on hit-and-miss methods and haphazard guesses.

If the concern is with urban-industrial situations, it is essential to know about the habits, values, interests, hang-ups, problems, needs, religious attitudes, hopes, fears, communal relationships, of the people in these areas. It is necessary to know where their resistance to traditional religion lies, what has given rise to it in order that past mistakes may not be repeated.

1.1.1 It would need to be borne in mind that there would be the danger of simply dressing up the old figure of the church in new clothes; or of administering the old pill with a new sugar-coating. A completely new level of trust would have to be discovered, if suspicion of a sly ecclesiastical trap is to be overcome.

1.1.2 This approach does not deny the power of the gospel to meet people where they are; it simply recognises the fact that the church's approach is so clouded by its traditional practices and implicit assumptions that it must be radically re-examined.

1.2 *A theological-ecclesiological study*. We are not the first to face these problems, and there is a great deal of information already available on what has been done elsewhere. The suggestion is not that we can simply lift a method that has been successful elsewhere and apply it here. There is nothing as simple as that. The idea is rather to examine in detail as much as possible of the available literature, analysing the conditions obtaining, the methods used, the goals envisaged and the degree of success achieved. One thinks for example of the useful book by Rüdiger Reitz, in which he examines and analyses virtually all the significant new developments in church ministries in America. But the books of Colin Williams, publications of the Urban Training Centre, and others are all relevant.

1.3 *The third phase* of the research project would obviously be the correlation of the first two, and the outlining of new concepts for the local situation.

It needs to be emphasised that the intentions are quite radical, involving a thorough re-evaluation of the shape and mission of the church. Were it to come to the conclusion that church buildings should be closed, it would have to say so, but show why!

2. *How?*

Such a research project would have little value if undertaken merely by what is already a para-church organisation. It could be said that its conclusions were prejudged, if they were negative to the established and traditional churches. A way must therefore be devised whereby the churches would commit themselves to a study which might be genuinely threatening to their present structures. Perhaps they would not take it seriously, envisaging such a possibility with a half-con-

cealed smile. But perhaps honesty would force some to admit that it is a question that needs to be asked without a ready-made answer being kept in reserve.

Is it possible that an organisation such as the SACC might be found to support such an investigation?

VI. CONCLUSION

Lest we should leave the impression that we have been engaged here in a "we"- "them" confrontation, as though we in some way stand outside of the church and have the right to exercise judgment on it, let it be clearly understood that what is offered here is self-criticism. We who are Christians are such because in God's mercy the truth of Jesus Christ has been preserved for us by the Christian community through the centuries. We are the product of the church in that the Word of God has come to us by way of its proclamation. But precisely for this reason we are entitled to look at the church critically, and, hopefully, creatively. It is an act of faith on our part that the Holy Spirit is present in our thinking and will renew the church in its mission and service to the cities of our time.

The fundamental contention of this discussion is that the church must see itself in very much more comprehensive terms, inclusive of so-called para-church groups, unstructured worshipping communities, pre-

sent wherever Jesus Christ is present amongst men. For this reason it is contended that the church must engage in fundamental self-examination, in order to discover whether it is not mistaken in assuming that traditional forms, functions and dogmas represent the ultimate truth of the church; in order also consciously to drop the weights and encumbrances which hinder it from being the church for the world of today.

SOME BOOKS CONSULTED:

E. de Vries, *De dienst van de kerk aan de Industrie-arbeider* (T. Wever, Franeker, 1962)

Rüdiger Reitz, *The church in experiment* (Abingdon, 1969)
The church for others (WCC, 1968)

J.C. Hoekendijk, *The church inside out* (SCM, 1966)

ed. Clive Porthouse, *Ministry in the seventies* (Falcon, 1970).

J.N.D. Anderson, *Into the world, the needs and limits of Christian involvement* (Falcon, 1968).

G.F. Vicedom, *The mission of God* (Concordia, 1965).

See also the many relevant works by:

Colin Williams, Jan Blauw, H. Kraemer, Bonhoeffer, Barth; and studies undertaken in various research centres in Europe, Britain and America (such as Urban Training Centre, Chicago; the Gossner Mission, Mainz etc.).

the root of the matter:

brian brown

THE ODESSA MENTALITY



Headlines proclaiming the banning of the book, "The Odessa File", caused me to coin a phrase — "The Odessa Mentality". It is descriptive of that state of mind enslaved by fear and insecurity.

Not since the banning of "Black Beauty" has an action by officialdom been such a "give-away" as to a mental attitude which prevails in our sad society. The banning of the classic story of the horse, "Black Beauty", was more explicable. It all took place long before the "black is beautiful" era had conditioned white minds to consider the possibility of Blackness being lovely. For the racist minds of those days, encouraged by detergent advertisements which assured that only whiter than white could be admired, "Black Beauty" was a contradiction in terms. When the gaffe was pointed out to the censors, the book returned to the bookshelves and red-faced bureaucracy returned to the task of safeguarding the nation's morals.

The Odessa Mentality, revealed in the banning of the Odessa File, is more disturbing in its implications for our society. I recall this Frederick Forsyth saga vividly, the book having been my annual holiday excursion into escapist literature during 1974. Curiosity prompted me to scan the novel again on the day of its having been banned. What lurid passages of torrid lust in the Nazi concentration camps had escaped my naive eyes? What new expletives were waiting to be discovered so as to add sauce if not sanctity to my vocabulary? Or was the novel calculated to rouse racial feelings and disturb good neighbourliness?

No fresh insights of perversion or profanity became apparent to disturb my soul or titillate my fancy. Unless one resented the recalling of Nazi atrocities against the Jews, one could only glory in the clear warning of the bitter fruits of racism which the Odessa File portrayed.

Newspapers and commentators had a field day in ridiculing this absurd decision and the predictable unbanning took place shortly thereafter. Author Forsyth doubtless rejoiced that many more readers, their curiosity aroused, will now join the 100 000 South Africans who read his mild and innocuous work in the pre-banning days. Others will view the banning blunder with less than joy.

What is the cause of this Odessa Mentality? The Director of Publications stated that "further information" had come to hand, allowing the book to be unbanned. In the light of this meaningless statement one can but assume that the book's bomb-making description was the reason for the banning and the subsequent unbanning.

So the Odessa Mentality reveals itself. Obsessional fear, expressed in warped security consciousness. The insecure followers of the god Security had to make their offering. Was not Forsyth part of an international conspiracy geared to ensure that every revolutionary could be an expert in backyard

bomb-making? Was not this part of a plot to overthrow the existing order and threaten state security?

The Odessa Mentality could be simply bureaucracy's gift to revue satire and dinner-party giggles if it were confined to blundering book bannings. But the Odessa Mentality is also seen in the banning and detention without trial of *people*. Our pathological sense of insecurity is the sort in which this warped mentality flourishes, allowing people to be institutionally assaulted.

Recently I embraced, tears and all, a friend who had been released after 13 months of detention without trial. At the time of writing my friend Horst Kleinschmidt is still detained, presumably in the name of the ogre Security. Both friends are victims of the Odessa Mentality. The mentality which removed the Odessa File from the bookshelves is the same as that which removed Horst from his home.

Surely the cure for this ailment is found in the injunction: "Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus our Lord". It is the mind of love which casts out fear. The mind which finds its security in Christ and His justice.

Quite the opposite in fact from the Odessa Mentality which seeks for security at the expense of Christ's justice. *

OUTRAGE FROM THE HIGH PRIESTS

donald woods

There have been a couple of indignant objections from outraged clergymen over last week's column on pussyfoots in the pulpit who avoid the moral issue of apartheid's conflict with Christianity.

They say preachers should steer clear of politics.

Now isn't that dandy? So if politicians pass a Bill through Parliament making adultery compulsory among unconsenting adults in public our preachers would presumably avoid commenting on it because it is political policy ...

You know what these pulpit pussyfoots are saying, of course — that those early Christians should have avoided martyrdom and accepted Nero's political edicts against their faith, and that politics is somehow sacred, untouchable and above moral issues.

In the old days idolaters worshipped the Golden Calf. These days they worship the Golden Politician. Talk about strange gods.

And when the exceptional clergyman — a Beyers Naudé, a Denis Hurley or a Bill Burnett — points to the obvious conflict between the God of Christianity and the false god of pigmentation, he is frowned on by the high priests of pussyfootism as if he were in gross heresy.

Can't you just hear how that other High Priest, Caiaphas, might have put it to Christ: "Come, come, it's not so much what you are saying, but the way you are saying it. There is a way of doing these things."

Yes, and there is a way of not doing these things. And here is where the pussyfoots of the pulpit are expert.

In essence, they have subtly added to the Ten Commandments in this sort of fashion: Thou shalt not steal, unless the politicians in power ordain otherwise ... Thou shalt not bear false witness, without the approval of the governing caucus ...

They shy away at what they call the "social gospel" — but

there has never been any other kind. There can be no greater hypocrisy than to preach one set of moral values for the next world and a totally different set of moral values for this one, as most of our clergymen do.

Naturally, when they claim they should never say anything political in the pulpit they mean anything to do with "opposition" politics. If it is to commend the Government, that is okay. Suddenly that becomes non-political.

It is nonsensical to say that a preacher should never give political guidance on moral issues. They should have tried suggesting that to D.F. Malan, or the many dominees who never hesitate to give such guidance.

Whether it accords with Christian ethics is another matter, but if a preacher doesn't know his own conscience on the biggest moral issues of our time in South Africa, apartheid, he should never presume to preach to South Africans on any other moral issue because all these other issues are less relevant.

And because they range through less relevant to totally irrelevant and because the pussyfoots know deep down that they are just going through a format, they have to dress it all up with phoney intonations and artificial pronunciations.

Surely you've heard the way they play games with their voices — letting the voice drop towards the end of the sentence, saying "comfort" as if it rhymes with "some fought", intoning as if they were testing the levels of a tape-recorder, speaking of evil as "eee-veel" and generally slinging a line of bull throughout.

When the bull-slinging is in Afrikaans one of the tricks is to eliminate the normal pronunciation of the double-e so that "gees" rhymes not with "pierce" but with "peace". Another is to let the voice break emotionally at the end of a sentence.

Artificiality, all of it. Those artificial tones reflect the

artificial message; the careful avoidance of the essential message and the essential commitment it implies.

These people, who with every inflection of their voice, every gesture — and often by outright statement — hold themselves up as the most ardent witnesses to the Christian faith, have actually watered down its basic elements, distilled from this what suits them best, and turned what is directly pertinent to our time and circumstances into something abstract and theoretical. They have got right away from it all — all in the name of Jesus Christ.

His name wasn't Jesus Christ anyway, it was Yeshua Bar-Yosef, and somehow the formalisation of this Aramaic Galilean name into the Latinised version with the Greek addition — though intended in all reverence — typifies the way

in which basic Christianity has become distilled and refined into an abstraction down the centuries.

The process of abstraction has now reached its peak right here in South Africa, where not only do politicians claiming Christian values enact the most flagrantly un-Christian laws, but the majority of Christian clergymen aid and abet them with silence on the subject.

They object to being called pussyfoots of the pulpit — but what other description is there? What shall be their name?

Let them be called the ecclesiastical Iscariots, though their sell-out is not for 30 pieces of silver in a bag, but for rand notes in the collection plate.

— *Rand Daily Mail*, 17.10.75

HORST KLEINSCHMIDT: SPEAKING FROM HIS CELL

ivor shapiro

Leopards break into the temple and drink the sacrificial chalices dry; this occurs repeatedly, again and again; finally it can be reckoned on beforehand and becomes a part of the ceremony.

— Franz Kafka: **Stories and Reflections**

Frequent and extensive detentions will then have the effect of bludgeoning this country's subjects into a state where such action is to be expected in advance. And so it happens that the effects of repeated detentions under the Terrorism Act become less and less of concern; the ritual is perfected.

— Horst Kleinschmidt, writing in **Bandwagon**, August 1975

The second quote is taken from an article my friend Horst wrote a few days before he himself became a victim of the South African ritual. He was writing about a man he knows and I do not know, Nyameko Pityana, who was detained for four months under the Terrorism Act earlier this year, and then released to continue his five-year term under a banning order. Horst wrote:

"No charges were brought against him, no explanation was given to him or to his employers or to the public of South Africa, as to the reasons for his detention. But worst of all, there was no attempt at justification for this action by the authorities."

After Nyameko Pityana it was Raymond Burgers and Hector Mbau and Monamodi Radebe and Frank Molubu and James Polley and Pumza Dyantji and countless others — at least 52 in detention at one stage. The ritual continued. No charges, no explanations, no attempt at justification.

Then it was Horst. A knock at the door while the house slept, a three-hour search, anxious attempts to pacify the nine-month-old daughter. One can imagine the scene, it is nightmare material. On 15 September, Horst Kleinschmidt's life was broken into and he was taken away.



"Their act is performed: a man disappears for a number of months and in the same way he disappears, it can be expected that he will reappear some day. When he will be detained nobody knows; how long he will be 'away' nobody knows; what will happen to him nobody knows; what the detention is about nobody will find out."

Meanwhile, an upper-class mayoress is urging fellow-citizens not to vote for a particular political party, for fear of getting "kaffirs in your swimming pool". While civil war is being waged to the north, nine cabinet ministers are busy signing a manifesto "launching South Africa into a full-scale battle on inflation". While the Minister of Foreign Affairs is showing off South Africa's new democracy image in West Germany, one of the South Africans most respected in the governing Social Democratic circles there, Horst Kleinschmidt, is thrown into solitary confinement for interrogation purposes.

This is *all* part of the ritual. There can be no détente without detention, says Cosmos Desmond, and he is right. These actions *under* the Terrorism Act, says the CI's board of management, amount to nothing less than acts of terrorism. And these acts of terrorism, aiming to stifle the courageous voices of the few who still continue to speak the truth about what is happening to this country, may yet succeed in allowing the government's actions to go unchallenged, and its supposedly brand-new policy to accomplish what it sets out to do.

The ritual is endless, but it is not pointless. It is only by means of the ritual that our present way of life can possibly survive in 20th-century Africa. What frightens me most is how fast we are nearing the day when our future will be decided by a clear choice between this way of life and a brutal way which will bring years of pain, and may or may not bring something better. But:

"The State apparatus acts and it does not concern itself with what its subjects think of the matter. Those who ask questions about those who disappear incur the displeasure and close surveillance of the army of faceless, grey-coated men."

A couple of years ago, Horst issued a poster which paraphrased in contemporary South African terms the famous words of Pastor Niemöller. Now that "They" have come for him, it is hideously appropriate to quote the poster's words in full here:

"In 1950 they came for the Communists. I was not a Communist and it did not concern me. In 1953 they came for the Trade Unionists. I was not a Trade Unionist and it did not concern me. In 1955 they took the vote from the Coloured people. I was not Coloured and it did not concern me.

"They came for the African Nationalists. I was not an African Nationalist and it did not concern me. They imposed censorship legislation. I was not a writer and it did not concern me.

"In 1968 they passed the Improper Interference Bill. I was not in the Liberal Party and it did not concern me. In 1972 they began trial by commission. I was not affected and it did not concern me. In 1973 they banned white and black student leaders. I was not a student and it did not concern me.

"Now they are coming for Christian and social change groups. I am a member of these, but there is nobody left to support me.

"They will come again and again; finally it can be reckoned on beforehand. They will come for the churches, they will come for black leaders and the press and in the end it becomes part of the ceremony.

"When will they come for YOU?" *

BOOKS RECEIVED

roelf meyer

In English:

MURIEL AT METROPOLITAN, by M. Tlali. Publisher: Ravan Press, Johannesburg. Price: R2,95. 95 pages.

Muriel Tlali's story tells of the ordinary workday experiences of a Black person. Her story however, is not strident in hatred or resentment against those who have turned her, in Fanon's words, into "an object in the midst of other objects". There is even at times a latent warmth in her attitude towards those "on the other side". This is Ms. Tlali's first book.

CHURCH AND NATIONALISM IN SOUTH AFRICA, edited by T. Sundermeier. Publisher: Ravan Press, Johannesburg. Price: R2,70. 152 pages.

The papers in this book were originally presented at a Consultation on Church and Nationalism arranged by the Missiological Institute at the Lutheran Theological College, Mapumulo, Natal, towards the end of 1974. For nine days 70 delegates from all the larger churches and from various independent churches met together at the consultation. They examined the philosophical, sociological and historical views of nationalism as we find it in South Africa, especially in the form of Afrikaans "Christian-Nationalism". Fourteen papers on

topics such as "Coloured Nationalism?", "Christian Nationalism", "The Liberated Church and True Freedom", "Nationalism in the Dutch Reformed Churches", "Philosophical roots of Nationalism", as well as the findings of the Conference are published in this book.

LM AND OTHER STORIES, by P. Wilhelm. Publisher: Ravan Press, Johannesburg. Price: R4,95. 120 pages.

A novella set in Mocambique at the time of the white 'backlash' against Frelimo, and selected short stories by a talented young writer who is going to occupy a significant place in South African literature.

LOCAL COLOUR, by S. Gray. Publisher: Ravan Press, Johannesburg. Hardcover, price: R4,95. 128 pages.

Set in Saldanha Bay — past, present and future — this first novel by one of South Africa's leading young poets is both apocalyptic and biting satirical. Gray depicts an "ordinary" South African community in all its extraordinary eccentricity.

THE WORLD OF NAT NAKASA, edited by Joe Patel. Publisher: Ravan Press & Bateleur Press, Johannesburg. Price 5,25. 160 pages.

With an introduction by Nadine Gordimer, this volume of selected writings is published just ten years after Nakasa fell to his death in New York, after having left South Africa on an exit permit. A significant figure in South Africa's literary history, Nakasa occupied a unique position among black writers, astride the colour bar. His writings are both extremely funny and, at times, almost unbearably poignant.

RELIGION AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, edited by M.G. Whisson and M. West. Publisher: David Philip, Cape Town. Price R7,95. 223 pages.

This volume of a number of essays by various authors has been compiled in honour of Monica Wilson, formerly Professor of Social Anthropology in the University of Cape Town. The essays deal with a number of rural and urban peoples of Southern Africa — the Cape Nguni, Zulu, Sotho, Khoi, and Lovedu. Among the topics covered are traditional world-views, spirit possession, the ancestors, missionary activities, pilgrimages and African independent churches.

MISSION STATIONS AND THE COLOURED COMMUNITIES OF THE EASTERN CAPE 1800-1852, by Dr Jane Sales. Publisher: A.A. Balkema, Cape Town. Price: R9,50. 176 pages.

This book is an attempt to build up a picture of the development of the Coloured community from within — to see such events as the Commission of Inquiry, Ordinance 50, and the frontier wars from the perspective of the people of Bethelsdorp and Kat River. This book shows that the succession of frontier wars in the Eastern Cape between the English colonial Government and the Xhosa people was not only the story of defeat and impoverishment for the Xhosa, but also the story of hope turned into dejection for the Coloured people of the Eastern Cape.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND WHITE PREJUDICE, by R. Buis. Publisher: Ravan Press, Johannesburg. Price: R2,40. 71 pages.

A young sociologist tests whether the social and racial teachings of the Dutch Reformed Church, Presbyterian Church and Roman Catholic Church have an influence on the attitudes of their white members. He finds that DRC members have the most hostile attitudes to blacks, with RC members being the most tolerant. That this reflects the respective churches' teachings is indicated by the fact that the more committed the members are to their churches, the stronger are their attitudes of hostility and tolerance.

MULTISTAN: A WAY OUT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN DILEMMA, by P.N. Malherbe. Publisher: David Philip, Cape Town. Price: R4,95. 172 pages.

The author proposes a plan that could resolve the critical problem of race relations in South Africa in the foreseeable future. "Multistan, in essence, means setting aside a portion of the country in which racial laws are repealed, thus giving South Africa a region within its own borders which resembles other multi-racial societies." The economic, social and political consequences of Multistan are explored. For the author an immediate candidate for a trial area would be Zululand and the patchwork homeland of KwaZulu.

POVERTY EATS MY BLANKET, by P.J. TH. Marres and A.C.A. van der Wiel. Printed in Lesotho by the Government Printer, Maseru. 112 pages.

This study deals with the measurement of poverty in general, and its application to Lesotho in particular. An extensive discussion of the best known yardstick of poverty, the Poverty Datum Line, is presented. A Poverty Datum Line for Lesotho's capital, Maseru, is developed and modified for application to rural areas. This norm is then used in an attempt to gauge the extent of poverty, and the standard of living in Maseru.

AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION, by E.G. Parrinder. Publisher: Sheldon Press, London. Price: cloth £1-5; paper 65p. Third edition. 156 pages.

The author provides a comparative study of the main religions south of the Sahara, demonstrates their common ground and builds up a coherent picture of African beliefs and practices. The book is divided into sections on the African view of God and the nature gods; the place of religious beliefs in social life; and spiritual forces.

VIOLENCE AND THE STATE, by L. Macfarlane. Publisher: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Great Britain. Price: £1-0-75. 155 pages.

The author makes an analysis of the modern state, examining those factors which threaten to destroy it and those which hold it together. This book seeks to construct a bridge between the realms of reason and reality in politics. He deals among others topics with the urgent political problems of dissent and civil disobedience which modern society faces. Some other topics which are dealt with are "Force and Violence", "The state as Violence", "Violence against the state" and "The Nation State: Myth and Reality".

INDIA AND THE LATIN CAPTIVITY OF THE CHURCH — THE CULTURAL CONTEXT OF THE GOSPEL, by R.H.S. Boyd. Publisher: Cambridge University Press, London. Price: £3-40. 151 pages.

This is a study of a genuinely *Indian* Christian theology, detached from its traditional "Latin" encasement. The Christian Church is strongly established in India and has evolved its own activities and structures, quite distinctive from those in the West. The author suggests that the western Church can in turn learn from the eastern, and must do so if it is to liberate its theological language, its organisational structures and its "colonial" approach to the spread of Christianity from the traditional forms which now impede it. Towards the end of the book the author points to "The Way of Freedom", — to be one, — for the new, — to be ecumenical, — to be evangelical, — to be human, — to be one.

2. In German

STUDIEN ZUR FRIEDENSFORSCHUNG — BAND 13 — CHRISTENTUM UND MILITARISMUS, edited by W. Huber and G. Liedke. Publisher: Ernst Klett Verlag, Stuttgart/Kösel-Verlag, München. 222 pages.

Some eight theologians, biologists, sociologists, philosophers and political scientists discuss the relationship of "Christianity and Militarism" in this volume of essays. Empirical investigation, social scientific analysis, historical insight and theological interpretation are combined to discuss the theme of the book. The authors are trying to transcend the polarised situation in which the Church/Political world finds itself with regard to violence, the Gospel and the modern world. Huber concludes his essay by saying that in order to get

rid of attitudes like those of militarism, Christianity must attempt to proceed towards an era in which power is no longer the dominant and unquestioned framework of social organization.

STUDIEN ZUR FRIEDENSFORSCHUNG — BAND 3 — KONFLIKTE ZWISCHEN WEHRDIENST UND FRIEDENSDIENSTEN, EIN STRUKTURPROBLEM DER KIRCHE, edited by U. Duchrow and G. Scharffenorth. Publisher: Ernst Klett Verlag, Stuttgart/Kösel-Verlag, München. 258 pages.

The action group "Church Structure and World Peace" of the Evangelical Study Society in Heidelberg has presented its study in this publication on "**Conflict between Military Service and Peace Service, a structural problem of the Church**". Topics such as "Conflicts in the Evangelical Church in Germany from 1950 to 1969 in the context of the historical and peace discussions", "Conscientious Objection as Legal Problem", "World Peace and the problem of the Ecumenical Structure of the Church" and "Military Pastoral Counselling and Church discussion on Conscientious Objection" are dealt with by experts in their field.

3. (IN DUTCH) IN HOLLANDS

WERKLIKHEID EN HOOP: NIEUWE DIMENSIES VAN EEN VERANTWOORDELIJKE WERELDMAAT — SCHAPPIJ, DEUR H.M. Lange. Uitgewer: Bosch en Keuning n.v., Baarn. Prys: | R2. 144 bladsye.

Die boek behandel die verhouding tussen geloof, kerk, wêreld en samelewing soos wat die gedagtewisseling en bewuswording in die Wêreldraad van Kerke, en in besonder in die afdeling „Kerk en Samelewing” plaasvind. Dié afdeling wat veertien jaar met die vrae van die verhouding tussen ryk en arm lande besig is, vra nou die beslissende en allesomvattende vraag na totale wêreldontwikkeling. Dit is die voorwerp van hul studie en aksie. Die twee hoofpunte van die program is die tegnologiese en ekonomiese groei. Die benadering van die skrywer is een van sosiaal-etiese aard vanuit die begrip „verantwoordelike maatskappy”.

CHRISTELIJK GELOOF — EEN INLEIDING TOT DE GELOOFSLEER, deur H. Berkhof. Uitgewers: G.F. Callenbach B.V., Nijkerk. Prys: | R10. 596 bladsye.

Die outeur probeer die evangelie in hierdie dogmatiese werk vir die teoloog en die gemeente so vertolk dat hy 'n weg wil aanwys tussen stoere, geykte tradisionalisme en koerslose, stuurlose modernisme. Hy skryf oor elke onderwerp in grotergedrukte letters vir die kerkmens en in kleiner druk vir die teoloog. Die werk probeer informasie sowel as inspirasie voorsien. Teen die einde van die boek behandel hy 'n besondere aktuele onderwerp, nl. die „Vernuwing van die Wêreld” en die plek van die wêreld in die geloof. Moderne probleme word aan die orde gestel met 'n skat van inligting uit die tradisie en die geskiedenis. 'n Handige sakelys sowel as 'n register van Bybeltekste en 'n lys van persoonsname rond dié omvattende studie af. *

SOUTH AFRICA

Weep, oh weep
Daughters and sons
Of this beautiful land
South Africa.

Weep, oh weep
All those who care
For the daughters and sons
Of South Africa.

The pools are deep
With the countless tears
Wrung

From the suffering and silent ones,
Through all the long years
Of oppression and grief.
And how many more must we bear?
Words fall like rain —
Just words and promises,
But where are the deeds that bring change?
Where is the Love
For all the oppressed
Fellow daughters and sons
Of our beautiful land,
South Africa?

—Helen Kotze

DIAKONIA

A Project of Christian Churches in the Greater Durban Area

DIAKONIA is a new joint project funded by eight Christian Churches in the greater Durban area. Its purpose is to help the Churches in this area to be more effective in responding to social situations that cause widespread suffering. It is due to come into operation in January 1976 and will have offices at St. Andrew's Centre, St. Andrew's Street, Durban.

The following personnel will be required:

1. SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER:
Black, and fluent in Zulu and English
2. SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER:
White
3. SECRETARY-TYPIST
Fluent in Zulu and English

Detailed applications giving full personal particulars (including full names, place and date of birth, etc.), qualifications, experience and names and addresses of three referees, should be submitted before 30th November, 1975 to:

The Acting Secretary,
DIAKONIA,
P.O. Box 217,
Durban,
4000.

Further details of the project, including the job description for Senior Executive Officers, can be obtained from the above address.

The Steering Committee reserves the right to make no appointment or to appoint by invitation.

If they put you on trial
for being a christian~
would there be
enough evidence
to find you guilty?