

DR JOHN DE GRUCHY REPLIES TO REV. R. G. CLARKE'S REVIEW OF 'THE CHURCH STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA' PRINTED IN NOVEMBER REALITY

"I am grateful to Bob Clarke for his review, and especially for his critical discussion of Chapter 2. One major purpose of book reviews, which is often forgotten, is that they should help forward the debate on the issues at hand and not simply praise or damn the book. I am naturally pleased that Bob Clarke has commended my book, but I am also thankful that he has taken it seriously enough to subject it to critical inspection. Scholarly endeavour would die without the challenge of such dialogue.

"Without indulging in apology, I would respond to his critique of chapter 2 as follows. 'The Church Struggle in South Africa' was not intended to provide a history of the Church's struggle against racism etc. As a theologian I am not primarily interested in writing detailed historical studies, but I am concerned to reflect theologically on history. In order to do this it is important that an adequate historical basis be provided, otherwise theological reflection becomes specious

and speculative. But an adequate basis does not mean an exhaustive one. I gladly and readily admit that some of the details to which Clarke refers should have found a place in my treatment, and I am indebted to him for mentioning them, but I am not convinced that my purposes required me to include everything. Indeed, I do not think that my thesis would have been affected a great deal, if at all. As Clarke has indicated, there is a wealth of material waiting to be researched and published on this subject, and I for one am eager to see his own research coming to fruition. One problem I had to face was the fact that my book was based on lectures given in North America. Indeed, my book was first published in the USA earlier this year. This meant I could only paint some broad strokes on the canvas — a more Brueghel-like portrayal might have clouded rather than clarified the issues. Certainly it would have required a far larger canvas than publishers are prepared to provide!" □

POEM

i a woman
number among my friends
men of gentle sensitivity
who like respect appreciate me
enjoy my company

yet even they
do all these things with a kindly air
an air of faint but unmistakable patronage
a fatherliness a tolerance
for my femaleness as if at any moment
my mind might turn into
fluffy cottonwool

extrapolating
i boggle
trying to imagine what it must be like
to be black
trapped in a web of mindless white
superiority

we all laughed
when angry women burnt their bras
as symbols of oppression

what symbols will blacks choose to burn
in their frustrated rage
shall we be laughing
then

by Stephanie Warren