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VAN DIE „VELDSLAG VAN ANGHIARI" DEUR
LEONARDO DA VINCI.

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THE "BATTLE OF ANGHIARI" BY LEONARDO
DA VINCI.

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DIE KERK IN POLITIEK

waar die veldslag beslis word,
daar word die lojaliteit van die soldaat bewys—

Kerke is nie abstrakte entiteite nie, maar hulle is institute wat in die geskiedenis betrokke is. Hulle vorm 'n deel van die samelewing. Om die taak van die kerk as sodanig te begryp, moet 'n mens die konkrete situasie waarin hy bestaan, ernstig neem. Dit beteken dat die kerke nooit neutraal in 'n gegewe situasie kan wees nie—as hulle egter wel daarop aanspraak maak om neutraal met betrekking tot politieke aksie of probleme in die samelewing te wees, beteken dit eintlik dat hulle standpunt aan die kant van die status quo, die bestaande orde ingeneem het. Dit beteken gewoonlik dat die kerke dan ten gunte van die magselike teenoor die massa is, aan die kant van die onderdrukkers teenoor die onderdrukte.

In Suid-Afrika maak die regering daarop aanspraak dat daar geen botsing tussen die kerk as sodanig en die staat is nie, maar alleenlik tussen individue, Christelike leiers, ens., en die staat. Aangesien van die teologiese onhoudbaarheid van so 'n standpunt waarop nie nou ingegaan word nie, word die feit in die algemeen deur die kerke bevestig. Sodoende kom dit voor of die kerke en die regering vrede met mekaar in Suid-Afrika hou. Hoekom is dit so in die huidige omstandighede? Is dit dat die kerk in die algemeen tevrede is dat die regering en die wyse waarop die sake van die staat hanteer word, ooreenstem met die boodskap en inhoud van die evangelie van Jesus Christus? Of is dit dat die kerke nie daaraan glo om in die samelewing en politiek betrokke te wees nie, en gevolglik besluit het om neutraal in die politieke veld te wees? Dit is geen geheim nie dat die huidige regering glo dat die kerke nie 'n direkte en spesifieke taak in die politieke veld het nie en dat die eerste minister die kerke gewaarsku het om hulle aandag by hulle eie sake te bepaal. In die algemeen het die kerk gereageer deur hierdie „teologie” te aanvaar en die meeste kerke glo dat die enigste ding wat vir hulle oorgelaat word om te doen, is dat *individuele Christene* in hulle persoonlike hoedanighede moet probeer om die politiek so posetief as moontlik met die evangelie te beïnvloed.

Aangesien hierdie gedagtegang en „teologie” die „stille ooreenkoms” tussen staat en kerk is, is dit geen wonder nie dat die regering voel dat hulle in die moeilikheid is as 'n kerk of 'n groep Christene in die sosiale of politieke veld betrokke raak met die boodskap van Christus as Koning ook in hierdie sferes soos dit deur

Paulus uitgespel is: „... om alle dinge wat in die hemele sowel as wat op aarde is, onder een hoof in Christus te verenig” (Efesiërs 1:10).

Die regering is nie net in die verleentheid met hierdie getuienis wat in woord en daad gegee word nie, hulle het inderdaad tot aksie oorgegaan om 'n einde aan hierdie betrokkenheid te maak deur middel van inperkings (vgl. die jongste inperking van Manas Buthelezi), deportasie, intrekking van paspoorte, ondersoek van moontlike „ondermyning” (vgl. die Schlebusch-kommissie), ens. Dit word gewoonlik gedoen sonder enige verduideliking of sonder om enige verklaring met betrekking tot die aksie uit te reik.

Aangesien die parlement sy werk weer in Februarie begin het en aangesien dreigende aksie oorweeg word teen sekere Christelike groepe, teen die pers in die algemeen en teen spesifieke Christelike publikasies in die besonder, moet 'n mens ernstig oorweeg wat die taak van die kerk as sodanig in hierdie omstandighede is. Tot die huidige het die kerk in die algemeen op die kantlyn van die slagveld gestaan, of het hy die gang van sake deur sy stilswye „goedgekeur”. As daar reaksie was, het dit gewoonlik deur middel van spesifieke kerkleiers, individue of groepe Christene gekom, maar nie deur die kerk as sodanig nie. Hier moet 'n mens algemene verklarings oor ras, apartheid en die politiek uitsluit. Is dit dan 'n gesonde toedrag van sake of is dit 'n rampspoedige dilemma vir die kerk?

Swart Christelike reaksie was dat daar 'n begin met „Swart Teologie” gemaak is, maar dit word alweer deur die regering en die kerk in die algemeen, ten minste in die Afrikaanse Kerke (met die uitsondering miskien van die swart N.G. Kerke) as hoogs „gevaarlik” gesien en aksie is daarteen geneem. (Vgl. bv. die verbanning van die boek „Essays on Black Theology”).

geen finale outonomie in politiek nie

As 'n mens probeer om die wese van die kerk se taak in Suid-Afrika te begryp, moet een baie belangrike aspek nie misgekyk word nie. Hierdie is nie slegs 'n probleem vir individue of spesifieke Christelike groepe nie, maar

dit is 'n feit dat die betrokkenheid van die kerk in die samelewing en politiek 'n saak is vir die hele kerk, die liggaam van Christus op aarde. Dit is ook nie alleenlik 'n saak van metode, of hoe om die regering oor sekere kwessies te nader of hoe die kerk se boodskap gegee moet word nie; die probleem lê veel dieper.

Die hart van die saak is dat daar geen lewensfeer of dit op die persoonlike, sosiale, politieke of kerklike vlak is, wat 'n onafhanklike, selfingeslote morele finaliteit besit nie. Alhoewel elke sfeer volgens spesifieke stelle reëls en veronderstellings fungeer, is die lewe egter 'n geheel en die hele lewe moet onder die evangelie van die Meester van die lewe, Jesus Christus, ingesluit word. God het een koninkryk wat in hierdie wêreld moet kom—daar is nie nog 'n wêreld nie. Gevolglik het die kerk se boodskap geen grense of beperkings in die wêreld nie, watter sfeer ookal genoem word.

Die basiese veronderstelling van 'n regering (of 'n kerk) wat die kerk uit „die politiek” wil hou, is dat politieke en sosiale prosesse hulle eie outonomie besit en alhoewel die politici ook Christene kan wees, moet hulle voor alles politici vir die professionele politiek wees en dan eers Christene. Dit is 'n metafisiese veronderstelling wat die mens, die politikus, die regering die finale „god” in die politiek maak.

Alhoewel die regering in Suid-Afrika so offisieel uitgesproke teen kommunisme is, moet dit tog gesê word dat hierdie bovermelde veronderstelling inderwaarheid elemente van onchristelike Marxisme bevat. Wat die belangrikste vir Marxisme is, is die basiese (politieke) realiteite in die samelewing en dat verbeelding (geloof), moraliteit en God (as daar 'n God is, wat Marxisme nie aanvaar nie) ondergeskik gemaak moet word aan hierdie natuurlike orde van sake. As 'n mens eers eenmaal aan die outonomie van die sosiale of politieke sisteem glo, word jy outomaties geprogrammeer om 'n slaaf van hierdie wêreld te wees, verstrik in jou eie lewe en vrese, en jou eie politieke stelsel. Dit is wat inderwaarheid met die wit politieke lewe in Suid-Afrika gebeur het; dit is 'n gevangene van die wêreld soos dit is en gevolglik het dit bevryding dringend nodig. Om hierdie probleem van bevryding te oorkom, want die witmense in die algemeen wil dit nie hê nie, word bevryding alleenlik na die lewe hierna geprojekteer. Maar omdat Christus in hierdie lewe gebore is en verlossing hier in die wêreld voltooi het, moet bevryding en 'n nuwe (politieke) lewe hier begin.



Dit is een rede waarom 'n mens individuele Christene in die regering kan hê wat opreg glo, maar wat tog terselfdertyd 'n wrede, harde apartheidsstelsel navolg.

die kerk word nie 'n politieke party

Betekén dit dat ons graag na die middeleeue wil terugkeer en die samelewing en politiek wil verkerklik? Nee, maar een ding moet duidelik wees en dit is dat die kerk as 'n liggaam en as 'n deel van die samelewing 'n spesifieke lewensbelangrike rol en boodskap het, ook vir die politieke lewe van 'n land. As hierdie essensiële rol gemis word, doen die kerk homself nie net 'n ondiens aan nie, maar veroorsaak dit dat die politiek op 'n afgodiese wyse selfstandig word omdat dit die taak van die kerk is om die essensiële dimensie van die evangelie—eenheid, versoening, vryheid, vrede, liefde, order,—in die politieke lewe van 'n land in te dra. As die kerk met die politiek betrokke is, word hy nie 'n politieke party nie, maar dra hy die onmisbare evangeliese dimensie in die politieke arena in. Gevolglik kan die kerk dan nie van politieke ondermyning of -opportunistiese beskuldig word nie omdat hy alleenlik maar sy taak uitvoer, nl. om ook op dié terrein van Christus te getuig.

Dit het van die uiterste belang geword dat die kerk as 'n geheel die feit behoort te besef dat die sosiale en politieke orde van Suid-Afrika nie so ontstaan het soos dit is as gevolg van 'n goddelike noodsaaklikheid nie, maar die situasie is so omdat mense dit in die verlede en hede so gewil en gebou het. Alle sosiale sisteme is aksie van onvolmaakte mense en gevolglik staan dit onder God se oordeel. Gevolglik het dit nodig geword om ons mensgemaakte realiteit in ons politieke samelewing te ontgoddelik. Die kerk moet begin om te bid en te werk vir die Koninkryk om in die teenwoordige tyd te kom, selfs, ja juis in die politieke lewe van Suid-Afrika. As politieke besluite die finale woord vir die kerk is, het die kerk God verloor en het hy 'n slaaf van mense geword.—Het ons al so vêr in Suid-Afrika gevorder?

Maartin Luther het gesê dat as ons die waarheid van die evangelie bely behalwe oor die spesifieke probleem van ons dag en geskiedenis, bely ons nie Christus nie, hoe vrymoediglik ons hom ookal probeer bely. Waar die veldslag beslis word, daar word die lojaliteit van die soldaat bewys.

THE CHURCH IN POLITICS

where battle rages
there the loyalty of the soldier is proved—

Churches are not abstract entities. They are institutions involved in history. They are a part of society. To understand the task of the Church as such we must take seriously the concrete situation in which it exists. This means that the churches can never be neutral in a given situation—If they do claim to be neutral in relation to political action or social issues it means that they have actually ranged themselves on the side of the status quo, the existing order. In so doing the churches have opted for the power elites against the masses, the oppressors against the oppressed.

In South Africa the Government claims that there is no clash between the Church as such and the state, but only between individuals and Christian leaders, and so on, and the state. We do not at this stage wish to expatiate on the fact that this standpoint is *theologically untenable*, but merely mention in passing that it is in general confirmed by the Churches. So it would seem that the Churches and the state are at one in South Africa. Why is this so in present circumstances? Is it that the Church in general is satisfied that the government and the way in which the affairs of state are conducted comply with the message and contents of the gospel of Jesus Christ? Or is it that the Churches do not believe it right to be existentially involved in society and politics and have therefore decided to observe neutrality in the political field? It is no secret that the present government believes that the Churches do not have a direct and specific task to perform in the political field and that the Prime Minister has warned the Churches not to meddle. The Church in general has responded by accepting this alleged theology and most of the Churches believe that the only course left open to them is for *individual Christians* in their personal capacities to try to bring positive influence to bear in the field of politics in line with the teachings of the Gospel.

As this line of thought and "theology" is in the nature of a "silent agreement" between state and Church, it is no wonder that the government feels embarrassed when some Church or body of Christians becomes involved in the social or political field proclaiming the message of Christ as King in these fields too, as it was said by St. Paul: "... that the universe, all in heaven and on earth, might be brought into a unity in Christ" (Ephesians 1:10).

The government is not only embarrassed by this witness in word and deed, but has actually taken action to stop this involvement by way of bannings (cf. the latest banning—that of Manas Buthelezi), deportation, confiscation of passports, investigation of possible subversion (cf. the "Schlebusch Commission"), etc. Such action is usually taken without explanation.

As Parliament has resumed its work this month and as action is threatened against certain Christian groups, against the press in general, and against specific Christian publications in particular, one must seriously consider the question: *What is the task of the Church as such in these circumstances?* To date the Church in general has kept to the sidelines of the battleground or has tacitly "approved" the state of affairs. If there were any reaction, it usually came by way of specific Church leaders, individuals or groups of Christians, but not through the Church as such. Here one must exclude general statements on race, apartheid and politics. Is this a healthy state of affairs, or is it a disastrous dilemma for the Church?

Black Christian reaction led to the emergence of a "Black Theology", a movement which was yet again seen by the government as highly "dangerous", and calling for restrictive action as e.g. in the banning of the publication entitled: "Essays on Black Theology". The Church in general concurred in the government viewpoint—at least as far as the Afrikaans Churches were concerned, and with the possible exception of the Black D.R. Churches.

no final authority in political decisions

When one tries to understand the nature of the task of the Church in South Africa, there is one very important aspect which must not be overlooked. The problem is not only a problem for individuals or specific Christian groups but the fact is that the involvement of the Church in society and politics is *an issue for the whole Church, the body of Christ on earth*. It is also not only a question of method, of how to approach the government on certain issues or how the Church's message should be given; the problem goes much deeper than that.

The heart of the matter is that there is no sphere in life, be it personal, social, political, or ecclesiastical, that has an independent, self-contained moral finality. Although every sphere works according to a specific set of rules and assumptions, yet life is a whole and the whole of life must be included within the gospel of the Master of life, Jesus Christ. God has only one Kingdom and this must come to pass in *this* world—there is no other “world”. Consequently the Church’s message has no limits or restrictions in the world, no matter what the field.

The basic assumption of a government (or of a Church for that matter) which wants to keep the Church out of “politics” is that political and social processes have their own autonomy and although the politicians can also be Christians they must first and foremost be politicians for the professional political field and Christians only after that. This is a metaphysical assumption which makes man, the politician, the government, the final “god” in politics.

Although the government in South Africa is officially vociferous in its condemnation of Communism, it must be said that the assumption referred to above, has in it in fact elements of unchristian Marxism. What matters most for Marxism are the basic (political) realities in society and imagination (faith) morality and God—(be it noted, however, that Marxism does not accept the existence of God)—must be made subject to this natural order of things. Once one believes in the autonomy of the social or political system, one is automatically conditioned to be a slave in this world, ensnared in one’s own life and fears, and that same political system. This is actually what has happened to white political life in South Africa; it is a prisoner of the world as it is and therefore desperately in need of liberation. In general the whites do not want to achieve liberation here and now, and they evade the issue by projecting it to the hereafter. But it must be remembered that Christ was born into this life and fulfilled his mission of liberation here in this world and liberation and a new (political) life must start here. This is one reason why one can have individual Christians in the government who are sincere believers but who at the same time still follow a cruel, harsh system of apartheid.

the church does not become a political party

Does this mean that we would like to revert to the Middle Ages and to theocratize society and politics? No, but one thing must be made clear and that is that the Church as a body and as part of society has a specific and vital role and message for the country including the political life of the country. When this essential role is omitted the Church not only does itself a disservice but it causes political life to become independent in an idolatrous way because the task of the Church is to carry the essential dimension of the gospel—unity, reconciliation, freedom, peace, love and order—into the political life of a country. If the Church becomes involved in politics, it does not become a political party; it brings into the political arena the indispensable dimension of the gospel. Consequently the Church cannot be accused of political subversion or opportunism. It is only performing its duty, namely to be a witness for Christ in this field also.

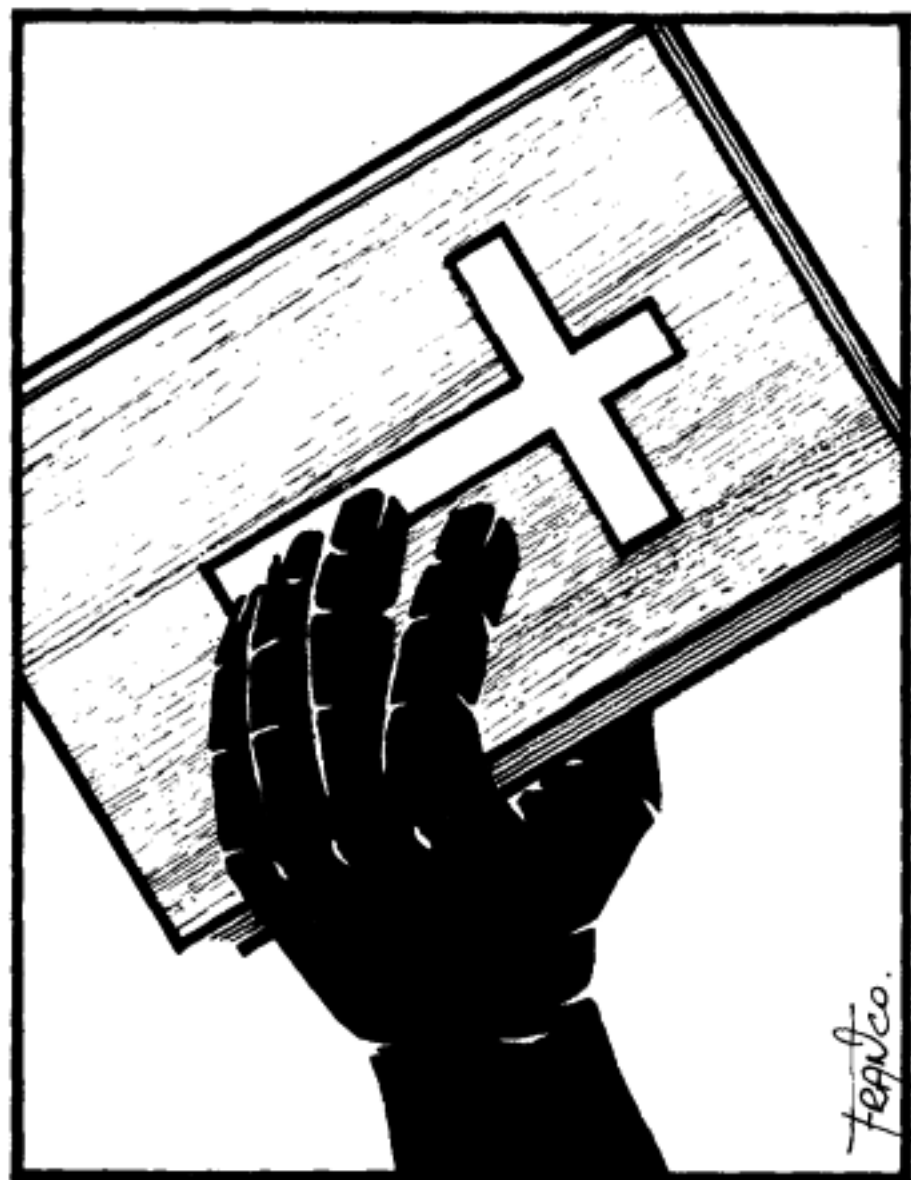
It is of the utmost importance that the Church as a whole should come to realise the fact that the social and political order of South Africa has not reached its existing form because of a divine necessity, but because *men* have built it in the past and the present. All social systems result from the acts of imperfect men and consequently are under God’s judgment. It has therefore become necessary to remove the false sentiment from the man-made reality in our political society. The Church must now start to pray and work for the Kingdom to come, even, nay especially, in the political life of South Africa. If political decisions are accepted as the final word for the Church, then the Church has lost God, and has become a slave of men—Have we gone so far in South Africa?

Martin Luther said that *if we profess the truth of the Gospel but excluding the specific issue of our day and history, we are not professing Christ however boldly we may assert that we are doing so. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved.*



waarheen wil swart teologie?

alan boesak



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Vanaf sy verskyning as 'n teologiese fenomeen het swart teologie veel tonge in beroering gebring. Vir veel in hierdie blanke gedomineerde wêreld is dit moeilik om dit te begryp. En selfs mense wat hulleself as „progressief-denkend” noem, het dikwels die grootste moeite om begrip vir swart teologie te voorskyn te bring. Ons sal in hierdie artikel nie ingaan op die waaroms van hierdie laaste houding, of op die reaksie van swart en blanke kant op die swart teologie nie, maar ons wil eerder vra wat swart teologie is, wat hy wil en waarheen hy op pad is.

Eerlikheidshalwe wil ons vooraf sê dat onder swart teoloë self verskil bestaan ten aansien van begrippe, van aksente wat gelê word. En waarom nie? In die Christelike teologie is nog nooit koekoek-één-sang gewees nie en ons weier om swart teologie tot so iets te degradeer net om deur die blankes „ernstig geneem te word”. Daar is egter wat die essensiële dinge betref, 'n hegte eenheid onder alle swart teoloë.

Swart teologie wil God se handeling in die wêreld in terme van swart ervaring vertaal; hy wil hom besig hou

met die nuwe ondekke ervaring dat God daar is vir die onderdrukte, die armes, die swartmens; en hoë God vir die swartmens is.

Swart teologie wil ingaan op die omvormende moontlikhede van die evangelie, wil die moontlikhede en beloftes volstrek ernstig neem en interpreteer in terme van die agtergrond van die swart ervaring, van die legitieme verlange van swartmense om as Gods kinders op hierdie aarde te mag leef. Swart teologie is geen wanhopige greep in die lug nie, maar uitdrukking van hoop en vertroue in 'n God wat ondanks alle blanke anekasies tog God gebly het, d.w.s. totaal anders as die God wat die blankes ons voorgehou het.

Hy is 'n God wat vir die swartmense leef, 'n God wat ontstaan tot die stryd, wat geen genoë neem met die vernedering van mense nie, in hierdie geval sy swart kinders. Dié God laat geen leuen, geen halwe waarheid, geen selfvervaardigde mite toe om onaangetas te bestaan nie. Sy geregtigheid dring deur tot die wortel van die kwaad.

Vir die swartmens is rassisme die grootste kwaad, die grootste bedreiging vir sy menswees. Dit is nog gevaarliker omdat rassisme in ons situasie deur Christene beoefen word. Swart teologie wil rassisme aansien vir wat dit is: sonde, rebellie teen God en sy evangelie, en 'n bedreiging vir die voortbestaan van sy kerk.

Swart teologie ... Christelike teologie?

Ondanks verwyte van sommige blanke teoloë is en bly swart teologie 'n Christelike teologie. Hy wil geen selfstandige teologie wees nie (1); dit is wars van alle absolutisme. Swart teologie is die verkondiging van die ou evangelie wat relevant gemaak word vir die nuwe situasie van die swartman. Swart teologie wil formuleer wat swart Christene in die evangelie sien, wat hulle verwag van die evangelie en van die kerk. Swart teologie is in sy wese uitgesproke kritiek op die netelige posisie waarin die Christelike geloof homself bevind as gevolg van sy kompromis met mag en die magtiges, as gevolg van sy onvermoë om die evangelie in sy volheid te verkondig aan swartmense in hulle situasie van vernedering en onderdrukking.

Swart teologie neem die stryd op teen 'n magsinterpretasie van die evangelie en glo dat Jesus in die eerste plek daar is vir die armes, die swakkes en die magteloses. Swart Christene neem die blankes baie kwalik dat hy dié aspek van die Christelike geloof, nl. die bevryding, so erg verwaarloos het. Daarom is swart teologie essensieel 'n teologie van bevryding. Bevryding in the plek van 'n teologie wat vanuit 'n magsposisie bedryf word en in die tweede plek bevryding van politieke en ekonomiese bande, van ontmensliking en uitbuiting.

Dit is duidelik: hier het 'n mens met 'n reaksie-teologie te make. Maar nogeens: waarom nie? Swart teologie reageer ... nie teen blankes of ter wille van swartes nie, maar ter wille van die teologie, die Christelike geloof. Die geloof wat ons lewe bepaal en waarvolgens ook ons wil lewe ... ondanks! Dit is 'n reaksie op wat dr. Virgil Cruz „perversies van die Christendom” genoem het. (2) Swart teologie neem die saak op vir die geloof in 'n strydende bevrydende God teen 'n geloof wat Christus 'n dienaar maak van eiebelang en sieklike partikularisme. Hy sê onherroepelik nee!

Hy sê onherroepelik nee

- * teen 'n teologie wat van God 'n abstrakte idee maak en van teologie 'n niksseggende intellektuele gedoe wat met hierdie wêreld in geen enkele verband staan nie ...
- * ... teen 'n teologie wat God annekseer as blank en Westers, wat deur die vriendelikheid en onuitblusbare sendingywer van blankes ons genadiglik aangebied word ...
- * ... teen 'n teologie wat uit onvermoë die mens en menslike verhoudinge ontproblematiseer: God word skielik „kleurblind”, versoening tussen rasse word gedegradeer tot „integrasie”, of erger nog, tot „gesamentlike aanbidding”.
- * ... teen 'n teologie wat oorrumpel word deur die bestaande sodat hy die hoop verloor. Of angstig

bewarend homself vassuig aan die status quo uit vrees vir verandering; of meteens alle vertrouwe en hoop opsê terwyl hy kies vir konflik sonder uitsig op verantwoordelike versoening.

- * ... ten slotte teen 'n etiek van die ordeninge wat alles by die oue wil laat en kies vir 'n etiek van die verandering, wat glo en werk in die revolusionêre krag van die Heilige Gees wat verandering, bekering en vernuwing in die wêreld bring. Daarom is Jesaja 61:1, 2 en Lukas 4:18, 19 vir die swart teologie 'n onmisbare beginpunt. Die aangename jaar van die Here is daar!

Blankes by swart teologie?

Beteken swart teologie 'n eksklusivisme waar alleen swartes by tuishoort? 'n Soort teologiese apartheid wat ons by ons blanke leermeesters afgekyk het en nou konsekwent deurvoer? Sommige sê selfs dat swart teologie alle bande van kommunikasie tussen blankes en swartes afsny.

Hoewel die versoeking groot is om hier te vra: „watter soort kommunikasie”? kan ek nie hier daarop ingaan nie. Dit moet egter gesê word: Swart teologie soek die beloftes vir die evangelie vir die swartmense in hulle swart situasie.

Dit behoort duidelik te wees dat geen blanke hiervoor woorde kan hê nie. (3) Dit beteken egter nie dat die blankes buite staan, of dat hy daarmee „niks te make” het nie. Dit kan per definisie nie so wees nie! Swart teologie is 'n teologie van bevryding vir swartes sowel as blankes. Geen blanke Christen kan van „die vryheid wat in Christus Jesus is” geniet solank hy broers en susters in kettings hou nie; solank hy my verneder en uitbuit, is „sy vriendelikheid nié aan alle mense bekend” nie. Wat ek wil sê, is dit: die blanke is netsowel die slagoffer van sy sisteem as die swarte, al is dit dan op verskillende maniere. Die bevryding van die swartman kan, moet selfs die bevryding van die blanke beteken. Ek moet my swartheid ontdek in die lig van die evangelie—dat ek 'n waardige skepsel van God is, bestem om 'n besondere rol in die wêreld te speel. My swartheid is van God, dit is waardig, dit is geweldig! My verantwoordelikheid is om toe te sien dat my swartheid nie, d.w.s. nooit weer teken van minderwaardigheid en minder-mensheid word nie. Net so moet die blanke sy blankheid sien in die lig van die evangelie en die volle konsekwensies daarvan!

Anders as James Cohen nooi ek die blanke uit om nie swart te word nie, ten minste nie in die eerste plek nie, maar om eers te sien wat hulle blankheid beteken. Vandaaruit word 'n gesprek sinvol. Eers dan kan hulle saam met ons „swart” wees. Dit is inmiddels duidelik dat „swart” nie hier met die velkleur te make het nie, vandaar dat in swart teologie *God* swart genoem kan word.

Swart teologie juis in S.A.

Dit is nie toevallig dat swart teologie, soos ons dit verstaan, alleen maar kon ontstaan in lande soos die Verenigde State van Amerika en Suid-Afrika nie. Dit is juis in hierdie lande waar swart Christene voel dat hulle aan 'n „Christelike” onderdrukking onderworpe is; dit is juis in hierdie lande waar die Christendom 'n „vested interest” het in die handhawing van die status quo. Dit is geen wonder dat juis in hierdie lande meteens op alle „gevaare” van hierdie nuwe teologie gewys word nie. Natuurlik is daar gevare. Ons kan maklik die foute wat die blanke teologie gemaak het vrugteloos herhaal. Ons reaksie loop ook die gevaar om neuroties te word. Daar is die gevaar dat ons die moontlikheid opgaan om agter ons swartheid te verskuil ten einde konstruktiewe kritiek te kan afwys. Om maar iets te noem. Daar is die gevaar van die teologie wat ideologie word en van 'n „omgekeerde” anneksasie van God. Weer is die verleiding onweerstaanbaar. As die blanke dit maar altyd so goed gewet het soos hy dit blykbaar nou doen, het ons wel veel minder probleme gehad! Maar hierop gaan ons elders in. (4) Voorlopig beteken dit alles vir 'n land soos Suid-Afrika dit: Vir swart Christene is die teologie en die kerk nie langer 'n vlug in die hiernamaals „waar dit soveel beter sal wees nie”. Jy kan nie oor die hemel praat as jy nie eens weet wat jy op die aarde is en doen nie.

Blankwees is nie langer bepalend en die toppunt van alle goed nie. Hulle interpretasie is nie langer 'n bindende gesag waarvoor my swart hoof moet buig nie. Ek leef by die genade van God en nie by die genade van die blankes nie, hoe graag hy my dit wil laat glo deur sy houding en sy wette. Ons is nie daar vir die blankes nie, ons is daar, sê Adam Small, en hy spreek vir almal.

Dit beteken verder vir swartes dat apartheid teologies gesien, sonde is, opstand teen God, en dat anders as die blanke teologie swart teologie nie sal duld dat God misbruik word om ontmensliking en vernedering te bedek nie. Dit beteken dat die Westerse beskawing waarmee die Christelike geloof (helaas!) nie ten onregte nie, geïdentifiseer word as ten diepste selfsugtig en (in sy teenwoordige gestalte) as 'n bedreiging vir die verkondiging van die evangelie ontmasker word.

Maar dit beteken egter ook dat ons vurig hoop dat die blankes ook bevry sal word. Mense wat in ang en wantroue leef, kan nie lefhê nie. En hierdie laaste is stellig die moeilikste taak van die swart teologie: om aan swartes te verkondig om nooit op te hou om die blankes lief te hê nie. „Want as julle liefhet die wat julle liefhet, watter loon het julle?” (Matt. 5:46). Swart teologie wil hierdie teks volstrek ernstig opneem. Maar daar kom 'n mens nie vanself uit nie; ons sal almal deur die vuur moet heen.



VOETNOTAS:

1. Dit is een van die punte van verskil met James Cohen, Noord-Amerikaanse eksponent van swart teologie.
2. VU Magazine, April 1973.
3. Vergelyk die bundel versetpoësie „Cry Rage!” en die skitterende vertaling van prof. Rothuizen: Schreeuw van woede! Uitgegee deur Kok, einde September. Veral die gedig oor die vraag of die witman woorde hiervoor het. („Cry Rage” is in S.A. verban—red).
4. Sien voetnoot 1.



WEIGHED AND ...?

DETAILS OF SCHLEBUSCH QUESTIONING DIVULGED

A former vice president of Nusas, Mr. Horst Kleinschmidt (28), has divulged details of his interrogation about the student body by the Schlebusch Commission.

At his trial in Pretoria today for allegedly refusing to testify before the commission on the activities of the Christian Institute, Mr. Kleinschmidt said that he had reconsidered his attitude towards the commission after the banning of eight Nusas leaders. He felt that there was a direct link between the commission's interim report and the bannings.

Mr. Kleinschmidt said under oath that he had been interrogated for about half-an-hour on his background, his parent's political views, relationship with the banned Nusas leader, Neville Curtis, and the University Christian Movement.

The line of questioning adopted about Curtis might have been prejudicial, Mr. Kleinschmidt thought.

It had been suggested that he might have been misled by other Nusas officials and student leaders. He felt that his evidence before the commission had not supplemented in any way the information which they already possessed.

Mr. Kleinschmidt, who pleaded not guilty at the outset of the proceedings today, said he was opposed to the system of banning people as it was a form of punishment which took everything from a man's life that offered him a livelihood and means of expression.

In his evidence in chief, Mr. Kleinschmidt told how he had been approached by the Security Police to spy on certain student organisations. They offered him a salary and to pay for his studies. He rejected the offer outright.

—Pretoria News, 8.1.74.

MOULDER GUILTY OF DEFIANCE

James Moulder (30), a lecturer in philosophy at Rhodes University, was given the option of a fine when convicted in Pretoria today for failing to testify before the Schlebusch Commission.

He was sentenced to a fine of R50 (or 25 days' imprisonment) with a further two months' imprisonment conditionally suspended for three years.

He indicated that he intended handing in notice of appeal.

The magistrate, Mr. G.J.V. Jordaan, said in his judgment that it was the duty of every citizen to testify before a court of law and a duly appointed commission of inquiry.

—Pretoria News, 10.1.74

SCHLEBUSCH CASES PUT OFF

The trials of five members of the Christian Institute for allegedly defying the Schlebusch Commission have again been postponed.

The Rev. Theo Kotzé, Cape director of the Christian Institute, Mr. Peter Randall, former director of Spro-cas, the Rev. Roelf Meyer, editor of the C.I. journal, Pro Veritate, the Rev. Brian Brown, the C.I.'s administrative director and the Rev. Danie van Zyl, former Spro-cas communications director, were remanded to dates in February and March.

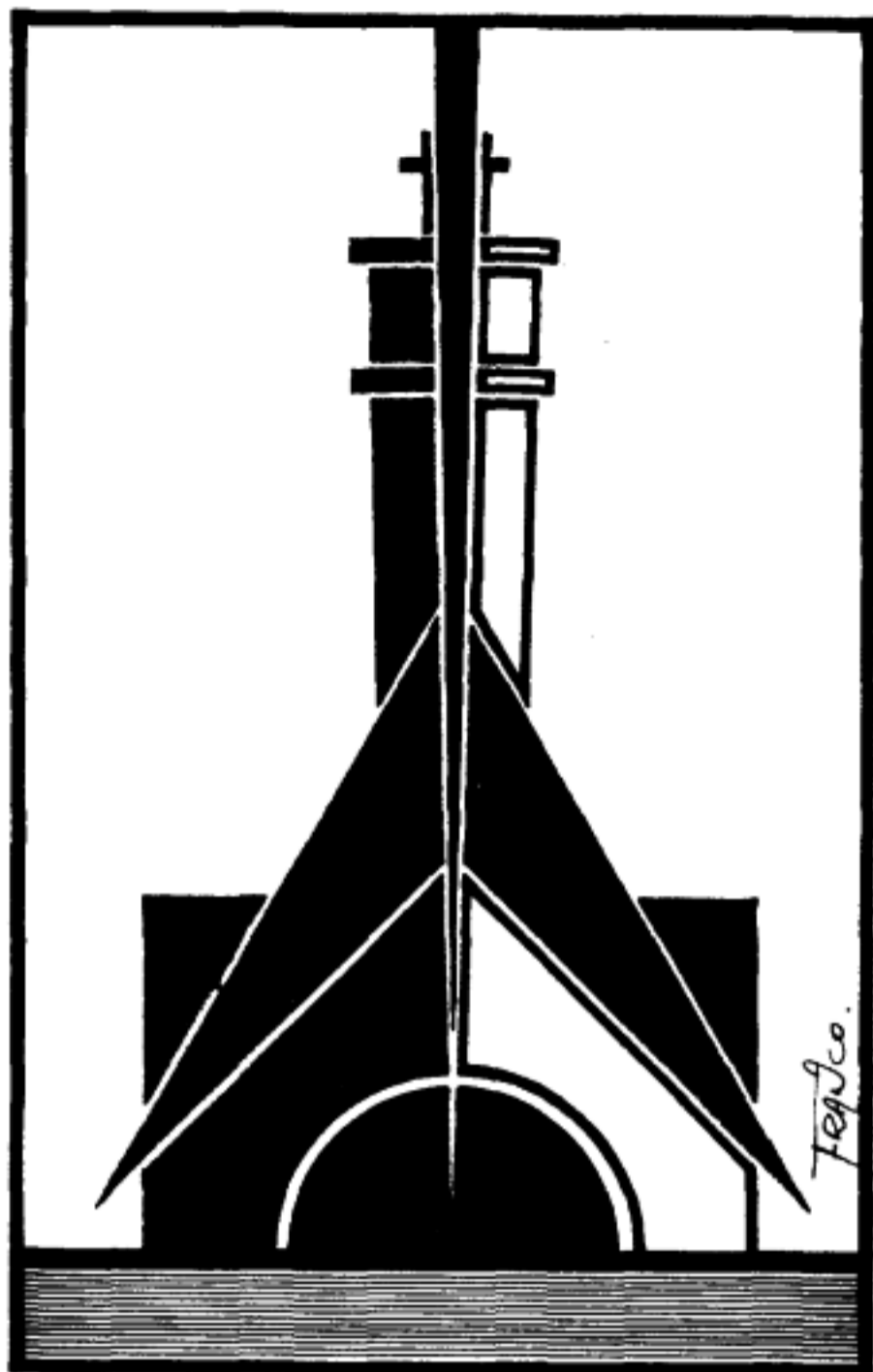
The remands were a sequel to a decision by the magistrate in the case of Mr. Kotzé to lift partially the secrecy clause contained in the Commissions Act.

State counsel told the court that the Schlebusch Commission wished to obtain legal advice on whether the hearing was being conducted before a proper court.

Mr. Kotze's case was subsequently postponed until February 20. Immediately afterwards the cases of the other Christian Institute members were also postponed.

—Pretoria News, 16.1.74.

GEWEEG EN ...?



THE CHURCH CRISIS ON RACE RELATIONS

ecunews

Afrikaans, English and Black Churches are standing on the threshold of a new era in race relations. But because none have any idea of what direction to follow in the future, all are in some danger at the moment.

Something of a crisis is facing the "family" of the N.G. Kerk. 100 ministers of the N.G. Kerk in Afrika (the African "daughter church" of the N.G. Kerk) for the first time openly criticised apartheid. As a result, it seems that there may be a direct confrontation between the White "mother" church and the Black "daughter" church.

Yet while eyes are focussed on the N.G. family, the tension there is symptomatic of a much wider tension in race relations affecting practically all churches in South Africa.

In fact, it can be said that South African churches have reached a watershed in their approach to race relations, and none of them are very sure of what the future will bring or which direction they should take. This article seeks to set the whole question of race relations in churches in some sort of perspective.

Being multiracial organisations uniting people on a common basis of belief, Churches in South Africa were among the first institutions in the country to have to evolve some sort of a pattern of regulating relationships between different races. In the process of time, three distinctive structure patterns emerged.

A. THE APARTHEID CHURCHES (The Afrikaans and Lutheran Churches)

The largest Afrikaans Church, the N.G. Kerk, is also the oldest Church in South Africa. It has chosen to adopt a basis of segregation or apartheid in racial affairs among its members. Thus, there is a White "mother" church, and separate, theoretically autonomous churches for each Black group—the N.G. Kerk in Afrika for Africans, the N.G. Mission Church for Coloureds and the Indian Reformed Church for Indians. The churches are linked by a federal structure at the top national level.

Originally, there were no such racial divisions in the N.G. Kerk. However, in the mid-19th century the divisions began to appear "because of the weakness of some" in the words of famous phrase. Whites objected among other things, to sharing the same communion cup as Coloureds or "tribal" Africans, and so, largely for pragmatic reasons, separate churches were formed.

This pattern of separation was carried even further by the breakaway Nederduitse Hervormde Kerk in the Transvaal, which bluntly prohibited Blacks from becoming members. Although this church has carried

out limited missionary work among Blacks and established separate churches, these do not even have a federal link with the "mother" church.

And while the smaller Gereformeerde (Dopper) Kerk did not follow the pattern of having separate "daughter churches" for Blacks, nonetheless strict segregation between Blacks and Whites was applied at all levels of the church other than its national synod.

Other Afrikaans churches formed later, notably the Apostolic Faith Mission, a large Pentecostal denomination with a preponderance of Afrikaans membership, did follow the Mother and Daughter church system of apartheid.

Also falling in the category of "apartheid" or segregated churches, are the Lutheran Churches of Southern Africa. Today there is no multi-racial Lutheran Church, the 13 member churches of the Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in South Africa (FELCSA) being divided on ethnic basis.

However, this situation did not come about by deliberate design. Rather it reflects the divisions between Lutherans in Europe, missionaries from different churches having started work in different areas in South Africa, while White German settlers here formed their own exclusive White churches.

The system of separate churches for separate ethnic groups has several powerful arguments to commend it. For one thing, it gives people an opportunity to express themselves and their worship in their own indigenous way.

For another, it enables Blacks especially to be in control of their own affairs to some extent. And certainly, notable Black leaders have been produced by these churches—Dr. S.P.E. Buti in the NGKA, the Rev. E. Mannikam in the Indian Reformed Church (N.G. Indian daughter church), Bishops P. Mhlungu, D. Rapoo, L. Auala and Dr. J.L. de Vries in the Lutheran Churches.

B. THE UNITARY CHURCHES (The main English-language denominations)

When churches originating in Britain "set up shop" in South Africa, they made little or no adaptation to their structures in order to cope with the local race situation:

The Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational and Roman Catholic churches simply incorporated Blacks into their national, regional and local structures.

While the ethnic composition of an area sometimes meant that a regional or local body was all Black or all White, these were nonetheless incorporated into an

overall unitary structure, which in theory was non-racial. Blacks could, and have in limited numbers risen to top positions in these churches where they have violated an almost sacred convention in South Africa that no Black shall be in a superior position to a White.

Here, however, it must be said that the non-racial nature of the structures ruled and rules in theory only. On a local level segregation between Blacks and Whites is almost total. Where Blacks and Whites do come together at higher regional and national levels, Whites are almost always in control of the machinery of the churches.

C. THE BLACK INDEPENDENT CHURCHES (over 3 000 churches)

The Black Independent churches first began to appear in the late 19th century and now include well over 2m people. They could, in a way, be included among the "apartheid" churches, in that they have separated themselves from the White churches, and have an entirely Black membership. In these churches one finds perhaps the most authentic expression of African Christianity, practically untouched by the hand of the White man.

However, this separation is not based on rejection of Whites as such, but rather on a rejection of a Western-orientated way of doing things. Black Independent churches do not bar Whites from membership, and in fact recently one of them, the Presbyterian Church of Africa, accepted its first White minister.

Nonetheless in their separation, Black churches in fact go much further in the direction of segregation than even the White "apartheid" churches, in that they have virtually no White members and no contact with White churches.

In this sense they have no problem in race relations. Yet their almost complete separation from White churches can be seen as one attempted solution to the race question in a multiracial or multinational society.

SYSTEMS UNDER STRAIN

On the basis of growth of membership, there has not been much to choose between the apartheid churches and the Unitary churches over the past few decades. The Black Independent Churches on the other hand, have shown spectacular growth. However, as will be seen, their "solution" to the race relations question has by no means proved to be ideal.

Up to the late 1960's the various race systems worked relatively frictionlessly. Where racial friction did occur, mostly within the unitary churches, Blacks merely opted out and became part of the Independent Churches.

The dawning of the Black Consciousness Movement spelled trouble for the apartheid and unitary system of Church Government. Both began to be questioned by Blacks; at the same time, however, new movements began to arise among the Black Independent churches which indicated that the final outcome of Black Consciousness was not being considered satisfactory either.

At the moment, the questionings and tensions are rising to a peak. Again it is best to deal with each system separately.

APARTHEID UNDER FIRE

In the apartheid churches, the clearest manifestation of the new Black Consciousness has been an attack on apartheid, and in the case of the Lutheran Churches, a strong rejection of any idea of segregation in church life.

Some Blacks are willing to admit merit in the system of segregation, which allows people to worship in their own indigenous way. However, they increasingly react against a type of apartheid which seems to hold them at an arm's length on the basis of colour alone, and which does not even allow them to worship in many White church buildings.

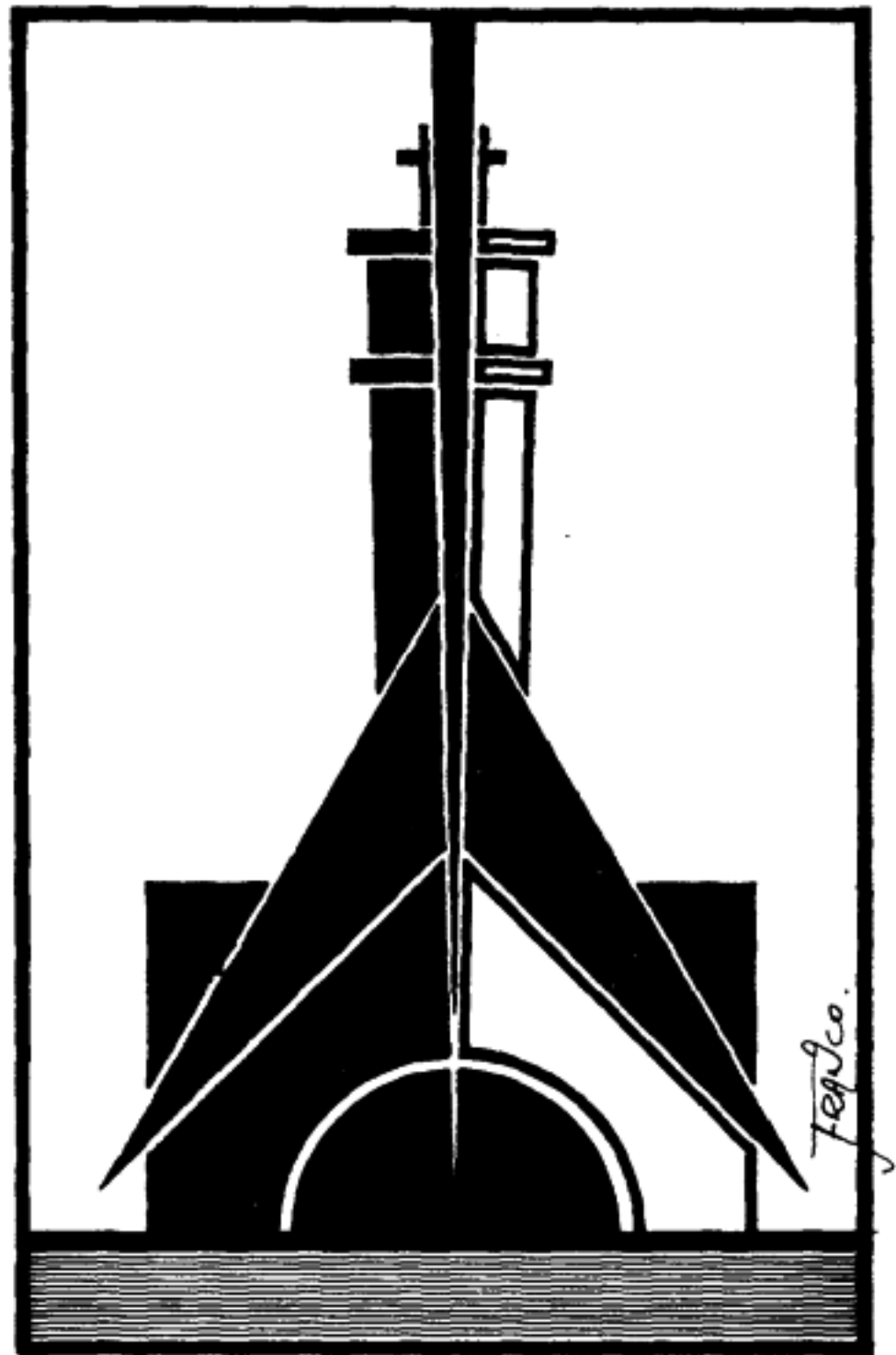
Earlier this year, a Coloured minister of the N.G. Mission Church, the Rev. J.J.F. Mettler, wrote to the Afrikaans Sunday Newspaper *Rapport*: "We are too colour conscious. In everything, even in our religion, we see White, Brown and Black. We even talk of a "White, Coloured and Bantu Church". There is only one Church, and that is the Church of Jesus Christ ..."

An outspoken leader of the N.G. Indian Reformed Church, the Rev. E. Mannikam, says that while he does believe in separate churches for different ethnic groups, nonetheless churches should be open to all, and if the White N.G. Kerk rejected the principle of mixed worship, he has stated categorically that he and his Indian congregations would break away from the N.G. family.

Now African members of the N.G. have joined in this criticism. The secretary of the General Synod of the NGKA, the Rev. S.P.E. Buti, reports that at the controversial meeting of 100 Black ministers of the Church in Soweto last month: "It came out boldly that we could no longer hold our peace against the ideology of separation of races on the basis of colour".

The ministers were criticising apartheid in a political sense, but by logical extension, this must also apply to apartheid in the Church.

Yet these criticisms of Church apartheid by Black members of the N.G. family are mild compared to those which have been voiced by the Black Lutherans recently.



These Blacks have not only criticised church apartheid, but have vehemently demanded that White Lutheran churches should unite with the Black.

At the conference of the Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Southern Africa (FELCSA) (which has a membership of 850 000) held in February, Dr. J.L. de Vries, head of one of the two large Black Lutheran churches in South West Africa, said: "Time is running short. We can't wait anymore for White churches to come to unity. We must ask them: 'Why can't you unite with us? What is the problem?' Suspicion against Whites is mounting in the country, and in the Lutheran Church. If we do not find a way to come into contact on a local level, the Lutheran Church will break."

Black criticisms and pressures in the apartheid churches are showing up one disadvantage of the system, which is that separatist feelings among whites are very hard to break down.

In the White Lutheran churches in South West Africa for instance, pastors have given up in despair trying to move their congregations in the direction of unity with Blacks, and have asked to be sent home to Germany.

It will be argued by many in South Africa that White resistance to drawing more close to Blacks in churches is perfectly justifiable. Yet it is creating a situation in which the irresistible force of Black Consciousness is moving into collision with the immovable object of White separatist feeling. Obviously this situation holds great danger for the apartheid churches.

THE UNITARY CHURCHES

Paradoxically, while Blacks in the apartheid churches are expressing a desire for closer unity with Whites, Blacks in the unitary churches are in many instances, moving in a separatist direction.

This move stems not only from rising Black Consciousness, but from disillusionment about the gulf between profession and practice on the question of non-racial equality in the unitary churches.

It is widely acknowledged that on the local level especially, the unitary churches are as apartheid inclined as their Afrikaans-speaking counterparts. There are a good number of "English" local congregations that also refuse to let Blacks use their churches for worship.

In the higher structures of the unitary churches, Blacks theoretically should have a status of equality and of voice with the Whites. This is practically never the case; Whites have floated like cream to the top of the power structures.

Black reaction against this situation was expressed by the Archbishop of Capetown, the Most Rev. Robert Selby Taylor in delivering his charge to the Anglican Provincial Synod last week: "Thoughtful Blacks are today striving to be liberated from dependence on White leadership and dominance, and they are seeking to develop their own insights, culture and standard of living. They are not convinced that Whites have a monopoly of all that is wise and true. On the contrary many believe that Whites have betrayed Christian standards."

Thus, there is a tendency among Blacks in the unitary churches today to think in terms of withdrawal from the White dominated structures. "We must withdraw ourselves before coming back to talk to Whites on an equal footing," says the Rev. Maurice Ngakane, director of the division of Mission and Evangelism in the S.A. Council of Churches.

Blacks have already shown signs of withdrawal. For instance, the passivity and lack of expression from the Blacks at the recent Pretoria Conference of the Methodist Church of South Africa—which probably has the highest calibre of Black leaders of any of the unitary churches—has been interpreted by some as a form of withdrawal.

Physical withdrawal from a Church took place at this year's Assembly of the Congregational Church in Uitenhage, Cape. Here, the ex-chairman of the 120 000-strong Church, the Rev. Alan Hendrickse, brought proceedings to a stop when he and several other Black ministers walked out after a procedural wrangle with a White chairman. Mr. Hendrickse had been arguing that solving racial tensions within the Congregational Church was far more important than finding unity with other denominations.

Perhaps the sharpest clash between Blacks and Whites on the side of the unitary churches is occurring at the moment at the Wilgespruit Fellowship Centre, which has the backing of these churches and which represents one of the most far-reaching attempts to attain the racial unitary ideal.

In a hard hitting article appearing in the African *Drum* magazine this month, Black staff at Wilgespruit lash out at both its White-dominated management committee and the S.A. Council of Churches.

"The Blacks argue that it is impossible for Whites to divorce themselves from a way of life they have known since birth", says the article. "While things remain as they are, multiracialism is impossible".

A White member of the Wilgespruit Management Committee admits: "We have a bad problem on our hands, and we don't know what to do about it".

And that sums up the feeling among Whites in the unitary English-speaking churches as well. These churches have made attempts to cope with the new surge of Black Consciousness. Most have groups looking at the race situation in their Churches and trying to bring about more equitable conditions, for instance the giving of more power to Blacks in church structures.

The Anglican Church has its Challenge Groups". In the Methodist Church there is the programme of Justice and Reconciliation, the "Hand-in-Hand" programme in the Congregational Church and the Justice and Peace Commissions in the Roman Catholic Church.

However, as yet the impact of these various programmes has been meagre, and in the eyes of impatient Blacks have really made no difference to the situation at all.

Yet another difficulty arises here, for while Blacks are increasingly impatient of White unitary churches, they are not sure of the direction in which they want to go.

This was clearly seen at the Durban Congress on Mission and Evangelism in March of this year, whose 700 participants were drawn overwhelmingly from the unitary churches. At that Congress Blacks dropped a bombshell when they demanded to be allowed to caucus separately.

The new move had a traumatic effect on the Whites, for here was the withdrawal policy receiving almost brutally frank expression. In contrite mood, Whites decided to listen to what the Black caucus had to say—only to find that in fact it had nothing positive to say.

In their meeting the Blacks had found themselves deeply divided, and that while they were united in criticising the Congress for its White orientation, they had no positive points to make or clear directions to indicate.

Nonetheless, Black anger and frustration is building up in the unitary churches, and they too are finding themselves in a situation of some peril.

THE BLACK INDEPENDENT CHURCHES

At the present moment, the third “solution” to the race question in the churches—separation from Whites—does not look all that good, for the picture presented by the Black independent churches is one of division, weakness and confusion.

The membership and the numbers of these churches is continuing to grow at a fast rate. Yet certain happenings over the past few years point to many difficulties in their situation.

There are a good number of independent churches, like the Zion Christian Church centred on Morija in the Northern Transvaal, which are large and stable. However, there is also a huge mass of much smaller churches which are poverty-stricken both from a financial and educational point of view.

Because of their small size, their chances of pulling themselves up by their bootstraps are minimal. And a good proportion of them realising this, have attempted to come together in larger, ecumenical bodies over the last decade to find strength in unity.

The most notable of these bodies was the African Independent Churches' Association (AICA), which at its height included close on 500 independent Black churches.

However, at the moment, AICA is in a state of collapse. The immediate cause of the collapse is lack of finance; but AICA's budgetary failures are due to the inexperience and lack of education of office-bearers, which in turn must be traced back to churches too small and divided to be able to afford training or education for officials and leaders.

Another important reason for AICA's downfall was the feuding and internal power struggles which characterised the whole eight years of its existence. Thus, one important lesson taught by the AICA experience is that the separatist spirit which led to the formation of the

Independent Churches, has bred a separatism of its own. This has produced a huge multiplicity of churches which seems to ensure that they will remain small and weak for a long time.

Realising their weakness, many of these churches are desperately seeking for ways to better themselves both from the point of view of education and of recognition. For instance, no fewer than 110 Black independent churches have applied for admission to the S.A. Council of Churches, which however, has imposed a moratorium on new admissions until the matter can be investigated.

In the meantime, the S.A. Council of Churches is also being besieged by demands from Black churches for theological education, but for the moment the chances of providing such education on a wide scale seem small.

With the crash of AICA, the Black Independent Churches, left to struggle on their own, are also facing something of a crisis.

NO SOLUTIONS IN SIGHT

The crises in the apartheid, unitary and the Black independent churches are in a way brand new. The Black leadership of the NGKA came out with its condemnation of apartheid only last week. The African Independent Churches' Association collapsed only last month. As yet the crisis in the unitary has not yet crystallised properly. Churches have hardly begun to think of solutions. Yet obviously they will have to start thinking very hard soon, for the crises in which they find themselves are part of the larger question of race relations facing South Africa as a whole.

—*Ecunews*, Nov. 1973.





alpheus hamilton zulu

THE DILEMMA OF THE BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN

This speech was published by the W.C.C. SE/47 Study Encounter, Vol. IX, No. 3, 1973. The Rt. Rev. A.H. Zulu, Anglican Bishop of Zululand delivered this lecture at the University of Cape Town.



I believe that duties are graded for all men so that priorities differ for different people according to situation and time. For this reason in proclaiming what I consider to be right in human relations I see myself called primarily to speak to black people because I am black.

I speak also on the basis of two further assumptions.

The first is that in spite of my Zulustan citizenship I am in fact a South African and therefore concerned for the present and future welfare of this country equally strongly with everyone else. The second is the conviction that there is a basic humanity which I share with white people and which makes our interests in life ultimately similar, despite the white man's rejection of me. This conviction impels me to do whatever may lie in my power to enable the white man to see the values in black-white relationships to which he is blind, because for him as for blacks, life is rich and full in relation to the extent and depth of appreciation of human values.

FREEDOM IN SOUTH AFRICA

I will not attempt—even if I could—to give a philosophical or ethical analysis of freedom. It is sufficient to remember that it is the value *par excellence* which makes man human. The theist regards it as the primary gift of God. The atheist says it is nature's highest gift to man. Men and communities are free when they can determine what they should be and strive for those goals. It is as he struggles for values ahead that man is truly man, living in the present for the future, with and through the experiences of the past. Man is free when his past enables him to create in the present a better future for himself.

One of the gems in religious literature says men become free when they know the truth—that is, the whole truth concerning the past and the future. But man tends to see all things partially. When he sees everything of value only in his past he becomes conservative and backward-looking, unable to adjust to change, and can perish. When he sees value in the present alone, worshipping and living for values which are temporary as if they were permanent, he can find himself living more like an animal than a human being. At the same time man lives effectively for the future when he appreciates and uses his past and present.

Because white South Africans have the franchise they imagine themselves to be free. In fact they are enslaved by their inability to recognize the humanity of the black man and the rights of black people inherent in that humanity. White blindness to these values is the cause of much suffering, pain and even death in South Africa. It has been the cause of friction and wars between white settlers and the native African from the time of Jan van Riebeeck to our time. To the white settler, the Hottentot, the Bushman, the Xhosa or the Zulu was an animal specie, irritatingly frustrating in its similarity to man and in the pangs of conscience experienced when he was killed.

Between white and black as groups, there never was, as there is not today, a human relationship. Many who hear me now may think it preposterous that I should mention it. But this was the manner in which the Hottentot at Table Bay lost his stock and his land. Shaka, the Zulu king, received the British Settlers in 1824 and granted them land where Durban now stands. Within thirty years, Sir Theophilus Shepstone was carving out native reserves, deliberately placing blacks on land which was not suitable for agriculture so that they should starve and go out to seek work on white farms. The land south of the Tugela became Natal as distinct from Zululand and was declared white. Later, the same Shepstone was planning an assault upon the Zulu King. In the debacle which followed the Zulu war, Dutch settlers also came in for their share of the booty. The memory of these events is ever fresh for me for I was raised on these stories. I was told how my family lost its

lands when early one morning a Dutch farmer was seen in our yard on horseback. With a sweeping motion of the hand he declared every hill nearby as his land and demanded that the young members of the family should go to work on his farm. And they did so until my father fled to live on a reservation.

It is not necessary to describe how similar things happened with the arrival of every batch of white settlers and the migrations of the Great Trek. Nor has the process ceased with the eviction of so-called black squatters on white farms, the clearance of black spots, the disposal of redundant natives and, more recently, the projected consolidation of reserves. The thing has been happening for three hundred years between Table Bay and the Zambesi River.

The argument will be readily conceded that in order to survive the white man had to be harsh and even cruel at times. I grant this upon the basis of what I know of the process of evolution and the history of black people generally and the Zulu in particular.

The black man resents very bitterly, however, the white man's attempt to cover up the truth that these things happened. The white man has no right to claim that he was sent by God to convert and civilize the black man when he knows full well that he came primarily for economic reasons. Nor can the white man claim to be fully civilized himself if civilization means perfection in social living, in the sense of living in fully integrated communities. Such perfection is not evident in Europe, as it is not found anywhere in the world.

Truth must be taken seriously wherever it can be found. Amicable relations will be established upon the humble acceptance of the truth of history, upon honest regret for brutality and inhumanity in the past and a firm resolution to seek together a way of living for the future.

WHEN IT BECOMES FOOLISH FOR A BLACK MAN TO REGARD WHITES AS FRIENDS

Some black people find strength from appreciation of the humanity of the white man. They refuse consciously and deliberately to retaliate by shutting their eyes and calling a white man a beast because he regards them as such. They consider it a duty and privilege to strive to help open the eyes of their fellow men to values presently closed to them. Such people will endure, at least for a time, criticism and disparagement from their fellows on account of their continuing against odds to expect brotherly relationships to be forged across the colour barrier. At the same time it would be a grave mistake to presume to think that such attitudes will survive callous white discrimination indefinitely. And even if the patience of such persons should be strangely endless, it may be necessary for them to have to act with severity in

the way that God himself deals with the humanity he loves. The white man's disregard for the black man's humanity has blinded his eyes to the black man's rights to basic human values such as freedom, justice and self-determination. Responsible white leaders have, therefore, made statements and enacted laws which invite hatred and draw bitter resentment in any self-respecting black man.

A list examples of utterances which make a black man look silly and unpatriotic if he continues to hope for reconciliation between white and black Africa:

1. Pride is taken in the promise that the black man is being given the right to make some laws to govern himself in a number of reservations. The white government describes these areas as Bantu homelands. It does not occur to many white people that such a description of black reservations is both an affront and an insult to an intelligent black man who respects himself, loves his people and knows his history. Unless, for example, it is proposed to remove all white people from what is now known as Natal and Zululand, no one who respects the Zulu as a human being may speak of a Zulu homeland. Nor should it ever be regarded as any one's gift to black people to give them the opportunity to determine their destiny. This is a right due to them as persons.

2. Some years ago, a Minister of State addressing a Missionary Council of a white church was reported to have said: 'Missionary work is the duty and task of our people. This is a duty equal to the law of self-preservation, for without missionary work there can be no law of self-preservation for the white man in South Africa.' If, everybody knows, self-preservation for the white man in South Africa means white supremacy, what is the black man expected to understand by missionary work? If you are black and a Christian missionary, how then do you respond to the black accusation that when the white man came to Africa, the black man had the land and the white man had the Bible, and now the black man has the Bible and the white man the land?

3. In 1965 a senior Minister of State said: 'The key to the whole question of *apartheid* is political separation; territorial separation is not complete while many Bantu are in the midst of white ... so, other forms of separation should be practised—residential, educational, social, on all levels—sport and entertainment included.' This statement has, of course, been repeated many times since. Yet evidence points to the probability rather that blacks will be living among whites in the next hundred years. In fact, black men know that the truth is correctly expressed the other way round, namely, that whites will be living among blacks as far as we can see into the future. When the black man sees 'the other forms' of separation carried out against him without hope of territorial separation, is there not justification for him to regard political *apartheid* as a fiction and an ideology which places him for ever at the mercy of the white man

who, in shouting it continually as a slogan and singing its virtues, would destroy the black man by persuading him to accept a lie?

4. On another occasion another Minister of State was reported to say: 'The South African War has never ended, but today it is not against the Afrikaner but against every white man in South Africa. The soldier is no longer the British Tommy, but the Native, the Coloured and the Coolie. The weapons are no longer copper, steel or lead but spiritual methods, such as hatred, lies and slander.'

In point of fact, if the Minister had been black and had made this statement against whites, he would have been arrested and charged with engendering hatred between the races. If the black man has any human feelings at all, what should he think and how must he react when responsible men speak as if he does not exist, or if he exists, is openly described as an enemy? Is it to incite him to behave as an enemy and be destroyed? Two years later, that same man was reported to have said: 'For English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking sections, the time to unite is now, because Britain has chosen to stand with the black man and hand over the States of Africa to today's Dingaans and Shakas ... The Afrikaner has never chosen the side of the black man; he has never deserted the English-speaking section.'

It must be noted that the offence which drew all this vindictive attack was the political freedom obtained by black men in other parts of Africa. The Minister spoke when the South African response was the self-government of the Bantustans. What then is the black South African really getting through the Bantustans if an important leader of the white nation has so much to say against black political freedom north of the Zambesi? Why should both white groups unite against the black man? Who is fighting whom? If the black South African is a human being why should people not recognize his aspirations to self-determination and work hard to bring it about speedily?

5. Once, South Africa House in London was reported to have published the following, among others, as good reasons for *apartheid* in the Republic: 'to safeguard the positions of the white nations of South Africa which the European immigrants chose and settled as their homelands over the past 300 years; to lead the Bantu to effective self-government in those parts of South Africa which the Bantu immigrants chose and settled as their homelands during the same period of history.'

No black man can fail to see and bitterly to abhor the subtle insinuation. The question will be repeated a hundred times. Why does the white man seek to deceive the world when a nobler path is open? The black man's answer is that the white man has succeeded in completely deceiving himself that the black man does not think and understand things like a human being. And

what shall we say of the apparently deliberate refusal to consider and to talk of Coloured and Indian-stans? If the white man knew black men as human he would invite them to work out with him a new pattern of living, more just and human because based upon a new perception of values long hidden.

Is it surprising that you should find every black person ask the question he can never answer: why does the white man hate him? The Zulus often think it is revenge for the death of Piet Retief. But then was not Blood River sufficient retaliation? And, if a careful score is kept of the wrongs each has done to the other, can there be hope ever of reconciliation? Or is it beneath the dignity of the white man ever to imagine a relationship of equality with anything black? The administrator will expect the loyalty and respect of blacks, but their young men must for ever be satisfied with crumbs that fall from the white man's table—the better to control him. Again, the unanswerable 'why?'

I could dilate endlessly upon my own personal experiences and the humiliations I have suffered as an individual person on account of my colour. I refer to it all because every black man has experienced it and hated it. Nearly every class of white person has had his share in treating me as less than man—missionaries and bishops of my own church; ordinary white men of the working class assaulting me for failing to call them Boss, or the garage foreman who abandoned me to my fate because I could not tell him in Afrikaans what the trouble was with my car; the group of professors who in utter disregard for his status as political leader of black South Africa sent the late Chief Luthuli and me to drink tea in a little cell that served them for a kitchen; or the State President who turned down my appeal for temporary asylum in a bishop's house situated in a white town while I built mine in a black town.

THE DILEMMA

Some black people consider themselves resolutely committed to fellowship among men regardless of colour and to work for reconciliation where animosities exist. Both fellowship and reconciliation, however, are the fruit of collaboration between two parties. Of recent years, the 'other forms of separation', in education, in employment and in social relations, have succeeded so well that a big gap has grown between white and black. Opportunities of knowing people of a different colour are decreasing every year. Without mutual and effective communication how do people become friends, and if there may be no friendships how do black and white come to trust one another?

Black people who grew up when friendships were possible between the colours and who have experience of such intimacies have become an anachronism. If it is a sacred principle for white not to meet black, what kind



of future does South Africa hold for us all? Several generations of black Africans have grown up without experience of friendships with white on the basis of equal humanity. They are the people who suffer the consequences of an educational system which prepared them for life in nineteenth century Africa. They bear the brunt of the black man's burden which flows from pass laws, influx control, job reservation, lack of scientific and technical education, the insecurity of the urban black family, the black wage system, restrictions against organizing for a productive sale of their labour.

Black youth charge more strongly than before that the Christian religion is the opium which has made their parents tame and subservient; they are frustrated when

whites of their own age groups engage in political activities with the government's blessing, especially when they are nationalists, while their own leaders have been banned or imprisoned, especially when they were nationalists. The frustration is made more painful by the banning and restrictions imposed upon white youths who have tried to understand and appreciate the desires and aspirations of young people of other colours.

The question always recurs. If you are black and you seriously want fellowship with folk not of your colour and barriers are erected through legislation, what do you do? In 1964 a Dominee was reported to have found joy in the determination of his people to struggle and win through. Much of his people's struggle involved violence and wars. He was reported to have sung praises in the following words: 'The will to be free, and not a slave; the will to live with honour survives and will triumph still.' In much of the life of black youth there is evidence of such a will. And as long as it survives there can be no doubt that it 'will triumph still'. The question is whether the victory will come with or without violence.

WHY THE URGENCY?

Everywhere in the world there is an awakening of black consciousness. All black people are in a hurry to discard the white man's shackles once and for all. The freedom presently enjoyed by Africa, India and the East, released from domination by white powers, is regarded as a foretaste of a privilege which all black men must enjoy. The mood of the world generally is that every group of people must express its personality by accepting responsibility for its own self-determination. This is the attitude which led certain European powers to give self-government to their former colonies. This is the attitude which has involved Portugal in a pointless war for over ten years. And because white South Africa is regarded by many in the world as a colonial power in relation to South Africa's black population, there is incitement to violence and an urge to dismiss peaceful change which is described as a myth.

And then, as everybody knows, the phenomenon of guerilla warfare has become the standard method of fighting. It is taking place currently on our borders. Several African nations are committed to supporting the effort of the guerillas against the whites of Southern Africa. The Chinese Communists who are experts in this kind of warfare have a strong presence in Southern Africa. There is evidence that the black guerillas have improved their skills over the years. South Africa is quite seriously on the verge of war. Recent reports of a black contingent going up north confirm the rumours that the guerillas are indeed black men.

Even if what we are told is true and all the guerillas are communist-inspired, it is true also that the declared

reason for this struggle is to give to black South Africans a freedom they honestly do not enjoy. Very few whites in this country are committed to non-violence and there is no reason why there should be any more among blacks. After the disillusionment which followed the quelling of the black passive resistance movement in the middle fifties, it has become unreasonable to gain support for the hope of a non-violent solution. The harshness with which discrimination is enforced by law and custom makes a black man look simple and naive if he continues to believe and talk of non-violence ever becoming effective. This is a fact even though nobody speaks of violence.

The offer of self-government to rural Africans has high-lighted the injustice to all black men in the treatment of the urban black man. That the African resents the ejection of urban Africans and that it has been the cause of much evil does not seem to affect large masses of white people or the government. The fact that the whites have power seems enough. But is it? That the harshness of life in black urban areas has caused extreme bitterness can be seen, I believe, in the fact that this has been the spearhead of agitation even though the majority of South Africa's black political leadership has been for many years drawn from rural areas. The fate of urban Africans was the concern of men like the late Drs. Seme and Dube, Mr. A.G.W. Champion and the late Chief Albert Luthuli. It is significant also that several leaders now in exile and in prison had the same background and were engaged in the same struggle.

This seems to suggest the need for white people to appreciate the predicament of the urban African and to take seriously the representations made on behalf of all blacks by rural leaders.

WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

I believe that the current cultural revolution among the white youth carries a message for the world and for South Africa.

Progress consists, after all, in the recognition of new values and a striving to attain them. Creative change is a response of discerning men and women to glories which while lying in the future seek to be expressed now.

The youth of the Western world are strangely united in seeking a new fellowship and brotherhood among men. Their revolt against the traditions and even the morals of their fathers is, to them, a destruction of barriers that separate human beings who ought to be sharing all good things in life. In this country, nothing expresses this peculiar sensitivity of youth to the wishes and aspirations of their fellows more than the response of NUSAS (National Union of South African Students) to the rebellion of SASO (South African Students' Organization). Compare the magnanimity of the leadership of NUSAS with the violence of their elders in

church, State and society to the faintest agitation for change.

I do not wish to imply that the young people have found the key. What I am saying is that in so far as they search for the values which unite men, they are pointing the way which has been lost, even to the Christian western world, despite its foundation upon Jesus Christ, who said men and women are his faithful followers only when they love one another as he had loved them. That this is the way for the future was shown in the overwhelming gratification which filled every heart when Chief Buthelezi was received with obvious delight by the students at Stellenbosch.

Until now white South Africans have seen their hope for survival in a rigid exclusiveness of groups. They have regarded this as so extreme a priority that they have tolerated much that was grossly evil in human suffering to achieve it. The only possible crops, however, that will ever be reaped along this road are fear, suspicion, hatred and eventual mutual destruction. The young people are reminding us of an important truth. In the war for survival throughout history, all species have adopted one of two methods according to circumstances. One has been the beastly one of cruelty, murder and conquest. The other has been creative adjustment to new situations. It seems to me that an atomic age demands that white South Africans can hope to survive only by adjustment. To succeed, they need a spiritual and moral courage which will be more demanding than the merely physical one which helped them conquer Dingaan or Cetshwayo.

I am speaking to South Africa. I say South Africa has a great future and that future is within reach—if you will increasingly acknowledge the humanity of the black people whose land you have taken; if you will accord them the respect and rights which are due to them as humans; if you will accept them as partners in the development of the country, investing at least as much money in their development and training as in armaments; if you will boldly test the honesty of the nations in Africa and outside, which threaten to fight you on account of your inhuman white-black relations, by granting that freedom now. This you can do by making new laws and by providing opportunities for the educational, economic and social advancement of black people.

Furthermore, the majority of you white people are Christians. Can this be the moment for you to be liberated from enslavement to tradition? The Bible, which you say is the Word of your God, says your freedom is his will. Will you now in loyalty to your Master put your God to the test? I do not believe he will allow you to perish because in obedience to him you have loved your neighbour, in spite of his colour, as you have loved yourselves.

I fully realize that, even if they could, it would be

wrong of whites to resolve the black man's problems. It would be a further dehumanization of him. The human in black men has been awakened. The black man is discovering, in human terms perhaps too slowly, that the scope prescribed for him by whites is not the end of this world, and that, depending upon his own attitude, it can in fact be the point from which the process of his liberation begins. Ultimately, the black man will attain to his fullest humanity by meeting the white man's oppression in so creative a manner that the oppressor also may be liberated from fetters which bind him in his prejudices and inability to love.

It is, nonetheless, right for the white man to know that the black man is conscious of the oppressiveness of all the things that conspire to make him less than human. While the black man carries the final responsibility for his freedom, the white man has a part to play. He must be prepared to strive with the black man to hasten the process of the latter's humanization. In this connection it is necessary to draw the attention of many white people of goodwill to their own share in the oppression of blacks, in the paternalism which kills all initiative.

There are promises of political parties to liberate the black sections of the community and to improve their lot in numerous ways; there are the social services of welfare bodies and religious organizations; there are subsidies in areas of housing, wages, transport and hospitalization. One need not spend time recounting numerous charities. Two other conspicuous examples are the assistance given by the Republic to Bantustan Governments and the staffing and running of black universities.

If the fact is accepted that the urgent task for South Africa is for the black man to be fully man, then the sooner white friends stop doing things for him the better. Black people believe that in many cases white men enjoy 'helping the poor people'. Often it is done, perhaps unconsciously, as a generous way of controlling and therefore prescribing the way of life of black people. These generous acts have positive value only when they accompany deliberate action enabling blacks to make their own decisions and their own mistakes.





rosemary elliot

**WAR,
CONFLICT
& GROWTH
OF THE
SPIRIT.**

What are the roots of war and violence? What can people of goodwill do as alternative ways of meeting and resolving conflict? Why are we, who are Christians, ineffective in promoting another vision of society? Is injustice, whether economic or political, the only cause for conflict and war?

In Africa, we can recognise in an extreme form the fruits of injustice, prejudice and the misuse of power, particularly in the field of race relations. But these qualities also appear in every other country and men are held by the evil effects of them everywhere—hunger; lack of respect for human life; famine; massacres; war; great riches for a few; poverty for the many. These are some of the problems which nourish war and violence.

Charity and war are no solutions

The Christian, like men of other religions, is both the victim and the perpetrator of the system. The Christian's responsibility is to reveal the nature of Christ's Gospel to all men. The difficulty is that like 'all men' he tends to become bogged down in 'fighting the system' or 'clearing up the mess' it causes—feeding the hungry, nursing the sick etc. It is true that the helping of the sick and hungry is a visible expression of Christian love, but it is also true that the system which produces these evils is untouched.

How can we fight the evil system? The answers we find depend very much on the level of commitment to Christ. For some, the only way to overthrow an unjust system is by force. For others, boycotts provide a more satisfactory weapon. For the majority of 'ordinary' Christians, the decisions and values of everyday life bind them to the system-as-it-is, and they become committed to upholding it by force if necessary.

It is not possible to ban wars, because they arise from the greed and selfishness of man. But Christians should not take part in wars, either in attacking nor defending unjust systems. It is not possible to promote Christian values using patently non-Christian means.

What is the specific Christian role in the face of injustice? Is there ever a 'just war'? The answers are difficult. There is no 'just war' because men project the evil which is within them onto the other 'side' and find it easier to kill it, than to eradicate it from within themselves and their own lives.

Therefore we need to turn from the impersonal 'They' to our own lives. Immediately we become responsible. The day-to-day decisions we make reveal where our values lie and if we examine what we are doing with our time and money, we shall often find we are giving strength to the very thing we condemn in others.

Answers—Christian answers—are desperately needed to the problems of production and distribution: the right use and fair sharing of the world's resources

and how to control power and share it. In the absence of constructive Christian thinking on these problems, the world muddles on from crisis to crisis and progresses erratically through trial and error.

Africa provides a first class exercise ground for working on these problems. One of the first things we should note is that some problems are insoluble in terms of present day values. We need to evolve new standards with new social and political structures. The Christian contribution to this is potentially very great. But we need to see where our value lies.

The awakening of the Spirit

Christians need to become fearlessly pacifist, and society needs to recognise that they have a very valuable role to play in evolving new ways to resolve conflicts peacefully, and not to punish them. Neither should it see non-aligned people in conflict situations (e.g. war) as traitors, but as people who potentially have a lasting solution.

Not all people develop at the same rate, and until new and better ways of resolving human conflict are evolved and tested, the 'bad' old ways will of necessity be used. If men search and find the right answers to their problems, they live together in peace, but if they make the 'wrong' answers then conflict persists and intensifies. What is more, as it intensifies it drives men into ever more distorted patterns of behaviour and these tend to reinforce the suspicion and lack of trust between the groups in conflict. So it is essential to have undistorted 'whole' people who seek for truth and justice for all, not just for one 'side' at the expense of the other.

To enable the oppressed and deprived to confront the society in which they suffer and to meet the underlying causes of conflict before it erupts into violence at the national or international level, small groups of concerned people need to come together and confront one another. The wider the range of potentially conflicting interests represented in these groups, the better, because it is at this level that the qualities of the spirit can get to work on the problems involved and influence the final solution.

The real question is then, WHAT develops a love-orientated spirit? Spiritually developed people live fuller, more integrated lives and the quality of life in itself is a sufficient reason in trying to develop it. It will not be achieved by repairing our present society—its values are too low-grade to contain the higher level. But it is in tackling the problems we see near us with other Christ-committed people, that we shall gain experience and begin to exercise the spiritual qualities we need. There will come a moment when we suddenly realise a change of life-style solves the whole problem and creates a new level of life.

Most people have not got to this stage yet. The vast majority of people need to acknowledge that spiritual qualities are desirable and then learn in what situations they can best be utilised. It is exactly at this point that most people switch off—when tempers rise (often because people care deeply) and when we most need good humour, patience and unselfishness. All too often we tend to say "To Hell with that lot" and resign!

So what? So those who see the vague shape of how things might be, find themselves faced with Christian groups and congregations in conflict. We find the very milieu in which these qualities of the Spirit should be most in evidence, appear to be undermining themselves and disintegrating from within.

This conflict between spiritually, partially-awakened people is inevitable at this stage. In fact it is an essential part of growing and finding answers to the problems we face. The world has many value-systems locked in struggle. The way WE live our lives gives strength to one or other of these. Often our lives are a mixture of values and this mixture causes us to be confused and inconsistent.

It is important not to give up when things go badly. People do not all develop at the same rate and some solutions require a high-level of spiritual maturity. But if the Vision of the Kingdom of God is valid, then it is still valid even if individuals break the continuity. If the spirit of love is worth striving for, then it is for us to continue in it as far as we are able, even when others give up. When we allow one man's wrong decision to make us respond in kind, then we ourselves destroy our Fellowship in Christ from within. The Devil uses Christians to destroy the Kingdom of God and we should beware of fighting evil when we should be living good.

How are people motivated towards Christ? Far too many suffer from a limited unexpressed Christianity. It is unexpressed in that they seldom project a good thought or a fleeting concern into practice. The moment we attempt to translate thought into practice, we hit rocks. If we persevere, we are led deeper and deeper into the problems of suffering, selfish humanity. Our own effectiveness is limited, not only by our own psychological flaws, but by what may be the greater flaws in people around us. We then find humanity, which is damaged anyhow, has built up social, political and economic structures which cause more people to become damaged—physically ill from injury or low wages: mentally disabled from stress and spiritually crippled by fear.

If we begin to confront the conflict at the community level, we will begin to open our minds and spirits to confronting the sources of war and injustice. As we grow in spirit and experience in order to resolve these problems, we shall begin to create and become part of a



new community. These new communities will develop a climate of opinion which will enable political and industrial leaders to act from moral strength in a realistic way to overcome national problems. We should realise that often politicians are restricted in finding 'good' solutions to pressing problems, because of the selfishness, fear and greed of the people. Social evolution needs spiritually developing people and this is what our life in Jesus Christ is about.

Face conflicts at local level

The roots of war and violence are often deeply hidden and the economic power structure, which is far more powerful than the political one, is the one least touched by love. There are some incredibly dangerous conflicts

which are totally submerged and need uncovering—like the shortage of materials and the rising world inflation: or the need for expanding economies in industrialised nations, which expand at the expense of the 'Third World.'

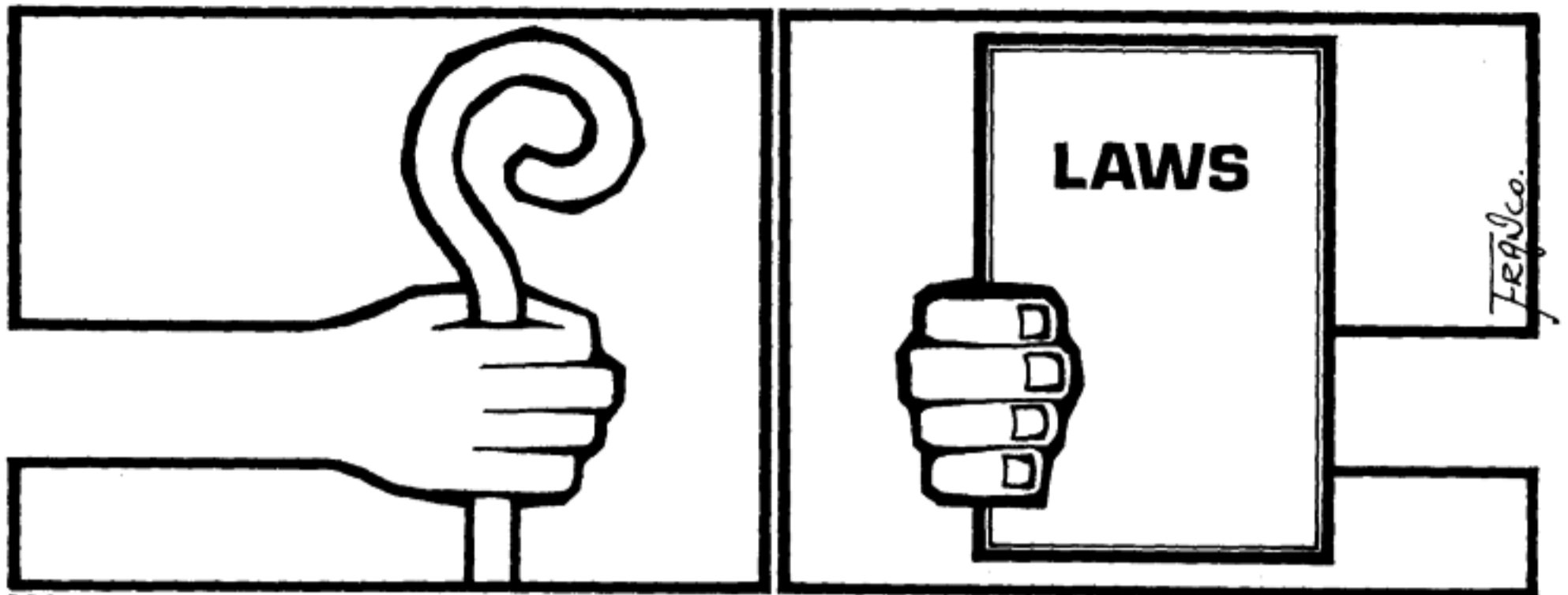
The day-to-day decisions we make (or do not make) determine the value system of our country. The way we live OUR lives gives strength to one or other of the systems which are at present locked in struggle all over the world. If we are to prevent destructive violence on an unprecedented level, we must face these conflicts at the local level. To do so enables spiritual qualities to be channelled into the situation. We need to realise that training for peace is at least as rigorous as for that of war, but very different. What is needed most desperately is that the resources of the Christian churches, especially the people, should be awoken and 'trained' how to recognise conflict situations and meet them.

If we do this we shall find the beginning of a miracle. The conflict between privilege and poverty will no longer be on our borders, but within ourselves. As we, led by Christ, grow spiritually to make the necessary changes, we will find ourselves part of an evolving society. A society with spiritual values a living part of its fabric, because these qualities not only live in us, but find full expression in our lives and the communities in which we live.

We shall represent a spirit at work in the world. This Spirit is Eternal, it stands in the everlasting tradition which has been from the beginning of time. Men may reject it, kill or imprison those who become channels for it to reach the world, but because it is God-given, those men who do so, do so at their most deadly risk. What God is offering the world is true salvation at every level of life—not just the spiritual, but political, personal and economic. If we would but do the right thing, conflicts are healed, society evolves and the quality of life is enriched for all.

Christ's Gospel is not only for the poor and the suffering, but for the rich and the powerful—even when they do not understand it and realise it threatens their way of life. Therefore *where the Gospel is involved there cannot be 'sides', there can only be people, some of whom are more aware than others, but all potentially citizens of Christ's Kingdom.* It is upon us to show forth the nature of this Kingdom, so that all men may be released from fear and drawn into its loving, creative fellowship.





church and state in south africa

TO OBEY OR DISOBEY ?

**THE FOURTH AND LAST PART OF AN ARTICLE
BY BRIAN JOHANSON**

State action in relation to the churches

The government has always insisted that there is no clash between church and state in South Africa. Two types of action by the government can be distinguished. The *first* is in the category of *intimidation and harassment* of those who work within the law, but against the policies of the government. These methods apply to both church and secular bodies. (E.g. the Aurora cricket club). The action may be in the form of a ministerial warning, followed by intimidatory actions by the police. An example of this is what happened after the publication of *A Message to the People of South Africa*. The Prime Minister reacted by denouncing those who criticise the political status quo 'under the cloak of religion'. He said that men must not abuse the pulpit to try to attain political ends in South Africa.

The *second* type of state action is a *direct intervention* designed to prevent people from engaging in activities which are in conflict with government policy. In order of

severity one could list them as follows: bannings, house arrest, usually for a period of five years; deportation orders, which normally forbid a person ever to return to South Africa except with specific government permission; passport withdrawals, which keep the person concerned a prisoner in his own country; police raids, usually before dawn, coupled with the removal of documents.

By taking action in this way against church leaders who are actively engaged in programmes designed to bring about change, the government can effectively hamper the church's activities without appearing to clash with the organised churches.

Before leaving this aspect it might be helpful to look again at the reason for this fundamental difference between the state and many of the churches. It would seem that the government sees the issues in South Africa in terms of security and therefore, power. For the government, anything which threatens the present power system in the land must be controlled or

destroyed. The church sees the issues in South Africa in terms of justice and peace, and maintains that any security or peace that is maintained by unjust means is both doomed and untenable. The state would maintain that the security of the country is threatened by the church's policy of integration and equality. The church would maintain that the security of the state is threatened by the policies of the government because they are in so many respects fundamentally inhuman and unjust. The government would counter by saying that its policies are aimed at justice on the basis of separation. The church, observing both the findings of the American Supreme Court and the facts of the local situation counter that separation is intrinsically and necessarily unjust. The government would appear to have adopted an absolutely intransigent position in regard to the rightness of its policies, and takes no notice of representations from the English-speaking churches. (Even, for example on such general matters as conscientious objection and capital punishment).

The many considerations which have come to light in our discussion thus far make it apparent that so long as we continue to debate about an impersonal confrontation between the church and state, the issues will remain blurred. This is inevitably so because the government can point to a harmonious relationship with such a large part of the church, and also it can point out that no legislation has ever been aimed at the churches as such. It will point to the fact that there is still freedom of religion in every aspect of South African life and that no person need suffer because he is a Christian.

But it is when the government takes specific action against specific Christians for specific reasons (whether these are enunciated or not) that the issues begin to emerge more clearly. It is often impossible to discover the precise reason for the action taken against individuals, but when explanations are given it usually appears that they are thought to be conscious or unconscious participants in, supporters of, or agents for the *great communist plot* against the state. We ought not to dismiss lightly the idea of a communist plot, or that its planners might have infiltrated some South African organisations, but we certainly can raise questions. It is totally impossible that every Christian man and woman who from conviction is utterly opposed to apartheid, and is willing to do something about it is therefore in league with or party to some such plot. The termination of apartheid will bring about a change in the state, but it will not necessarily be either communistic or disastrous. We can only conclude then that the ostensible reason for acting against people (i.e. that they are tools of communism) cannot hold, and that the actual reason for acting against them is because they are being consequentially obedient to their conscience in following Jesus Christ.

If this is so, as in most cases it must be, then the state must know that it is acting against the One from whom it receives its authority. It may well be that it will one day

hear the stormy words, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest". It may one day discover that the church was acting in obedience to its Lord when it acted for the poor, the hungry, the helpless, the oppressed, the imprisoned, the deprived, the dispossessed, the broken, the homeless; when it protested against laws which break up families and bar men from rewarding employment. But on the other hand, this might only become clear to the state when the church really becomes the church of Christ in this country, and ceases to be so hopelessly divided within itself.

The role of the church in the present situation

We are faced then with an ecclesiastical problem. Unfortunately the church struggle is likely to be even more difficult to resolve, because it is between parties divided on the basis of religious convictions, and these are always the most intractable. Precisely for this reason however the theological debate must continue and the churches must do their utmost to engage one another in discussions on vital issues. A crucial issue which the churches must resolve is to determine whether their differences really do arise from differences in understanding their commitment to Jesus Christ, or simply their commitment to the state.

As we have already seen, we cannot regard the state as being always in the right and legitimately claiming continuous and unqualified obedience. Rather, the state can be regarded as right in a qualified sense, to the degree that it punishes evildoers and rewards good. This means that the church may also have to determine from time to time that the state may be wrong, when it forbids what God has commanded, or commands what God has forbidden, or is unconcerned about what God says must be its concern. The church must face these situations, act accordingly and go through the consequences. There comes a time and a place then where the Christian is forced to make a decision regarding an unjust law. These are personal decisions, based on a communal or private understanding of the truth, although it is doubtful whether a community can make an undertaking on behalf of the individual. This is a critical situation for the church because not all Christians will have the same perception of the problems involved, nor the same conviction and courage to act in relation to them. Here the strong may not be critical of the weak, nor should the weak act simply for fear of offending the strong.

In positive terms, the church has a responsibility to make itself into the model of a just society, and like the New Testament community it must be very much concerned with the needs and circumstances of all its members. In limited ways the church is being practical about the physical problems of its members, but what is visible is just the beginning of a vast undertaking.

Simultaneously, the church must continue to present to the state within which it lives, and of which it is a part, those principles which provide a sound and viable basis for the national life. This does not mean evangelising or Christianising the government—nor even the decision as to whether this is needful or not!—but the enunciating of the foundations of justice and humanity as these are demonstrated in the biblical witness to the righteousness of God.

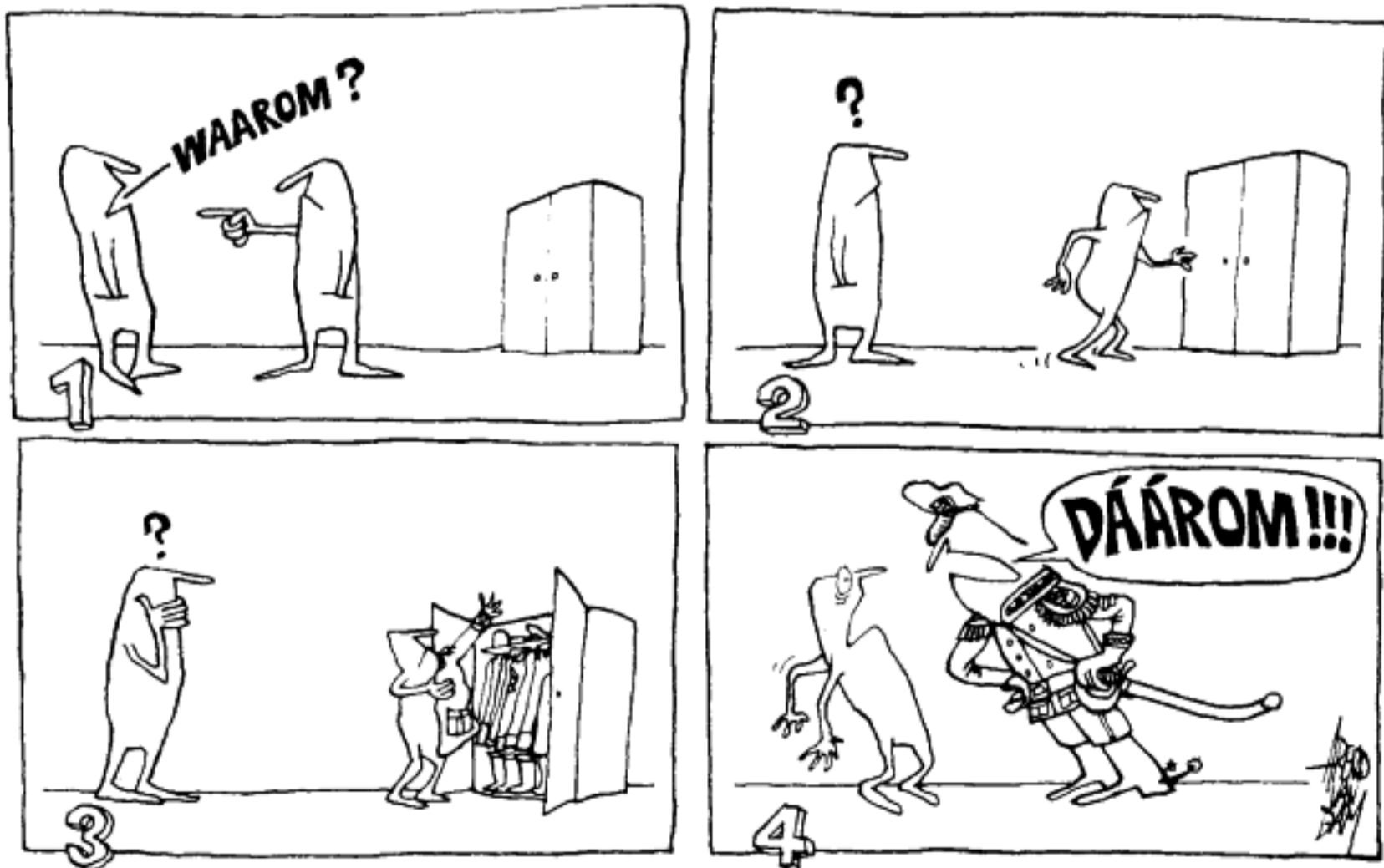
The Church also has a prophetic role in the proclamation of the Gospel with all its negative and positive implications, in judgment and grace, in warning and promise, in all places and circumstances, and therefore also to the state. Because the state derives its authority from God, it lives under the Word of God, and therefore also under the judgment of God. Where is the government to discover what this means if not through the church? And in this case, let it give careful attention to what the whole church is saying, lest it hears only those

who speak comfortable words, and say 'Peace! peace!'. If the ministers of state wish to hear the gospel which is intended for sinful men, let them then listen to what the sin of men is doing to human beings, in the cry from a million South African hearts.

When Jesus said to the state that it had authority against him only because that authority was given by God, he said a decisive thing. He accepted Pilate's verdict of innocence. He also accepted Pilate's surrendering of him to death. And by submitting himself to both the righteous judgment and the unrighteous action of the state, he judged the state in the very process of its wrongdoing.

Christ is Lord. And there are no limits to his Lordship. ★

—VU Magazine, Nov. 1973.





**... man will agonize until he learns to love
without limit ...**