

REDAKSIE

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LET WEL

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PRO VERITATE

EDITORIAL

Engage or Disengage?

AS PRESSURE on White South Africa to abandon or at least modify apartheid hots up, decisions are being taken around the world for either increased involvement in this country or increased isolation and boycott. A number of such decisions are reflected in articles in this issue of Pro Veritate.

Recently the World Council of Churches decided on isolation and boycott and Polaroid on increased involvement. These decisions symbolise the opposite poles in the process of polarisation that is occurring in other countries concerning a strategy for change in South Africa.

The debate on engagement vs. disengagement is likely to continue for a long time to come, without any clear consensus emerging in countries which feel they have a role to play in combating apartheid. This includes primarily the Western democracies which are already involved in Southern Africa, whether through trade, military collaboration, diplomatic ties, or through loose historical and cultural connection. Increasingly it is coming to include states in the rest of Africa as well.

All we ask as the debate continues and lobbying occurs and decisions are reached in council chambers and board meetings from Washington to Geneva is that the issues do not become hopelessly befogged with wishful thinking, emotionalism, prejudice, feelings of guilt and sheer ignorance. Hard facts, hard thinking and hard talking are needed before rational and effective responses can be formulated. In this issue we have gathered together some of the relevant material as an aid in this process.

Our own position is that we are able to respect and accept both the decision of Mr. Neil Wates (see Pro Veritate September 1970), whose conscience would not allow him to invest in South Africa, and the decision of Polaroid, who see it in their own interests to play a more meaningful role in promoting change in this country by establishing educational programmes for blacks here.

Too many of the other recommendations and decisions being canvassed strike us as woolly, ineffectual and/or irrelevant.

Die Cilliers-bom

PRO VERITATE wil die Stellenbossche sosio-
loog, prof. S.P. Cilliers, gelukwens met die visie
en die moed wat hy geopenbaar het in sy prikkelende
voorstel ter opheffing van die dilemma van ons Suid-
Afrikaanse rassepolitiek. Visionêr was sy toespraak
voor die Institute of Citizenship in Kaapstad onge-
twyfeld, al is dit maar omdat dit soveel bemoedigende
vergesigte ontbloomt voor 'n volk wat lank al gekort-
wiek word deur kroniese kortsigtigheid. Manmoedig
was dit ook, juis omdat die visie so gewaagd is in
'n gemeenskap van vreesbevangenes en ideologiese
obsessieliers.

Ons bewonder die inisiatief wat prof. Cilliers
geneem het en sou hom graag van harte wou onder-
steun in 'n diepere navorsing van die interessante
moontlikhede waaroor hy die sluier gelig het. Ons
wil hom egter ook waarsku. Oor 'n meer doelgerigte
uitbouing en ontwikkeling van die tuislande sal hy
vind dat almal dit met hom eens is - behalwe wanneer

dit kom by die prys wat vir al die vrome voornemens
betaal moet word. Oor al die jare heen was dit egter
ook ons vrugteloos strewe om die blanke „establish-
ment" daartoe te beweeg om die status quo vaarwel
te sê en om die blote moontlikheid van 'n „common
society" in die res van die land selfs vir 'n oomblik
in die gesig te staar. Ons twyfel ten sterkste of hy
veel meer sukses gaan hê. Kyk maar na die beteken-
isvolle nie-reaksie van selfs die sogenaamd „ver-
ligte" Afrikaanse pers op sy toespraak.

Ons wens prof. Cilliers die allerbeste toe op sy
kruistog. Maar as hy sy mede-Afrikaners van sy eie
kaliber daartoe kan beweeg om, met dieselfde moed
as hy, die turksy nou eens en vir altyd met kaal
hande vas te gryp, dan is ons bereid om soos die
eens vermaarde Cassius Clay op hande en voete na
hom aan te kruip en teenoor hom te bieg: „Jy's die
kampioen!"; of soos Kipling dit sou gestel het:
„You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din".

Identity

ANYONE who, in the line of duty, is compelled to
make an objective study of the outpourings of the
Government-supporting press is struck time and again
by what can only be called the obsession of Nationa-
list political pundits with the concept of identity.

This most mystical concept about which there is
so much editorial ballyhoo and which has become a
veritable shibboleth in the esoterics of Nationalist
thinking is obviously not the identity of the individual
or personal identity. No, it is a peculiarly hallowed
form of group identity, an ethnical identity, the iden-
tity of a particular people (volk) as opposed to mere
national identity or the identity of the South African
nation as such. One noted editor of a party-lining
Afrikaans newspaper, for instance, in a veritable
orgy of semanticism, sees South Africa as consisting
of an agglomeration of such ethnical identities neatly,
mechanistically and deterministically ordered accord-
ing to a "separate multi-national pattern of coexis-
tence" (*afsonderlike veelvolkige noasbestaans-
patroon*).

For those of our readers who fail to make head or
tail out of this gobbledygook: the general idea ap-
pears to be that, according to the doctrine of nation-
al salvation decreed by the apostles of apartheid,
original sin consists of any ungodly attempt to mix
the unmixable and to reconcile divinely created
opposites. Every racial and ethnic group in this
country has its own unique, undeniable and inalien-
able identity and it is the primary duty of every loyal
citizen not only to acknowledge, preserve and devel-
op these multiple identities, but in fact religiously
to observe the differences between them and even to

emphasise and heighten them wherever possible. By
all of us thus keeping our proper and preordained
distance from each other, albeit in "peaceful co-
existence", we shall ultimately be catapulted into
the drab Utopia of blessed though featureless "Non-
Friction".

What all the party hackwriters seem to be forget-
ting in their ideological fervour for the preservation
of "identity", however, is that Non-Friction, the
ultimate ideal of Nationalist philosophy, is neither
blessed nor, indeed, Biblical.

To be sure, respect for and insistence upon per-
sonal identity is part of the message of the Bible;
it is one half of the divinely revealed truth about
man. Even the Trinity is composed of three indivi-
dual identities and in the second table of the law we
are distinctly enjoined to "Love your neighbour as
yourself". Concern for oneself and one's own iden-
tity is manifestly, therefore, no evil, but clearly the
will of God. And many further examples can be addu-
ced from the Scriptures in proof of this contention
so widely held amongst devout Christians.

What is utterly unbiblical, unChristian and sinful,
however, is the temptation to which so many other-
wise God-fearing men have succumbed on the strength
of this half-truth - this single dimension on the pa-
radox of divine revelation: to absolutise the fact of
"an own" identity (*'n eie identiteit*) at the expense
and to the exclusion of the inescapable responsi-
bility towards reconciliation and communion between
individual identities whom God brings into contact
with each other. When one places one's own identity
upon a tall and lonely pedestal, one commits blatant
idolatry. This was the grave error into which 19th

century rationalism and the idealism of Fichte, Schelling and Hegel fell. This is the evil to which political self-seekers have resorted through all the ages for nefarious purposes of their own. When the self, the "own" identity, becomes an idol, when it ousts love of the neighbour, of the Other, from the scene, the Biblical truth about man becomes perverted and Satan takes over in him to the exclusion of God in whose image he was created.

And what applies to individual or personal identity applies *mutatis mutandis*, to group identity of whatever description; as was realized already by Leibniz, Kierkegaard and Donne, no man can ever be "an island unto himself". "Identity" dare never become an end in itself. It should certainly be recognised and developed, but only to serve a far higher purpose; the entering into a spiritual but nonetheless eternally real relationship with another identity, the Other, the Thou.

Conscientious Judgement

OVER THE LAST few months we have been exploring the whole concept of conscientious objection and alternatives to national service. This matter was discussed in Parliament last month when the Minister of Defence made it clear that he had no sympathy with the concept. We, however, will be coming back to it because we view it within the wider framework of peace. And peace is one of the chief preoccupations of Pro Veritate.

At this point we would merely like to summarise some of the points raised in our last two issues.

- ◆ It is important not to equate National Service with Military Service. We subscribe to the many positive values of National Service and believe it should be extended to all South African youth.
- ◆ Within the present framework of the Defence Act only limited concessions are made to conscientious objectors and then only if they serve in non-combatant units within the military machine. We believe, along with the delegates at the Peace consultation last year in Baden, Austria and the delegates at the Inter-faith Conference on Peace and Religion last year in Kyoto, Japan, that the exercise of conscientious judgement in refusing to undergo military service is a right of the individual. This right should be respected in our South African law as it is respected elsewhere.
- ◆ There is a distinction being made nowadays between conscientious objection to war *per se* on the one hand and selective conscientious objection to certain wars and certain types of defence training on the other. Ways and means should be worked out that will similarly respect the selective conscientious objector.
- ◆ We believe it is far more important to build peace than to defend peace. Given the fact

This is the discovery - the rediscovery, in fact, of the Biblical truth about man - which will eternally stand to the credit of the 20th century exponents of the so-called "I-Thou" concept, Ferdinand Ebner, Martin Buber and Eberhard Grisebach and to those perceptive theologians who reintroduced it into modern Christian anthropology, men like Gogarten, Heim, Barth and Brunner.

Our South African protagonists of ethnic identities, too, whether they be of the political, cultural or religious variety, would do well to make this rediscovery of Biblical revelation.

Let us recognise and develop our respective personal and group identities by all means. But let us do so only *for the sake of* a reconciliation between the various identities and a true and vital communion with each other in the common society to which we have been called and elected by God.

that all will do national service, then the bias at law ought not to assume this to take the form of military training (defending peace). The individual ought to be given the straight choice himself.

There are many values of National Service - Peace training. We list a few:

- ▲ Understaffed mental hospitals, homes for the aged, homes for drug and alcoholic rehabilitation, ordinary hospitals can be vastly assisted. This year the Defence Budget has been increased by R59 400 000 to R316 000 000. Being non-productive spending, the Defence Budget only aggravates the inflationary problem. Alternatives to military service would assist this as the services of the peace corps trainees in the above institutions could be chargeable and, being housed and fed in such established institutions, the Defence Budget would be correspondingly reduced.
- ▲ Young people can be exposed to suffering and be offered the opportunity of constructively helping towards its alleviation. (Alternatively they could offer their services to a developing nation especially if the national service is performed after university training or apprenticeship).
- ▲ With so many young people interacting, programmes could be worked out where peaceful methods for the solution of intergroup tensions and aggression could be worked out, where prejudice could be countered and where a communal spirit of commitment to one's country and the development of its people can be fostered.

Before any of the above is realisable the Defence Act will have to be changed by parliamentary procedure.

(continued on page 4)

OPSTANDING EN SENDING

Abraham Viljoen

SEDERT DIE OPKOMS van die nuwere Protestantse sendingbeweging in die vorige eeu en die daarmee gepaardgaande teologiese refleksie t.o.v. die sending, is die groot sendingbevel van Mat. 28:19 as die klassieke „bewysplaas” vir die sending aangedui. Vanselfsprekend het dit 'n verskraling van die sendingtaak van die kerk meegebring en in afgelope dekades, na die tweede wêreldoorlog, is veel gedoen om die teologiese fundering van die sending binne die raamwerk van die heilsgeskiedenis as die groot eskatologiese gebeure in „die laaste dae” uit te werk.

En tog kom ons in ons refleksie oor die sending van die „groot sendingbevel” nie weg nie. Juis die tydskop waarop dit gekom het, die wyse waarop dit gegee is, die verband waarin dit in die Evangelies opgeteken staan en die inhoud daarvan gee ons steeds die beste aanduiding van die wesenlike sendingskarakter van die Christelike gemeente. Pase en Pinkster konstitueer die „volk van God” in die laaste dae. Die sending veronderstel die opstanding.

Dit word weer duidelik as ons die gebeure rondom Pase in herhinnering roep soos dit in die Evangelies en in die Handeling van die Apostels weergegee word - die kruisiging, die opstanding, die verskynings gedurende veertig dae en dan die „hemelvaart” en die pinkstergebeure.

□

In die vroeë kerk het die opstanding die sentrale plek beklee in hierdie ry van „heilsgesbeure”. Dit staan met nadruk vóórop in die eerste preek: „Jesus, die Nasarëner, ... Hom het God opgewek”. Die aartsvader Dawid het, omdat hy dit vooruit gesien het, gespreek van die opstanding van Christus. Hierdie Jesus het God opgewek, waarvan ons almal getuie is. (Hand. 2). Paulus wy 'n hele bespreking in sy brief aan die Korinthiërs aan die opstanding (1 Kor. 15) en grond sy hele apostolaat op die verskyning van die opgestane Jesus aan hom, die ontydiggeborene. In die liturgië van die Oosterse Kerke het iets behoue gebly van die kernboodskap van hierdie vroeë Christene: Hy het opgestaan en dit mag uiteindelik een van die lafenisse wees op die woestyn-

tog van die ekumeniese beweging as die Westerse Kerke weer in die gees daarvan kan deel. En met die opstanding het die sending gekom. Hierdie heilshistoriese verband is van groot belang as ons vandag nog oor die sending dink.

Dit herinner ons eerstens daaraan dat Hy leef en die oorwinnaar is. „Aan My is alle mag in hemel en op aarde gegee”. Dit is die volmag van die sending. Die sending is 'n oorwinningstog. Die stryd is gestry. Dit is volbring - God het dit gedoen. Die laaste vyand is verslaan. Die goeie boodskap bly oor. Dit moet verkondig word tot heil van die mens. Jesus is die Here. Vrede op aarde en in die mens 'n welbehag.

Verder moet ons telkens herinner word daaraan dat dit Hy is wat dit doen. „Ek is met julle al die dae tot aan die voleinding van die wêreld.” Lukas beskrywe sy Evangelie as die verhaal van wat Jesus *begin* het om te doen en te leer tot op die dag dat Hy opgeneem is. Sy werk sal soos dit Hom behaag in die sending gestalte (liggaam) aanneem en so voortgesit word totdat Hy alles en in almal sal wees. Die sending is 'n goddelike gebeure en niemand kan met die opgestane Christus vereenselwig wees sonder om opgeneem te word in hierdie „Ereignis”, „event” of gebeure nie. Die sending is dus nie 'n kerklike werksaamheid nie - net so min as wat dit die stokperdjie van 'n klompie entoesiaste is. Dit is dié werk van God in Christus Jesus. Daarom was dit vir Paulus hard om teen die prikkels te skop. Daarom ken die verkondiger geen vrees in sy profetiese getuie nie - ook wanneer die valse profete sy uitlewering eis.

□

Dit herinner ons verder daaraan dat die sending 'n doelgerigte beweging is: na die eindes van die aarde en die einde van die tyd. Die opstanding het 'n waterskeiding geword - die ongehoorsaamheid van die verbondsvolk het die era van die „heidene” ingelui. Die program is daargestel: Judea, Samaria en die uiterstes van die aarde. Die heil is vir die wêreld. Die volksgrense - ook van die verbondsvolk - moes deurbreek word. Die „heidene” moes in die gemeenskap van die gelowiges opgeneem word. Dit het tot „onluste” gelei soos ons in Handeling kan lees. Maar so het ons as „heidene” in die kraal gekom.

Die groot misverstand van die sending uit die Westerse lande leef in die praktyk steeds voort -

Abraham Viljoen is senior lektor in Sendingwetenskap aan die Teologiese Fakulteit van die Universiteit van Suid-Afrika.

PEACE ON EARTH - GOODWILL TO CHRISTIANS

LAST MONTH we published details of the Inter-faith Conference on Peace and Religion held in Kyoto, Japan. This conference was attended by, amongst others, Jews, Hindus, Muslims and Christians and epitomised the new spirit prevalent among the world's great religions. Faced by growing atheism and many global problems of common interest and concern, a new spirit now animates inter-faith dialogue - one which accepts the dignity, the sincerity, and the integrity of the other.

Pro Veritate in associating itself with this wider ecumenism, is grateful for the messages of goodwill sent to Christians, through us, at this time of Easter from Rabbi B.M. Casper, chief Rabbi of the Federation of Synagogues of South Africa, Molvi Ibrahim Mia, head of the Waterval Islamic Institute and Swami Hridayananda, director of the eye hospital at Rishikesh, India and presently at Sivananda Ashram, Durban.

As the Jewish Passover coincides with Easter, we in our turn greet all Jews at the Passover and pray that they may be abundantly blessed by the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Chief Rabbi B. M. Casper

IT IS WITH PLEASURE that I offer some words of greeting to your readers at this season of religious celebration.

Theologically, an unbridgeable gulf separates Passover from Easter; and the proper attitude is to accept that there is this fundamental theological difference between the two religions. One of the great hindrances to the promotion of closer understanding and discussion between us is the vast flood of missionary literature and activity intended for the conversion of Jews to Christianity.

Yet we should meet on the ethical and moral plane for we do share certain deep spiritual convictions and we do cherish in common agreed social ideas of justice and humanity. And the world being what it is, we have a duty to strive together to combat the ignorance, the intolerance, the hunger and the inhumanity that still abound. This is a season when we should together put on record our concern for the victims of spiritual darkness, especially in lands where a godless regime seeks to stifle faith and spread fear.

Above all, let us remember in our prayers that land in which our festivities and solemnities have their origin, and where men and women are struggling to rebuild and be rebuilt in circumstances in which many of us see the Finger of God.

Through such mutual concern and sympathy we can hope to advance a spirit of goodwill and understanding among all the communities of this land and hasten the awareness that, in the words of the prophet Malachi, We all have One Father and One God hath created us all.

Rabbi B.M. Casper is chief Rabbi of the Federation of Synagogues in South Africa.

Molvi I. Mia

FOR MANKIND to live a life of civility and affability and for him to live religiously in this world is more than his food and drink. If one lives religiously adhering strictly to his religious principles he is certainly a mercy to himself, to all his other fellow-beings and to the rest of the creatures in the world. Religion is such an invaluable gift that by living it one adorns his character thus becoming dear to Allah (God) and His Creation.

Godlessness and irreligiousness are a dangerous threat to peace, unity and harmony. To combat this evil and to invite to religion and Godliness is certainly laudable.

This is the task of responsibility which you have pledged to fulfil to the best of your ability.

We wish to congratulate you for having taken the initiative against this threat to peace.

Molvi Ibrahim Mia is head of the Waterval Islamic Institute

Swami Hridayananda

ON THIS HOLY occasion of Easter let us recall to our minds the great teachings of Lord Jesus Christ. He taught "Whosoever will save his life will lose it and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake will find it". After crucifixion alone, we can attain resurrection.

It is by leading a spiritual life that we can enjoy eternal happiness, but leading such a life is not an easy task. When we start living the spiritual life, we take rebirth from the material and emotional worldly consciousness into higher spiritual consciousness.

We have to crucify ourselves. We have to give up all attachment to luxuries, pleasures of the flesh and also deny and go beyond the inner attachments to objects and people. Satisfaction of desires which seems to be the very goal of life must be given up with correct understanding. We must be convinced of the destructive nature of our desires and attachments and at the same time have a clear grasp of the state of happiness that can be gained by living a spiritual life. We must gain victory over our mind which is full of habits and tendencies which are entirely opposed to our spiritual rebirth and resurrection.

Let us not be disheartened when we go through the trials and humiliations of life. These are essential for our spiritual evolution. Swami Sivanandaji, my Spiritual Master, says: "Trial is a crucible into which Nature throws man when She wants to mould him into a sublime being". It is when we have suffered deeply, when we have gone through acute mental conflicts, that we seek God. It is when our most cherished hopes have withered away that we become reflective and realise the transient nature of everything in this world. It is then that we gravitate inwards towards our essential nature. It is then that we try to find out whether there is anything imperishable in this world of perishable objects and experiences.

We are ignorant and weak when we are left to ourselves. Without the help of the Lord it is not possible for us to solve our intellectual doubts, overcome our attachments or get over the practical difficulties of life. A man of great physical strength and intellectual power without equal inner spiritual strength can do more harm than good to himself and to others around him.

So let us always remember the limitations of our egoistic self-effort, and surrender to the Divine at all times. He alone can help us out of our helpless state. As Jesus Christ has declared: "The Kingdom of Heaven is within us". To attain this let us take up the Cross and follow Him.

My Master, Swami Sivanandaji declares the same Truth in a different way. He says: "Annihilate the animal in you, sublimate the human into the Divine and express this divinity in all your thoughts, words and actions. This will enable you to attain the 'Kingdom of Heaven' which is within you". To achieve this he gives us the easiest method, that is, to serve all, to love all and share what we have with others and thus purify your mind. With a purified mind, meditate and realise the Eternal Truth which is the same in all religions.

Sri Swami Hridayananda is a visiting Swami from India, who as an ophthalmic surgeon directs the eye hospital at the Ashram in Rishikesh in the Himalayas.

SPRO-CAS

BOENEDESPRAKING

SPRO-CAS (die Studieprojek oor Christenskap in 'n Apartheidsamelewing) het nou die stadium bereik dat hy op die punt staan om die finale verslae van ses deskundige kommissies (op die gebiede van die ekonomie, onderwys, wet, politiek, sosiologie en die kerk) te publiseer. Intussen het daar reeds, as 't ware by wyse van inleiding tot die belangrike finale verslae, vier sogenaamde „geleentheidspublikasies" verskyn.

Hierdie onopsigtelike publikasies (maar ongeveer 80 bladsye elk) bestaan uit oordeelkundige sameflansinge van 'n reeks uitgesoekte studiedokumente wat in die loop van SPRO-CAS se besprekinge tot dusver deur 'n aantal deskundiges na vore gebring is as hulpmiddels tot 'n sinvolle beskouing oor Suid-Afrika se sentrale probleem: die rassekwessie en alles wat daarmee saamhang. Die publikasies staan onder redaksie van Peter Randall, Direkteur van SPRO-CAS en die skrywers van wie bydraes in die boekies opgeneem is, is vakkundiges van formaat soos Lawrence Schlemmer, Alan Paton, F. van Zyl Slabbert, André Brink, H.W. van der Merwe, Fatima Meer, W.A. de Klerk, M.G. Whisson, G.F. Jacobs, Denis Worrall en Rick Turner. Aangesien hul bydraes nie spesifiek vir hierdie doel opgestel is nie, spreek dit vanself dat 'n sekere gebrek aan koördinasie tussen die verskillende stukke tot op groot hoogte onvermydelik is en dat daar eintlik geen deurlopende draad in die redeneringe van die skrywers te bespeur is nie. Nogtans is die boekies uiters oordeelkundig gekompileer en verskaf die vier publikasies aan die leser 'n teregend vlugtige blik op die geweldige rykdom aan studiemateriaal waaraan hierdie paar uitsoekstukkies ontleen is.

Feitlik sonder uitsondering getuig die verskillende bydraes van besonder deeglike navorsing en van diepe onderliggende vakkundigheid. Die peil van redenering wat dan ook deurgaans gehandhaaf word, is prysenswaardig hoog. Dit laat die waarderende leser waarlik sy tande slyp vir die finale SPRO-CAS-verslae wat nog moet kom.

Daar is ook natuurlik veel waarteen gevit kan word of waarmee daar selfs ernstig verskil kan word. Dit is ook te begrype, want dit gaan hier oor aangeleenthede waarvoor daar in ons land kennelik geen eenstemmigheid en eendrag bestaan nie. Nogtans slaag die vier geleentheidspublikasies uitmuntend in hul wesenlike doel; om denkende Suid-Afrikaners nog dieper aan die dink en ook uiteindelik aan die praat te sit oor die groot kwel- en knelpunt in ons volkslewe: die rasseprobleem en apartheid. Geen wonder dan ook dat die eerste oplaag van die publikasies (2,000 elk) reeds bykans heeltemal uitverkoop is nie.

* * * * *

JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR - WHO ARE YOU?

Andrew Tracey

Andrew Tracey, M.A. (Oxford) in anthropology, is a musicologist at the International Library of African Music (ILAM), Roodepoort, Transvaal. He is editor of the magazine "African Music" of the African Music Society, was musical director of the popular South African show 'Wait a minim', which ran from 1962-1968 all over the world. He specialises in African instrumental techniques through field research.

ILAM is a registered non-profit research organisation which for many years has taken a leading part in the scientific study of music and the aural arts in Africa. It is the only organisation of its kind on the African continent. Under the directorship of Dr. Hugh Tracey, it is engaged in discovering, recording and analysing the authentic music of Africa with the object of establishing the theory of music-making in Africa and assessing its social, cultural and artistic values, thus contributing to African cultural maturity and consequently improving relations in Africa, America and elsewhere.

It has already published over 230 LP records of the traditional music of 15 African countries which are available from ILAM, Box 138, Roodepoort, Transvaal, South Africa.

JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR, a rock opera about the last six days of Christ's life, by Andrew Lloyd Webber (music) and Tim Rice (lyrics). MCA Records, 2 discs, MKPS 2011 & 2. Double sleeve, with full lyrics, photographs of artists, reproductions of Christ as envisioned by various artists.

YOU TURN ON the wireless and loud repetitive music blares out. Depending on who you are, you switch off because it is rock, or you leave it on because it is rock. Only if you happen to listen for a bit do you realise that the words are not just the vain repetitions of normal music, but about the life of Christ. Incredible! How can they put religion together with this essentially, well.. profane music? Whatever the answer, there are bound to be many reactions to this newest of the new - a religious oratorio couched in modern, even hip language, and set to (largely) heavy rock music. There will be those wildly for and against, and I also expect a large group who will think it must be good for fear of being thought square.

The action of the opera consists of a sequence of moments taken from Christ's last six days, many of them imaginary and not specifically following the Bible story. The emphasis is on Jesus' inter-personal

relations, mainly with Judas, but also with Mary Magdalene, the crowd, Pilate and Herod, and the apostles. The whole mood is one of rock, and of the emotions that one tends to associate with it, which gives it an immediacy that strikes you with each new number. After all, don't we hear this music around us every day? The emotions it arouses are already hot, so to speak, and to have them now associated with the characters around Jesus in his hectic last few days brings the story home with vividness.

• BRILLIANT HANDLING

Rock is mood music; even without any words at all you can often judge the emotion. Certain types of pop and rock music have their own built-in emotion, and this is used powerfully throughout. I found the use of rock most effective where it expresses the basic, unconscious, hypnotic or mindless quality of the crowd scenes; their transition from all-for at the beginning ... "Jesus Christ Superstar!" ... to all-against at the end ... "Crucify him!" ... is brilliantly handled. Another is the apostles, by and large treated as a bunch of sheep, who keep singing "Everything's all right, yes" when it is obvious from the action that it is not. Other qualities that rock is capable of conveying without really trying are excitement, cyni-

cism, confusion, desperation, anger ... Sometimes the music is used to reveal a mood, the real background state of mind, that the words alone belie, as in the tortured, confused musical introduction to Judas' betrayal scene to the priests.

It seems to me that Rice and Webber have deliberately chosen and emphasised facets of the bible story which can naturally be expressed within the rock range of emotions. The whole thing is by no means rock all the way through, however. Webber, the son of a professor of music, is obviously an accomplished all-round composer. When the time comes for contrast he is able to introduce elements of many other kinds of music, from Herod's taunting of Jesus to a bouncy ragtime beat, to a string quartet, use of 5 and 7 time, the wonderfully wide and joyous "Hosanna heysanna" which goes sour the last time it is heard, Pilate's dream in folksong style - a coherent little gem - and the highly sophisticated bitonal effects, chilling and disturbing, of the crowd's interruptions of the high priests' meeting, and the choir's entry "Poor old Judas, so long Judas" behind Judas' final agony. There is humour in the apostles' song at the last supper, as they gradually sink into their pots and switch off from the turbulent scene going on around them: "Always hoped that I'd be an apostle, knew that I would make it if I tried. Then when we retire we can write the gospels, so they'll talk about us when we've died".

The crucifixion scene, from banging the nails in to the final dramatic 'cut', has a surrealistic, nightmare quality, with mad laughter, the moaning of a choir and interweaving electronic sounds. Then the orchestral conclusion, simply named 'John 19:41' is an astonishingly peaceful contrast to the rest of the work - straight 19th century romantic orchestral music! One wonders why the work finishes in this way? The effect on me is one of reconciliation, almost as if to say "We didn't really mean to offend you" or "Your music *has* got something to say too".

● LIMITATIONS

Rock, of course, also has its limitations, which is probably why Webber has to switch to other types of music at times. In the garden of Gethsemane, for instance, I do not think it is capable of expressing the depth of Jesus' emotions. The expression is limited in some other places too where it sounds as if Webber felt he *had* to make it sound rock. What is this rock sound I keep referring to? It is composed of many elements but one of the most important is repetition of a short musical phrase. Since the word 'rock' was first used the average phrase length has got shorter and shorter, the chord sequences have been cut down, often to just two chords (or even to one). What it thus gains in intensity of emotion it loses in train of thought. The repetitive principle is really effective when the music has to convey an intense or basic emotion, as in the crowd or the apostles' scenes, when they have a fixed response to the leader's changing words, or of course when

the action itself is repetitive, as in the horrifying scene when, to an overall crescendo, every one of the 39 lashes is counted out, one to each inexorably repeating musical phrase. But there are also times when the music is too strong, as perhaps Peter's denial, and others when the rock 'phrase' seems to have nothing particular to say about a certain scene. Continuity, too, is always difficult in music with short repeating patterns, as African choirmasters have also found in compiling medleys of African folk songs; Webber has been ingenious in using recurring musical themes and changing chord sequences to assist him in overcoming this basic "one thought at a time" characteristic of rock, but where more continuity is required he has borrowed from other types of music, such as the 'musical', and simply kept a rock beat going in the drum to preserve the mood.

● THE MEDIUM AND THE MESSAGE

The basic issue of the acceptance of "Jesus Christ Superstar" will be whether the religious message is reconcilable with the type of music, whether Christianity will allow itself to be associated with rock. This problem is not new for the Church; throughout its history it has continuously absorbed new elements, presumably not without a struggle, from the cultures in which it has found itself, both in ritual and music. The issue depends on the fact that music, more than other arts, is directly associated with human behaviour patterns. These associations are vividly evoked when the music is heard and may easily drown out one's assessment of the music as music *per se*. This unfortunate fact has had a lot to do with church music in Africa, for instance. Christianity was first introduced in Africa in company with a certain type of music, Sankey and Moody, Wesley, plainsong etc. which became accepted as the right kind of music for civilised Christian people to make, much to the detriment of the traditional music. The "Africanisation" of church music in recent decades, led first by the Catholic Church, has found considerable opposition from the older church members, raised on the "good old hymn tunes", for whom the effect of hearing African music in church was to re-evolve all the spiritual, emotional and social connotations of something they thought they had "left behind". But for the younger people, in those parts of Africa where Africanisation has made headway, this music has a doubly effective impact because it no longer has that non-Christian significance, yet it is based on something distinctively African which fills a definite need in the musical consciousness of Africans.

So with rock - its qualities, for those not actually switched on to it, have been called in turns noisy, erotic, violent, mindless, sentimental, vulgar, banal, anti-establishment etc ... None of these are usually considered desirable by the upholders of traditional western moral standards, who are by and large, but not entirely, the old.

● QUESTIONS

So we have to consider:

- (1) Are these presumably undesirable associations in the music going to prove irreconcilable with the religious message contained in the story itself, and make the whole thing little more than another kind of musical kick, this time a "religious" one? and
- (2) Has our western society reached a stage where youth and age actually do not share a common culture any longer?

In answer to the first question, here one can only go by one's own subjective reaction, and those of young people who are already grooving on rock. They don't have that initial hurdle of the foreignness of the music and its negative associations that older listeners may have to overcome before they can get through to the message. I think this work will convey something new and meaningful to them, and to many others with an open mind and ear. The same story of Christ has been told and retold in thousands of ways since it happened, from the four gospels right through Oberammergau, Bernard Shaw, here in South Africa Isaiah Shembe, prophet of the famous Zulu "Church of Nazareth" in Natal, and all the multitude of non-western Christian churches. Every retelling reveals something more of the whole meaning of the story. We westerners do not normally realise how thoroughly conditioned we are by our own particular form of European culture until we see the same familiar facts and beliefs of Christianity reinterpreted through the eyes of some foreign culture. And under this last term we have, remarkably enough, to include the culture of youth (although the 'generation gap' is nowhere near such a feature of life in South Africa as it is in the U.S.A.).

● THE JOY OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE

This leads us to the second question, which is often heard, from Margaret Mead for instance, the famous American anthropologist and keen sensor of the undercurrents beneath our present world of which most of us are completely unaware.

It could well be said that Christianity up to now, in the first 2000 years of its existence, with its teachings on original sin, guilt, suffering, penitence, self-denial and so on, quite apart from its other more positive teachings, has contributed a certain negative, restrained or inhibited character to the cultures of Europe, a character which contrasts notably with most other cultures, and religions, of the world. I mean not only the great world religions, but also those of the world's thousands of "primitives", from Eskimos to Polynesians to Africans.

Could it be, in the present situation of western youth, with its championing, in its music at the very least, of some of the more joyous and unrestrained aspects of the human experience, as known by so many non-western peoples, that we might be seeing

a reappraisal and broadening of the foundation of our western society? Even that we might get a whole new interpretation of the moral quality of Christianity? Was only one interpretation possible right from the start? Think of all the important stages through which Christianity has gone, since its original founder. If any one of the important men had seen the fundamental facts differently, could not our society have been built up on a different basis?

● YOUTH RETHINKING RELIGION

This record at least is a small piece of evidence that such rethinking of historically accepted religion is possible among some of today's youth. The striking feature of Webber and Rice's treatment of the last days of Christ's life is their handling of Judas, traditionally a despised character whose motivation is not much discussed. I do not think it would be too much to say that they have seen in Judas a symbol of modern youth and ascribed to him some of the desperate, rebellious questioning, confused attitude of youth to the older generation today, as well as to traditional religion. The opera opens off with a long plea from Judas that Jesus "cool it", saying they were getting much too loud, that they would be crushed if they went too far, that he was starting to "believe the things they say of you", i.e. that Jesus was God. Well, this is what people are saying these days, turned on as they are to other world religions, Zen Buddhism, Hinduism, Gibran ... Which God is right? Youth is far more aware of other human cultures now than ever before.

Near the end the voice of Judas is even introduced speaking as a modern man, still addressing Jesus in the sincere, but puzzled and exasperated way that typifies his earlier relations with him:

"Every time I look at you I don't understand
Why you let the things you did get so out of hand
You'd have managed better if you'd had it planned
Tell me what you think about your friends at the
top?

Who d'you think beside yourself's the pick of the
crop?

Buddah was he where it's at? Is he where you are?
Could Mahomet move a mountain or was that just
PR?

Did you mean to die like that? Was that a mistake or
Did you know your messy death would be a record-
breaker?

Don't you get me wrong - I only want to know"

These obviously deeply-felt thoughts I think will ultimately be "Jesus Christ Superstar"'s most important contribution, long after the hooha has died down of whether rock and religion should go together. Pop music next century will itself be quite different, and old squares may even then be saying "Oh for old-time music of the 1970's!".



SPREEK

VERAL GUNSTIG

Cas Labuschagne

1 KONINGS 22: 5-14. - Verder het Josafat aan die koning van Israel gesê: Raadpleeg tog eers die woord van die Here. Toe laat die koning van Israel die profete bymekaarkom, omtrent vierhonderd man, en hy sê aan hulle: Sal ek teen Ramot in Gilead trek om te veg of dit laat staan? En hulle antwoord: Trek op, en die Here sal dit in die hand van die koning gee. Maar Josafat sê: Is hier nie nog 'n profeet van die Here, dat ons deur hom kan raadpleeg nie. En die koning van Israel antwoord Josafat: Daar is nog een man om deur hom die Here te raadpleeg; maar ek haat hom, omdat hy oor my niks goeds profeteer nie, maar onheil; Miga, die seun van Jimla. En Josafat sê: Die koning moet nie so spreek nie! Daarop roep die koning van Israel 'n hofdienaar en sê: Gaan haal Miga gou, die seun van Jimla. Onderwyl die koning van Israel en Josafat, die koning van Juda, elkeen op sy troon sit, bekleed met koninklike klere, op 'n dorsvloer by die ingang van die poort van Samaria, en al die profete voor hulle profeteer, het Sedekia, die seun van Kenaana, vir hom ysterhorings gemaak en gesê: So spreek die Here: Hiermee sal u die Arameërs stoot totdat hulle vernietig is. En al die profete het so geprofeteer en gesê: Trek op na Ramot in Gilead en u sal voorspoedig wees, en die Here sal dit in die hand van die koning gee. Toe sê die boodskapper wat gegaan het om Miga te roep, vir hom dit: Kyk tog, die woorde van die profete is uit een mond goed vir die koning: laat jou woord tog wees soos die woord van een van hulle, en spreek goeie dinge. Maar Miga sê: So waar as die Here leef, voorwaar, wat die Here vir my sê, dit sal ek spreek.

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DIE SKRIFGEDEELTE plaas ons na die middel van negende eeu voor Christus, byna vier eeue na die optrede van Moses en Aäron, en ongeveer een eeu voor die optrede van die groot skrifprofete. Op daardie tyd was in Juda en Israel nie alle die staatslewe goed gekonsolideer nie, maar ook die godsdienstige lewe. Die profetisme het 'n blywende rang in die staatsbestuur verkry as die godsdienstige onderdeel van die ingewikkelde apparaat van die staatsbedryf. In die noordelike gebied was daar in dié tyd ongeveer vierhonderd profete in die bediening, min of meer almal direk aan die hof verbode. Naas hul werksaamhede by die verskeie tempels, was dit hulle plig om aan die vors Gods Woord te openbaar, en hom te adviseer by die neem van belangrike beslissings. Dit kan nie met sekerheid gesê word of hierdie vierhonderd man almal in die diens van die hof gestaan het in 'n godsdienstige hoedanigheid nie. Met inagnome van die amp van profetisme as onderdeel van die staatsbedryf, mag ons wel aanneem dat hierdie profete afhanklik was van die hof vir hul lewensonderhoud. Gevolglik is dit nie onbillik nie om te aanvaar dat hulle opgetree in ooreenstemming met die gesegde: „Wiens brood men eet, diens woord men spreek.” Dit is egter nie die enigste verklaring vir die eenstemmige advies gegee aan die koning, soos uitgebeeld in die verhaal nie. Soos ons sal sien, was daar verdere faktore wat hulle uniformiteit van optrede en eenvormig gunstige antwoorde aan die vors beïnvloed het.

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Daar is vier hoofkarakters in die drama wat hom afspeel op die dorsvloer by die ingang van die poort van Samaria wat dien as vergaderplek, nl. Agab, die koning van Israel, wat op die punt staan om 'n krygstog teen die Arameërs van stapel te stuur; Josafat, die koning van Juda en bondgenoot van Agab; Sedekia, die woordvoerder en aanvoerder van die vierhonderd profete, en Miga Ben Jimla, 'n onafhanklike profeet. Soos gebruikelik in dié tyd word alle militêre ondernemings voorafgegaan deur die inwin van 'n godsspraak om vas te stel of God die onderneming sal sien. Dit is opvallend dat die inisiatief nie deur Agab nie, maar wel deur die besoekende koning Josafat, geneem word. Hieruit kan ons tot die gevolgtrekking kom dat Agab so seker was nie alleen van sy militêre kennis nie, maar ook van die advies van sy profeteskoor, dat hy self geen stappe gedoen het om God deur die profete te raadpleeg nie. Hy kon beswaarlik die versoek van sy gas en bondgenoot weier en dus gebied hy die landsprofete om op te tree. Vierhonderd man verklaar eenstemmig in die naam van die God van Israel: „Trek op, die Here sal dit in die hand van die koning gee!” - Wat wil jy nog meer? Gerugsteundeur so 'n konsensus van godsdienstige opinie kan daar mos niks verkeerd gaan nie. Josafat, geensins beïndruk deur dié profetiese koor wat so eenvormig uit een mond praat nie, wantrou die profete wie se advies vir hom soos 'n deurgestoke kaart voorkom, en wil van sy kollega weet

of daar nie nog 'n profeet van die Here is nie. Daarop kom die antwoord dat daar nog Miga Ben Jimla is, maar die man staan bekend in die land as 'n dwarskop wat die vors en die volk allesbehalwe goedge-sind is deurdat hy nooit goed nie, maar alleen onheil profeteer. Fatsoenlikshalwe kon Agab die versoek van sy gas om ook dié profeet te raadpleeg, nie van die hand wys nie. Trouens kan dit geen kwaad doen nie, want die mening van die één gek kan tog nie opweeg teen dié van die vierhonderd nie.

So word Miga Ben Jimla dan ontbied. Wetende wat sal gebeur wanneer die buitestaander op die toneel verskyn, doen die vierhonderd profete alles in hulle vermoë om krag te verleen aan hulle eenstemmige uitspraak. Dit is in hulle belang om die vors met woord en daad te oortuig dat hulle slegs goeie bedoelings het met die volk en met die land, dat hulle getrou is en dat hulle diep oortuig is van die juistheid van hulle insig. Hulle woord word onderstreep deur 'n simboliese optrede, uitgevoer deur Sedekia. Aanskou hierdie yster horings, die toonbeeld van krag! So spreek die Here: Hiermee sal u die Arameërs stoot totdat u hulle vernietig het! As 'n soort sakrament toon die optrede dat die koning se wens bewaarheid sal word. Die Here self sê dit, en ons sê almal so.

Die bode wat Miga gaan ontbied het, het of opdrag daartoe of voel hom geroepe om die profeet onderweg te bearbei, want dit lyk tog nie goed as die een profeet sus en die ander so spreek nie. Miga word op hoogte gebring van die eenstemmige uitspraak van die vierhonderd profete: hulle het almal goed gespreek vir die koning; laat dan tog u woord ook wees soos dié van hulle en spreek goed. In hierdie situasie moet die profete uit een mond praat. Bowendien is daar belangrike sake op die spel - die koning wil aan die Arameërs toon wie meester is in die hoër-Jordaangebied, en behalwe dit mag ons by ons bondgenoot uit Juda nie die geringste twyfel laat ontstaan dat dit ons erns is en dat die krygstog sal slaag nie. Dink aan die eer van u land en u volk en wees tog lojaal teenoor u kollegas; u sal verstandig optree as u ook goed spreek.

Dat daar op hierdie wyse druk uitgeoefen word op Miga Ben Jimla kan ons ons lewendig voorstel. Hy hoef alleen maar „ja” te sê en hy sou die held van die dag wees, gewild aan die hof en bemind in die hoogste godsdienstige kringe.

Moet tog nie die saak vir ons almal bemoeilik nie; spreek goed! 'n Mens vra jou af wat in Miga se gemoed omgegaan het toe hy by die dorsvloer aankom en Sedekia aantref is sy gebaarspel met die ysterhorings ten aanskoue van die ganse eendragtige en instemmende skare van die land se profete. Sy gedagtes kon wel gewees het: hulle is weer mooi op dreef, die jibroer - kliek. Die koning hoef maar eenmaal die sweep te klap en hulle draf ewe inskiklik saam.

Intussen beskik Miga op daardie tydstep nog oor geen godsspraak nie, maar die standpunt wat hy op beginsel sou inneem, het hy reeds aan die bode bekend gemaak: Sowaar as die Here leef, voorwaar, wat die Here vir my sê, dit sal ek spreek. Basies is sy standpunt dieselfde as dié van Bileam (Num. 22:20,35; 23: 12,26; 24:13) wat eweneens te kenne gegee het dat hy alleen dit sou spreek wat die Here in sy mond lê. Daarmee distansieër Miga hom by voorbaat van sy ander kollegas. Hy voel hom geroepe om Gods woord te spreek, ongeag die gevolge hetsy vir hom of vir die koning en die volk. Uit die res van die verhaal blyk dit dat Miga aanvanklik sê presies wat van hom verwag word: Trek op, en u sal voorspoedig wees.

Agab glo hom nie en beveel hom om die waarheid te praat, want voor Josafat moet hy hom laat regverdig. Toe die waarheid uitkom, glo Agab ewemin, maar hy het ten minste gelyk gekry. „Sien u, hy profeteer oor my niks goeds nie, net onheil”. Ons hoef ons nie te verstom oor die feit dat Miga aanvanklik dieselfde sê as die vierhonderd profete en pas daarna sy eie profesie uitspreek nie. Dit is enkel 'n geval van taktiek. Jeremia sou later teenoor Hananja dieselfde taktiek toepas deur op Hananja se profesie te antwoord met: Amen, Laat die Here so doen. Miga wil alleenlik illustreer dat die koning hom tog nie glo nie, al sê hy presies dieselfde as die ander profete. Dit is die lot van die ware profeet dat sy woorde reeds by voorbaat in wantroue aangehoor word omdat hy bestempel word as „staatsgevaarlik” en „volksvyandig”. Op Miga se etiket staan waarskynlik aangeteken „onheilsprofeet”, want as sulks staan hy bekend by Agab. Die geskiedenis het bewys dat Miga se voorspelling bewaarheid is en dat die vierhonderd profete verkeerd was. Daar was ongetwyfeld onder hulle enkeles wat in hulle harte dit met Miga eens was, maar hulle durf dit nie sê nie. Trouens, dit was veels te gevaarlik om hulle aan die kant van Miga te skaar, want hy was reeds deur die koning verdoem.

Ons kan ons nouliks voorstel hoe dit moontlik is dat hierdie vierhonderd profete so eenparig saamstem. Hoe kom dit dat hulle in alles konformeer?

In die nadraai van die verhaal word op hierdie vraag geantwoord: 'n Leuengees het hulle verlei. Vertaal in die moderne idioom beteken dit: Hulle het verkeer in die greep van 'n ideologie waardeur die gees van die Here van hulle gewyk het; hulle kon nie meer onderskei tussen Gods wil en hulle eie wensdenkery nie, tussen waarheid en leuens nie. Oor 'n eie profetiese getuienis beskik hulle nie, want dié het hulle verruil vir die kollektiewe skyngetuienis van 'n fatsoenlike groep jibroers waar niemand iets aan het nie; nie Agab nie - en ons ewemin.

ENTER POLAROID

Polaroid sells its products in South Africa as do several hundred other American companies. Our sales there are small, less than one percent of our worldwide business.

Recently a group has begun to demand that American business stop selling in South Africa. They say that by its presence it is supporting the government of the country and its policies of racial separation and subjugation of the Blacks. Polaroid, in spite of its small stake in the country, has received the first attention of this group.

We did not respond to their demands. But we did react to the question. We asked ourselves, "Is it right or wrong to do business in South Africa?" We have been studying the question for about ten weeks.

The committee of Polaroid employees who undertook this study included fourteen members - both black and white - from all over the company. The first conclusion was arrived at quickly and unanimously. We abhor *apartheid*, the national policy of South Africa.

The *apartheid* laws separate the races and restrict the rights, the opportunities and the movement of non-white Africans. This policy is contrary to the principles on which Polaroid was built and run. We believe in individuals. Not in "labor units" as Blacks are sometimes referred to in South Africa. We decided whatever our course should be it should oppose the course of *apartheid*.

They addressed themselves to a single question. What should Polaroid do in South Africa? Should we register our disapproval of *apartheid* by cutting off all contact with the country? Should we try to influence the system from within? We rejected the suggestion that we ignore the whole question and maintain the *status quo*.

Some of the black members of the study group expressed themselves strongly at the outset. They did not want to impose on the black people of another country a course of action merely because we might feel it was correct. They felt this paternalistic attitude had prevailed too often in America when things are done 'for' black people without consulting black people.

It was decided to send four of the committee members to South Africa. Since this group was to include the two black and two white members, it was widely assumed they would not be granted visas. They were.

Their prime purpose in going to South Africa was to ask Africans what they thought American business should do in their country. We decided the answer that is best for the black people of South Africa would be the best answer for us.

Can you learn about a country in ten days? No. Nor in ten weeks. But our group learned one thing. What we had read and heard about *apartheid* was not exaggerated. It is every bit as repugnant as we had been led to believe.

The group returned with a unanimous recommendation.

In response to this recommendation and to the reports of the larger study committee, Polaroid will undertake an experimental program in relation to its business activities in South Africa.

For the time being we will continue our business relationships there (except for sales to the South African government, which our distributor is discontinuing), but on a new basis which Blacks there with whom we talked see as supportive to their hopes and plans for the future. In a year we will look closely to see if our experiment has had any effects.

First, we will take a number of steps with our distributor, as well as his suppliers, to improve dramatically the salaries and other benefits of their non-white employees. We have had indications that these companies will be willing to cooperate in this plan.

Our business associates in South Africa will also be obliged (as a condition of maintaining their relationship with Polaroid) to initiate a well-defined program to train non-white employees for important jobs within their companies.

We believe education for the Blacks, in combination with the opportunities now being afforded by the expanding economy, is a key to change in South Africa. We will commit a portion of our profits earned there to encourage black education. One avenue will be to provide funds for the permanent staff and office of the black-run Association for Education and Cultural Advancement (ASECA). A second method will be to make a foundation to underwrite educational expenses for about 500 black students at various levels of study from elementary school through university. Grants to assist teachers will also be made from this gift. In addition we will support two exchange fellowships for Blacks under the U.S. South African Leader Exchange Program.

This article appeared first in American newspapers advertising the Polaroid Corporation's policy. It has been slightly shortened.

FOREIGN ENTERPRISE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Fred van Wyk

THE RECENT DECISION of Polaroid, an American firm which sells its products in South Africa, to plough back part of its South African profits into the education of Black South Africans in the form of bursaries and scholarships, has focused attention sharply on the American and other foreign firms and business concerns which operate in South Africa. It should be pointed out at once that Polaroid is not the first nor the only firm to use part of its profits for the upliftment of the Blacks. Other firms, notably a big Dutch concern, has done likewise and on a considerable scale. Some other firms, American, British, Dutch, German, etc., are using part of their profits to improve the wages of their Black workers, the introduction of pension and medical schemes, better housing, etc.

Both forms of assistance are to be welcomed and it is hoped that this kind of help will soon become the general practice, not only of foreign firms but of South African ones also. (Many of the latter do in fact give additional assistance in various forms).

There are at present just over 300 American firms conducting business in South Africa. Their total capital investment in South Africa amounts to about R75 000 000 yielding a nett profit of some 17%, most of which is freely repatriated. From a business point of view it is only natural that these firms should make use of the "cheap" labour available in South Africa and they do in fact provide work opportunities for thousands of Black, Coloured and Indian South Africans, and also, of course, for White South Africans. This is true of the other foreign companies too.

Wages are determined to a large extent by supply and demand, but also by the general patterns operative in any area. American firms, like any others, are reluctant to draw attention to themselves by radical departures from the general patterns and practices, yet a substantial number of them - and also of others - do in fact pay wages well in excess of the minimum scales laid down by wage determination boards. (In this connection it should be noted that minimum wages are laid down and there is no legal provisions to prevent employers from paying wages and salaries commensurate with the minimum effective level in the area in which they are situated).

Mr. F.J. van Wyk is Director of the South African Institute of Race Relations.

Evidence which the S.A. Institute of Race Relations recently gave at sittings of the Wage Board on behalf of African workers revealed the depth and extent of poverty among the Africans in the Durban, Witwatersrand and Pretoria areas. Johannesburg serves as a good example where the minimum weekly wage rate for the largest category of African workers was fixed at R8.60 in 1968, which was some R18.00 a month lower than the secondary poverty datum line for the area, established in 1966. The evidence showed that a rise of 21% would be required to raise these particular scales to the largely ineffective secondary poverty datum line but a rise of no less than 82% would be necessary for wages to reach the minimum effective level. In the Johannesburg area this would be about R100 a month (\$143) at a conservative estimate. In 1969 the average monthly earnings of workers in various sectors * were as follows:

	African R	Coloured R	Asian R	White R
Manufacturing	49.8	69.2	74.3	276.5
Construction	46.5	109.2	140.3	303.9
Mining	17.5	72.5	52.0	325.6
Wholesale trade	49.1	67.8	100.4	251.9
Central Government	36.1	100.3	127.0	211.3

Wages have been stressed as this is obviously the area in which foreign firms could make one of the most important contributions to the betterment of the non-white communities in South Africa. There are, however, other areas also and a recent article which Mr. Peter Randall, Director of SPRO-CAS (Study Project on Christianity in Apartheid Society), prepared for the Christian Institute, listed the following:

1. The promotion of vigorous training programmes, and also literacy.
2. The selection of promising workers for further training in the home countries of foreign firms.
3. The advancement of workers as speedily as possible to promotion posts.
4. The creation of bursary and scholarship funds for the children of workers.

* Source: *Mercurius, Journal of the Department of Economics, University of South Africa, September 1970.*

5. The institution of non-contributory pension schemes, free medical aid, and, if necessary, supplementary high-protein feeding.
6. The establishment of effective and recognised workers' committees to allow for workers' participation in decision-making and for training in bargaining skills.

In addition, Mr. Randall also offered the following suggestions:

1. Participation in community development in the townships from which workers are drawn: libraries, clinics, crèches, pre-school enrichment programmes, feeding schemes, etc. (Participation would be largely in the form of grants and subsidies).
2. Financial and moral support to welfare and other organizations in South Africa working for the upliftment of the various communities.
3. The establishment of an independent reviewing commission composed, in the case of American firms, of both black and white Americans and South Africans, to periodically assess the practices of U.S. firms in South Africa. Such

aspects as wages, discrimination in employment, social responsibility of firms, working conditions and training of black employees, and the degree of worker participation in decision-making, could be examined, with the commission's recommendations and reports made public.

•

This brief article has been written on the assumption that foreign firms will remain in South Africa despite various pressures that they should withdraw. It is the writer's firm belief that they should - and will in fact - remain here. They *are* making a valuable contribution to the general welfare of all sections of our community - and they could, and will, play an increasing rôle in this regard. There is, it is submitted, general agreement among all sections of our population, both black and white, that they should remain here for the common good of all concerned, and, lastly, as Mr. Randall has pointed out, since the foreign companies are primarily here to make profits - and there is a high return on investment in South Africa - they will resist all efforts and pressures for them to withdraw from South Africa.

Invest Church Funds for maximum social impact

THE COMMITTEE on Financial Investments established by the Seventh General Synod of the United Church of Christ in America has published its report under the title of Investing Church Funds for Maximum Social Impact.

This Church because it envisions itself as a Christian transformer of culture has praiseworthily revealed both its analysed investments as well as its investment policy. It has done this because it has accepted that social values and social justice ought to be given consideration together with security and yield in the investment of its funds. Consequently it set up the committee on Financial Investments to establish criteria and make recommendations toward substantial use of investments to promote maximum social impact.

The Committee discovered:

- that there is often a variance between church policy in acquiring and administering investments on the one hand and the church programme that the investment return is intended to fund on the other, and
- that private and hence church investors have a responsibility along with the public sector of not merely attempting to maximise profits but service of the wider community precisely in and through investments.

Consequently it decided:

- that financial institutional effectiveness

should take precedence over financial institutional purity and

that the churches role is to identify and support those forces in culture that are consistent with Christian values and oppose those that are not.

Flowing out of this reasoning the following priority concerns were isolated

- * racism (i.e. social justice)
- * poverty (i.e. economic justice)
- * world development
- * peace

Because of these areas of concentration the church is encouraged to invest in those enterprises that pursue the same goals as its own. The committee also suggests a viewing of an enterprise's policy in the following four areas before an investment should be placed:

1. the enterprise's product,
2. the enterprise's influence on public policy,
3. the enterprise's internal practices, e.g., those dealing with employment and personnel matters, and relations with the community in which the enterprise is engaged; and

This booklet is well worth its cost of \$1.25 (+ 25c postage). It can be obtained by writing direct to COFI, United Church of Christ, 297 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010.

GOD IS CONVERGENCE

Martin van der Ploeg

IT IS SAFE to say that the majority of Christians who are acquainted with the writings of Teilhard de Chardin believe that he has highlighted one of the many aspects of the Face of God. Overseas he has made a profound impression on scientists, theologians and philosophers and has greatly influenced Christian thought.

Insofar as his philosophy is relevant to the policy of apartheid, the following brief summary of his religious convictions will suffice:

- ★ God-is-love is the essence of an evolving Universe;
- ★ The Evolution of the Universe is of a convergent nature and is moving towards a Final Unity/Perfection/God;
- ★ This Unity is gradually being built up by all the works performed in the World, it is of a spiritual nature, and is a transformation, sublimation or climax of Matter.

□

In other words, at least one aspect or characteristic of Love is convergence - in fact Teilhard went so far as equating them. Furthermore the Universe for him consists out of those convergent streams into which all our thoughts and actions are incorporated which are inexorably moving towards perfection. We too, must then converge; we must go with that stream because we cannot halt it.

The concept of God's omnipresence is nothing new, yet we cannot fail to be impressed by Teilhard's emphasis that it includes both our slightest or most intensive actions and thoughts, whether spiritual or material, whether it is sweeping the floor, praying, operating a factory or governing a country. And whether we acknowledge God or not, He is there and we must adore Him. This is the first Commandment - no options are given. If we fail to take His divine law into account when drafting our human laws, the chances are that we will go against the stream of

Martin van der Ploeg, a Christian businessman applies Teilhard de Chardin's theory of convergence to the South African scene, concluding with arguments against sanctions and boycotts.

Universal evolution, which rejects everything evil in its relentless movement toward Perfection.

If Love is convergent, divergence is characteristic of hate. The relationship between Teilhard's philosophy and the policy of apartheid is immediately apparent. Apartheid, as the word implies, is divergent.

□

But before we proceed on the subject of apartheid, let us first have a closer look at the implications of Teilhard's philosophy.

If the stream is moving i.e. converging toward God, and we labour to stay in the centre of that stream and swim with it, it is obvious that we move faster toward our spiritual/temporal goal than we can calculate. How much faster we do not know because we cannot know the speed of the current we are in.

And our labour in order to fit into the Universal pattern of that stream must be convergent. In more practical terms: the greater our efforts to be one with our neighbour (by loving him, i.e. wanting for him what we want for ourselves), the more convergent we are, the more we conform to the Universal pattern of evolution toward Perfection, the faster the current and the greater the progress, the greater the profit and the greater the benefits. Consequently the oneness of the First and Second Commandments, viewed in this light becomes clear.

Conversely, the more divergent the nature of our actions are, the harder we have to labour against the current, the sooner we are exhausted or alternatively, the sooner this current will destroy us or force us, with much suffering on our side, in another direction viz. a convergent one. Put in another way, we exhaust our energy in hating: our efforts, thoughts, works, relaxation, money making, building and achieving things at great sacrifice are to no avail as they will be taken away from us and destroyed. Building while hating is building at a loss, the more intense our hate, the greater our loss.

But what of the other side of the convergence coin, namely that of divergence. However well-intended boycotts may be, they are by nature divergent. Consequently they have never produced the required

results. If the intention is good, i.e. the good of the 'victim' is intended in which case one wishes to help him by trying to force him away from the wrong (because divergent) path towards a good (because convergent) path, the boycott may have no harmful effects. Many boycotts, however, find their origins in the smugness and arrogance of the instigators and invariably produce the opposite result. The improvement of the 'victim' was not even seriously intended because the real reason is often a closer tie with other organisations or countries and hence aimed at increased material profits for the originator. The efforts also diminish the instigator who becomes at least partly responsible for the intensification of the 'wrong' policy in the country of the 'victim'. As regards South Africa, boycotts (because they are a form of apartheid) often boomerang to the detriment of the poor and weak.

Some people speak about Gandhian boycotts and point to their positive results. The Gandhian efforts and their results fully support Teilhard's philosophy. A Gandhian boycott is not one of withdrawal (divergent) but one of greater involvement (convergent). And this involvement brings with it hardships, sufferings and even death. By suffering for the good of one's fellowmen, one identifies oneself intimately with his cause. For this reason the Gandhian philosophy of conflict fits the Teilhardian philosophy of convergence as a hand in a glove; both intention and action are supremely convergent by nature.

□

Let us now return to the matter of apartheid. As far as South Africa is concerned the present course is clear. It is divergent by nature and is gradually becoming even more so. We are already busy paying for it. At present, the payments are small, almost negligible.

But the writing is on the wall. We are paying in education (where standards are low and decreasing), in trade, in industry, in sport, in fact in almost every sphere of life. These payments will become bigger and bigger, until the course changes from divergent to convergent i.e. until we start identifying ourselves with our neighbour. Whether we like it or not the First and Second Commandments are like unto one another - they give us no option, no alternative.

This implies that the principle of convergence must be accepted fully and immediately with the operational change-over taking place gradually. The gradualness is a necessary aspect of convergence.

The following question therefore becomes important:

Is there still a way open, within the terms of the existing laws, which could change the present course into a convergent one?

It is beyond doubt that the most powerful way, namely Gandhi's method, would clash immediately

with the laws. This being so, one wonders whether we have the people with the courage of their convictions to bear the consequences.

Fortunately, there is still a way open to us. Not by virtue of our courage but rather by virtue of our conviction. We have the conviction that justice must be done to all. This is a convergent aspect of our belief and therefore carrying with it some God-implied potential power. Compared with Gandhi's method it requires less training and self-discipline but plenty of tenacity, patience, tolerance and understanding.

□

Many people in other countries are concerned about the situation in South Africa. Some of them are actively engaged in trying to halt the process of apartheid. Almost invariably they do this by means of boycotts. Their motives vary from almost perfect to downright short-sighted egoism. Furthermore, the philosophy of Teilhard de Chardin has made a tremendous impact overseas. "Le Milieu Divin", "The Phenomenon of Man", "The Future of Man" and other works are widely read and discussed and his message is being heard and well received. The majority of readers are scientists, philosophers, theologians and almost invariably educators. The time is ripe for planting these ideas. We need to change our thinking from divergent-thinking to convergent-thinking.

We should make a thorough study of this philosophy in consultation with the churches. Archbishop Hurley and the Christian Institute surely will be pleased to assist. For good measure we should study some distant and contemporary history in terms of convergence and divergence. If there is any truth in the above, this should become apparent and strengthen our conviction. This study should issue forth in a booklet which should be widely circulated.

Accompanied by these booklets, letters should be sent to European, American, African and Asian Heads of State, as well as to individuals and organisations all over the world explaining that boycotts have the opposite effects to the ones intended and suggesting that South Africa should rather be pulled into every organisation of conceivable interest, especially those of the United Nations, sport, art and literature.

The benefits would not only follow from psychological advantages (fear would break down) or from economic ones (the economic impact would probably be sufficient to break the back of the existing system) but mostly because the actions would be by nature convergent and would therefore conquer. The poison will disappear and the healing process set in.

Our faith in this convergent aspect of God and the intensity of our actions following from that faith will be decisive for the future of our country.



TEILHARD -

SOME BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Catharine Goodwin

*Catharine Goodwin is a contemplative
working with Life Line Witwatersrand*

"CHRIST OF GLORY, hidden power stirring in the heart of matter, glowing centre in which the unnumbered strands of the manifold are knit together; strength inexorable as the world and warm as life; you whose hands hold captive the stars, you the first and the last, the living, the dead, the re-born; you who gather up in your super abundant oneness every delight, every taste, every energy, every phase of existence, to you my whole being cries out with a longing as vast as the universe: for you indeed are my Lord and my God".

So wrote Teilhard in the stillness of the vast solitude of the desert as he finished his mystical and philosophical poem "Mass upon the altar of the world."

THE MAN

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin was a French Jesuit who was born in 1881 in France and died in the U.S.A. in 1955, having spent most of his adult life in China. He was both mystic and scientist - the field of his study being (i) the history and properties of man as animal and (ii) the study of the earth - geology, botany, mineralogy and palaeontology. He was a priest who mixed with all men; he was a thinker taking his place in the advance guard of thought. A specialist in the scientific history of the past he was interested only in the future - the future of man. "Throughout my whole life, during every moment I have lived, the world has gradually been taking on light and fire for me, until it has come to envelop me in one mass of luminosity glowing from within - the purple flush of matter fading imperceptibly into the gold of spirit, to be lost finally in the incandescence of a personal universe..." (Le Milieu Divin).

"This is what I have learnt from my contact with the earth - the diaphany of the divine at the heart of a glowing universe, the divine radiating from the depths of matter aflame". (Le Milieu Divin).

Teilhard lived during a period of doubt and perplexity, was driven from his own country by the injustice of political struggle, served during the 1914-18 war as a stretcher bearer at the Front; was in Pe-

king when America dropped its atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It was his fate to be misunderstood and condemned to silence by his church and to suffer torments that at times came near to overwhelming him. Like many others, he might well have retreated into his own solitary existence and abandoned his chosen field of activity, but his reaction was the exact opposite. In all that he did, as in all that he taught, there was no bitterness nor disillusioned cynicism, nothing but a constant optimism. Far from railing against the pettiness of men or the chaos of the world, he made it a rule never to assume the presence of evil. And when he was unable to deny the evidence of his eyes, he looked not for the damning but the saving element in what he saw: a mental attitude that surely provides the only road to truth. He was a man possessed by a vision who unlike many before him was incapable of compromising it, but constantly endeavoured to present the ideal as he saw it, and live passionately by it.

He was a Christian and hence a theist. Hence his vision was God-oriented. He was a scientist and hence interpreted God through scientific categories. Whereas the writers of Genesis wrote of the origins of the universe in mythical terms, his book "the Phenomenon of Man" is a restatement of cosmo genesis in scientific terms. Whereas Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross wrote spiritually in psychological categories, his spirituality was written in scientific ones.

He was a priest and so inherited an orthodox tradition. This tradition by and large interpreted the search for God by a flight from the world, his role was precisely to show how God could be sought and found by an engagement with the world.

SOME CATEGORIES

★ He believed in evolution and that history had an upward trend. The universe because it had a past, must be directed towards some final goal. Hence his vision is built on a time model. Previously, as in the Middle Ages, man's thinking and hence his

world view were built on a spatial model and so too was man's concept of God (the God out there). Being interested in the origins of man in order more meaningfully to speak of his future, Teilhard's thinking was linear and temporal and hence he saw God not only as the originator of man but more strongly as the destiny of man. This destiny he called the Omega Point. The world with all its riches, life with its astonishing achievements, man with the constant prodigy of his inventive powers, are all organically integrated in one single growth and one historical process, and all share the same upward progress towards an era of fulfilment. The inescapable dimension of time is a real function of growth and maturation, essential to our individual and collective becoming.

★ To overcome every obstacle, to unite our beings without loss of individual personality, there is a single force which nothing can replace and nothing destroy, a force which urges us forwards and draws us upwards, this is the force of love which is at the same time convergent. i.e. converging towards the Omega Point, which is the point (i.e. meaning) of history and hence of evolution.

★ His great vision was working to build the future and by the future he meant more than the building of the material world, he envisaged the irreversible ascent, through man's co-creative efforts, to the meeting with God in death as the ultimate point of transforming union.

But before this happens mankind must draw closer together and unite upon itself. The importance and significance of the technico-mental process of the last few hundred years cannot be underestimated. By its structure mankind does not dissipate itself but continually concentrates upon itself - the forces of civilization and evolution combine to make man a species, which having entered the Realm of Thought, folds itself back upon itself, so that we are bound to envisage its end in terms of some states of maturation which must illumine the future for us.

★ We must here mention a term he coined namely the noosphere. "We must talk of a particular biological entity such as has never existed on earth - the growth, outside and above, the biosphere (mere living sphere), of an added planetary layer, an envelope of thinking substance, to which for the sake of convenience and symmetry, I have given the name of the noosphere." (The Future of Man).

It is generally accepted that what distinguishes man psychologically from other living creatures is the power, acquired by his consciousness, of turning in upon himself. The animal knows, but only man knows that he knows and is capable of being changed by his knowledge.

As the individual grows from the biosphere (life sphere) to the noosphere (consciousness sphere), so too do peoples and nations, so too does man as a whole.

★ Teilhard believed in the world - here too there is an analogy on the individual plane. The Manichean heresy in the early Christian centuries saw a dichotomy in man between body and spirit, depreciating body and lauding spirit. As we now accept man to be one and whole, spirit-in-matter and hence take the body seriously, so too with the world. No depreciating the physical world in order to elevate the spiritual world. No false distinctions between sacred and secular - the one interpenetrates the other. Hence the search for God, the adoration of God is not in withdrawing from matter, but accepting it, taking it seriously, and precisely through it coming to spirit embedded in it as gold in the rock.

A Teilhard Bibliography

(i) Books by Teilhard de Chardin

Hymn of the Universe
 Le Milieu Divin (in English)
 The Building of the Earth
 The Making of a Mind (letters)
 Letters from a traveller
 Writings in time of war
 The Vision of the Past
 The Appearance of Man
 Man's place in nature
 The Phenomenon of Man
 The Future of Man
 Science and Christ

(ii) Books on Teilhard de Chardin

An introduction to Teilhard de Chardin
 by N.M. Wildiers
 Teilhard de Chardin and a guide to his thought
 by Emile Rideau
 Teilhard de Chardin - a bibliography
 by Robert Speaight
 Album - Teilhard de Chardin
 by Jeanne Mortier & Marie-Louise Auboux
 The Religion of Teilhard de Chardin
 by Henri de Lubac
 Teilhard de Chardin - Scientist & Seer
 by Charles E. Raven
 Teilhard de Chardin & the Mystery of Christ
 by Christopher F. Mooney

(iii) Readers who are interested in the thought of Teilhard in relation to contemporary human problems can join the

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 LONDON SW 7.**

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