

PRO VERITATE



FEBRUARIE 1972

By the publishers of the magazine

PARLEMENT IN DIENS

Die parlement, wat met wetgewende „mag“ beklee is, is weer in Kaapstad aan die werk. Daar word die lewens van miljoene mense in Suid-Afrika beheer en die geskiedenis in 'n sekere rigting gestuur.

GEEN „SKEPPER“ NIE

Wat dringend noodsaaklik is, is dat onthou moet word dat in die geskiedenis die Christelike weg was dat die owerheid die beskermmer van die „wet“ eerder as die skepper van wette was! 'n „Christelike“ owerheid bepaal nie wat reg of verkeerd is nie, maar lê dit, wat volgens God se wil in Christus is, in wette vas. Die „reg“ of „wet“ moet onafhanklik van die owerheid wees.

Indien die wetgewing egter nou uitsluitlik van die owerheid afhang, verloor dit die belangrike verband met die moraliteit. Alles wat die regering dan as wet proklameer, is „reg“, wat die morele waarde daarvan ookal mag wees.

Hierdie rigting word ook in Suid-Afrika gevolg en die gevolg is gevaarlik. Dié wette word nou formalisties, wat beteken dat nie die inhoud van God se evangelie die beslissende is nie, maar die vorm van 'n beleid. Die wette kry finale gesag of dit geregtigheid bevorder of nie!

STAATSABSOLUTISME

Erger nog: Wat die owerheid as wet verklaar is wet, „reg“ selfs al sou dit die teenoorgestelde van moraliteit of die ware „reg“ wees. Dit gebeur omdat die owerheid met so 'n siening nie langer „onder“ die wet is nie, maar „daarbo“. Daar is nou geen wet anders as dit wat die owerheid maak nie en gevolglik ook geen „wet“ waardeur die regering tot orde geroep kan word nie! Dit lei tot staatsabsolutisme en totalitarisme.

Het die „wette“ in ons land nie ook los van enige normatiewe beginsels geword sodat dit slegs 'n saak van blote politieke mag is nie? Formele wette lei noodwendig tot relativiteit omdat daaragter dan geen werklike gesag is nie! Die owerheid is 'n dienskneg van God en as hy nie God se wil doen nie, het hy ook nie werklike gesag nie (John. 19:10, 11, Rom. 13:1-6, Hand. 4:19 & 20).

TOTALITARISME, ANARGISME & WETTISISME

Nie die owerheid is die hoogste gesag in Suid-

PARLIAMENT IN SERVICE

Parliament, clothed in legislative "power", is at work in Cape Town again. There the lives of millions of people in South Africa are controlled and history is steered in a certain direction.

NO "CREATOR"

An urgent necessity is that it should be remembered that in the history of the Christian way the *government was the protector of the "law" rather than the creator of laws!* A "Christian" government does not determine what is right or wrong, but commits to written law that which is according to God's will in Christ. "Justice" or "law" must be independent of the government.

However, if legislation now depends entirely on the government, it loses the important connection with morality. Then everything which the government proclaims as law, is "right", notwithstanding the moral value thereof.

This direction is also being followed in South Africa and the consequences are dangerous. *These laws are now becoming formalistic, which means that the deciding factor is not the content of God's gospel, but the formation of a policy.* Laws are invested with final authority, whether this promotes justice or not!

STATE ABSOLUTISM

Worse still: What the government declares to be law, is law, "justice", even be it the opposite of morality or the true "right". This happens because the government holding this view is no longer "under" the law, but "above" it. Then there is no law other than that made by the government and accordingly also no "law" by which the government can be called to order! This leads to state absolutism and totalitarianism.

Have the "laws" in our country not also become separated from any normative principles, so that it is merely a question of naked political power? Formal laws of necessity lead to relativity because behind them there is no real authority! The government is a servant of God and if it does not do God's will, then it has no real authority (John 19:10, 11, Rom. 13:1-6, Acts 4:19 & 20).

TOTALITARISME, ANARCHISME & LEGALISME

Not the government but Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the highest authority in South Africa.

Afrika nie, maar Jesus Christus, die Seun van God. Hierdie absolute evangeliese sekerheid moet ons van twee dodelike gevare red: 'n valse verheerliking van die sogenoemde hoogste gesag van die owerheid wat tot totalitarisme lei én 'n valse verheerliking van die soewereiniteit van die volk wat tot anargie lei. 'n Derde gevaar is natuurlik die verering van die wet self wat tot formalisme, wettisme en fariseïsme lei. So is Christus gekruisig omdat Hy die „wet” oortree het en so word God's geskape mense in Suid-Afrika onevangelies deur die „wet” volgens rasse geklassifiseer, wat veel lyding deur bv. gesinsverbod, werkreservering, armoede, diskriminasie, tweede-klas-burgerskap en gedwonge apartheid veroorsaak.

PROPAGANDA IN PLAAS VAN PROFETISME

Alleenlik God het finale gesag om te sê hoe sy geskape mense en die gelowiges, wat deur Christus aan die kruis verlos is, beheer moet word en hoe hulle moet leef. Daarom moet die parlement dringend vra: Wat wil U hê moet ons doen (Hand. 9:6)?

Daar moet dringend en onmiddelik van die ses groepe „diskriminasie”-wette en aanhoudings sonder verhoor na Christus en sy evangelie gedraai word. Wee 'n land waar nie „justisie” nie, maar *polisie* heers; nie die *reg* nie, maar die *mag* die gesag het; nie *profetisme* nie, maar *propaganda* die botoon voer; nie die *wyse* nie, maar die *brutale* die beheer uitoefen; nie die *liefde* nie, maar die *totalitarisme* die kern vorm!

OPLOSSING

Jeremia en Johannes die Doper het God se Woord oor en tot die owerheid gespreek. Amos en Jakobus het sy Woord oor en tot die maatskappy gespreek. God se geregtigheid geld nie alleen die menseverhoudinge nie, maar ook die struktuur van staat en maatskappy. Is die organisasie in Suid-Afrika sodanig dat die liefdesgebed tot God en die naaste daarin kan floreer, of asem dié stelsel die Kainsgees: „Is ek my broer se wagter?” 'n Maatskappy waarin die een die ander „in die Here” en nie in geld, in rang en stand, of in raskleur sien nie, word eers 'n egte mensegemeenskap ... Hier lê prinsipiëel die oplossing van die rassevraagstuk (J. Overduin).

PROFEET PROFETEER!

By die dankbaarheid vir die getuienis wat individuele groepe gelewer het, kom ons versugting: Sal die kerk in sy geheel tog nie sy vrees afskud en soos een man teen die gruwelike ongeregtheid in Suid-Afrika getuig nie? Ware profetisme bedel nooit om populariteit nie (Gal. 1:16)! Die magteloosheid van die kerk in Suid-Afrika om die onreg te stuit, staan in verband met die verbleking van moedige profetisme. En vreeslik is dit as 'n kerk die woord van die owerheid in plaas van God spreek (Jer. 5)! *

This absolute gospel certainty must save us from two deadly dangers: a false aggrandizement of the so-called highest authority of the government which leads to totalitarianism *and* a false magnification of the sovereignty of the people which leads to anarchy. A third danger is, of course, the glorification of the law itself which leads to formalism, legalism and hypocrisy. Thus Christ was crucified because He contravened the "law" and thus in South Africa people who were created by God are unequivocally classified by "law" according to race, which gives rise to much suffering through, for example, the breaking up of families, work-reservation, poverty, discrimination, second-class citizenship and forced apartheid.

PROPAGANDA INSTEAD OF PROPHECY

God alone has final authority to say how the people He has created, as well as the believers who were saved by Christ on the cross, should be controlled and how they should live. Therefore it is imperative for parliament to ask: What will thou have us do (Acts 9:6)?

There must be an immediate and urgent turning away from the six groups of "discriminatory" laws and imprisonment without trial, towards Christ and His gospel. Woe to a country where not "justice" but *police* reign; not *right*, but *power* has authority; not *prophecy*, but *propaganda* dominates; not the *wise*, but the *brutal* is in control; not *love*, but *totalitarianism* is the core!

SOLUTION

Jeremiah and John the Baptist proclaimed God's Word about and to the government. Amos and James proclaimed His Word about and to society. God's justice applies not only to human relationships, but also to the structure of state and society. Is the organisation such in South Africa that the commandment of love towards God and our fellow being can flourish therein or does this system breathe the spirit of Cain: "Am I my brother's keeper?" A society in which we see each other "in the Lord" and not in money, in position and standing, or in racial colour, really becomes a true human community ... Herein lies the fundamental solution to the problem of race (J. Overduin).

PROPHET PROPHECY!

With our thankfulness for the testimony given by individual groups, comes also our heartfelt sigh: Will the church as a whole not shake off its fear and testify with one voice against the atrocious injustice in South Africa? True prophecy never begs for popularity (Gal. 1:16)! The powerlessness of the church in South Africa to stop injustice is connected to the fading of courageous prophecy. And how terrible it is when a church proclaims the word of the government and not that of God (Jer. 5)! *

Ministry and...

AUTHORITY IN AFRICA

The problem of authority is a major one, not only in the European society and church, but also in the African's life. Here Dr. Klaus Nürnberger, who is a lecturer in the Lutheran Theological College at Mapumulo, Natal, deals magnificently with the crisis of authority which has arisen and in the end leads us to a promising solution. This speech was delivered under the heading "The Ordained Ministry Seen in the Light of Patterns of Authority in Africa" at the conference of the South African Working Society for Missionary Studies held at the Rand Afrikaans University, Johannesburg, from 25th to 27th January 1972. The article has been divided into two parts. It will also appear in the booklet containing all the addresses and discussions at the conference which will be the fourth publication in the Lux Mundi Series, obtainable from the General Secretary, 31 Fourteenth Avenue, Menlo Park, Pretoria.

This paper is meant to pose a problem, not to supply an answer. The existential situation of the African minister could and should be analysed only by an African minister himself, not by an outsider like me. Neither can I boast of any substantial phenomenological research on the theme. I can only speak from the church and ethnic context in which I have worked. Moreover, the paper ventures into the field of sociology, in which a theologian like me might very well burn his fingers. But to ask intelligent questions is a valid initial stage of any academical pursuit. And in this light the statements made here should be seen. They are meant to ask the question what we are up to when we ask young men to train for the ministry, and why our appeal meets with ever less enthusiastic response.

UNIVERSAL CRISIS

To speak of the universal crisis of the ministry is commonplace. It is somehow connected on the one hand with the *spiritual* transition to a scientific and secularised world-view and practical mode of life. On the other hand it is connected with the *social* transition to the technically organised, specialised and pluralistic urban-industrial system. It would seem that our pre-scientific theology and our pre-industrial ecclesiastical structure start to fall out of place. Much has been said and written on these themes. What we lack are detailed studies of our own situation which would either verify or cast doubt on these generalising statements.

The theme, of course, is gigantic. When I started with my preparations I had the following outline in mind. First, the traditional African and the new Western patterns of authority in contrast to each other, and each seen against the background of their religious or ideological depth-dimensions. Second, the impact of the Western on to the African patterns and the results of white colonial domination, especially in its historical and modern South African forms. And

**Klaus
Nürnberger**

finally, the ever latent conflict between the African minister and the white missionary, seen as a specific existential expression of the more comprehensive socio-political setting in which both have to operate.

EROSION OF SOCIAL FUNCTION

It didn't take me long to discover that this impressive programme cannot be dealt with in a short paper like this. Thus reluctantly discarding my initial plan, I finally tried to isolate single dimension of the theme, on which I formulated a fairly provocative hypothesis. I presuppose that authority is derived from status, status from role and role from function. The hypothesis itself says that the authority of the minister in our African "established churches" is rapidly declining on account of a progressive erosion of social function with obvious indispensability(1) I will try to elaborate this hypothesis by confronting the role of the minister with different social images of authority relevant in our situation.

OUTDATED FIGURE

Before we come to that, it might be useful to deal with the question of whether social status and authority should have any significance for the "servant of the Servant-God in Christ" at all. Surely this is a valid question for any Christian. But it leads us off the point! Our colleges run out of students, our ministers are consciously or unconsciously grappling with role-uncertainties and frustrations, and the latest sociological study on the theme bears the significant title: "The Vanishing Clergyman."(2) The *skandalon* of the cross of Christ is one thing. The decline of a certain, seemingly out-dated professional figure is quite another thing. The former is a spiritual and theological problem, the latter is a problem of social structure. The ordained minister *had* a coveted social role and status not so long ago. If that is no longer the case, then there must be a sociological reason why. This paper attempts to trace this reason.

I The Image of the Father

In pre-missionary African society the basic socio-religious entity was the lineage. The extended family was organised in a (mostly) patrilineal form, reaching from the ancestors to the children. Authority was essentially bound to seniority and sex, the former being the over-riding principle. According to seniority authority obviously increased up the line, culminating in the ancestors, and decreased down the line, vanishing with the newly-born. This graded authority was distributed evenly throughout the system, the *father* being the central figure.

The father is the central figure in such a system because it is in him that the self-regenerating power of the lineage is concentrated. Fatherhood means *auctoritas*, in the word's deeper sense of creative power. But it is not the father's own *auctoritas*. He has his own father, to whom he owes his existence and generating life-power, and who therefore is his senior in *auctoritas*. Right down the line authority is always delineated authority. The father is at any time the vessel, or rather the spearhead of the self-reproductive energy of the whole lineage. The authority of the father is thus the culmination of the *auctoritas* of the extended family as a whole.(3)

RESPECT

To refuse to show respect for your father is not only a personal offence, but a sacrilege to the religious entity of the lineage. The grudge of a father may pursue the son with "bad luck" (Tswana: *madimabe*) wherever he goes. It is thus spiritually and physically dangerous, just as the ill-feelings of the ancestors are disastrous for the living members of the family. Showing respect may take the form of symbolic actions such as proper greetings, presents or sacrifices. But actually these symbols only represent the attitude of total submission to the father as the representative of the lineage.

Conversely the father also depends on the recognition of his *auctoritas* by the son. Concerning the economic support of the older by the younger generation this is obvious. But the dependence is comprehensive. Ancestors depend on being "remembered" by their offspring. Once forgotten they are doomed. That is why they seem to react so vehemently when being neglected, sending drought or sickness or other signs of their displeasure. Lack of respect for the *auctores* obviously endangers the whole religious system, because it attacks the central religious entity itself: the lineage as a self-regenerating entity.

THE ORDAINED MINISTER AS A "FATHER"

Has this sociological image of the father any bearing on the ordained ministry in our "established churches"? The title "Father" used in some churches is,

of course, imported. Nevertheless it seems to strike a chord in the heart of the African Christian. At least in the sense of a person to whom you look up in respect, from whom you expect guidance and care, who is in some way responsible for you, who in his turn may expect some support from you, the title "Father" is affectionately used for social superiors of different kinds, including church leaders. In this sense the minister is a "father" too. The question is, however, to what degree this fatherly authority is really a functional one.

TOKEN OF COURTESY?

Obviously the minister is not the embodiment of the creative or regenerative power of the fullness of life for the congregation in the same sense in which the father is this for the family. Theologically speaking it could be so, of course, and we theologians tend to flatter ourselves that it is. Sociologically speaking it isn't. The minister in charge of a dozen scattered congregations is far too remote to be the actual dispenser of spiritual life and inspiration. In the "Independent Churches" it may be different. So the question arises whether the title "Father" is a longed-for and ascribed role that disappoints its expectations, or whether it is nothing more than a token of courtesy and indulgence.

But the fact that the ordained minister has, in fact, very little of the practical socio-religious function of a father is not the only critical observation. The image of the father itself in its deeper socio-religious dimension seems to be breaking down rapidly. Who is a "father" for the average African youth of today, whether in the urban or the rural areas? Which percentage of normal children still know a caring father who is present? One could argue that fatherhood may be an archetype that will always continue to exist at least in the longings of normal men, even after it has disappeared as a social reality. This would need some investigation. As it is, I doubt whether the father-image will continue to be an asset to the African minister for any length of time.

THE IMAGE OF THE CHIEF

What the father is to the extended family, the chief is to the tribe. Phenomenologically speaking the authority of the chief is a derived one. A certain clan may, for example, be attributed seniority, and thus the senior of this clan becomes the senior of the whole tribe.(4) The chief's *auctoritas* is, therefore, more limited in range than that of the father, although the number of people under him is far greater. The basic function of the chief is to be the focus of the tribe as a whole, the expression of its unity, its living symbol. Ideally he has no private authority as against the tribe. Rather, the authority which a community has over its

own affairs is allowed to culminate and to be represented in one symbolic figure. Speaking in pictures: the chief is not the spider in the web, but the centre of the web itself. He doesn't take decisions. He summarises and expresses the decisions of the tribe, which have crystallised in the deliberations of the family heads in the forum (Sotho: *kgoro*). Since in the African social system the group is infinitely more important than the individual, and since the chief represents the group, his status is enormous.

HIERARCHY

This "political" concentration of group authority is organised in a clear hierarchy: the family-head, the clan-leader, the sub-chief (Sotho: *tona Nguni: induna*), the chief, the paramount chief. All these represent subsequent subordinations of smaller under larger groups in concentric social circles. This hierarchy is strictly observed. To by-pass an intermediate authority is not only a personal insult, but a usurpation of power (of initiative and decision) by an individual or a minor group against the larger entity. Acquisition of private power—not necessarily by the use of magic—is the essence of sorcery (Sotho: *boloi*), the form of devilry most dreaded by traditional African society. Bypassing intermediate authorities comes very near to it!

THE ORDAINED MINISTER AS A "CHIEF"

The processes of conversion and acculturation do not prevent cultural undercurrents from perpetuating themselves in transmuted forms. Dealings on the various judicial and administrative levels of our "established churches" reveal the typical tribal patterns described above. The pre-industrial, patriarchal structure of Western denominations with their hierarchical ladder of councils, each focussed in a key person, greatly facilitated the continuation of older patterns of authority. On the local level it can often be found that certain specific clans belong to certain denominations and others to others. Denominations assume the quality of "new tribes". Clan leaders have a good chance of becoming elders. The council of elders functions like a *kgoro* under the local evangelist or chairman as *tona*. The minister figures as the "chief" on parish level, the bishop or moderator as "paramount chief" etc. Of course this is nothing more than a heuristic sociological model, and may as such not be overstrained!

Under such presuppositions the minister will have considerable and coveted prestige. Since he has the advantage of having been trained in the acquired Christian traditions over the other members of the council, he has every chance of becoming a strong leader. But he may not shatter the impression that he is carefully following in the footsteps of his spiritual ancestors, the missionaries. His role is supposed to

focus, embody and represent, even to guarantee the life-force and heritage of the denominational community in its specific forms. Woe to him if he doesn't! A chief is not meant to act according to his individual sense of responsibility. If he does the outrage is severe!

WORD OF GOD

It scarcely needs to be said that theologically speaking this pattern is open to criticism. At least in the Protestant understanding of the Christian faith a minister is not called to focus group convictions and decisions, but to proclaim the *verbum Dei* as *verbum externum*. And this *verbum Dei* may or may not be the crisis of the group's decisions and convictions. It is sufficient to refer to the role of the Old Testament prophets to make this clear. Or to the Reformers. A minister doesn't represent the group against itself—which is the genuine role of the chief in the African set-up—but God on the one hand and secondarily the group on the other hand. In this double act of mediation he represents Christ himself. Christ is not a chief in the sense described above, but the Lord—the crisis brought by the new creation over the old. The deeper the theological apprehension of the minister and the congregation, the greater the impossibility to draw the minister's authority from group cohesion along tribal lines. But alas—how feeble is the social impact of theological insight!(5)

A TRIBE IS AN ENTITY

Apart from this theological critique it would seem, however, that this type of ecclesiastical structure is slowly disintegrating anyway. It is steadily being attacked from two directly opposite quarters. The first is the genuine tribal structure itself. The Christian congregation apprehended in analogy to a tribe can only be effective as a short-lived substitute of the real tribe during times of socio-political disorder. Where the traditional tribal structures continued unimpeded, it never got its feet off the ground. Where the new state-sponsored tribal authority system is instituted with success, the denomination is inevitably edged out of its "tribal" role. It must be remembered that a tribe is a comprehensive social, political and religious entity. Once the denomination is reduced to purely spiritual matters, it becomes too feeble to survive as a "tribe".

The attack from the opposite quarter concerns the patriarchal tribal system as a whole and comes from the side of the transition to the urban-industrial system. Surely the old tribal structure will bequeath many social, cultural and religious aspects to future generations. But in its old forms it cannot survive the impact of the industrial age in the long run. And if the tribe dwindles as a social reality, it will obviously become irrelevant as an ecclesiastical model too.

THE MINISTER AS A "DIVINER"?

Apart from the father and the chief Africa has always known another form of authority, which is not grown and comprehensive like these, but acquired and specialist. It is derived not from the religious entity of the lineage, but from the dynamistic-magical perception of reality, which is prevalent in the old African society. Its most important representative is the diviner(6) According to this view the universe is an intricate, balanced system of power. It can be disturbed by men—whether they be ancestors, sorcerers or unintentional evil-doers. For normal human beings it is not possible to recognise the nature and extent of the disturbance, nor to know its remedies. This is where the specialist and acquired function of the diviner (Sotho: *ngaka*) becomes indispensable, giving him his well-known status and authority.

In how far does the role of the minister correspond to that of the diviner? We have said that this is a specialist and acquired role. This is true for the role of the minister too. We have also said that it is bound to the dynamistic perception of reality, which means that it becomes obsolete outside it. Nevertheless there are aspects in this role which can be traced in the role of the minister too. Somehow the minister forms the link between man and the sphere of the divine. He seems to have special knowledge of and access to this sphere. In this respect the significance of the sacraments cannot be overestimated. The fact that the minister alone has the right of administration of the sacraments—often also of the sacred rites of confirmation (puberty rite!), marriage and burial, all of which are passage rites for all intents and purposes—brings him extremely near to the diviner. No wonder that this remains a carefully guarded reserve, while the functions of teaching and preaching is freely shared with the laity! I am sure that deeper investigation would bring to light a host of parallels in this regard.

"FATE"

Going deeper we find a more valid correspondence which is seldom recognised. The function of the diviner depends on the existence in every human life of what Westerners call "fate". Unaccountable enmity, injustice, suffering and death cannot be digested by the human psyche without some sort of positive response. I want to know why. And I want to know what I can do about it. The diviner offers the answer to both questions. That is his genuine function. Being put into question by fate is an existential problem also for the Christian. The sense of insecurity can't be left unchallenged by his faith. The Christian answer to this problem is the Gospel itself, which grants the assurance of comprehensive salvation by simple proclamation. It does not pretend to solve the problem of fate or to do away with it as the diviner does. But it takes away its ultimacy

and gives the believer the courage and power to live a positive life under its presupposition. It is this aspect that seems to be most capable of development in a genuinely Christian sense. But then pastoral care in the form of situational, personal proclamation and sacrament-administration will have to play a greater part in the routine of the minister at the cost of "star-preaching" and other less essential ways of running out of time! Perhaps here again the "Independent Churches" come into the picture!

Apart from this last positive note we cannot help but register that the functions, roles and status to be drawn from tribal patterns of authority are feeble and will continue to dwindle in the future. The minister cannot hope to fill the roles of father and chief in their essentially comprehensive form and he is not supposed to either. The patriarchal tribal structure is on the decline anyway under the attack of the urban-industrial system. And the "mystical" aspects of the role of the diviner will disappear with the dynamistic world-view. And what is then left, is little enough!(7)

cont. next month

FOOTNOTES

1. When talking about authority I do not deal with the age-old conflict between state and church, or with the equally perpetual problem of church government. Neither am I concerned with the theological concept of divine authorization of a man of God. For the purposes of this paper I shall limit the concept of authority to the phenomenon of socially essential, or at least accepted and appreciated function.
2. Verryn, T.D.: *The Vanishing Clergyman*. SACC, Braamfontein 1971.
3. For this reason fertility is basic and essential in a comprehensive social, cultural and religious sense. With sterility the life-power of the whole lineage is at stake. A dead branch may be cut off. But if there is no other living branch, the lineage as a whole up to the most distant ancestors is doomed. That is not only true in a biological sense. Biological reproduction is only one dimension of the whole. In fact the biological problem of sterility as such can be overcome fairly easily, for instance by raising children on behalf of a deceased person. But fatherhood is much more than that. The father is the bearer of the whole cultural and religious life of the lineage. He received it to hand it on. And that is from where his authority is derived.
4. Of course this is, like many others in this paper, a generalising statement which cannot do justice to the vast variety and complexity of African political systems. But that is not our aim anyway!
5. The difference is naturally not limited to the function of the minister, but concerns the whole essence of a Christian congregation as opposed to a tribe. It is not constituted like the latter by its own inner biological, spiritual or sociological cohesion, but by the proclaimed immediacy of each member to God in Christ—an immediacy which liberates from group loyalties for service to the group, in free responsibility to Christ alone.
6. So as not to complicate matters I shall leave out the herbalist, who is often, but not always, combined with the diviner in the same person.
7. In meditating on the different roles provided for by the African social system, I came across an office that is well suited to act as an image for the office of the Christian ministry. In Sotho is called the *motseta*, which means a go-between, messenger or ambassador. A *motseta* authoritatively represents the individual or group who sent him. His authority is complete, but derived. On his own, he is nothing at all. Likewise the Christian minister has the "power of the keys". He is commissioned to proclaim the claim and the gift of God authoritatively. But apart from his office *in actu* he is nobody in particular, a normal congregation member. Unfortunately the *motseta* can only provide a metaphor, not a sociologically valid image. The reason is that a *motseta* always functions between living humans, not between the divine and the human sphere. So the pastor can only be called a *motseta* in the figurative sense.

'n ,VERBANNE' DIENSKNEG

Pastor Hans-Ludwig Althaus, wat die afgelope anderhalf jaar (van sy 5 jaar kontrak) vrugbare diens in Suidwes-Afrika gelewer het en graag sy werk in die Evangeliese Lutherse Kerk van Suidwes-Afrika (ELK) wou voortsit, is deur die Suid-Afrikaanse owerheid verhinder. Sy aansoek om 'n verdere verblyfpermit is sonder die verstrekking van enige rede deur die regering geweier. Volgens berig is hy die eerste Evangeliese Lutherse leraar in die afgelope 130 jaar wat so gedwing is om sy werk te staak.

Op 30 Desember 1971, die dag voor hy en sy eggenote uit Suid-Afrika vertrek het, is daar 'n onderhoud met hom gevoer. Die volgende onthullende eerste-handse feite het aan die lig gekom ...

Daarna is van nog twee vrugbare werkers in die Koninkryk, wat gedwing was om Suid-Afrika te verlaat, afskeid geneem ...

GESLAAGDE TUISLANDE?

V: Dink u dat die Ovambotuisland in besonder, maar ook die ander tuislande in Suidwes gaan uitwerk? En hoe voel die swart Afrikane oor die tuisland-idee volgens u insig?

A: Die kerkbesture het dit in die winter van 1971 baie duidelik in die brief aan die eerste minister gestel dat hulle nie met die tuisland-politiek ooreenstem nie. Ek haal aan: „*We cannot do otherwise than regard South West Africa with all its racial groups as a unit. By the Group Areas Legislation the people are denied the right of free movement and accommodation with the borders of the country. This cannot be reconciled with section 13 of the Human Rights.*”

Dit is natuurlik baie moeilik om hierdie vraag te beantwoord omdat ek geen profeet is nie. Maar die ondervinding uit die verlede het tog bewys dat baie klein politieke eenhede ekonomies, polities, kultureel en sosiaal nie van groot waarde vir die toekoms kan wees nie! Oral in die wêreld het ons verenigde volkere—in Amerika, in Rusland en ook in Europa begin ons nou om 'n baie noue samewerking tussen die verskillende state te bewerkstellig. Dit beteken dat die mense eintlik altyd na 'n groter eenheid gevra het en dat hulle ingesien het dat klein eenhede nie belangrik kan wees nie.

Dus in verband met die klein tuislande wat nou in Suidwes-Afrika geskep sal word, moet ons sê dat hierdie klein gebiede net 'n uiting, 'n toepassing van die ou slagspreuk „verdeel en heers” is! Die meerderheid van die nie-blankes glo gladnie in 'n bestaan van die tuislande in die toekoms nie.

STAMBOTSINGS EN APARTHEID

V: Daar word tog beweer dat die nie-blanke stamme mekaar feitlik begin uitroei het en dat die koms van die blanke en gevolglik „apartheid” vir hulle dus baie voordele sal inhou. Wat sê u daarvan?

A: Die oorlog tussen die verskillende stamme het werklik in die verlede plaasgevind, naamlik tagtig, honderd of meer jaar gelede en dit sal eintlik, volgens die gesprekke wat ek met baie, baie mense gevoer het, nie 'n bedreiging vir die toekoms meer wees nie.

Die nie-blankes in Suidwes-Afrika verstaan hulleself eintlik as een volk, alhoewel daar natuurlik klein verskille tussen die volkere is en alhoewel daar miskien ook 'n paar verskillende belangstellings, veral by die Hereros, gevind kan word. Hierdie slagspreuk dat apartheid noodsaaklik is om oorlog tussen die verskillende stamme te verhinder, is net 'n slim „trick” van die blankes om apartheid te laat werk en te handhaaf.

Die swartmense lag egter oor hierdie gedagte en hulle dink aan die tye ná die Herero-oorlog terug toe hulle taamlik vreedzaam op die ou lokasie in Windhoek bymekaar gewoon het en waar hulle geen moeilikheid met mekaar gehad het nie. Vandag betreur hulle dit baie dat die Kleurlinge apart moet lewe en die Bantoes ook alleenlik in sekere dele in die Bantuelokasies moet bly. Hulle sê apartheid het reeds soos 'n infeksie, soos 'n virus onder hulle gewerk. Hulle wil hulle eintlik as 'n eenheid sien, maar die verskillende groepe wat nou in die woonbuurte apart moet woon, het reeds veroorsaak dat daar opnuut 'n kloof tussen hulle ontstaan het, maar hulle wil hierdie kloof nie hê nie! Hierdie gevolgtrekking, hierdie *feit* is 'n resultaat van baie gesprekke wat ek met inheemse Kleurlinge en Bantoes gevoer het. Ek het van 'n paar Ovambo-leiers gehoor dat Ovamboland van die Kunene tot die Oranje strek omdat die hele Suidwes, die „Homeland”, die tuisland van die nie-blanke volkere van Suidwes-Afrika is!

EKONOMIESE ONAFHANKLIKHEID?

- V: Sal die Ovambo-„tuisland” ekonomies selfstandig wees?
- A: Ons weet dat hulle vandag in Ovamboland oorbevolk is en dat Ovamboland baie afhanklik sal wees van die nuwe nywerhede, wat daar geplaas sal word, maar ons weet ook dat daar nog nie genoeg nywerhede is nie. So is hulle gedwing om uit die Ovamboland uit te gaan en in die polisie-sone te werk. Dit beteken, ekonomies gesproke, dat Ovamboland nog nie onafhanklik, nie selfstandig is nie en ook nie in die toekoms selfstandig sal wees nie!

STAKING EN KERK

- V: Het die kerke enige deel aan die stakings, wat op die oomblik in Suidwes aan die gang is gehad en watter rol gaan die kerk in die toekoms in dié verband speel?
- A: Die kerk is natuurlik nie aan enige praktiese organisering van die stakings verbonde nie. Ons weet beslis nie wie daardie stakings georganiseer het nie. Die kerk kan egter eintlik nie anders as om dankbaar te wees dat daar 'n verandering gekom het nie, al is dit dan ook deur middel van 'n staking. Dit is 'n bewys dat die mense wat onder die kontrakstelsel moet bly 'n sekere eenheid en solidariteit getoon het deur te probeer om self hierdie *probleem* op te los.

Die twee Lutherse Kerke het in hulle ope brief die probleem van kontrakstelsel ook genoem—, *There can be no doubt that the contract system breaks up a healthy family life because the prohibition of a person from living where he works hinders the co-habitation of families. This conflicts with sections 23 and 25 of the Human Rights.*

Ons glo dat die hele atmosfeer vir 'n staking miskien 'n bietjie voorberei was deur die moedige optrede van die kerke omdat ook in die gesprek met die eerste minister hierdie kontrakstelsel genoem was. Die kerk kan egter net daarin geïnteresseerd wees dat die menslike situasie, veral van die werknemers, verbeter word.

Die kerk moet aan die kant van die mense staan wat ly, of wat nie volgens die moderne metodes met betrekking tot die verhouding tussen

werkgewers en werknemers hanteer word nie. Dit sal nie verantwoordelik van die kerk wees as die kerk hierdie staking nie ondersteun nie. Op hierdie wyse word 'n metode gebruik wat oral in die wêreld gebruik kan word sodat die werknemer sy eie regte kan verdedig of bereik; regte wat nie onbillik, nie onregverdig is nie. Ek dink dat die kerk die staat daaraan moet herinner dat hy daarvoor moet sorg dat elke mens, elke individu, sy reg het om sy situasie so veel as moontlik te verbeter.

Waarskynlik moet Suid-Afrika leer om ook die staking nie as 'n kriminele aksie van 'n mens te beskou nie, maar as 'n *normale* aksie van die moderne mens te waardeer. Stakings het in die wêreldgeskiedenis baie groot verbeterings en veranderings ten goede, tot gevolg gehad.

ANDER MIDDELE?

- V: Sou u sê dat daar geen ander weg oop was nie?
- A: Kwaai kritiek kan oor die heersende situasie van die werknemer gelewer word. In die apartheid-situasie in hierdie land is dit so dat die werknemers geen vakunie en geen moontlikheid tot staking het nie. As die staat hierdie situasie kan verbeter, sal ook die enitlike kritiek van die buitenland teenoor die situasie van die werknemer minder wees. Moontlik het die staking ook in Suidwes-Afrika ontstaan omdat daar feitlik geen kontak tussen werkgewers en werknemers was nie! Dit is 'n algemene feit van die situasie in die land dat die blankes eintlik geen egte gemeenskap met die nie-blankes het nie.

KOMMUNIKASIE

- V: Hoe kan die kerk met kontak behulpsaam wees?
- A: Die kerk moet in die toekoms meer daarvoor sorg dat daar kontak, gesprekke, kommunikasie tussen blankes en nie-blankes en tussen werkgewers en werknemers sal plaasvind. Dit is baie opvallend dat by die gesprek, tussen minister M.C. Botha en die ses leiers van die industrië in Suidwes-Afrika op die 29 Desember 1971, daar geen Ovambo, geen nie-blankes, teenwoordig was nie! Dit is 'n bewys dat die owerheid tot nou toe nog nie begryp hoe hulle met die mense moet werk om te vorder nie. *Ek dink dat die tyd aangebreek het dat geen wet geproklameer kan word en geen verandering met betrekking tot die nie-blankes kan plaasvind sonder 'n deeglike bespreking in die teenwoordigheid van en met verantwoordelike nie-blankes nie!*

RYM APARTHEID EN CHRISTENSKAP?

- V: Ek neem aan dat u (as Christen) uit beginsel teen apartheid is. Wat is u teologiese redes daarvoor

en hoe sien u die positiewe Christelike verhouding tussen mense?

A: Eintlik kan hierdie vraag baie eenvoudig beantwoord word. Ons weet uit die Nuwe Testament en veral met betrekking tot die *persoon* van Jesus van Nasaret dat Hy geen onderskeid gemaak het tussen mense van verskillende volkere nie. Hy het in sy gelykenisse persone gebruik wat nie aan sy eie volk behoort het nie. Mag ek u aan die persoon van die Barmhartige Samaritaan herinner wat nou een van die belangrikste modelle en voorbeelde vir ons moderne teologiese insigte vir ons wêreld is? Die Barmhartige Samaritaan, 'n buiteland, was die persoon wat, sonder om te vra, praktiese hulp vir 'n mens wat in nood was, verleen het. Ek dink hierdie beeld, wat 'n baie bekende model is, is eintlik die grond daarvoor dat ons teen die skeiding van mense is.

Ons glo dat die nie-blanke bevolking in ons land in geestelike en menslike nood verkeer. Ons wil nie nou daarvoor praat wie daarvoor verantwoordelik is nie. Ons weet dat die mens self ook baie skuld daaraan het. Ja, hy het skuld aan die situasie waarin hy is, maar dit is tog opvallend dat in ons land daar so baie mense is wat verhinder word om vryheid, gelykheid en broederskap tussen swart en nie-swart te ondervind. Daarom moet *die kerk* daarvoor sorg dat hierdie gemeenskap tussen swart en nie-swart en tussen mense van verskillende volkere, ontwikkel kan word.

In ons tyd waar ateïsme en onkerklikheid in die wêreld toeneem en die nie-Christelike godsdienste vinniger as die Christendom in die wêreld groei, moet ons tog probeer om alle Christelike groepe in ons land en in die wêreld saam te snoer en te verenig. Ons moet met ons geestelike en teologiese talente en ook ons finansiële bydraes, bereid wees om te help. Ek dink dat veral die blanke kerke in hierdie land nog 'n *groot* taak het om die nie-blanke kerke oor alle apartheidswette in te lig en te help—sodat ons meer en meer Barmhartige Samaritane vir die nie-blankes kan wees.

APARTHEID EN MENSWEES

V: Dink u dat „apartheid” die mens tot sy reg kan laat kom?

A: Ons glo glad nie daaraan dat die apartheidstelsel in hierdie wêreld die mens tot vryheid, gelykheid en broederskap kan lei nie en ons weet dat dit ook in die hemel voor God nie die betekenis vir hierdie wêreld is nie omdat daar geen apartheid na ons dood sal wees volgens die wil van God nie. Daar is nie-blankes in Suidwes-Afrika wat die ondervinding met Afrikaners gehad het wat gesê het dat hulle nie die „Onse Vader” kan saambid nie omdat hierdie groot gebed van Jesus Christus alle mense, wat in God glo, ingesluit het. God kan daar soos 'n Vader beskou word sonder om hulle verskillende agtergronde in ag te neem.

Die Christendom in Suid-Afrika moet leer om die Onse Vader nie net teoreties te bid nie, maar ook prakties in die samelewing te bewys!

KERK VS. REGERING?

V: Is die Lutherse kerke in Suidwes-Afrika teen die regering en sal 'n vereniging meer krag aan hulle verleen?

A: Ek dink albei kerke het in die stadium waarin hulle nou is, reeds bewys dat hulle nie teen die regering is nie. Hulle het egter die regering gevra om die situasie in die land te verander. 'n Groter eenheid sal natuurlik ook daartoe lei dat die regering hierdie twee Lutherse kerke nog meer sal vrees omdat die regering daarin geïnteresseerd is om die blanke invloed in hierdie nie-blanke kerke terug te hou.

ONTWAKING VAN DIE KERK

V: Hoe sien u die toekomstige rol van die kerk in Suidwes en dink u dat die kerk nog 'n groot rol in Suidwes gaan speel?

A: Ek glo dat die kerke, in besonder die Lutherse kerke van vandag, met hulle profetiese taak in die politieke situasie van Suidwes-Afrika 'n baie belangrike rol speel, omdat die kerke die regering daaraan herinner wat die plig van die staat teenoor die mens is. In die teologiese geskiedenis het mense graag die kerk as die gewete van die staat gesien. As die staat 'n Christelike staat wil wees, dan moet hy daarna luister. As die staat nie daarna luister nie, sny die staat eintlik ook die invloed van die evangelie af.

Ons glo dat dié kerke nou wakker geword het. Ons dink dat ons Lutherse kerke veral ontwaak het om die regering daaraan te herinner wat sy plig is. Ek glo nie dat ons in die toekoms die wiel van die geskiedenis weer kan terugdraai nie. Die rede is omdat ons inheemse kerkleiers nou die taak baie duidelik sien om verantwoordelik en dapper die dinge wat nou belangrik is, uit te spreek.

VERSKILLENDE RASSE IN EEN KERK!

V: Is dit prakties moontlik dat die verskillende rasse tog in één kerk kan saamwerk?

A: ELK omvat reeds verskillende volks- en taalgroepe, naamlik die Damaras, die Hereros, die Ovambos en Kleurlinge. Die verskillende volks-groepe is van hulle agtergrond bewus en ons werk in die sinode en kerkbesture bv., baie versigtig sodat elke taal en volksgroep werklik tot sy reg kan kom. Ons is baie versigtig met betrekking tot hierdie verskille omdat ons weet dat elkeen sy eie taal wil handhaaf, maar ons moet sê dat die hoof-medium tussen al die verskillende taalgroepe eintlik die Afrikaanse taal is! *

Service and...

WOMEN IN CHURCH

If the Spirit of God is using women in his service, why does the Church as a whole not acknowledge this and appoint them as "official" workers? The question is discussed in this brilliant speech by Dr. Elfie Strassberger, a female "minister" in the Anglican Church, Clanwilliam. She has a doctorate in history and recently completed a theological doctorate in ecumenism. The speech was presented to the conference of the South African Working Society for Missionary Studies under the heading "THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH" and will also appear in the Lux Mundi Series (see sub-heading to Dr. Nürnberger's article).

Elfie Strassberger

(missionary in India 1863-1910) taught the Santal Christians that each one had an immediate ministry to fulfil. The Santal Church grew faster than any other church in India.

Introduction:

CHANGE IN STRUCTURE

The role of the ministry in the Christian church is changing fast. The need for change has been felt for some decades. The structures of the church and the structure of its ministry are unable to meet the needs of the 20th century world. A recent sociological study of the priestly role in South Africa in the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches is titled 'The Vanishing Clergyman.' (1) This study, amongst others, shows that the church is conscious of the need for new structures. The priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:9) is being re-discovered. Cecil Northcott sees the potential of a new image developing in Africa. He says that, "It may be that one of the surprises of African Christianity in store for the whole church is its conception of another kind of greatness, the greatness of the whole church, a glowing, tumultuous whole dependent not on a few outstanding personalities but on the rich quality and variety of the total company." (2)

Perhaps the ministry has been, for too long, an exclusive authoritarian privilege instead of an inclusive form of service. The western individualistic approach has shaped the Christian ministry not only in the West, but also in the East and in Africa. Towards the end of the 19th century, Nevius taught the new converts in Korea that each one had a ministry to fulfil towards the next man. The church in Korea grew faster than in any other Eastern area. In India, Lars Olsen Skrefsrud

FREE FOR FREEDOM

Is the waning influence of the Christian church partly due to the fact that men, and especially women, who are conscious of their priestly calling are being rejected because they do not fit into the pattern of the old structures of the church?

The role of women in the church appears to be strongly influenced by the position of women, generally, in any particular area. Jesus Christ came to set men free for freedom (Gal. 5:1). The Apostle Paul expounded this freedom by saying that, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). Paul indicated that within Christianity no particular quality was determinative. In the order of creation there is the distinction: male and female; in Christ man has received "a new freedom also from the domination of their sexual nature." (3). In Christ man is neither male nor female, although he retains his male or female qualities and characteristics. "It is in this freedom that in the New Testament new forms of ministry are possible for men as well as women. It is in this same freedom that celibacy is offered as a way of life to men and women." (4)

WOMEN DOMINEERING?

In the history of the social development of man various patterns developed in which men generally played a domineering, leadership role and women a more submissive role. The resistance to opening the ordained ministry to women might be due to a fear

that women in the ministry might fulfil a domineering role, as too many men in the ministry have, alas, done in the past! The call to the ministry is, however, a call to service, whether the person called be male or female.

The Holy Spirit *calls* to service and to the ministry and the Holy Spirit *equips* for service (1 Cor. 12:11). No form of service is complete in itself and the service of the ministry is not either complete in itself. All forms of service are equal before God. "Ieder Dienst, der von Einzelnen übernommen wird, ist nur Teilfunktion, die der Ergänzung durch andere gleichberechtigte Funktionen bedarf. Das gilt auch vom Pfarramt." (5)

The ministry is a form of service and neither the male minister nor the female minister is called to dominate the congregation, but to serve. Service is the proof of a vocation!

I. The Bible and the Role of Women in the Church.

Much has been written on various interpretations of the Biblical view of the role of women in the ministry of the church. I hold the view that; "Biblical teaching cannot be abstracted from the historical context in which the books have been written." (6) God's revelation in Christ is the centre of Scripture and only in the light of this revelation can we attempt to find answers to our questions in the Bible. We dare not draw conclusions from single proof texts. We must constantly take into consideration the whole of the Bible "and the historical situation to which each single passage refers." (7)

OLD TESTAMENT

In Old Testament times Israelite women had a higher social standing than the women in other Eastern nations. They were not excluded from governmental functions. We remember the Profetess Huldah (2 Kings 22:14) and the judge Deborah (Judges 4:4-5). Women performed service in the Holy Temple (1 Sam. 2:22). When Joel prophesied the coming of the Holy Spirit, sons and daughters, men servants and maid servants were included in the prophetic role (Joel 2:28, 29). The promise was fulfilled in Acts 2 and in the rest of Acts the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit were given to women as well as men (cf. Acts 21:9; 18:24; 9:36). The demarcation between the ordained and the unordained who received charismatic gifts was not as marked in New Testament times as today. The New Testament promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit is to all believers. The priesthood is for every disciple of the perfect High Priest, Jesus Christ.

NEW TESTAMENT

To argue against the ordination of women from 1 Cor. 14:34; 1 Tim. 2:11, appears to be rather futile. The Apostle Paul spoke within a certain social situation. Most women were married young and were subject to their husbands and instructed by them (cf. 1 Tim.

2:11; 1 Cor. 14:34). Church services were less organized and more spontaneous and anyone could speak. Women were, however, expected to remain silent according to the traditional pattern at that time. They were to behave in a manner in which they would not put the Christian community to shame (cf. 1 Cor. 14:26, 33). (Cf. also Gal. 3:28, Ephesians 2:13, Filemon 11, 1 Cor. 12:7.)

Early church historians point out that women played quite a role in the proclamation of the Gospel in the early church, (8) and that towards the second century they played an important role in certain sects, for example the Montanists and Gnostics. The official church consequently adopted, through her bishops, a very reticent attitude towards the influence of women. This fact appears to have had a lot of influence on the attitude to women in the church. In 400 A.D. the Western Church removed women from all ministries; the church in the East had female deacons until 1200. According to the 1968 Lutheran Report it appears that the fear of the sects was the strongest motivation against the ministry of women in the early church. The hierarchical development of the ministry, however, also began to play a major role. The priesthood of all believers began to recede into the background.

BASIS

During the Reformation period women, set free from the ascetic ideal of the medieval cloisters, in some instances married and some of them heroically held their own at the sides of their husbands. Women were not admitted to the ministry, however, although Luther in his acceptance of the doctrine of a "general priesthood" said that if a woman had the required spiritual qualities she was fit to proclaim the Word of God. In case of need, when there were no men willing or capable, a woman could preach the Gospel and Administer the sacraments. (9) Luther and Calvin were still convinced of the inferiority of women, however. Calvin also allowed a woman to preach, etc. in case of need. Calvin opened up the deaconship to women. (10) Voetius advocated the institution of deaconesses as auxiliary forces for the deacons. (11)

Basic to my theological approach is thus first, that all men are created in the image of God "and are therefore of equal dignity and worth before him," (12) and all who are renewed through the Holy Spirit, regenerated, are called to be priests of the Most High God. Second, the whole Body of Christ is called to witness to the name of Christ, and to proclaim the Good News (cf. Matt. 28:19). Both men and women thus have their appropriate ministries. Third, that the ordained offices is a culmination of the priesthood of all believers. The ordained ministry grows out of the ministry of all believers. And this would include the ecclesiastical hierarchy of deacons, priests and bishops - the bishop being the servant of the servants of God.

cont. next month

Work and...

THE OVAMBO STRIKE

From the "outside" much has been said about the Ovambo strike in South West Africa. From the "inside" the story is somewhat different ... These facts were compiled by the Reverend S.T. Hayes for the Diocese of Damaraland, under date 24th December, 1971.

BACKGROUND

The Ovambo are a group of related tribes in northern South West Africa and Southern Angola. Those living in South West Africa number about 350 000, and comprise about 45% of the population of the territory. The area they live in, called Owambo, straddles the border between South African ruled South West Africa and Portuguese ruled Angola.

Men from both parts of Owambo have formed an important section of the unskilled labour force for the mines, farms and factories of the southern part of South West Africa, generally known as the Police Zone. The name Ovamboland is usually used to distinguish the part of Owambo that lies in South West Africa.

WAGES

Men wishing to work in the Police Zone may normally only do so by means of the contract labour system. An organisation which represents the employers, the South West Africa Native Labour Association (SWANLA) is the sole recruiting agency. Prospective employees report to the recruiting office in Ondangwa, Ovamboland, and, if accepted, are sent to Grootfontein, the railhead in the Police Zone. From there they are graded and dispatched to employers throughout the territory. The workers are graded according to physical fitness and age into Class A, B, C and piccanin. The latter are children. Minimum wages are laid down for each class, ranging from R3.75 for a piccanin to R8.75 for a Class A labourer. These wages are monthly.

The prospective employer fills in an order form, in which he orders from SWANLA the class of labourer he desires, and pays a deposit to pay for railage, food en route and blankets. The employer also has to provide board and lodging for the employee for the duration of the contract. The contract normally lasts for one year, and may be extended by mutual agreement for a further six months. Many employers pay more than the minimum wage, and some provide

Stephen Hayes

better working conditions than others. Actual wages range from the minimum to R100 per month, but the average is around R20.00.

CHURCH OBJECTIONS

Almost all the churches in South West Africa have objected to the contract labour system. The contract system is being increasingly applied in South Africa, though in a much milder form than in South West Africa. The South West African system is in fact the platonic ideal of contract labour, which the National Party government wishes to apply in South Africa as well. It has there come under fire even from the Dutch Reformed Church, which on many issues supports the South African Government.

CASH TAXES!

The main objection to the system is that it places a great strain on the family life of the workers, who are not allowed to take their families with them to their place of employment. They are also not generally free to choose their employers or the type of work they are to do, but must accept the employers to which they are assigned by SWANLA. As the great part of Owambo has a subsistence agricultural economy, there is little cash available. The imposition by the South African government of taxes on the inhabitants of Ovamboland which have to be paid in cash, has led to great economic pressures being placed on the Ovambo to work in the South. In fact the original purpose of the imposition of these taxes was to force the Ovambo to go and work for the whites in the south.

WARNINGS

For these and other reasons, some churchmen have referred to the contract system as "a form of slavery". Its most serious condemnation came as part of an open letter sent by the two black Lutheran Churches in the territory to the South African Prime Minister. Bishop Leonard Auala, of the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-

kavango Church, and Moderator Paulus Gowaseb, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, jointly signed this open letter. Not only have the churches condemned the system as evil, but through pastoral contact with their members they were aware of profound dissatisfaction with the system. The open letter was a warning to the South African government that this dissatisfaction existed. The church leaders subsequently held meetings with Mr. Vorster, the S.A. Prime Minister, and Mr. Jannie de Wet, Commissioner General for the Northern Native Territories. At one of these meetings Mr. Jannie de Wet denied that the contract system was a form of slavery, and said it was freely accepted by the Ovambo themselves, who did not hesitate to sign contracts, and he said that if they did not like the system, they would not allow themselves to be recruited. This statement was later to be given as a reason for the strike.

THE STRIKE

The strike appears to have had its origin in Walvis Bay. It was reported in the "Windhoek Advertiser" of December 10, 1971, that the workers in the Municipal compound at Walvis Bay were planning to strike on December 14, in protest against the contract system. It is said that the workers in Walvis Bay also wrote letters to other parts of the territory, urging the workers there to strike on that day.

The South African Sunday Newspapers reported the strike plans prominently, and an Afrikaans Sunday newspaper, "Rapport", said that it was believed that the strike was being encouraged by certain church leaders. These leaders were not named, but a photograph of an Anglican priest of Windhoek was placed in the middle of the article.

On Sunday afternoon, 12th December, the residents at the Windhoek municipal compound, which houses about 6 000 Ovambo contract workers, held a meeting at which it was decided to strike the following day. A few, fearing trouble, did not return to the compound that night.

SCHOOLBOYS

On Monday 13th December, the vast majority of the city's contract workers did not leave the compound to go to work. White schoolboys, in the middle of their summer holiday, were employed as rubbish collectors and for milk delivery. The building industry closed down, but it was due to close down a few days later for the annual holiday. At Walvis Bay, where the idea had apparently originated, the strike was not so effective. It is estimated that only about 1/4 of the workers went on strike, but they have been joined by larger numbers, who waited till the end of the week when they were paid. Later in the week the strike spread to the American-owned Tsumeb mine, which is a major

source of revenue for the territory. The lead smelter closed down altogether, while the copper smelter was manned by whites, with a greatly reduced rate of production. It is estimated that it will take at least a year for the mine to achieve full production again, provided the labour situation returns to normal.

Workers at the Klein Aub and Oamites Copper mines, and at the Berg Aukas lead and vanadium mines also went on strike. A number of other smaller mines have also been affected. So far there has been no sign of a strike of workers at the Consolidated Diamond Mines at Oranjemund. The Oranjemund mine employs about 5 000 workers from Ovambo-land, and is well-known for good working and housing conditions.

ARRESTS

Most of the strikers were sent back to Owambo in special trains, and recruiting has ceased. Normally about 500 new recruits arrive each week at the Grootfontein depot of SWANLA. This means that even though some workers have not gone on strike, they will not be replaced when their contracts expire. Some farm workers have joined the strike, generally as a result of hearing of the strike on the radio. On one farm in the Grootfontein district, belonging to a Mr. James Simson, 9 Ovambo workers went on strike. The farmer took them to the police, who arrested them. (Breach of a labour contract is a criminal offence). The farmer said he did not wish to employ two of them, whom he regarded as 'agitators'. They were sent back to Owambo. The remainder were beaten, and were then asked if they would return to work, and six of them again refused. The farmer said that his "kitchen-ovambo" heard of the strike on the radio, and told the others about it, and they all went on strike.

One of the complaints about the contract system is that while it is illegal for either party to break the contract, the employers who break the contract are rarely punished. Recently at a congress in Windhoek, one farmer, Mr. Danie van Vuuren, said that he always withheld the wages of the workers until their contract had expired, and recommended this to other farmers as a method of ensuring that workers stayed until the end of their contract. Though he publicly admitted breaking the contract, and publicly advocated breach of contract on the part of employers, no action was taken against him. If an employee of such a farmer wishes to make a complaint, he must report his complaint to the police or the nearest magistrate. If, however, he leaves the farm to do so, without first asking the permission of the farmer, he is liable himself to be charged with desertion. This, again, is what has been described by the churches as a form of slavery—where a man is in effect forced to work for no wages, under threat of prosecution.

NEGOTIATIONS

The day the strike began in Windhoek, a meeting was held in Walvis Bay, which was attended by Mr. G. White, the Chief Native Affairs Commissioner for South West Africa, and a group of headmen from Ovamboland. Bishop Auala, who was on holiday in Swakopmund nearby, was also present at the meeting.

The strikers made the point that Mr. Jannie de Wet had said that they freely accepted the contract labour system because they were not forced to sign on, but that they allowed themselves to be recruited freely. To show that they rejected the system, the strikers said they were now freely handing in their contracts, and opting out of the system. Mr. White stood up to say that they had misunderstood Mr. de Wet's remarks and that that was not what he had meant. The strikers shouted at Mr. White to sit down, and he did so.

The following day, Tuesday 14th December, a similar meeting was held in Windhoek. Mr. White said that he understood that the workers had grievances, but that a meeting was to be held in February between a group of Ovambo headmen and representatives of SWANLA, under the chairmanship of Mr. Jannie de Wet. Mr. White said that the strikers would be given a choice—they could return to work, and await the result of the February meeting, or they should return to Owambo. The strikers decided to return to Owambo.

After Mr. White and the headmen had left, the police sealed the gates of the compound, and no one was allowed in or out. A number of local people, including a school principal, who were in the compound visiting friends or who had gone to attend the meeting out of curiosity, were arrested when they tried to leave the compound. They were taken to the police station, and visitors from the local Katutura township, where the compound is situated, were told to pay R10.00 admission of guilt. They complained that no charge had been specified, and Colonel Krige, the district commandant of the police, when asked by a reporter of the "Windhoek Advertiser" what the charge was, refused to reveal it.

AGITATORS AND INTIMIDATION

White employers in Windhoek ascribed the cause of the strike to "agitators", and said that their employees would never strike unless they were forced to. However, there is little concrete evidence of intimidation or agitators. Documents exhorting the workers to strike were handwritten—which would seem to indicate a degree of haste and spontaneity. On the first day of the strike in Windhoek the strikers were boycotting the food prepared in the compound kitchens, and were travelling freely in and out of the compound to buy food at the local shops.

Mr. Clemens Kapuuo, the chief of the Hereros, who owns a grocery and general dealer store in Windhoek reported that there were a large number of strikers who came to his shop to buy mealie meal, meat and bread. He spoke to a number of those whom he knew, and said that they were unanimous in saying that the strike was aimed at the contract labour system as such, and not at individual employers, or any other issue. He also said that the Hereros generally supported the strike, though they did not join it because it was arranged by the compound residents, who had not consulted the residents in the rest of Katutura. He said that the Hereros also had to put up with a somewhat milder form of the contract system, and that they too were opposed to the system.

CHURCHES?

It appears therefore that strikers were moving freely in and out, but did not attempt to escape to return to work, which would be expected had they been forced to strike by intimidators. Mr. Kapuuo reported a sharp drop in customers on Tuesday 14th, which was when the police sealed off the compound. When the strikers were taken to board trains to return to Owambo, they were peaceful and orderly. There was no attempt on the part of any of them to leave, and return to work, in spite of the presence of the police, who had said that they would protect people from intimidators.

Allegations on the part of certain newspapers that the churches had helped to organise the strike are also totally without foundation. Undoubtedly many of the strikers were members of the various Christian churches in the territory, and they apparently used Bible passages in speeches at meetings. However, the hierarchies of the churches knew nothing of the strikes until they were reported in the press.

MISS VOIPIO

Certainly the churches are in sympathy with those who are opposed to the contract system, but the strike was arranged and took place without the knowledge of the leaders of the different churches. At the time of writing, most church leaders are not in Windhoek (December 24) but they will probably meet to discuss the strike and the contract labour system early in January. Only then will it be known certainly what the official attitude of the churches is to the strike. Miss Voipio, a lecturer of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Otjimbingwe, has done extensive research into the contract labour system, and while the full results of her research will not be available for about a year, her knowledge and experience will undoubtedly guide the churches in how to act.

From the available evidence, it would seem that the strike was a more or less spontaneous demonstration of dissatisfaction with the contract labour system.

cont. on page 17

Ministry and...

The permit issued to the Bishop of Damaraland, the Right Reverend Colin O'Brien Winter, by the Department of Bantu Affairs in Windhoek 28th January was withdrawn by the Magistrate in Ondangua, Mr. van Niekerk, on Monday morning 31st January in Ondangua. In an interview with Mr. Pieterse the newly appointed Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner for South West Africa, Bishop Winter was informed that this action was taken on instructions from Pretoria. The Bishop was further told that he may apply again for a permit to enter Ovamboland, but that the application, in his opinion, was not likely to be granted.

CHURCHES' AID

Bishop Winter, whose permit was valid until the end of 1972, went to Ovamboland to consult with and minister to the African clergy and the white staff at St. Mary's Mission Odibo. This is in the area where the incidents between the South African Police and the Ovambo have taken place. While he was at the Mission, where the morale of the staff was high, it was reported to him that four people had been killed in a clash with the police, and that reprisals were being taken by the Ovambos on those suspected of summoning the police, and that one sub-headman had been wounded and his wife hacked to death.

The Bishop then went to Ondangua to see the leader of the strikers, Mr. Johannes Nangutuuala. He told Mr. Nangutuuala that he backed his demands for the abolition of contract labour and for better conditions and wages for the workers. He added however that he abhorred the increasing violence on both sides. Mr. Nangutuuala agreed and asked that the church leaders in Ovamboland issue a statement calling for a peaceful settlement.

ROBBEN ISLAND

The Bishop also met with the mother of a prisoner on Robben Island and was told that the Ondangua Magistrate had refused her permission to visit her son. He was later told that the Magistrate had also refused the nephew of another detainee permission to see his uncle. He was informed that Robben Island authorities had raised no objection to the trips.

On Monday 31st January the Bishop went to see Mr. van Niekerk, the magistrate, to ascertain the truth of these allegations. Mr. van Niekerk was surprised to see the Bishop and immediately demanded to see his permit. After inspection he handed it back to him. Asked whether he had refused permission for the two Robben Island visits, Mr. van Niekerk replied, "It may be". The Bishop said that he had told the two persons

APARTHEID

The announcement of the withdrawal of Bishop Winter's permit was shocking. Is this not yet another practical example that apartheid and the work of the Christian Church is incompatible? Is this withdrawal not in conflict with Christ's command to go to all people and preach the gospel?

The following statement was issued by the Diocese of Damaraland on the 2nd February 1972.



to apply once again, and that he would pay all expenses involved.

The Bishop further added that if, as he believed, this was in accordance with current South African law, he would regard a further refusal by the magistrate in a serious light and would then force action by bringing the matter to the notice of Parliament and the United Nations.

PASTORAL CARE CUT OFF

Bishop Winter later issued a statement which reads as follows:

"This action on the part of the South African authorities is the culmination of what I consider to be a deliberate attempt to curb and weaken the ministry of the Anglican Church. Since I became Bishop seventeen (17) permits have so far been refused by the South African authorities. The present action is a deliberate one in cutting me off from the pastoral care of fifty thousand black Anglicans and those missionaries and other church leaders who serve them. The reasons for this are obvious.

"I have refused to accept the ideology of apartheid and have been outspoken about the suffering it is causing to the thousands in this land who are daily afflicted by it. I have chosen to act as the spokesman of those who are denied basic human rights and this the government will neither tolerate nor allow.

CRISIS IN OVAMBOLAND?!

"I believe the present situation in Ovamboland is critical and deteriorating daily. The government blames the missionaries for the present unrest and refuses to see that the Africans themselves are rejecting the contract labour system. The Church has a vital part to play in finding a solution. I have called for a dialogue between the government and the Church and the government and strike leaders. None has been forthcoming.

cont. on page 17

The Rev. T.D. Verryn was ordained as a priest in the Anglican Church in 1958. Among other things he has been Rector of the Pietersburg Parish and Mission. At the moment he is Director of the Ecumenical Research Unit in Pretoria. He has had a few books published, the newest of which is "The Vanishing Clergyman", dealing with a vast problem.

Here he spells out the attitude a Christian should have about his work and the labour structure ...

MARX VS. WEBER

The role that Christianity has played in the history of capitalism and industry is ambiguous. Karl Marx and his followers have accused not only the Church, but religion in general, of obscuring scientific inquiry and drugging the toiling masses into abject submission to their exploiters. In contrast, Max Weber saw in Christianity, and particularly the Calvinist-Puritan ethic, one of the great sources of the Industrial Revolution. He regarded religion as playing a stimulating rather than an inhibiting role in the development of Western society as we know it.

Which of these competing views do we espouse? The answer to that question can have disquieting consequences for those who wish to live in full obedience to the Gospel!

QUESTIONING ANSWERS

There is little doubt that the majority of people in positions of privilege or authority — be they heads of families or rulers of empires — have always looked on religion as a valuable auxiliary for policing their subjects. The parent who suddenly discovers that his teenage daughter has progressed from asking him questions to questioning his answers is a frequent caller at the Rectory — even if before this he was an infrequent worshipper in church. Perhaps the clergy will succeed where he feels he is failing. Perhaps the parson will help him keep his head above the rising tide. The chances of the parent finding an ally in the minister are, I suppose, more or less even. The wayward daughter might be dragged in to be told "Thus saith the Lord". She might go under in the face of this onslaught, never to emerge again. She might go through the motions of submission for a time, and later rebel with such violence that what was good in her home and church is forever rejected with what was bad.

On the other hand, the panicking parent might find in the clergyman one who feels that Christianity and the Scriptures are there to stimulate, to liberate, to pose questions, and to raise to full stature all the God-given faculties of the human being. The happiest out-

Trevor Verryn

come will be if both parent and child reach a new responsibility and maturity.

A MOSES OR A SLAVE?

School principals are another category who frequently regard "The Church" as a back-up team for their school prefects. I once had the giddy experience of working with an educationalist who frankly regarded it as the duty of the Church to provoke and inspire young children to probe and question, and even on occasion to rebel, so that the school-leaver would go out into the world more like a potential Moses than a ready-made Israelite slave to Pharaoh.

Marxists have seldom needed to make thunderous propaganda against the Church in countries where social injustice has been a conspicuous feature of life. Where the Church has been strongly identified with the wealthy and privileged, it has normally played into the hands of Communists very adequately. It has adopted the very role which Marx ascribed to it, even to the point of harrying its own members who dare to raise a prophetic voice on behalf of those whose faces are being trampled in the dust.

Need this be? Is Christianity so Constantinized that it is now inextricably bound to the support of the *status quo*?

A NEW LIGHT

It has frequently been observed that the appearance of the Bible in the vernacular of a people normally excites a national self-awareness. People previously in the grip of darkness and fear now hear a liberating message. They hear it in their own terms and concepts. With surprise, and then joy, they exclaim "We hear them preaching in our own language about the marvels of God" (Acts 2:11). They now begin to see not only themselves, but their entire culture, in a new light. God has looked on them with eyes of love, bestowing on them new dignity and purpose. Their language has become a fit medium for the divine Word.

Language is but one aspect of the culture or way of life of a people. It embodies their thoughts and feelings. It represents their shared experience, and expresses their common aspirations. In this human ambience they find and hear the living God. It is not surprising that their self-perception expands and that they reach for new heights.

cont. on page 24

APARTHEID

(cont.)

There is a break down in human relations in Ovamboland which is critical and government reports that things in Ovamboland are calm are false.

BITTERNESS

"The strikers hold a meeting. The police arrive in force to smash it. There is shooting—people are hurt or killed. The Africans retaliate by burning down the kraal or killing the person they think has informed on them," is how one African described it to me.

"Here obviously is a case for the government to initiate talks with the strike leaders. So far they refuse to meet with them, but how else can a peaceful settlement be arrived at. The result is bitterness and rising dissatisfaction.

TRUTH REMAINS FREE!

"South Africa is unable to contemplate a change in the system of apartheid and its concomitant laws which the Africans reject. Its only answer so far is the dismissal of missionaries and violence to those who oppose it. For my own part I shall continue to speak out whenever conscience, compassion or truth demand it." *

OVAMBO STRIKE (cont.)

Undoubtedly someone must have had the idea of a strike, and perhaps a small group propagated this idea in Walvis Bay. But its ready acceptance by workers in widely scattered areas of South West Africa, in some cases with workers joining the strike after hearing about it on the radio, does not indicate an organised conspiracy or campaign of intimidation. Nor was the strike instigated by church leaders. It seems to have been organised entirely by the contract workers themselves.

POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF THE STRIKE

It remains to be seen whether the strike will be effective in bringing about any significant modification of the contract labour system. The fact that it was more or less spontaneous, with no central organisation, means that the strikers have no leaders who can present the demands and grievances of the bulk of the workers. The meeting to be held at Grootfontein in February, between representatives of SWANLA and the Ovamboland headmen will probably not be representative of the strikers, as the headmen have not

had first hand experience as contract labourers. There is now a possibility that this meeting may be brought forward.

What the strike may well achieve is the creation of a climate in which the whole system can be discussed and possibly revised. The local National Party newspaper "Die Suidwester", in the brief space of a week, has changed its attitude from a defence of the principle of the contract system to a far more flexible approach, and the realization is growing among S.A. government officials that the situation demands a radical approach.

APARTHEID POLICY

The economic effects of the strike will probably not be seen for some time. The mining industry is the most seriously affected, but because recruiting has stopped there will probably be a gradual draining away of labour from the mines, factories and farms. Whatever is decided about the contract system, it will probably take 2-3 months to bring the labour force up to normal strength again. There has been talk among employers of bringing in workers from elsewhere—Botswana and Malawi have been mentioned, as well as South Africa. However, this would seriously damage the apartheid policy of the South African government. Ovamboland is destined to become an independent Bantustan, and its main economic resource at the present time is labour. If it can no longer export workers to the south of South West Africa, then the whole pattern of its development will have to be radically revised, and this would represent a major failure in the apartheid system. This should also be seen in the light of the fact that the South African Government was hoping to extend the contract labour system to South Africa itself, where it is already in limited operation, particularly with miners and with blacks wishing to work in the Western Cape.

It is possible that the contract system could be replaced by a form of influx control, such as operates in most parts of South Africa—but this too would be setting the apartheid clock back.

Up till now, South Africa has not had to spend much money on the administration of South West Africa—the revenues from mines, agriculture and the fishing industry have made the territory more or less self-sufficient. But if the labour dispute continues much longer, there is likely to be a serious recession in the mining and building industries. The fishing industry has already been hit by reduced quotas, and will be further affected by them. In other words, South West Africa may become an economic liability for South Africa, and have to be subsidised out of the pockets of the South Africa, and have to be subsidised out of the pockets of the South African taxpayers, who generally have little knowledge of, or interest in, the territory. At most its retention is a question of national pride with the whites of South Africa. *

African Theology 2

James Cone

Gayraud Wilmore

The climax of this striking speech which uniquely compares the indigenous African Theology and the "militant" Black Theology of America is reached in the last part this month.

AFRICAN RELIGIOSITY

Today some black theologians are seeking the original source of this unique form of Christianity in the New World, not only in the experience of the slaves and freedmen, but even further back—in the traditional religions of Nigeria, Dahomey, Ghana and other areas of Africa from which our ancestors came. Until very recently, and in some cases even today (such as in the Sea Islands off the coast of South Carolina) survivals of African religiosity could be found in black religion in the United States. For example: the deep sense of the pervasive reality of the spirit world; the blotting out of the line between the sacred and the profane; the practical use of religion in all of daily life; the reverence of the ancestors and their presence with us; the corporateness of social life; the source of evil in the consequences of an act rather than the act itself; and the utilization of drums, singing and dancing in the worship of God.

The search for a Black Theology takes us not only into the survivals of African religions and the syncretistic religion of the slaves yearning for freedom, but also into the black experience in the black ghetto today. Black theologians cannot ignore the words of Langston Hughes about the living religion of the black poor:

"But then there are the low-down folks, the so-called common element, and they are the majority—may the Lord be praised! The people who have their nip of gin on Saturday nights and are not too important to themselves or the community, or too well fed, or too learned to watch the lazy world go round. They live on 7th Street in Washington, or State Street in Chicago and they do not particularly care whether they are like white folks or anybody else. Their joy runs, bang! into ecstasy. Their religion soars to a shout. Work maybe a little today, rest a little tomorrow. Play awhile. Sing awhile. O, let's dance! These common people are not afraid of spirituals, as for a long time their more intellectual brethren were, and jazz is their child. They furnish a wealth of colourful, distinctive material for any artist because they still hold their own individuality in the face of American standardization."

FOLK RELIGION

It is from this reservoir of black culture—of which religion has always been an inseparable part—that Black Theology seeks the genius of what Professor Joseph Washington called "Negro Folk Religion—the religion of protest and relief." It was this Folk Religion that Marcus Garvey, Elijah Muhammed, Malcolm X, Maulana Ron Karenga and Albert Cleage tapped when they began to build their black nationalist movements. It was this same Folk Religion which came into its own in the Southern civil rights movement under Martin Luther King, Jr. and has found its most profound expression in the Black Power and Black Theology movements of the '60's and '70's. In the final analysis, Black Theology is concerned with the ultimate questions which arise from the black folk of the ghetto—from their suffering, their joy, their perception of themselves and of American reality. Black Theology is saying that the God who spoke to us out of our African past and out of the religion of the slaves, is speaking to us today in the accents of the contemporary black community—and his message is Liberation.

DIFFERENCES

It is clear that there are areas of convergence and dissimilarity between what we are calling Black Theology in the United States and what is termed African Theology in Africa. Both of these theologies are rooted in the experience of black people who received a highly attenuated form of Christianity from the white churches of Europe and America. Both are partly religious reactions to white ecclesiastical domination and political and economic oppression. Both are in quest for a base in the authentic milieu of an indigenous people—in one case, in the environment of the post-colonial African state, in the other—the environment of the contemporary Afro-American ghetto. In both instances we are dealing with self-conscious African or Afro-American churches (or the black constituencies of white-controlled European or American churches and missionary societies) which are emerging from a period of emulating white standards and are seeking a distinctive style of life and relevance to the culture of the people to whom they minister. But in terms of theological renewal there are important differences

that we must consider—differences which are inevitable in light of the different situations in which these churches exist, but which may be used to enrich the life of each other.

It would be presumptuous for the authors of this paper to attempt to commend what follows here as an accurate interpretation of African Theology. That task belongs to African theologians themselves. What we will present is what some African theologians are saying and what, rightly or wrongly, is communicated to us about the theological program implicit in the work now in process.

PROF. IDOWU

Professor Idowu of Nigeria, in one of his first published works on indiginization describes the "shock of recognition" he experienced when he first realized that the Christ he worshipped as an African had been presented to him in the context of a language and culture not his own, and that he had assumed that it was impossible to understand Christ and Christianity in any other way. Idowu was only one of several African theologians for whom it has become increasingly and disturbingly clear that the Church in Africa could not attain self-hood and maturity until it possessed a knowledge of Jesus Christ in African terms and could communicate that knowledge in the languages and thought-forms of Africa. For many years it had been assumed that God did not come to Africa until the first European missionaries landed on these shores and that, lying in the darkness of a primitive and pagan faith, Africa had nothing to offer as a cultural or spiritual basis for the Gospel.

PRE-CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

In his *African Ideas of God*, Edwin Smith reports his conversation with Emil Ludwig, an eminent biographer, in which he told Ludwig about the progress of Christian missions in Africa, how the Africans were being taught about the Christian God. Ludwig was perplexed. "How", he exclaimed, "can the untutored African conceive God?... How can this be? ... Diety is a philosophical concept which savages are incapable of framing." Thus have the traditional religions of Africa and African spirituality, as such, been regarded by both Africans and Europeans in the not distant past. We understand that one of the first tasks of African Theology is to put an end to this nonsense, for which white missionaries and anthropologists must bear no little responsibility, and begin a reconstruction of the Christian faith in Africa which takes seriously the fact that God had revealed himself in the traditional religions and that by a selective process African theologians can use this revelatory content to throw light on the message and meaning of Jesus Christ. Thus the consultation of African theologians held in Ibadan in 1965 could conclude:

"We recognize the radical quality of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ; and yet it is because of this revelation we can discern what is truly of God

in our pre-Christian heritage: this knowledge of God is not totally discontinuous with our people's previous traditional knowledge of Him."

LINKAGES

In the new standard work by Kwesi Dickson and Paul Ellingworth, *Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs* (Lutterworth Press, 1969), Idowu, Mbiti, Kibongi, Adegbola and other distinguished African theologians deal with such themes as the African image of man, concepts of God and the spirit world, priesthood, sacrifice and ideas of morality in such a way as to demonstrate the linkages between African and Christian religious knowledge. This cataloguing of African beliefs and comparing them with similar beliefs in Biblical religion, particularly in the Old Testament, was evidently an early stage in the development of African theological thinking and indicates the extent to which African theologians, most of whom were educated in European and American seminaries, have sought, first of all, a deepening of Christian orthodoxy by bringing to it insights and discernments which lie outside of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

CORPORATE SALVATION

In an unpublished paper presented at the 1969 A.A.C.C. meeting in Abidjan, Professor Dickson of Ghana clarifies the significance of this tendency in the theological work being done in Africa:

"Of course, whatever help that may come from sources outside the Judeo-Christian traditions are most likely to lie within the realm of the explicatory rather than the foundational; nevertheless, it could fill out a hitherto western expression of Christian theological concepts. One might hazard the example that the doctrine of Justification by Faith, which is the most missionary of doctrines, is usually expounded in terms of the salvation of the individual, to the exclusion of all ideas of corporate salvation, through the body of Christ ... We have only to allude to the metaphors of the Body and the Vine and its Branches to show that the African sense of corporateness ... could be a reminder that the traditional western interpretations of the doctrine of Justification does not pre-empt the implications of that doctrine."

According to Dickson this approach to the African theological task is complemented by a second line of approach which is represented by the work of Professor Mbiti who "recognizing the essential limitation of certain aspects of African thought by comparison with Christian teachings ... suggests that Christian views should be imported into African thought to the enrichment of the latter." In this he refers to Mbiti's comment that the African cyclical view of history must be invaded by the Christian concept of the *eschaton* because, while Africa has an eschatology, it has no teleology and it is in this area

that Christian Eschatology can contribute to natural revelation in Africa.

CONCEPT OF TIME

With the publication of *African Religions and Philosophy* (Praeger, 1969) Professor Mbiti of Uganda became widely acknowledged as the leading scholar of religion in Africa and his recent published works lay down some of the new directions for an indigenous African theology. As indicated by the above reference to African eschatology, Mbiti's work on the concept of Time in African religions has major significance for a fuller understanding of traditional values and how Christian theology, properly integrated with what he calls "transfused Religion" in the culture, can help shape the future of modern Africa. Thus, having exonerated African traditional religions from the charge of "primitivism" and given them the dignity they deserve, African Theology seems now to be taking up the task of bringing to traditionalism the insights of the Christian faith which are able to renovate the total life and culture of the new African nations.

In a lecture delivered at St. Paul's Theological College in Kenya last April, Mbiti said: "I believe that this is one of the most exciting principles in the whole relationship between Christianity and Traditional Religions. It calls for a theological articulation of the fulfillment not only as an academic exercise, but to guide the church in its life, work and mission in Africa... The Lord God may have spoken Hebrew to the children of Israel: He now speaks the Christ-language. This is the language of the Gospel; and the Gospel comes to fulfill, not to destroy."

MORE CONSERVATIVE

From the perspective of many of the younger Afro-American theologians, the "Africanization" of theology in Africa seems more academic, more bound to orthodoxy and more conservative than Black Theology in the United States and the Caribbean. It is, however, among the burgeoning phenomenon of African independent or "spiritual" churches that one sees another side of this picture, with increasing significance for African Theology. Thousands of independent churches now exist in all parts of Africa alongside of the older churches and their evangelistic fervor, their appeal to the poor and uneducated masses, and their utilization of traditional elements in music and liturgy gives them a vitality and relevance to African Christianity which cannot be ignored by African theologians. The problem that African Theology has in helping to relate Christianity to the new social and political realities cannot be solved without reference to the spiritual churches. The influence of these churches, as they become more institutionalized and led by trained clergy, is inestimable. Because of the role that they now and will increasingly play in the urbanization process, family life, social education and action, etc., they offer to African theologians the same exciting prospects for the indigeni-

zation of theology and the renewal of the church that the Black Consciousness churches of the ghettos offer to Black theologians in the United States. It is clear that the A.A.C.C. is prepared to make a more energetic approach to the African independent churches and at Abidjan it was proposed that a secretariat be set up for that purpose, with broad implications for theological study, dialogue and collaboration, as well as for affiliation.

DEFINITION

We conclude this part of the paper with reference to the significant fact that at Abidjan the discussion of African Theology was held in the section dealing with the topic: "Working with Christ in the Cultural Revolution." The group recognized that since African Theology was in an early stage of development, an exhaustive definition was impossible. An attempt was, however, made and seems to gather up all of the emphasis, nuances and problems we have noted in this brief discussion:

"By African Theology we mean a theology which is based on the Biblical Faith and speaks to the African 'soul' (or is relevant to Africa). It is expressed in categories of thought which arise out of the philosophy of the African people. This does not mean that it is narrow in outlook. To speak of African theology involves formulating clearly a Christian attitude to other religions. It must be pointed out that the emphasis is basically on Christian theology, which could be expressed through African thinking and culture."

DIALOGUE

One of the peculiar features of our present situation is that Black Theology is reaching out to African Theology, but the reverse is not necessarily true. In a sense Black American theologians are more isolated, more suspect of heretical inclinations and more embattled than African theologians. Therefore we are in greater need of dialogue and collaboration with those with whom we believe we have something in common. This is so not only because of forces within the American churches which define the canons of theological respectability, but also because, paradoxically, Black people in the United States are probably the most religious and the most secular of all American ethnic minorities (with the possible exception of the Jews). It is not an exaggeration to say that the hostility of the present generation of young Blacks outside of the church to what they understood to be the subservience of Black Christianity to the status quo, played an important part in forcing Black Theology and Black churchmen generally into a more independent and militant posture *vis-a-vis* White Christianity. On the other hand, African theologians and the African churches, because of the recent paternalistic relationship in which they stood to

European churches, enjoy a certain popularity among white Christians outside of Africa, both Protestants and Roman Catholics, and feel less insecure about their status within the ecumenical Church.

ANOTHER SUFFOCATING EMBRACE?

This does not mean that African theologians feel no need to "reason together" with their Afro-American brethren. Quite the contrary, for many of them recognize a certain tokenism in ecumenical circles, and some of the same pressures we feel from our young people are experienced increasingly by African churchmen. It does mean that in the nature of the situation Afro-American theologians are and will be taking the initiative for dialogue. Black Theology needs African legitimation, for strategic reasons if for no other. But the situation is a delicate one. No one should expect African Theology, as yet so tentative in its disengagement from the categories of Western thought, to permit itself to fall into what could become the suffocating embrace of another style of theological reflection—even that of black brothers from across the sea. There is an amiability and gentleness about African religion which is not true today about religion in Black America. In any dialogue between Black Theology and African Theology care needs to be taken that the aggressiveness and "hardnosedness" of Black Theology does not mount such an assault on African religious sensibilities that the situation turns out to be one side shouting and the other closing its ears in pained indifference. On the other hand, African Theology cannot be so impressed with its good reputation in W.C.C. circles, and so convinced that theological reflection is something that properly takes place in a setting resembling a sequestered English vicarage, that it cannot bring itself to converse with its tough, boisterous counterpart from the urban ghettos of America. We must talk to one another, for we have much to talk about. But we must hear one another with sympathy and understanding.

CRITERIA: WORD OF GOD AND HOLY SPIRIT

Dialogue first requires getting acquainted, but any dialogue between Black Theology and African Theology should, in due course, lead to mutually constructive critique and correction. The criteria of judgment is, of course, the Word of God and the testimony of the Holy Spirit. But there is also the action of God in history and the discernment of faithful men of how God is moving in their world to plant and build, and to root out and tear down. "Now we see through a glass darkly" and neither the church in Africa or the church in Black America has the full truth about what God is saying today to people of African descent and what he is doing in the world to make them fulfill their calling among the races of mankind.

AFRICANIZATION AND LIBERATION

African Theology is concerned about Africanization. Black Theology is concerned with Liberation. But Africanization must also involve liberation from

centuries of poverty, humiliation and exploitation. A truly African Theology cannot escape the requirement of helping the indigenous churches to become relevant to the social and political ills of Africa, which are not unrelated to Euro-American imperialism and racism. Similarly, Liberation has to do with more than political oppression and social justice. It is Jesus Christ who is the Liberator, the justified man is also liberated from "the lust of the flesh and the pride of life." The liberated man is no longer under the unqualified power of sin and the Devil. How can these two theologies correct the excesses and deficiencies of one another? What can African Theology learn from Black Theology about the demonic power of white racism in the world today and what God is doing about it? What can Black Theology learn from African Theology about faithfulness to the Word of God in a situation of rapid secularization out of a traditional ethos, about Christian morality and the devotional life? What can the older churches of Africa learn from the black churches of the United States about the assimilation of quasi-Christian ideologies and secular cults which can help them in *rapprochement* with the independent churches? What can the black churches of America learn from the African churches about reconciliation between tribal groups and between black and white in a multi-racial society? Does African Theology depend too much upon the modalities of European theology in discriminating between what traditional religion offers as "preparation for the gospel" and what it does not? Is Black Theology so obsessed with concepts of negritude, "Black Consciousness" and revolution that it is in danger of becoming so localized and so self-interested that it loses the universal message of love, peace and redemption for the whole world?

These are a few of the critical questions which will arise in any serious and candid encounter between Black Theology and African Theology. There are many more that can be instructive to both sides if we believe that mutual critique and reformation, under the judgment and the grace of God, are the true functions of theological reflection.

THE FUTURE

To what end will this long-frustrated and belated encounter between African and Afro-American theologians lead our churches in Africa and the United States? The answer to that question is not given to us today. We can only say that there exists between us a mysterious bond of blood brotherhood, a common past and a common experience of suffering and subjugation which God can use to his own good purposes as we come closer together in faith and life. The old black theologians (and we have used that term broadly to encompass all reflective Christian churchmen) used to talk about the destiny of the black race and how the sons of Ham would be a blessing to the world. Surely Fanon and others have taught us that the

cont. on page 24

'THE RELEVANT GOSPEL' 2
THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS
OF
THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY
Brian Johanson

The second part of the important address by Prof. B. Johanson deals with the problem of the Christian message, which must either be up-to-date or otherwise become powerless.

If then there is this close relation between beliefs about man and social practice, we are led to a second major question: *What is the correlation between the teaching of the Christian church and beliefs common in our society?* If we pursue the line of thought that the church's doctrine is affected by the cultural environment in which it is placed and the traditions within which it has developed then a variety of historical and even geographical factors will add their contribution to the emerging patterns of belief. To illustrate from the situation in South Africa: The Afrikaner Christian's understanding of man is likely to be quite strongly influenced by his nationalistic anthropology, associated with the birth and growth struggles of a relatively young people. The African Christian's understanding of man will similarly retain much that is distinctively African in its content, especially the pervasive sense of the presence of the ancestors. The tradition amongst English-speaking Christians is bound to be influenced by the broad liberal background of England's centuries of involvement with other peoples and other cultures.

NATIONALISTIC VIEWS PRIMARY?

These observations are not critically intended save to the extent that they cannot be reconciled with the Christological anthropology which is developed in Section III. Thus the characteristically English expression concerning "the brotherhood of man" is in itself an abstract assumption. Only if it is derived from its Christological basis, namely that Jesus Christ is the Brother of every man, does it have any meaning. A "social gospel" based on the "the brotherhood of man" and the equally abstract "Fatherhood of God" has no evangelical content. The "Fatherhood of God" is only meaningful as he is understood to be the Father of Jesus Christ. It is thus through Christ that man re-discovers his Father, and in Christ that he re-discovers his Brother, and hence, his "brethren".

Similarly, there is a clearly valid "nationalistic anthropology" which legitimately sees every man in a family, tribal or national context. The questions arise however, when his national context is regarded as the

most important aspect of his humanity. One is reminded of the phenomenon of the "German Christian" of the 1930's and early 40's. The important point here was that the emphasis tended to fall on a man who was a *German* but at the same time a Christian, rather than a Christian who was at the same time a German. "For a German the Church is a community of believers who are obligated to fight for a Christian Germany." Another statement indicates on which of the last two words the accent is to be put: "A godless fellow-countryman is nearer to us than one of another race, even if he sings the same hymn and prays the same prayer". These quotations appear in John Bowden, *Karl Barth*, S.C.M. 1971. One wonders whether these sentiments might not find some echo in our country, especially amongst the more militant protagonists of "Christian National" principles?

GREEK IDEAS IN CHURCH

These factors would be likely to be present in addition to the readily discernible influences of Greek, Hebrew and Roman thought, transformed to some extent by their passage through the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment, Pietism, Marxism, Existentialism, Freudianism, and so on. There would be an inclination to dispute this line of thought with regard to the *contemporary* situation, but it is now commonly agreed that it did in fact happen very clearly in the church's history. It is significant that it was precisely with regard to the doctrine of man that characteristically Greek ideas were absorbed into the church's teaching. This concerned the dual understanding of man's being, the body being regarded as the temporary (and usually evil) prison of the immortal soul. Ideas related to this were taught as orthodox Christian doctrine until virtually into the twentieth century when the Biblical concept of the unitary structure of man's being was rediscovered. Similarly the swing from individualism to collectivism, and back again, can be traced through the centuries. It is possible then for the objective investigator to draw out the best from these various traditions, and in an eclectic way select the best from contemporary cultures and anthropologies, and so propose an anthropology that would be normative for Christian social ethics? Such a process would no doubt have its appeal for the investigator, but would almost certainly be far too subjectively determined to win more than very limited support.

Were the church simply a rather persistent cultural phenomenon found principally in the Western world, and conforming with ready adjustment to a variety of social conditions, such an approach might be possible. It would not however, be very important, since there could then be no decisive significance in its views. There has to be a measure of cultural adaptation, such as the use of different languages, and also a measure of social adaptation, such as the development of different patterns of worship, suited to different peoples. These are necessary 'processes' if the church is to avoid being an alien and anomalous element incapable of involvement within given society.

FORMS CHANGE

The inevitability of this process, whether it be in relation to an element in the church's teaching or an aspect of its practice, does not however, justify the second step which is often taken, in which *the adapted form is then entrenched as the normative Christian position*. For example, we are only now beginning to break away from the idea that Christian worship must take place in a particular place, normally sitting in rows, and following a set routine of standing up, sitting down, kneeling. We are only beginning to realise that perhaps those who confused their shibboleths for our shibboleths are after all Christians too. The realisation that membership in the church of Christ is after all not necessarily to be equated with a listing on the church records has still not dawned on some, although it is a conviction with others. There are no doubt far more features within the church tradition which today are regarded as sacrosanct, and which are not yet recognised as irrelevant accretions of other times, which tomorrow will take their place in the limbo of historical curiosities. We are discovering, albeit slowly, that change has a place in the church too.

COMMUNICATIONS BREAKDOWN

Yet it is our conviction that from the start the Christian faith brought a new element into society, and that it continues to bring something new to every generation, and that this new element exercises a positive developmental function. It forces the church to be focussed on the present through its understanding of the past and the future, and makes it permanently relevant. Without attempting to define this new element any more closely at this stage, it is its presence that compels the church to return continually to a re-examination of the sources from which it springs, and so to discover in part at least *the measure in which compromise, and adaptation to cultural conditions have affected it*. Unless this is done the different branches of the church will continue to arrive at diametrically opposed positions on the same issues, without realising why they are unable to arrive at unanimity. It is essential that the churches of South Africa should be continually open and willing to re-assess their positions in the light of renewed study of

the documents that are the basis of their existence. It is also essential that these take the form of inter-church studies, because each group will inevitably tend to re-approach the traditional data, and the contemporary scene, with its own entrenched conceptions. These preconceptions can only be seriously exposed under the pressure of questions from outside the group that holds them. In South Africa the most disastrous and disturbing problem is the breakdown in communication between the major sections of the church, and one can only offer a pressing appeal that genuine dialogue on matters of great and overwhelming concern should be re-opened.

ANALYSIS OF MAN

In the light of what has been said so far, it should be evident that the church cannot arrive at its anthropology through a distillation of the best in social and cultural beliefs. Rather it must be derived from the Scriptures, which sounds simple enough, and which every church would probably claim to do. The process is normally to attempt an analysis of man as he appears in the Bible, often beginning with serious convictions regarding the historicity of Adam and Eve. The method has its obvious value, but the conclusions can very easily simply reflect a view of man as he was understood at any given point in time over a two thousand year period. So depending on our preference we can take as normative the view of man found in differing cultural conditions extending over a very long period of time. This method can yield profound insights into his origins, his destiny, his vocation, character and sinfulness, but the method and approach lend themselves to arbitrariness and dubious conclusions.

If, say, the Old Testament picture of Israel is taken as the standard, together with the exclusive national-cultural philosophy that went with it a whole series of conclusions can be drawn, which, on closer examination prove to be alien to a valid interpretation of the total Biblical anthropology.

PRE-OCCUPATION WITH HEAVEN

Alternatively, if the individualism of Ezekiel and Christ's personal call to discipleship are taken as normative, there are again corresponding implications. In this case the personal relationship of the individual with God is regarded as supremely important almost to the exclusion of corporate responsibility and social involvement. Where social action is engaged in, it is often done as a means to securing the personal salvation of the recipient of help. The obvious validity of this basic concern tends to dominate to such a degree that the goal of securing further "converts" becomes the over-riding ambition and the Christian's actual temporal involvement is obscured as a necessary but unfortunate evil. The result is a pre-occupation with the life hereafter which is seen as the ultimate answer to all earthly ills.

cont. on page 24

UNREST

(cont.)

THOSE WHO CAUGHT SOME VISION ...

It is not the most abject, blinded and miserably oppressed people who are likely to rebel against their overlords. Such people see no ray of light, and no prospect whatsoever of striving for better things. Indeed, the very concept "better things" is almost meaningless to them. It is those who have caught some vision of another world who begin to feel restless. They have tasted a sip of the wine of life, and they will have more. The more they taste, the more pressing will become their demand for the whole cup and a full draught. The masses who rebelled in the French Revolution were not the most oppressed people in Europe. Compared with the lower classes of other countries they were the best off. That is why they rebelled.

BASIC STRUCTURAL CHANGE

When those who once knew only bondage have begun to enlarge the sphere of their life, and have gained from their masters some measure of recognition, the story is not over. It has only just begun. Early protests and strikes, followed by negotiations, might secure a better status and a larger pay-packet. This is welcomed, but however large the salaries, it is soon perceived that they are inadequate compensation for work performed in pliable subservience to remote authority. When all that is required from the employee is nothing beyond diligent, unquestioning and disciplined adherence to orders to carry out stultifying tasks for hours on end, no amount of food or money will secure industrial peace.

SONS OF GOD IN UNREST

For a human being to grow and express his nature fully, he needs a life-work in which he is an acting subject rather than an object which is acted upon. Man is decisively moulded by his vocation, and if this is performed in an atmosphere which negates him as a mature person, he will not receive relief in leisure, wealth, or even political or religious extra-mural activities dissociated from his life-work. He cannot make his own the vision of dignity which he has glimpsed until he shares responsibly in the entire socio-economic and political structures of the society in which he works. With his fellow-workers, his immediate employer and the entire society in which he plays a part as a worker, he needs to co-determine the formation, organization and evaluation of his life-work.

Once individuals hear the message that in God's eyes they are invested with the status of Sons, they will not rest until this is actualized in all components of their society, whether they are supported in this by the officials of Christianity or not. *

AFRICAN THEOLOGY

(cont.)

star of Euro-American civilization is in decline and a new humanity must arise and point the way to a future of justice and equality for all peoples. In these days of revolutionary Black Power and African Socialism these themes are being sounded again. It is not racist madness to believe that Africa shall again have one of the greatest civilizations the world has known and that long-separated brethren, weary of bruising their fists upon doors that will not fully open, will come home by the millions to contribute to and share in the building of that greatness. It is not too much to believe that God wills to use the churches of Africa and Black America to give the sublimity and spiritual depth to that historical process that will make it minister to the humanization and redemption of the world. If some future integration of the truths and insights of Black Theology and African Theology can accelerate the fulfillment of that lofty vision of our destiny, then we need to be about the task that has brought us together.

The young theologian at Legon wanted to know why we cannot speak of an *african* Theology which encompasses the theological work we are doing on both sides of the Atlantic. That felicitous possibility is not available to us today, but by meeting and critically examining one another's views and working together in the world, that day may come. Let the Church say "Amen". *

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

(cont.)

Then too a dichotomous view of man can be sought in the Bible, and in a way found, which would tend to support a distinction between man's "spiritual" life and his "secular" life. The importance of the former would then take precedence over the latter with a consequent tendency to either asceticism at the one extreme or ethical laxity in social matters at the other. This makes possible a further dichotomy which would propose that the church's responsibility is the care of the soul, and it can accordingly be instructed to keep to its own (spiritual) matters, while the remainder of man's life, the physical and social, can be more properly regarded as the responsibility of society, operating through the state. This distinction very soon becomes illusory when the actual boundaries are sought, just as it does in the case of a person when the attempt is made to separate his spiritual and mental, from his social and physical functions. This proposed division in society is as false as the now abandoned dichotomy of man.⁽¹⁵⁾ These three possibilities represent actual views held by Christians in our society. (15) See Roger Shinn's work,

cont. next month

This is the second part of the report of the Working Committee on Church and Society of the W.C.C.

Here the method, approach and some of the fields are put forward and next month certain specific modern medical questions will be dealt with.

FAMINE NOT IMPERSONAL

One of the most important insights to be developed is the Christian understanding of personal life and inter-personal relationships. The quality of life is directly related to growth in the possibilities of individual and community relationships, to the fulfilment of human selves in a communal whole. The vision of the Kingdom of God can be understood, in one way, as the state of affairs in which all men are fully themselves because, through the unimpeded presence of the love of God, they fully contribute to the life of one another and fully share in the life of one another.

We suggest that the problem-producing developments in science (that is, in the various sciences) should be examined in the light of the way in which they increase the possibilities of personal influence over, and personal responsibility for, our environment and the direct development of ourselves.

For example, knowledge of the chromosomal causes of genetic defects may well mean that the birth of human offspring with no capacity for intelligent life ceases to be an impersonal chance and becomes a personal choice. In quite another area, developments in agricultural and relevant sciences and technologies mean that famine ceases to be an impersonal natural disaster and becomes a matter for personal action which can avoid it or personal exploitation which allows it to continue to happen. Of course, the new personal possibilities can be exploited in impersonal and in human ways. But this brings us back to the understanding of judgement and promise to which reference has already been made.

GENETICS AND SOUR GRAPES

The Working Committee considers that the most important aspect of genetics in relation to quality of life at present is the extent to which genetical potentialities are not fulfilled because of sub-optimal environments of many communities. Human fulfilment is inhibited seriously by many factors such as poverty, malnutrition, psychological factors and by the presence of toxic substances, some of which produce genetical as well as physiological damage. The entire problem of the preservation of a wholesome environment for man has profound consequences for the heritage of man. We are reminded "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge". The task of working toward a more optimal environ-

SCIENCE AND LIFE

ment for all peoples is emphasized at the outset of this report though this in itself is not primarily a problem for genetics as such.

MODERN MEDICINE

The specifically genetical problems which concern us have to do with the following. A major shift in the nature of future medical care is requisite. The great successes of the period since 1940 in overcoming infectious diseases as causes of human mortality and suffering make constitutional disorders, including mental disease, a major concern of medical care. At the same time, by reducing the rigor of natural selection against hereditary disabilities, modern medicine permits the survival and reproduction of the carriers of many defective genes who in earlier times would not have reproduced. Consequently, the human gene pool contains higher frequencies of many defective genes, and the genetically determined or predisposed disorders form an increasing part of medical care. Congenital blindness and deafness, cystic fibrosis and muscular dystrophy, xeroderma pigmentosum (a cancer), severe mental defects, numerous metabolic disorders such as diabetes and allergic predispositions are but a few examples in a lengthening catalogue of literally thousands of genetic ailments.

The most severe genetic defects are the lethals, which cause death at some age or other. Some such as Huntington's chorea, a severe mental degenerative disease, produce evident symptoms only after adulthood is reached, but the dominant gene responsible for the disease is often transmitted to offspring before the disease is recognized in the possessor. The severest of all lethals kill the human foetus or embryo, and are eliminated by natural abortion. Some estimates of the frequency of these are as high as 50% of all conceptions. At least 25% of all conceptions, by a more conservative estimate, are aborted naturally. Most of these are caused by an abnormal chromosome constitution or a lethal genotype.

MONGOLISM

The less severe genetic defects are those in which the foetus survives the course of pregnancy and the child is born alive, only to remain hopelessly incapacitated for normal physical or mental development (e.g. mongolism or amaurotic idiocy). These are the genetic disorders of greatest concern to the family and to society. Negative eugenics is chiefly concerned with the possibilities of reducing the personal and social burden imposed by such cases.

Recent biological developments offer some new ways of reducing this burden and pose a number of ethical questions.

(next month: Recommendations about Genetics, Abortion, etc.)

CHRISTELIKE MAANDBLAD

REDAKTEUR: R.A. MEYER V.D.M.

INHOUD

REDAKSIONEEL/EDITORIAL . PARLEMENT IN DIENS/PARLIAMENT INSERVICE	1, 2
MINISTRY AND AUTHORITY IN AFRICAKlaus Nürnberger	3
ARBEID EN 'N „VERBANNE" DIENSKNEG	7
SERVICE AND WOMEN IN CHURCH Elfie Strassberger	10
WORK AND THE OVAMBO STRIKEStephen Hayes	12
MINISTRY AND APARTHEID	15
WORK AND CHRISTIAN UNRESTTrevor Verryn	16
AFRICAN THEOLOGY 2	James Cone, Gayraud Wilmore 18
'THE RELEVANT GOSPEL'	Brian Johanson 22
'CHURCH AND SOCIETY' SCIENCE AND LIFE.....	25

DIE BUIITEBLAD

„HIERUIT KEN ONS DIE GEES VAN DIE WAARHEID (PRO VERITATE - VIR DIE WAARHEID)

AS GOD ONS SO LIEFGEHAD HET (DIE KRUISSIMBOOL), BEHOORT ONS OOK MEKAAR LIEF TE HE (DIE HAND EN DIE FIGUUR - DIE KLEUR WISSEL ELKE MAAND).

(1 Joh. 4:6, 11).

THE COVER

'BY THIS WE KNOW THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH (PRO VERITATE - FOR THE TRUTH)

IF GOD SO LOVED US (THE CROSS SYMBOL), WE ALSO OUGHT TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER (THE HAND AND THE FIGURE - THE COLOUR CHANGES EVERY MONTH).'

(1 John 4:6, 11).

INTEKENGELD vooruitbetaalbaar. Land-en seepos: S.A. - R1 (10/- of \$1.40), Afrika - R1.50 (15/- of \$2.10), Oorsee - 17/6 (Engeland), Lugpos: S.A. - R2.00 (£1 of \$2.90), Afrika - R3.50 (£1/17/6 of \$5.00), Oorsee - £2 (Engeland). Tjeks en posorders moet uitgemaak word aan Pro Veritate (Edms.) Bpk., Posbus 31135, Braamfontein, Transvaal. Prys per enkel-eksemplaar 10c.
 NEDERLAND: Luchtpost-editie f 17,50; Zeepost f 7,50. Alle betalings voor Pro Veritate of het Christeljk Instituut voor Z.A. kunnen geschieden op Giro 8685 t.n.v. de Generale Diaconale Raad der Ned. Herv. Kerk te Utrecht, met opgawe doel der betaling.
 LET WEL: Die redaksie van Pro Veritate verklaar dat hy nie verantwoordelik is vir menings- en standpunte wat in enige ander artikel van hierdie blad verskyn as die inleidings- artikel en redaksionele verklarings nie. Gedruk deur: Golden Era Printers & Stationers (Pty.) Ltd., 44 Pine Avenue, Fordsburg, Johannesburg.
 PRO VERITATE verskyn elke 15de van die maand.