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Later vandeemaand sou die Wêreldraad van Kerke 'n imponerende afvaardiging na Suid-Afrika stuur om met 'n ewe imponerende afvaardiging van die Suid-Afrikaanse Raad van Kerke samesprekings te voer oor die W.R.K. se omstrede Program ter Bestryding van die Rassisme.

Ons het nog deurgaans soveel waarde aan hierdie onderwerp geheg dat ons ons uitgawe van Oktober 1970 daaraan gewy het, ons lesers sedertdien voortdurend op hoogte gehou het aangaande die debat en voornemens was om dit in hierdie uitgawe tot 'n hoogtepunt te voer.

Die byeenkoms is egter gekanselleer omdat die „konfrontasie” waarop die Eerste Minister aangedring het, sou neergekom het op 'n monoloog, nie 'n dialoog nie. En dit ten spyte van die feit dat dit al hoe duideliker word dat ook die universele Christendom behoefte het aan 'n „uitwaartse beleid”. Die Eerste Minister, wat die godsdiens gedurig daarvan beskuldig dat hy inmeng in die politiek, sou goed gedoen het om liever iets van sy eie politieke wysheid op hierdie kerklike aangeleentheid van toepassing te maak het.

Omdat ons glo aan dialoog, het ons hoopvol na die byeenkoms uitgesien. Om hierdie rede ook het ons dr. Visser 't Hooft en dr. Albert van den Heuvel, albei van die W.R.K., uitgenooi om voorlopig 'n paar gedagtes op papier te plaas en word hul bydraes in hierdie uitgawe geplaas.

Dat die byeenkoms nou nie meer kan plaasvind nie is bewys van 'n tragiese ineenstorting van kommunikasie, nie alleen tussen die S.A.R.K. en die W.R.K.

Al troos dit slegs en help nie, publiseer ons slegs ter wille van agtergrondsverheldering onverkort en sonder verdere kommentaar die volle korrespondensie tussen die Eerste Minister, mnr. B.J. Vorster, amp-tenare van die S.A. Raad van Kerke, mnre. John Rees

(Algemene Sekretaris), John de Gruchy (Direkteur van Publikasies), dr. Alex Boraine (konvenor van die Suid-Afrikaanse afvaardiging tot die beoogde „konsultasie” met die afvaardiging van die Wêreldraad van Kerke) en dr. Eugene Carson Blake, Algemene Sekretaris van die W.R.K.

Dit staan ons lesers vry om hul eie menings te vorm. Vir die oordeelkundiges onder hulle sal drie dinge al hoe duideliker word:

Eerstens, wanneer dit kom tot 'n onderonsie tussen politieke sofistikasie en kerklike naïwiteit, moet die kerk noodwendig as die verloorder uitgewys word.

Tweedens, wanneer kerke heul met 'n keuse tussen dienstigheid teenoor die owerheid en teenoor die getuienisopdrag van Christus, dan is dit selde die Koninkryk van Christus wat enige wins toon.

Derdens, wanneer daar 'n skreeuende nood aan werklike profesie van die kant van die kerk bestaan en daar teruggeval word op sekulere „diplomatie”, dan bly die wesenlike getuienis van die kerk, op die keper beskou, versweë.

Afgesien daarvan dat die kerke in Suid-Afrika dit met die Eerste Minister eens mag wees in sy verwerping van die „afstootlikheid” van geweldsondersteuning, onthef dit hulle nog geensins van hul verantwoordelikheid om, saam met die kerke oor die wêreld heen, te profeteer teen die gruwel van rassisme, veral soos dit in ons land beoefen word nie. Hierin, minstens, staan hulle skouer aan skouer met hul medestanders in die Wêreldraad van Kerke, en op hierdie punt is hulle dit teenoor hulleself en hul Christelike gewete verskuldig om minstens 'n „konsultasie” met die Eerste Minister aan te vra - sy dit dan ook op die ingeperkte terrein van die „internasionale” hotel te Jan Smuts Lughawe.



## Freedom through Truth

**EDITORIAL**

There are many who will gravely resent our publication of this month's supplement on Nationalism, National Socialism and Christianity. In many circles it will be seen as a form of treason, letting the side down, letting the cat out of the bag .....

We find ourselves to a great extent in sympathy with this kind of reasoning. After all: why wash our dirty linen in public? Why rock the boat? Why remove our heads from the comforting sand?

And yet we cannot refrain from pursuing the truth, for this is what this Christian journal is all about: *Pro Veritate*, for the sake of the truth!

We believe that what is contained in our supplement, however unpalatable to the complacent, is the truth - and that the truth has to be faced, however unpleasant an experience this may be for all of us.

It is only the truth that will ultimately make us free: all of us, all South African Christians, all those for whom we are responsible before God.

And it is only in true freedom - and hence freedom from delusion - that South Africa, our country, can survive.



## ***Discarded Person***

Fr. Cosmas Desmond has been banned and put under house arrest. Ironically his banning order terminates on Republic Day, 31st May 1976. His banning order is deeply disturbing for at least two reasons.

First because the whole legal framework upon which our Western civilization is based has again been ignored. Hence we vehemently oppose this action as being yet another blatant example of rule by ministerial decree. All too often are our courts bypassed - in this way no reasons need be given, no evidence led and no lengthy court proceedings endured which may not guarantee a sentence. But this point has been made often enough elsewhere and we need not elaborate on it here.

Secondly, in banning him the State has made a decision about him that he is a dangerous person - one does not ban and subject a person to such stringent house arrest without very good reason. But Fr. Desmond is not only a citizen, not only a Christian but an official minister of the Church. In so far as the Church has not seen it fit to in any way censure him in the past, the State action implies that the Church condones what it censures. Hence a judgement against Fr. Desmond is a judgement which implicitly questions the integrity of the Church. For this reason the Church itself should either demand reasons for the State's action or publicly associate with Fr. Desmond and his concerns for the discarded people in the country as 66 of his fellow priests and fellow Christians did in a letter to The Star of 5th July.

Finally, for the Catholic Church the issue is even more pointed than this. The world episcopacy will shortly gather in Rome to discuss what for them are their two most pressing problems, i.e. the priesthood and World Peace and Justice. The Pope in an apostolic letter written to Cardinal Maurice Roy two months ago as a contribution to the work and thinking of the Pontifical Commission Justice and Peace and which we cover in an article in this issue, said: "Let each one examine himself, to see what he has done up to now, and what he ought to do. It is not enough to recall principles, state intentions, point to crying injustices and utter prophetic denunciations; these words will lack real weight unless they are accompanied for each individual by a livelier awareness of personal responsibility and by effective action".

If in isolated instances such as these our church leaders are unable or unwilling to take positive action or give positive leadership, it is pointless theorising at an international level, for the credibility gap between what is said and what is done will only widen.

## ***Frustration***

A fire burns within my heart  
consuming hope, strength and trust.  
Deep in my mind is a spark  
of torment, frustration and fear.  
Who can lift the yoke  
of toil and turmoil?  
Who can lift the curse  
imposed on me from birth,  
and heal the wound  
which never bleeds?  
Who can break the chains  
that bind me  
to sin, misery and crime?

Have I become a thing among things?  
A beast among creatures  
and a tool among weapons?

I waited,  
perhaps too long  
to hear the wind whisper  
"brother, you are free"  
The freedom to listen to justice  
or a baby cry  
or a leaf falling from a tree.

And as I pondered  
on these things,  
the fire within me became a flame  
causing eery shadows.  
Shadows of hate, vengeance and pride.

I gazed at the mute gods  
standing on their granite bases  
their eyes as cold as death.  
They just stood there  
as they did centuries ago.

Suddenly a cloud covered them  
and I saw them no more.

I rose up for action -  
but the flame died out,  
and the world laughed at me  
from Sinai to Simonstown.

I cursed the day  
the night and the hour,  
I shunned humility.  
And when I knelt  
as if in prayer  
my dark hands raised on high,  
a spirit seized me  
ten times ten  
with force and ecstasy.

*Colin Bowes.*

# ***A Letter of Paul to ....***

***Peter Sanders***

*Pope Paul has celebrated the eightieth anniversary of that remarkable document "Rerum Novarum", by which Leo XIII sought to bring the Roman Church of 1891 into the nineteenth century, with an even more remarkable document which, in the view of this writer at least, goes some way towards preparing the Church of Rome, and perhaps the Christian world in general, for the twenty-first century. This document is in the healthier tradition of papal utterances. There is a tentativeness, openness and awareness of the complexity of things which all Christian teachers might usefully regard as exemplary.*

## **WE HAVE COME A LONG WAY**

The papacy has come a long way since the Encyclical "*Mirari vos*" (Gregory XVI, 1832) was so accurately described thus by the contemporary Christian socialist Buchez: "One looks in vain for a Christian thought in this bragging and platitudinous Italian chatter, which can do no more than repeat the everlasting harangues of the reactionaries on liberty, the press, and revolutions ... there is not a kind word of pity for those who suffer; all its solicitude is for the princes and potentates, as though Jesus Christ had been executed in order to justify the power of the Patricians who condemned him". Successive Popes, and particularly Benedict XV, whose early death in 1922 was an unspeakable tragedy for the Church, and Popes John XXIII and Paul VI, have waged an increasingly successful battle against this tradition whereby papal utterances should be "bragging and platitudinous Italian chatter". With this document one may (hopefully) regard the tradition as finally buried.

The new papal letter is addressed to Cardinal Maurice Roy of Quebec in his capacity as president of the Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace. It is quite customary for important papal pronouncements to be addressed to individuals or particular groups.

The Commission on Justice and Peace produced recently a document which was to be submitted to the members of the forthcoming episcopal synod in Rome. Unlike the other document, on the Priesthood, which the bishops will discuss, and which simply ignores the theology and the sociology of the last forty years or so, the document on Justice provides a radical critique of everything from neo-colonialism and economic aggression to racial and ideological

*Peter Sanders is a member of the Dominican Order and is at present studying in Johannesburg.*

discrimination. Military regimes, Western governments, even the United Nations itself as an instrument of domination by the richer countries, all find themselves targets of this document's displeasure. It goes without saying that the Vatican Secretariat of State was not pleased. The document was leaked to the Italian press by a person or persons unknown in an effort to forestall its suppression. The battle continues.

Thus Vaticanologists, those experienced readers between the crooked lines with which God writes straight, take this letter of the Pope as having a double significance, not only in its content but also in its timing and the identity of its addressee. One can only hope that they are right; but in any case this Apostolic Letter remains a sign of the possibility of the Church re-establishing credibility even in this age of the Jesus Revolution! (Cf. Time Magazine June 1971).

## **PAPAL POINTERS**

The Letter starts with a recognition of the diversity of human society, and the Pope comments on the flagrant inequalities that he has himself witnessed during his journeys. He explicitly points out that the difficulties of the Church in nations "where she sees her placed recognised, sometimes officially so" are comparable with those in places where Christians are "kept on the fringe of society" or are "a weak minority". And then come the key words "It is difficult for us ... to put forward a solution which has universal validity. Such is not our ambition, nor is it our mission". One wonders how much suffering would have been avoided in history had previous Popes been able to make these words their own. And then: "In this search for the changes which should be promoted, Christians must first of all renew their confidence in the forcefulness and special character of the demands made by the Gospel". It is something of an event when the Gospel is seen, in such very high places, as the rationale for change, not the justification of the *status quo*.

## URBANISATION AND GOD

The first of the major social questions with which the Pope deals is that of urbanisation, using the word "megalopolis" (vile expression for a hideous reality) to describe the great urban concentrations which "accompany industrial expansion without being identified with it". New social problems are created, precisely as a result of unlimited competition. "While very large areas of the population are unable to satisfy their primary needs, superfluous needs are ingeniously created" by the "modern means of publicity" to which he has already referred. "It can thus rightly be asked if, in spite of all his conquests, man is not turning back against himself the results of his activity. Having rationally endeavoured to control nature, is he not now becoming the slave of the objects which he makes". Not only economic distress marks the life of the megalopolis; there is loneliness and isolation, and these lead in turn to "delinquency, criminality, abuse of drugs, and eroticism", always the responses of inadequate persons to intolerable situations. Christians must build the city, for there is the example of Jerusalem, the Holy City, the place where God is encountered, and the Pope, in a splendid image, comforts Christians who lose heart in view of the "vast and faceless society" of the modern city. "Let them recall Jonah who traversed Nineveh, the great city, to proclaim therein the good news of God's mercy and was upheld in his weakness by the sole strength of the word of Almighty God".

After a recognition of the insecurity of youth, a somewhat nuanced appreciation of women's liberation, and a word of praise for trade unions modified by a call to the responsible exercise of power, he goes on to deal with the victims of change. "Egoism and domination are permanent temptations for man" and they now bring into being new forms of discrimination against "marginal" groups, the handicapped, the maladjusted and the old. But people are also discriminated against on grounds of race or colour, sex or religion. On racial discrimination the Pope says: "Men rightly consider unjustifiable and reject as inadmissible the tendency to maintain or introduce legislation or behaviour systematically inspired by racialist prejudice ... Within a country which belongs to each one, all should be equal before the law, find equal admittance to economic, cultural, civic and social life and benefit from a fair sharing of the nation's riches". It were almost as if he decided that the criterion of justice is the opposite of what prevails in South Africa!

## CRITIQUE OF CURRENT IDEAS, THE UP AND THE PP

Now there follows the utterly remarkable section, "Fundamental Aspirations and Currents of Ideas", in which the Pope provides a critique of various schools of thought of current significance. He speaks of a double aspiration that characterises modern life, the aspirations to equality and to participation

"which are the two forms of man's dignity and freedom". In democratic societies the search for these values, in which Christians are bound to play their part, goes on "between ideology and pragmatism". Political activity springs from the tension between these schools, "seeking to realise by concrete means ... (some) complete conception of man's vocation". Cultural and religious groupings have the duty to try to explicitate ultimate convictions about man and society, but they, and the State, must recognise the propriety of pluralism. "Truth cannot impose itself, except by virtue of its own truth." No Christian can subscribe totally to any enclosed ideology, such as the Marxist "which denies all transcendence to man and to his personal and collective history", or the liberal, which believes it exalts individual freedom "by stimulating it through exclusive seeking of interest and power". I see here a timely word for South African Progressives who must ask themselves whether it will necessarily be such an improvement upon quasi-fascist economic *dirigisme* to replace it with a capitalist free-for-all.

The Pope goes on: "Is there any need to stress the possible ambiguity of every social ideology?". At worst it becomes a mere strategy, utterly alienating man. The Christian faith is above the ideologies "in that it recognises God, who is transcendent". And "there would also be the danger of giving adherence to an ideology which does not rest on a true and organic doctrine, to take refuge in it as a final and sufficient explanation of everything, and thus to build a new idol". To be consumed by an ideology is to be a slave. But the retreat from ideologies also has its dangers, and the Pope shows himself a student of Marcuse in criticising what he calls "this positivism which reduced man to a single dimension". This, surely, is applicable to the United Party. In its efforts to avoid ideology, and to pursue a policy of what the market will bear, the UP is in fact offering to enslave us all in a never-ending *status quo*. Nationalist dreams are pretty nightmarish, but at least the Nationalists recognise that the dreaming of dreams is a part of real life. The only politician elected on the explicit platform of "Safety First", Stanley Baldwin, led his country more or less directly into a frightful war.

## ROMANTIC UTOPIAS

He speaks sympathetically of the attraction of socialism and of the evolved Marxism which presents itself "as a scientific activity, as a rigorous method of examining social and political reality, and as the rational link, tested by history, between theoretical knowledge and the practise of revolutionary transformation". The Pope leaves open the question of how Christians are to relate to these socialist and Marxist urges to justice and rationality, but warns them that to distinguish these urges from the totalitarian tendencies of the ideologies is difficult. When one considers that it was only in 1948 that communists were excommunicated *en bloc* by Pius XII,

this amber light for Christian-Marxist dialogue is all the more remarkable. The Pope understands, too, the urge to the construction of romantic utopias as an escape from concrete miseries. But "to live in a hypothetical future is a facile alibi for rejecting immediate responsibilities". (Hippies, advocates of Black Power and most believing Christians, please note!). And one must question, too, in terms of Christian values, the various physical and social sciences, for these can mutilate man by claiming total validity for some partial quantitative or phenomenological point of view. Progress is an ambiguous concept, "the breathless pursuit of that which always eludes one just when one believes that one has conquered it sufficiently to enjoy it in peace".

### A VARIETY OF POSSIBLE OPTIONS

Facing these problems, Christians draw upon a dynamic tradition, precisely the tradition of a transcendent love for man that enables society to avoid simply changing one tyrant for another. Economics is not enough, for it is too often "the field of domination and confrontation", and hence politics is the field in which men choose to adjust their relationships. "According to the vocation proper to it, the political power must know how to stand aside from particular interests in order to view its responsibility with regard to all men, even going beyond national limits". Man rightly demands, in the political sphere, "a greater sharing in responsibility and in decision making". Christians are called to action to bring about these ends. "It is not enough to recall principles, state intentions, point to crying injustices and utter prophetic denunciations; these words will lack weight unless they are accompanied for each individual by a livelier awareness of personal responsibility and by effective action". It seems relevant here to point out that the churches of South Africa have been pretty strong on prophetic denunciation, pretty weak on effective action, as, for instance, in paying their own employees a living wage.

Finally: "In concrete situations ... one must recognise a legitimate variety of possible options. The same Christian faith can lead to different commitments". We must guard against uncritical acceptance of the intellectual climate in which we live. We are at the service of the Word of God which "will be unable to be proclaimed and heard unless it is accompanied by the witness of the power of the Holy Spirit, working within the action of Christians in the service of their brothers, at the points in which their existence and their future is at stake".

If this message were to be taken to heart in South Africa, we might yet see that happy day when it will no longer be necessary for Christians here to apologise for the name they bear. Christianity might then have some other connotations than SABC religion, cultural indoctrination, racial exclusiveness and kill-joy sabbatarianism. The Pope, at least, seems to be an optimist.

Lyle Tatum,  
New Jersey, USA.

LETTERS

I HAVE BEEN reading with interest your articles in Pro Veritate about conscientious objection to military duty. It is good to see that you are taking a firm position on the rights of conscientious objectors which is in harmony with church thinking in much of the world.

I am a bit concerned about your statement in the April issue in which you approve national service as opposed to military service. If you mean that you are in favor of voluntary national service, fine, but if it is compulsory national service which you are approving, I hope you will be continuing to give the matter careful consideration.

I am a Member of the Religious Society of Friends who has worked with conscription in this country for years and particularly on the problems of conscientious objectors. Nearly all of us in this position are now firmly opposed to compulsory civilian work, although strongly in favor of volunteer work for the good of mankind.

It seems to us that a man's vocation is a personal responsibility, not the responsibility of the state. Whether a man is a priest or a plumber, if he is a Christian, his vocation should have some relationship to God's will for him rather than a relationship to the state's will even for a couple of years or a couple of months.

There is something about conscription which poisons most efforts at having it result in service. One good volunteer in a mental hospital is apt to be worth a good deal more than someone who has to be there because of the law. When I fall ill, I want to be cared for by someone who is interested in doing the job.

There is also a problem about the status of the job. If people are conscripted to work in hospitals or similar kinds of humane tasks, does this mean that these jobs are unworthy of free labor and only slaves or conscripts should expect to do them? How about the attitude of the man who sees a job like this as his life work, or for some other reason gets channeled into this kind of job? How does he feel about it if those with him are conscripts?

There is also the problem of exploitation. There is certainly no Christian justification for the fact that attendants in a mental hospital are paid much less than common laborers working in a war plant. We need to turn the resources used for war preparation into building a better society and a part of this is getting adequate pay to people who do very worthwhile, even if menial, tasks. In saying this, I recognize that the United States of America is the worst sinner of all in this area because of the vast resources we pour into war and war preparation.

# ***A Six Month's Course***

## ***in Racial Discovery***

***Albert van den Heuvel***

Sometimes I am shocked to discover how overwhelmingly important one's own biography is in relation to what one thinks and does. When discussions are sober and theoretical this fact often escapes us. We think we are being logical and free from prejudices, escaping the conditioning of our own experience. But when the scene changes and things come closer to where it hurts, touch our flesh and blood, we react very differently. These musings become very vivid in the case of the discussion on the World Council of Churches' Programme to Combat Racism.

IN THIS ARTICLE I would like to subject myself to the South African reader in a rather personal way. And I do that for two reasons: the more important one is that I have been brought up in the ecumenical movement to believe in the indestructible unity of the Church, given in Christ and his Spirit. I share with South African Christians (1) the same judgement, (2) the same justification, and (3) the same hope. The second reason is much less important: I have come to love 'the beloved country' and its people, both during earlier visits and through many encounters abroad. I feel close enough to your country to be unable just to let it sit there. And I am not the only one. Many of South Africa's severest critics are the country's best friends. Relations with the South African white churches, Afrikaans and English-speaking, have been badly strained in recent years. Many South Africans have confessed to me their feelings of embarrassment and loneliness when abroad. They often felt misunderstood and ignored, and had the feeling they were being denied a hearing. Especially those who are in the opposition towards the racial policies of Pretoria felt this way. Often they travel to find friends and some comfort but - when they are white - they find opposition, critique and even cynicism. Africans react differently. They travel to get some relief and support but often feel that they are met with little more than verbal encouragement while real solidarity is denied to them.

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*Dr. Albert van den Heuvel, a minister of the Hervormde Kerk van Holland is Director of the Department of Communications at the World Council of Churches, Geneva, Switzerland.*

Strangely enough, we outside South Africa who hear about the country and read about it, also feel unheard and misunderstood. Most of us are unable really to understand how the black Christians are so patient and longsuffering and how the white Christians can live so complacently and coolly in a racist society where human rights are so trodden underfoot and human dignity is so basically destroyed. So there is lack of understanding all around and little change.

Since the decision of the WCC Executive Committee in September last year to grant contributions to anti-racist movements, our relations have not become much better. Africans and white South Africans alike have told us that the great majority of the black population have received the news of this decision with joy. A very small minority of whites have also reacted positively, but the vocal majority of the whites have reacted with great bitterness. One or two black voices also expressed dismay. And so the polarisation in the ecumenical movement reached a climax in your country. The long-standing bitterness of the blacks was felt and in not a few cases heard for the first time. Although again I don't quite understand how even the white opposition has become insensitive to the black population; apparently a symbolic act from outside was needed to show how little of the iceberg of pain and fury is visible and audible. If our grants have helped the South Africans to see things a bit more as they really are, they have fulfilled a major function. The unwillingness of most whites to go beyond verbal protest and charity was also made manifest. Reconciliation seems farther



away than ever, both between blacks and whites within South Africa and between South African whites and the rest of Christianity. I do not write this to discourage ourselves but to face honestly how big the task before us really is.

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### BEYOND VERBAL PROTEST

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I have learned during the last six months, however, that the South African whites have a mighty army of white supporters in Europe and North America. Also in the North Atlantic part of the world a very substantial group of whites is not ready to go beyond a strong but verbal protest against racism; who abhor blacks who rise up in anger to take what is not given to them; who are unwilling or unable to see their own support for violent repression while criticising the oppressed who take to arms while all other means only seem to lead to a faint *possibility* that eventually later generations may have a fuller human dignity. They also feel ill at ease and frustrated when asked to question or to stop support for racist régimes.

I write this, not to ridicule anybody, but in the hope that the next round of discussion could be without the psychological neuroses which arise when one of the partners feels itself to be in the minority and with its back against the wall. We are still in the midst of the discussion. Maybe therefore it is a good thing to write down, once again, what a person who has lived the debate existentially has learned during its first round.

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### THE STRUGGLE FOR LIFE

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1. I have learned, first of all, how little we white folks really know about the life, the thoughts, the hopes and the despair of our black brethren, In *Pro Veritate* this has been said more than once for the South African situation, but it is even more true for Western Europe. Our capacity to imagine what life among oppressed and discriminated people is like is very limited. These limitations may spring from fear, from repressed guilt feelings, even from the necessity to suppress reality out of our own psyche in order to survive. I have lived long enough on equal footing with black friends and colleagues to imagine - not to know, that is not possible - how deeply and un-integratably their basic unfreedom, pain and anger have eaten into their lives. Racism is like cancer. It destroys the human being. Therefore I have learned that the struggle against racism is basically the struggle for survival of human life. Before I could think about ecclesial consequences and political strategies I must begin to realise that here all of life is at stake. To be or not to be, that is the question. This realisation has led me to a rigid stance on a certain level. We can discuss whether a certain

programme is wise or unwise, effective or counter-productive, but one cannot discuss whether the struggle for racial justice is a primary or a secondary concern. Practically speaking, it also means for me that denunciation of racism cannot be enough. It must be countered with all our energy. Actively. Relentlessly. And God knows there is little time.

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### LIFE-STRUGGLE CENTRAL FOR CHURCH

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2. The second thing I have learned is that as a Christian, or a churchman, this struggle reaches down to the very being of the Church. Of course it is also a social, economic and political problem - and very much so - but before I can speak about that I must realise that racial injustice in the church, promoted by the church or endured by the church spells deadly danger to the community of saints, the priesthood of all believers, the Body of Christ. A church which allows racial injustice without declaring war on it is salt which has lost its taste. With the terrible words of the Gospel: it serves only to be thrown away and trodden underfoot. I write these phrases down, not as an accusation against anybody or any particular denomination, but as a realisation of common guilt. I do not dissociate myself from any church: I know that I couldn't even if I would like to.

This point has been made often before and more forcibly than I can make it; all I want to do here is to say that I have been forced to appropriate its meaning into my own life during these last months. I say it here so explicitly in order to ask my South African brethren that they do not accuse the WCC of party politics or gross political naiveté before they have heard and accepted that we did what we did, not as a political decision, but as an action, carried by a burning concern for the Church as the Body of Christ and the people of God. Of course our common commitment is to the quality of life in its fullness; but as a world council of churches we cannot but see the tragic consequences for mission and indeed for the faith of the Church which spring from racial injustice committed by Christian people. We must realise that non-Christians, be they atheists, agnostics or people of other faiths, slander the Gospel because of governments in Southern Africa which claim to defend and promote the Christian civilisation and at the same time terrorise, brutalise and suppress a majority of the people over which they took power. That is also the reason why world Christianity cannot leave Southern Africa in peace. The universality of the Church forces us to interfere. At least one of the reasons why we cannot speak as forcibly as we would like to atheist governments which also ignore human rights is precisely because so-called Christian governments do the same and often worse.

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### SPRINGS OF LIFE

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3. The third thing I have learned is that churches, nationally or locally, will only find effective ways to combat racism if they are shown the human, churchly and spiritual sources from which their commitment is

fed.

It is interesting to see how much Christian energy has been wasted since September in criticising each other and how little energy has been spent in working to combat racism! Should we call that a victory for the demons? If all Christians who felt that the WCC was wrong in what it did had made their critique known in alternative attacks on racial injustice, better strategies, clearer proclamation and more transparent actions, we would be further along than we are now. Congregations which are now confused and outsiders who now ridicule us would have been edified and mobilised for a yet broader strategy than the Programme to Combat Racism offered to them. Very few homiletic, catechetical, liturgical and systematic models were offered or developed. We fought each other rather than our common enemy and spent more time in arguments - I am afraid - than in prayer. Perhaps, here and there, this spiritual battle is fought in silence, but on the whole the task of the real spiritual mobilisation is still before us. And this will only be done when we can get people to move with the motivations they recognise as belonging to the centre of their faith. A faith-based protest is of course not absent but one longs for the biblical inter-relationship between word and act. Especially in our time in which words not incarnated are not credible to most people alive, this longing has become more intense.

Many criticise the Geneva offices for not providing such materials, but such materials do not easily come from international organisations. The WCC has made available all that the churches need to create their own. And the more the churches themselves originate, the healthier is the ecumenical movement, which does not have its headquarters in Geneva but in the member churches. The WCC is a fellowship of churches, not a super-church. I have learned during this last period how weak this sense of fellowship still is, and how easily it is threatened, but I have also learned how strong it is among those who are conscientiously a part of it.

4. I have also learned how easy it is to pervert and corrupt the basic motivation of a certain action. The WCC staff have been accused of giving up reconciliation, of betraying our best friends in South Africa, of supporting terrorism, of opting for violence, of aiding communism, of making common cause with Russia and China, of ignoring its member churches, of manipulating its committees, of making the church a tool of political organisations, and God knows what more. Have we really been all that unclear in our words? so naive in our actions? so unreliable in our explanations? I can't believe it, but I am willing to keep repeating that none of these accusations are well founded. They have been invented by our critics and used as labels. They are not of our making.

Then what have we done?

**WE HAVE FIRST OF ALL RECOGNISED THE VICTIMS OF RACISM THEMSELVES.** That was our basic new decision in the multiple strategy for racial justice. We have not replaced our former friends by them. Our respect and friendship for all other forces which struggle against racism have neither disappeared nor diminished. But we have accepted the request of the oppressed themselves that we should not ignore them, nor decide for them, nor help them through other channels. The basic aspect of racism is the denial of the equality and dignity of the people of other racial identity. This denial we wanted to overcome. In Southern Africa the black majority cannot manifest its protest against the system under which they live. The African National Congress and similar organisations are forced underground. Their longstanding commitment to negotiation and against violence was met by suppression. Their protest was silenced; their organisation driven into exile and jail. Which victims of racism could we help *directly*, in addition to our continuing indirect help? Only the whites. Of course they are also victims of racism, be it in a more subtle way. Are they not the prisoners of fear, of obsession, of an attitude which makes flexibility already a sin? The whites have been recognised. They have been invited outside their country, they have been visited - if their government allowed - their articles have been printed and reprinted, fraternal workers have been sent to them, their projects have been sponsored, their protest has been joined. But the Africans were only helped indirectly. Now, since Canterbury 1969, the WCC has changed that. Let me say here clearly and once again that the churches in the WCC are in no way limiting their support to the groups which have been driven to a violent reaction. The fact that the discussion makes that impression is again the responsibility of our opponents. Our trouble was and is that direct recognition of anti-racist organisations is dangerous for the receiver and practically impossible.

**WE HAVE NOT EXCLUDED LIBERATION MOVEMENTS FROM OUR SUPPORT.** Could we have done otherwise? But let me plead with the reader. I have learned in the first round of the discussion that all of us are part of the violent structures of a racist society. There are the active oppressors. There are the silent enablers of that oppression. There is the opposition which is still sucked into the whole supporting structure of the violent oppression. There are we, continental Europeans, who support this violence with our political super-structures, our economic investments, our sales of arms. And then, on the other side, there are the oppressed. Most of them form a silent majority, ridden by fear, by powerlessness and by frustration. But some of them have escaped and taken up arms. In South Africa this armed resistance is hardly more than symbolic at the moment. There seems to be some sabotage but hardly more. The decision of the African organised organisations which were driven underground that they would

no longer stick to non-violence has not been taken blindly, not overnight. It has been taken against their own hopes and desires. Should they now be excommunicated from the Christian fellowship? Did Jesus force the Roman centurion to lay down his arms before he healed his slave (St. Luke 7:2-10)? Should the relatives of oppressive violence be helped, but the relatives of liberating violence be disowned?

**WE HAVE QUALIFIED OUR SUPPORT FOR THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS.** From the outset we have made clear that the support for the liberation movements was for their social, humanitarian and educational work. For this qualification the WCC has been criticised severely. It has been called hypocritical and naive. Hypocritical by those in church and society who believe that in certain cases the church should identify itself fully with a certain struggle, violent action included. Many feel that for Southern Africa this time has come. The condition was called naive by others who are certain that the liberation movements will immediately buy weapons for those \$200 000 (which does not exactly buy many arms!) and by those who see a great danger that any help to liberation movements plans into the hands of the communist forces around the world. As to the identification with political movements: history reminds the church of a sad record in this respect. It seems on the contrary that the Christian community is not called to identification but to solidarity and sharing. Theologically this follows from the divine-human concept of incarnation, through which God took on human flesh to share our predicament. Of course this caused many people's confusion (think of the Church history of the 1st and 2nd centuries, during which the Church had the greatest trouble in formulating the nature of Christ properly), but it still must provide the model for the way in which solidarity may be understood. Identification means surrender of one's own identity and can only happen between persons and groups of the same nature. Between the church and political movements this is not possible. Qualified support for the liberation movements means that the churches say 'yes' to their programme for an integrated Southern Africa, 'yes' to their demands for justice and equality, 'yes' to their social, educational and information work. It does not mean that the Church is willing to buy *all* of the political programme, all of the propaganda and all of the methods employed. I have learned during these last months that some people give qualified support for most things to which they subscribe: their party, the theology of their denomination, the policy of their country. I have also learned that many want to make an exception here. When Christians identify completely with the policy of their country, it may be understandable that qualified support makes no sense to them, but it invalidates their critique on the WCC. Of course we need more clarity on the quality of our solidarity. If solidarity with the liberation movements did not include critique and questions, we would serve them badly. Who wants a friend that never criticises? Has the WCC record been so bad in South

Africa that its solidarity can only be explained as ungratified identification? I can not believe that!

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#### WCC STRONG REPUGNANCE FOR VIOLENCE

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As to violence, I can be short. The WCC has a history of strong repugnance for violence. We have objected to all wars, all violent conflicts, all use of violence where it occurred. Most of the churches are aware that the ineffectiveness of their condemnation of racism has created the very thing they were most scared of. Violence in Southern Africa can only be deterred by the accomplishment of racial justice. No black African would take the risk of death if he had somebody to rely upon. Since the Western world only helped him with words, he took to action. Here, only he who risks his life to break the systems has the right to critique.

The argument that the WCC plays into the hands of Russia and China seems to me not only nonsensical but also slightly malicious. Nonsensical because diversification of aid increases the number of political friends among whom one can choose. If Southern Africa goes communist, it is the responsibility of those who, by their actions, proved communism right!

The argument is malicious because it plays on the worst sentiments of ill-informed people. South Africans should realise themselves that the people - also the Christians - who live in communist states, live better than their own black compatriots! I am not a communist nor am I a Marxist, but this leads me to combat *racism* rather than communism itself. I would rather fight the cause than the manifestation. European communism was sown and cultivated in a soil of discrimination and oppression of the proletariat. That is the warning for South Africa. I learned in the last six months however that all these debates about violence and politics tend to obscure the overriding argument by which I began this article: even if all the critiques were correct, we have no choice as churches but to fight what denatures the Christian faith in South Africa. Neither did we have any choice but to recognise the victims of racism themselves. These two decisions led to what we did.

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#### ECUMENICAL SOCIAL THOUGHT NOT CHANGED

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5. I have also learned that many South Africans think that the WCC has suddenly changed the social thought of the ecumenical movement. As if we had moved all of a sudden from the concept of the Responsible Society to a theology of revolution. But does this argument bear up with regard to the facts? Of course the concept of the Responsible Society is under discussion. It could not be different. Dr. Oldham invented it while walking on a bridge in London. The first articles about it are written from a North Atlantic perspective. Critics would do well though to consider whether the description itself does not squarely transcend its origin and its early explanations. "The first Assembly of the WCC defined the Responsible Society as follows: A responsible society is one where freedom is the freedom of men

who acknowledge responsibility to justice and public order, and where those who hold political authority or economic power are responsible for its exercise to God and the people whose welfare is affected by it."

The weakness of ecumenical social thought is not so much the definition of the Responsible Society as the lack of clarity about a methodology to realise it. I do not see that the WCC has changed its basic social concept, but it now has to live with a multitude of models of how a society is changed. Let us remember; this is no less true for each church than it is for the WCC as a whole. Most white South Africans seem to hope for a model of slow changes brought about by education and conversion. They somehow hope for miracles. Theologically and philosophically this belongs in the idealism of the 19th century. The reader should therefore not expect too much sympathy from 20th century men for this model. Most of us outside South Africa feel that education is not enough and miracles should not be part of our calculation. What we need is effective action, based on love for justice and desire for reconciliation.

The great non-violence tacticians of this century, like Gandhi and King, proposed models through which power was exerted by all but violent means. They broke unjust laws, they committed acts of civil disobedience, they filled the jails. Why do Gandhi and King have no - or hardly any - followers in Southern Africa? The third model is that of the violent protest, which aims at the abolishment of the existing structure, not only politically but also economically and culturally. All these options find their advocates in the WCC, but the majority of the members of the Central Committee and Executive Committee are undoubtedly closest to the middle one. They find themselves between the advocates of violence on the one hand and of long-term education on the other. Their question to the white South African is: why do you not follow the Gandhi-King strategy? Has the time not come to move from the verbal to the active protest? When will you really test the moral strength of your people and their government? and how and when will you show in action your solidarity with the Africans? If you refuse the WCC model, then what is yours? In fact they await the radicalisation of the protest without advocating violence. South Africa is not a Responsible Society. That is a fact. It is not moving towards it, either. That is a tragedy.

The WCC sticks to the ecumenical concept of the international Responsible Society. By our qualified support for the African protest and our own study on non-violent means to change society, we keep the plurality of views within our fellowship before the Churches. The latter study will not be abstract but a precise theological reflexion on concrete cases of conflict which Christians meet with action of a non-violent nature. It seems to me that whatever its outcome, its results will be constructively critical of both hasty violence and merely verbal protest.

6. I have learned in the last six months that continuous consultation with the member churches is of the greatest importance. Many have said that during this crucial period consultation was insufficient. Sometimes the argument is distorted as if South Africa did not know what was coming. That is not true. South Africans refused an invitation to Notting Hill, but they heard what happened. South African churchmen knew of the International Advisory Committee and its decisions. If not all were informed then the whole ecumenical infra-structure within South Africa has to be re-designed. Of course nobody knew in advance what the decision of the Executive Committee was going to be. Not even the General Secretary or the Chairman. One should therefore not be more critical on this point than the facts allow. The need for consultation continues. If your government makes it impossible within South Africa we will have to struggle together elsewhere, but we must continue the dialogue.

One other remark is important, though. The WCC does not move forward from unanimous vote to unanimous vote! The race decision has been criticised because it was taken before all churches agreed. The issue was too important - it was said - to be taken by a majority vote in the Central Committee. However, most of its important decisions were taken with a great majority, but also with opposing votes. This happened when the basis was changed, when the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches integrated, when the Orthodox Churches were received into membership. On the Programme to Combat Racism, this happened also. It is not the practice of the WCC to wait for unanimity but rather to increase its communication with the opponents. The reason for such consultations is not to apologise to them but to discuss with them all the components of a decision with which they do not agree. A discussion on isolated decisions makes no sense. Only if their full context and all their international ramifications are known does a discussion become truly ecumenical.

I do not regret the last six months. They were often trying but they have also had many positive results. Many people have seen the demon of racism face to face for the first time. That encounter made it possible for some to prepare for the fight. A fight which is first of all spiritual and secondly political. It has already penetrated theology, especially in the teaching of the sacraments and the Church. It begins to reach homiletics and catechesis. All that is great ecumenical gain. But the struggle has only begun. Therefore many of us have realised that the first need in a programme to combat racism is prayer. Prayer for courage, for love, for God's assistance, for more harvesters in the fields and for God's own victory.

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# ***The WCC - a critical self-reflection***

***W. A. Visser 't Hooft***

This is not meant as an "apologia pro vita nostra". Nor as a public confession of guilt. Rather as a critical appraisal of the record in the light of our present situation.

1. The race-problem has been on the ecumenical agenda since the very beginning and has remained on the agenda throughout the history of the ecumenical movement. (Stockholm 1925; Jerusalem 1928; Oldham's "Christianity and the Race Problem").

2. Interracial relations have never been a problem *within* the ecumenical movement. In this it could build on the tradition of the World Student Christian Federation, the YMCA and YWCA in which men and women of all races had learned to cooperate in a spirit of mutual confidence. It is true that the ecumenical organisations were for a long time *de facto* overwhelmingly white in their leadership, but this was due to the fact that the development of autonomous churches in Asia and Africa took a long time.

3. The early period was characterised by a strong optimism. It was believed that by the preaching of the brotherhood of men and by the spreading of modern education race-prejudice would soon be eliminated. Too little attention was given to the non-rational character of race-prejudice and to the operation of the economic factors.

## **THE JEWISH PERIOD**

4. In the period from 1933 to 1945 the one dominating issue was that of national socialist racism and more specifically of antisemitism. For the Church the Jewish problem is not a racial problem, but a deep religious issue (Romans 6 to 8). But since the

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*Dr. W.A. Visser 't Hooft, a minister of the Hervormde Kerk van Holland, is a former General Secretary of the World Council of Churches. These reflections on WCC action concerning interracial relations were written for the 1969 London Consultation on Racism. The present WCC Programme to Combat Racism owes its origin to that consultation.*

Nazi's persecuted the Jews on racial grounds the churches had to face the racial issue also. The first frontline was that of the membership of people of Jewish ancestry in the Church. This battle was fought with great conviction. The universality of the Church as the people of God embracing men and women of all races was strongly proclaimed. Effective help was given to Jewish Christian refugees.

As to the wider issue, that is the fate of the Jewish people in Nazi territory, the record is more ambiguous. A few leaders of the German Confessing Church spoke out at their peril against the persecution of the Jews, but there was no consistent and continuous protest. Leaders of the ecumenical movement protested frequently against the persecution of the Jews. Considerable efforts were made to help Jews to escape. But it was not understood until it was too late that in the name of racial purity the greatest crime of our time was being prepared namely the murder of six million Jews. Priority ought to have been given in 1942 to the Jewish emergency. But though warnings were given, the churches in the free world did not respond adequately. (An exception was William Temple). It was a failure in imagination.

5. The result of this concentration on the Jewish issue was that:

(a) during this period other important problems of race relations did not receive sufficient attention;

(b) it was too easily assumed that the defeat of the wild racism of national socialism meant the defeat of racism *per se*. It was not seen that unavowed racism can be equally pernicious;

(c) there arose a deadlock between those who conceived of relations with Israel primarily in religious, biblical, terms and those who conceived of them mainly in terms of a racial problem (Evanston 1954). And the division among the Jews between Zionists and anti-Zionists complicated the problem even more.

## THE SOUTH AFRICAN PERIOD

6. In the post-war period the dominating issue became that of apartheid in South Africa. At every meeting of the Central Committee since 1949 there was intensive discussion as to the action which should be taken. The discussion which took place with the South African member churches (through a visit of the General Secretary and in the section on "race" in Evanston) seemed to lead to positive results. The member churches in South Africa seemed to be ready to accept the basic ecumenical principle of the oneness in Christ of Christians of all races. And they seemed to be on the way to a reconsideration of the apartheid-doctrine. In 1960 (Cottesloe) in the presence of a WCC delegation a report was adopted by official delegates of the South African member churches which gave ground for hope that the churches would together take a stand against racial discrimination. But owing to exceedingly strong political pressure on the Afrikaans Dutch Reformed Churches this report was rejected by the synods concerned and these churches decided to leave the WCC. A small but determined group of churchmen in South Africa continued however to work along the lines of the Cottesloe agreement.

7. From this "South Africa" period the following conclusions can be drawn:

(a) During that time we forgot too easily the acuteness of racial problems in other parts of the world.

(b) We counted too much on the theological factors and did not analyse sufficiently the non-theological forces operating in the situation.

(c) The statements and declarations made by WCC Officers or committees made little impression in South Africa, but the approach through a multiracial ecumenical delegation leading up to a consultation with representatives of all member churches in South Africa did make a strong impression. For the tragedy of South Africa was (and is) that there is no real dialogue between the races and Cottesloe became an unique opportunity for such a dialogue. This may well be one of the main functions of the ecumenical movement in situations of interracial crisis: to create such occasions of conversation in the presence and with help of representatives of the Oikumene which bring a wider perspective into the situation.

(d) We emphasised the struggle *against* "apartheid" rather than the struggle *for* a society in which the various races would be able to live peacefully together and so did not help the white South Africans sufficiently to find a way out of their predicament. More specifically we did not make an adequate study of the problem how cultural pluralism can be combined with a sufficient consensus concerning common goals. If "apartheid" is replaced by "development according to kind" and if this latter concept is interpreted in such a way that this development is not imposed by one race on another race, but each race chooses freely the nature of the development it desires and seeks at the same time to arrive at

an understanding with the other race concerning common purposes for the whole of society, a way out of the present deadlock may be found.

8. It was not until 1959 that the World Council appointed a full-time secretary to help the churches in dealing with problems of interracial relations. This appointment should have been made much earlier. We had trusted too much in Assembly - and committee-statements. The tough problems of racial tension and discrimination required a more continuous and concrete approach and the resources of the whole ecumenical movement needed to be made available to the churches which were confronted with grave racial issues.

## FROM PAPER TO GRASS ROOTS

9. It has remained a cause of weakness in the ecumenical movement that many congregations belonging to member churches of the ecumenical movement either sought to maintain their all-white character or did not go out of their way to become truly interracial in composition. The WCC deals in the nature of the case with nation-wide church bodies. And these bodies have almost without exception spoken out for an inclusive membership and against discrimination. But these good intentions have in many cases not been implemented on the local level. This means:

(a) that the ecumenical conviction concerning the essential universal character of the Church finding its expression in a fellowship of men and women of all races and nations has not reached the grassroots in such a way that it has become a decisive motive in the life of the local congregations;

(b) that the real issue is not whether Christians want interracial justice and equality, but whether they are willing to pay the price for it. For the price has to be paid locally.

10. I would therefore summarise the salient points as follows:

(a) We have believed too much in persuasion by declarations and not been sufficiently aware of the irrational factors in the situation.

(b) We have not given adequate attention to the economic factors making for racial injustice.

(c) We have insisted too little on the very considerable sacrifices which have to be made if racial justice is to prevail.

(d) We have not yet found common answers to the problem of violence and non-violence as methods of transforming present patterns and present structures.

At the Mindolo Consultation on race-relations in Southern Africa Dr. Z.K. Matthews gave a remarkable lecture on the subject: "From non-violence to violence". He showed how the black community in South Africa had tried again and again to arrive at a dialogue with the white rulers, how all these many

attempts had failed and how, to his own deep regret, the argument for violent overthrow of the present regime had become stronger and stronger. Now the question whether Christians may use violent means in the struggle for justice and freedom arises in many situations and not only in the field of race-relations. But it is of special acuteness in this field. We have not yet worked hard enough together to arrive at a common mind. I believe that we should not so much concentrate on a theology of revolution in general, for revolution has become one of the most ambiguous expressions of our terminology. I believe that we should take up the traditional concept of the right of resistance to tyranny. That right is explicitly recognised by theologians of the time of the Reformation. Beza, the successor of Calvin, defends this right and the Scots Confession of 1560 mentions among the good works which the Christians are expected to do: the repression of (that is resistance against) tyranny. We should build on the insights of these fathers in the faith and ask ourselves what this means for us to-day.

### THE BASIC CULTURAL PROBLEM

(e) We have not yet done our home-work concerning the basic cultural problem. What we call race is in fact an unit of humanity which has owing to its common origin and through its common historical experience developed certain cultural characteristics of its own. Each race wants to participate in the common civilisation of mankind. But each race wants also to preserve those aspects of its cultural identity which it values highly. There is no reason to think that before long the common civilisation will have swallowed up all the racial cultures. For culture has deep roots and the demand for identity is persistent. So our problem is how to combine a cultural pluralism with a sufficient amount of consensus or common culture to allow pluri-racial societies to function.

It is now almost forty years ago that I had the privilege of publishing in the Student World an article by Alain Locke, a great pioneer of the cultural renaissance of the black community in the USA. The question which he asked remains the basic question: "Can we have the advantage of cultural differences without their obvious historical disadvantages?" He answered this question in the affirmative. The rising tide of resurgent minorities had progressed too much to be pushed back or snuffed out. We had to combine this search for identity with the universalism of an interdependent world. And it could be done on two conditions. One is that we do not think of culture as our property. Culture-goods belong to all who can use them. And the second condition is that we do not think of self-determination in terms of revenge and of self-assertion, but in terms of creative individuality and cultural reciprocity.

We should have listened to such a prophetic voice. Is it too late today to follow that lead?

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## Appeal

*We are including in this issue as a supplement an open letter to South Africans written by 45 Christians in the Cape on Nationalism, National Socialism and Christianity.*

*To recover printing costs we are selling the supplement to non-Pro Veritate subscribers at 25c.*

*If you would also like to help us cover our costs and want to send a donation towards costs we would be most grateful if you send it to:*

PRO VERITATE,  
P. O. Box 31135,  
Braamfontein,  
Transvaal,  
South Africa.

HELLO, OLD BOY  
I'VE COME TO  
LIBERATE YOU

THAT'S COOL  
BUT I'VE JUST  
BEEN SAVED



# ***The 'Confrontation' Correspondence***

The decision of the WCC to set up a Programme to Combat Racism is fundamentally important. In addition to the responses (both for and against) already published in *Pro Veritate* of S.A. Churches, the following churches and ecumenical agencies have given their support to the Programme: Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland; Swedish Ecumenical Council; British Council of Churches; Hervormde Kerk in Holland; International Fellowship of Reconciliation, Holland; Dutch Province of the Roman Catholic Church; Steering committee of Christianisme Social, France; National Christian Council of Japan; Council of Churches in Indonesia; Presbyterian Church of New Zealand; President of Lutheran Church in Liberia; Christian Council of L'Eglise de Jesus Christ en Madagascar. This incomplete list shows something of the international Christian impact of the Programme.

For our churches not to dialogue with the WCC on this vital issue can only isolate the South African Churches from international Christianity. Because the meeting with the WCC never materialised we publish all the correspondence we have available. The WCC has already published their correspondence with the SACC (this correspondence is numbered) and the Prime Minister has likewise published all of his correspondence with the SACC.

## ***1. Letter from Mr. Rees to Dr. Blake dated 9 March, 1971.***

Dear Dr. Blake,

I do hope that you are well. Thank you for responding so quickly to my cable to you the other day and for the very excellent manner in which you have responded to the statement issued by our Prime Minister in regard to the representations that we have been making to him.

Since my return from Addis Ababa, I have been in consultation with the heads of the member churches of the World Council of Churches in South Africa and as a result of a number of meetings with them, became convinced that the only course of action to be followed was that of a direct approach to our Prime Minister, the Hon. B.J. Vorster. The Prime Minister gave us a fair and courteous hearing, and he indicated that he would allow a delegation from the World Council of Churches to visit South Africa for the purpose of a Consultation. I am, therefore, happy to extend this invitation to you to come to South Africa in order that we may discuss with you the reasons and theology behind the grants which you have given to certain organisations operating in Southern Africa and, further, to offer your delegation the opportunity to learn first hand the feelings of the member churches in South Africa about the decision.

As intimated to you on the telephone, the delegation, as we see it coming from your side, would be of a multi-racial make-up but also one in which, whilst we acknowledge that there is the necessity for staff members to be present, one in which the majority of membership will be that of representatives of the member churches of the World Council of Churches. Therefore, I would ask you to commence to negotiate with persons who would comprise that delegation for a Consultation which we envisage taking place late June, early July or end of July. I realise that these, as you intimated to me on the phone the other day, were difficult dates for you. We visualise that this consultation would take three or four days and would be held in close proximity to Johannesburg. I would

ask you to respond about the proposed dates of the Consultation and, in return, supply me with the names of the possible delegation in order that I may begin to commence negotiations with our authorities here for entry visas.

We are indeed grateful that this Consultation which has been called for by all member churches, is now a possibility. The nine member churches in South Africa have, at this juncture, nominated two people from each of their number to represent them at this Consultation. Therefore, it appears that from the South African side there will be a total of twenty people, which includes two members from the South African Council of Churches. This being the case, not a very large Conference Centre is needed for the Consultation.

If any of the dates suggested are not suitable, then is mid-August another possibility which you would be able to consider? Later than that would become an impossibility from the South African side as it would entail breaking into annual meetings of the various member churches within South Africa.

Yours sincerely,  
(Sgd) John C. Rees

Copy to: Prime Minister of South Africa, Hon. Mr. B.J. Vorster; Moderator Presbyterian Church, Rt. Rev. A. Patterson; President of Conference, Methodist Church of South Africa, Dr. C.E. Wilkinson.

## ***PM to SACC***

*Letter from the Prime Minister, Hon. B.J. Vorster to Mr. J. Rees of 16th March, 1971.*

Prime Minister's Office,  
Cape Town.

Dear Sir,

I have been instructed by the Honourable the Prime Minister to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of your letter dated 9th March, 1971, to Dr. E.C.



Blake, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches.

It is noted that you use the word "consultation" in your letter to Dr. Blake, whereas the actual word should be "confrontation" - the word the Rt. Rev. Paterson rightly uses in his letter to the Prime Minister after the meeting with him.

It must also be pointed out that the sole object of the meeting is to discuss the abhorrent grant and that the delegation will not be allowed into the country for any other purpose.

Yours faithfully,  
(Sgd) Private Secretary

## **WCC to SACC**

2. *Letter from Dr. Blake to Mr. Rees dated 2nd April 1971 (with copies to those mentioned above)*

Dear Mr. Rees,

Your letter of March 9 reached Geneva on March 16, and after consulting my colleagues, I am making an official but preliminary response.

First of all, I want you to know that I welcome the news of the success of your negotiations with the Government of South Africa which makes possible a consultation between representatives of the World Council of Churches and representatives of our member churches in South Africa. It is important that we hear you and that you hear us, and I trust that we can work out the details of the planning of such a consultation to our mutual satisfaction. There are seven points which I would like to put forward in order that we may be entirely clear about the consultation.

1. The delegations: according to your letter, there will be 20 representatives, two each from the South African member churches of the World Council and two from the South African Council of Churches. I am not yet prepared to say how many will come from the World Council of Churches but expect the number to be somewhere between 12 and 15. It would be helpful to us if, as soon as you know them, you would send us the names of the persons who will be in the consultation from your side. I will undertake to send you our names as soon as possible. I note what you have said about your desire that a majority of our delegation be representatives of the member churches rather than staff. May I respond to this by saying that in principle we believe our representation should be chosen by us and accepted by you, just as your representation is chosen by you and accepted by us. I can assure you, however, that there will be in our judgment a sufficient number of people from our Central Committee or other constituency committees on our delegation in addition to staff participation. My question here is: Do you agree that whom we

send is our decision and is it understood that visas will be granted to the whole list which we send? One thing which could prevent a consultation taking place would be if the Government of South Africa should for any reason feel that it could not grant visas for the delegation which we believe is required for the purposes of the consultation.

2. In contrast to the above point 1, I would respond to your letter by saying, as to the agenda itself, there must be agreement on both sides. In your letter you say:

I am, therefore, happy to extend this invitation to you to come to South Africa in order that we may discuss with you the reasons and theology behind the grants which you have given to certain organisations operating in Southern Africa and, further, to offer your delegation the opportunity to learn first hand the feelings of the member churches in South Africa about the decision.

As a preliminary response to that summary of the content of the consultation, let me say first that we are perfectly happy to discuss the reasons and theology behind the grants we have given under the Arnoldshain decision of last September, but we are willing to do this in the context only of the whole programme to combat racism, particularly in the light of the Central Committee action of Addis Ababa, which reads:

"6. The Central Committee urges the member churches themselves or through their respective national councils to:

(a) investigate and analyse the military, political, industrial and financial systems of their countries to discover and identify the involvement and support provided by these systems in the perpetuation of racism and racial discrimination in the domestic and in the foreign policies of their countries and coordinate their findings through the Programme to Combat Racism;

(b) develop individually or in cooperation with other churches strategies and action programmes designed to redirect these systems to contribute to the elimination of racism and racial discrimination, and to promote racial justice, and

(c) develop in cooperation with the Programme to Combat Racism and between themselves joint strategy and planning to secure and maintain full mutual cooperation and support in their efforts to eliminate racism and racial discrimination in church and society.

To this end the Central Committee welcomes the invitation of South African churches for consultation on joint strategy and action".

If this understanding is agreeable to you, then I would suggest that the agenda would include:

Presentations on the part of the W.C.C.

1. its understanding of itself as a Council of

## Churches

2. the history of its policies and programmes with regard to race, and,
3. an exposition of the present Programme to Combat Racism, including a presentation of the Special Fund, which has been the occasion of the need for this particular consultation. This presentation would necessarily include the theological and biblical basis of the whole programme.

These would be followed by presentations of critiques of the World Council's position and actions as seen from the point of view of the South African member churches and of the South African Council of Churches.

In the three or four days of the consultation there must be plenty of time given for the give and take of open discussion.

3. We are presuming that the consultation will be at least partly open to the Press, since its purpose, as we understand it, is not envisaged as being to formulate an agreed-upon consensus leading to new policy, but rather to explain the World Council's policy and to give full opportunity for the member churches of South Africa to criticise it. This does not preclude there being a statement released by the consultation itself, but I think it would be dangerous for us to suppose that we would be able to reach an agreed-upon statement. The danger of an entirely closed meeting is that the constituency in South Africa and in the world would know that a meeting had been held but would depend upon approximately thirty different people's individual descriptions of what had happened. This could be embarrassing equally to the churches of South Africa and to the World Council of Churches. My question is therefore: Do you propose that the consultation shall be open to Press at least for its major position presentations? We see value in some closed sessions particularly when free discussion is desired.

4. We shall also have to agree as to who shall preside over the consultation. My suggestion would be that there be two co-chairmen, one from the World Council of Churches' delegation and one from the South African delegation. If you are prepared to accept this idea, I would be glad to have your decision as to who should preside from your side and we will send you ours as soon as we have been able to determine our delegation.

5. We must agree upon mutually accepted dates. This is difficult as we must correspond throughout the world to find who can be made available for this purpose at the dates decided upon. May I suggest tentatively that the consultation take place near Johannesburg on June 16 - 19 or upon July 25 - 31. It appears that the June dates are preferable here but the consultation would have to be shorter. We need your reply on this subject at the earliest possible moment.

6. We must agree upon the living arrangements for the consultation. I would remind you that we would expect, as a World Council of Churches, meal and sleeping accommodations for our whole delegation that will not be in any way embarrassing. Will you be specific on this point?

7. There are other questions which occur to us. Should there be invited observers from non-member churches, particularly the Dutch Reformed Church and the Roman Catholic Church? Will the visas of our delegation be such that those who have time can visit other cities after the consultation and see your country? Is it understood that our delegation would be able to make visits to churches, friends, the Christian Institute, etc. etc. With relation to point 1 above, can you let me know if Bishop Zulu will be on the South African delegation. If not, would you propose his presence at the consultation in some way that his double representation would be symbolized?

May I hear from you as early as possible your considered response to the points made in this letter?

Very cordially yours,  
(Sgd) Eugene Carson Blake

cc. Officers of the World Council: Dr. M.M. Thomas  
Metropolitan Meliton of Chalcedon  
Miss Pauline Webb

Rt. Rev. A.H. Zulu  
All Africa Conference of Churches: Mr. S.H. Amisah  
Canon Burgess Carr

## **SACC to WCC**

3: *Letter from Mr. de Gruchy dated 13th April 1971.*

Dear Dr. Blake,

We acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 2nd April in response to ours of the 9th March regarding the consultation between the World Council of Churches and its member churches in South Africa.

In the absence of Mr. Rees overseas I am handling this matter on behalf of the Council of Churches, and have been in contact with the leaders of the churches to whom you sent copies of your letter. A copy also has been sent by us to the Archbishop of Cape Town. When these persons have had the opportunity to study the contents of your letter and to consider the two sets of dates mentioned in your letter I will immediately contact you again to indicate what their thinking is. I am of course bearing in mind the urgency necessary for the fixing of these dates so that you can assemble the delegation which you desire to have, in time.

As you know, John Rees will be visiting Geneva in the near future and I presume that you will discuss your letter with him. Of course, we are all in the

predicament of having to wait on our constituency before we can make any final arrangements.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,  
(Sgd) J.W. de Gruchy  
Director of Publications

4. *Letter from Mr. de Gruchy dated 20th April 1971*

Dear Dr. Blake,

Further to my letter of April 13, 1971, I am now in a position to report on the dates for the World Council of Churches/South African Churches Consultation. It seems that July 25 - 31 or a period within that time would be most suitable from our point of view and that the venue will most likely be in the vicinity of Johannesburg. The issues raised by you in your letter are being given serious attention by the relevant persons and as soon as I am in a position to report to you on this matter, I will do so. In the meantime, we trust that you will be able to prepare your delegation and we would also ask that for the moment the dates of the Consultation be kept as confidential as possible.

At the request of the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa, we have found it necessary to increase our delegation from two to three persons per member church. This means that our total delegation will be increased from 20 to 28 persons.

Please let me know as soon as possible the names and details of the persons on the World Council of Churches delegation so as to facilitate the obtaining of visas.

Yours sincerely,  
(Sgd) J.W. de Gruchy

5. *General Secretariat of W.C.C. to Mr. de Gruchy of 26 April 1971.*

Thank you for your letters of 13th and 20th April to Dr. Blake concerning the consultation between the World Council of Churches and its member churches in South Africa. I am sure he will be pleased to have this information before him which will enable him to go ahead in assembling the W.C.C. delegation.

Dr. Blake is presently out of Switzerland and is expected back in Geneva on May 3rd. You may be sure that your letters will receive his personal attention as soon as possible upon his return.

Sincerely yours,  
(Sgd) Secretary

6. *Letter from Mr. de Gruchy of April 22, 1971*

Dear Dr. Blake,

The Archbishop of Cape Town has written to me and responded to some of the points raised in your letter. I think it is important that you should be informed about his reaction because it may well reflect

the thinking of most of our Church leaders.

(1) The decision as to who represents the World Council is clearly a World Council decision. We do not wish to influence the choice of representatives though there may be certain people chosen who would not be given visas by the South African Government.

(2) At this stage we would prefer not to discuss the agenda. There will be a meeting of the South African delegation during May at which this question will be raised and our proposals for the agenda made.

(3) Whether or not the press should be admitted will be considered by the Preliminary Meeting in May. At this stage we would not wish to express any views, but after May we will discuss this further with you.

(4) The appointment of two chairmen appears to be a very reasonable one and this will be on the agenda of the Preliminary Meeting in May so that the South African delegation can nominate their Chairman.

(5) The question as to whether the delegation should meet with non-member churches is also one which will be considered in May though the heads of the Churches in South Africa already had this in mind. Further, it is reasonable to expect that those who come on the World Council of Churches delegation will be able to meet other bodies and travel to other places.

I would stress that these are the Archbishop's feelings on the matters raised though I am sure they represent the feelings of many others. As you know, he is President of the South African Council of Churches. I should also explain the purpose of the Preliminary Meeting which we will hold during May. This meeting will gather together the various delegations appointed by the churches for a few days to consider matters pertaining to the Consultation in July. It is felt that any decisions made with regard to the agenda, procedure, etc., should be made by those officially appointed by the Churches to represent them. These persons will obviously have the responsibility after the Consultation, of reporting back and it is, therefore, only fair that they should have the opportunity to be in on the planning of it.

Yours sincerely,  
(Sgd) J.W. de Gruchy

cc. The Archbishop of Cape Town  
Mr. John Rees, General Secretary, S.A.C.C.

## **WCC to SACC**

7. *Letter from Dr. Blake to Mr. de Gruchy of 5th May 1971*

My dear Mr. de Gruchy,

This is to acknowledge with appreciation your letters of 13th, 20th and 22nd April in response to mine of 2nd April to John Rees, which in turn was

in response to his official letter of 9th March.

As you probably know, John Rees has had a copy of my letter of April 2nd which I sent to him at the address he gave me in the Netherlands. I will, of course, look forward to discussing all matters with him when he comes to Geneva later this month.

I am taking it for granted that, if the consultation is able to take place, the dates of July 25 - 31 are agreed. I note that you are going to discuss the points of my letter of 2nd April with the Representative Committee and that I will be hearing from you with regard to them.

And now I come to the only matter in your letter of April 22nd that gives me real concern. In your point (1) you say: "We do not wish to influence the choice of representatives though *there may be certain people chosen who would not be given visas by the South African Government.*" If this should happen, when we have as responsibly as we know how chosen our delegation in response to your invitation, it will of course raise the question with us as to whether we can come at all. This would mean either that there would be no consultation or that we would change the place of the meeting out of South Africa. It would be the latter that I should much prefer, and I would hope that you would feel the same way also.

May I take up one visa question now? It has been my thought that this was an important enough occasion to require the presence of the Chairman of the Central Committee, Dr. M.M. Thomas. He is, as you know, a citizen of India. He writes me that his passport clearly excludes travel to South Africa. Can you investigate on the South African Government side to see whether an entrance permit for Dr. Thomas to South Africa could and would be issued without Indian Government endorsement? So far as I know no other member of our delegation would be in that kind of position and therefore I write this now in order to have the fullest amount of time to work on the problem.

Very cordially yours,  
(Sgd) Eugene C. Blake

cc. Dr. M.M. Thomas  
Mr. Baldwin Sjollema

## **SACC to WCC**

8. *Letter from Mr. de Gruchy to Dr. Blake of 10th May 1971.*

Dear Dr. Blake,

Thank you for your letter of May 5, 1971, with regard to the planned meeting between the W.C.C. and South African member churches. It is now certain that if the Consultation does take place, it will be within the dates July 25 - 31 as intimated in my earlier letter.

We appreciate very much your feelings as expressed in the fourth paragraph of your letter but I think, in all honesty, we had to say this and accept the consequences. It may well be that we are doing an injustice to those who grant visas but that remains to be seen. You will appreciate that this is not of our making.

With regard to the visa question, I would suggest that it is absolutely essential to have the full names and details (passport numbers, countries, etc.) as soon as possible so that we can make application here for visas as well as your own application from Geneva. We would need the same information with regard to Dr. M.M. Thomas before even taking up the question with our authorities. It seems to me that it might be advisable for us to submit the total list, including Dr. Thomas' name, rather than single out his particular case and send the names in separately. In any event, I would need to have these particulars before taking up his own case and would ask you to send these at your very earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,  
(Sgd) J.W. de Gruchy

## **WCC to SACC**

9. *Letter from Dr. Blake to Mr. de Gruchy of 13th May 1971.*

Dear Mr. de Gruchy,

I thank you for your letter of May 10. I know and think I appreciate the difficult position you are in with regard to your second paragraph of your letter. I am doing everything I can to make the consultation possible, but I must warn you now that there will be no consultation possible in South Africa if a selective granting of visas is made by the Government of South Africa.

I am somewhat troubled about your third paragraph. The situation of Dr. M.M. Thomas, who is my chairman and who is a citizen of India, is a different problem and more complicated than will be the problem of anyone else. That was the reason that I suggested that you should make a special investigation of his case as an Indian citizen. If it should work out that he did not come, we have a person on our list who is also an Indian citizen and, therefore, I need to know as early as possible the special procedures that may be necessary to get anyone from India into South Africa. This has nothing to do with the problem to which I referred in my former paragraph. I will, however, try to get the information that you ask, but I do respectfully suggest that a special inquiry, with regard not to Dr. Thomas as such but to an Indian citizen would be in order before I am able to send you the full list.

Very cordially yours,  
(Sgd) Eugene C. Blake

cc. Mr. Sjollema

## **PM to SACC**

*Letter from the Prime Minister, Hon. B.J. Vorster to Rev. J. de Gruchy of 8th May, 1971.*

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE  
CAPE TOWN.

Dear Sir,

I have been instructed by the Honourable the Prime Minister to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 20th April, 1971.

It is pointed out, so that there can be no misunderstanding, that the proposed meeting is not a "consultation" about World Council of Churches affairs, but a "confrontation" by the South African member Churches with the World Council of Churches regarding their abhorrent decision re the terrorists.

The Prime Minister will definitely not allow the World Council of Churches to come to South Africa for any other purpose.

It is also pointed out that it is not necessary for more than a few delegates to come for this purpose.

Yours faithfully,

PRIVATE SECRETARY

## **SACC to PM**

*10. Letter of Mr. de Gruchy addressed to the Prime Minister of South Africa dated 19 May 1971.*

Dear Sir,

We thank you for your letter of May 8, 1971, with regard to the proposed meeting between South African member churches and the World Council of Churches.

The delegation appointed by the South African member churches has now met to consider the Agenda and other details. They have instructed me to write to you with the following information:

The Agenda will be as follows: "The grants made by the W.C.C. to guerilla forces in Southern Africa and the reactions of the South African member Churches in terms of their respective resolutions and their understanding of their responsibility in South Africa."

We trust that the above terms will satisfy your conditions and that you will allow the meeting to take place.

With regard to the final paragraph in your letter, we respectfully submit that our original invitation to the World Council of Churches did not indicate any limit to their delegation. The General Secretary of the W.C.C. has indicated that approximately 12 - 15 persons will be appointed to represent them. In view of the fact that the South African delegation will number thirty persons, we would appreciate it if you would allow the W.C.C. to send their suggested number of delegates.

It has been very difficult for us to decide on the venue for this proposed meeting. However, we have made a preliminary booking at the kind invitation of St. Peter's Theological Seminary, Hammanskraal. If there is any further information which you require, we would be glad to furnish same. May we request that further correspondence on this matter be directed to the convenor of the executive appointed for this meeting, Dr. A.L. Borraine, P.O. Box 2157, Durban. We would appreciate it if copies of correspondence to him could be sent to us.

Yours sincerely,  
(Sgd) J.W. de Gruchy.

cc. Dr. E.C. Blake, W.C.C.

## **SACC to WCC**

*11. Letter from Mr. de Gruchy to Dr. Blake of 19th May 1971.*

Dear Dr. Blake,

Further to my letter of April 22, 1971, I wish to inform you that the Preliminary Meeting of the South African delegation has now taken place. We wish to make the following points with regard to our proposed meeting.

(1) In the light of your letter of April 2, 1971, and our reflection upon it, we suggest that the agenda be, "The Grants made by the W.C.C. to guerilla forces in Southern Africa and the reactions of the South African member churches in terms of their respective resolutions and their understanding of their responsibility in South Africa".

We wish to indicate that our invitation to the World Council of Churches was made prior to the Addis Ababa meeting of the Central Committee. Therefore, we must make it clear that our Churches have not agreed to consult on joint strategy and action in terms of Item 6 of Document 55 as referred to by you on page 2 of your letter.

(2) The South African delegation has elected Bishop Alphaeus Zulu as its Chairman. The other delegates, insofar as they have been appointed at this time are: The Rev. L. Mateza, the Rev. L.M. Ngema, the Rt. Rev. A. Paterson, the Rev. A.W. Habelgaarn, the Rev. Dr. B. Krüger, the Rev. J.J. Ulster, Dr. S. Nielson, the Rev. D.J. Gqweta, the Rev. W.M. Majikijela, the Rev. J. Wing, the Rev. B.N.B. Ngidi, the Rev. J. Thorne, Dr. K. Nürnberger, the Rev. D. Tutu, the Rt. Rev. B.B. Burnett, Dr. E. Strassberger, Professor C.W. Cook, the Rt. Rev. J.Y. Eliso, the Rev. B.M. Molaba, the Rev. A.E. Hendricks, Dr. Alex Borraine, the Rev. S. Mokitimi. As already indicated, there are other names still to be appointed.

(3) We recommend that the Press be not invited to attend the meeting but that all matters relating to press statements, press conferences, etc., be discussed by us together at the meeting.

(4) We suggest that the meeting begins on Monday at 3.00 p.m. July 26 and concludes not later than Friday, 30th at lunch time. We anticipate that the venue will be near Johannesburg and that there will be no difficulty with regard to the housing and hospitality of all delegates.

(5) We have decided that no observers be invited to attend. However, should you wish to make contact with such churches, we enclose a list of their leaders and their addresses. Further, it is not within our control to determine the nature of your visas but we hope that the delegates will have all the opportunity they need to visit whomever they wish.

Finally, we wish to indicate that we have appointed the Rev. Seth Mokitimi as Chaplain to the meeting and trust that this would be acceptable to you. Further, we trust and pray that this planned meeting will take place to the benefit of the Church of Jesus Christ today.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,  
(Sgd) J.W. de Gruchy

cc. The Prime Minister

*12. Letter from Mr. de Gruchy dated 21st May 1971*

Dear Dr. Blake,

Thank you for your letter of May 13, 1971, with regard to the visit of Dr. M.M. Thomas. I have made enquiries through our Department of Interior and as far as our Government is concerned, the problem you raise rests with the Indian authorities. Dr. Thomas needs the endorsement of the Indian Government on his passport to allow him to come to South Africa. From the South African side, all that is required is a visa obtained through the normal channels and this is not dependent on the Indian endorsement. In other words, Dr. Thomas comes as any other member of the delegation.

Further to my letter of May 19 which I trust you have received, may I mention that I inadvertently left off three names from the list of the South African delegation, namely, those representing the South African Council of Churches - Mr. John Rees, Dominee Beyers Naude, and my own name, as secretary to the proposed meeting. The reason for forgetting these names is simply that the first two were not present at the Preliminary Meeting. Further, as indicated in my earlier letter, there are still other names that have not yet been released.

We have had correspondence from the South African Foundation, which is a non-government association about presenting the South African image to the world at large. They have indicated their desire to discuss the W.C.C. grants with members of the W.C.C. delegation, and also to assist in any way they can

to enable delegates to see parts of the country in which they may be interested. You will probably be aware of their stance and, therefore, will need to make up your own mind on how you wish to respond to this. We would be happy to assist in whatever way we can. I would appreciate an early comment on this which I think could be quite significant.

Yours sincerely,  
(Sgd) J.W. de Gruchy

cc. Mr. John Rees

## **WCC to SACC**

*13. Memorandum from Dr. Blake to Mr. Rees dated 26th May 1971.*

Dear Mr. Rees,

Having today brought you up-to-date with the latest correspondence from Mr. de Gruchy concerning the proposed consultation in South Africa in July, it seems best to answer the correspondence with a comprehensive memorandum which you can take and discuss with him and with the representatives of the member churches which have been appointed to meet on the South African side of the consultation. I am covering the matters that concern us by commenting on the points made in Mr. de Gruchy's letter of May 19. His letter arose out of the Preliminary Meeting of the South African delegation.

(1) I do not believe that this point is responsive to my letter of April 2nd nor is really in harmony with the letter from you dated March 9, 1971, in which the formal invitation for the consultation upon which we are now working was raised. In that letter the invitation was given

“in order that we may discuss with you the reasons and theology behind the grants which you have given to certain organisations operating in Southern Africa and, further, to offer your delegation the opportunity to learn first hand the feelings of the member churches in South Africa about the decision”.

In Mr. de Gruchy's letter of May 19, however, he informs me that the representatives of the member churches suggest that the agenda should be

“The Grants made by the W.C.C. to guerilla forces in Southern Africa and the reactions of the South African member churches in terms of their respective resolutions and their understanding of their responsibility in South Africa”.

Certainly those who agreed upon this wording must have known that to call the organisations to which we have made our grants “Guerilla forces in Southern Africa” is unacceptable to us. Furthermore, that is a theme of a consultation and not an agenda. And although it is true that certain member churches asked for consultation with us prior to the Addis

Ababa meeting - to which suggestions I have personally responded favourably in each case - it is nevertheless true as far as the World Council of Churches as an organisation is concerned that the Central Committee decisions taken at Addis Ababa do give the only context in which we officially can discuss the race programme.

Further I believe I must ask for a definite response to the suggestions which I made in my letter of April 2nd as to the presentations which we would propose to make. They were:

1. its understanding of itself as a Council of Churches,
2. the history of its policies and programmes with regard to race, and
3. an exposition of the present Programme to Combat Racism, including a presentation of the Special Fund, which has been the occasion of the need for this particular consultation. This presentation would necessarily include the theological and biblical basis of the whole programme".

I think we also ought to hear from you as to definite agenda items which the South African Churches would like to present in the consultation. From the beginning it has been understood between us that an agenda must be agreed upon. I cannot even decide on how large a delegation or who should be on it unless we know the agenda in advance.

(2) We note the partial list of the representatives of the member churches which is included in Mr. de Gruchy's letter of May 19 and we have noted his letter of May 21st in which he adds his own name, yours and Dominee Beyers Naudé. I am not able at this time to give a full list with the details needed but expect at the present date that our delegation will include:

Dr. M.M. Thomas	Chairman of the Central Committee
Miss Pauline Webb	Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee
Dr. Ernest Payne	A President of W.C.C. and member of the Executive and Central Committees
Prof. Dr. L. Raiser	President of the Synod of the Evangelical Church in Germany
Rt. Rev. John Hines	Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church of the United States and member of Central Committee
Rev. Jean Bokelleale	Member of the Executive and Central Committees and President of Eglise du Christ au Congo
Mr. S.H. Amisshah	Retired General Secretary, All Africa Conference of Churches

Canon Burgess Carr	New General Secretary, All Africa Conferences of Churches
Prof. J. Lochman	Member of the Central Committee
Father T. Paul Verghese	Member of the Central Committee

#### Staff

Dr. Eugene C. Blake	General Secretary
Rev. Philip Potter	Director, Commission of World Mission and Evangelism
Miss Brigalia Zam	Associate Secretary, Department on Cooperation of Men and Women in Church, Family and Society
Mr. Baldwin Sjollema	Executive Secretary, Ecumenical Programme to Combat Racism
Rev. Charles Spivey	Secretary for Ecumenical Programme to Combat Racism
Dr. A. van den Heuvel	Director, Department of Communication

I expect that our total delegation will not be larger than 16 or at the most 18 persons. I am attempting to get information from each one of the above proposed to send you as soon as possible for action upon their visas.

(3) I note that the representatives of the member churches have recommended that "the press be not invited to attend the meeting but that all matters relating to press statements, press conferences, etc., be discussed by us together at the meeting". This is hardly responsive to the passage in my letter of April 2nd in which I indicated that it would be very difficult for us to come to South Africa without having some confidence in agreed-upon press relations. Even today as I dictate this, there has been a release in South Africa which is embarrassing to us indicating that the consultation has been decided upon. I was under the impression that we were negotiating the terms upon which we can have a useful consultation. I take the opportunity to assure you again that I want the consultation to take place. Nevertheless it would appear to us that the minimum would be an invitation to the press to those plenary sessions in which the formal presentations are made by the World Council of Churches within the agreed upon agenda.

I emphasize that this is the minimum from our point of view and leave it to you as to whether you would not want the press to hear directly the presentations from your delegation given within the agreed upon agenda. I am perfectly happy that all other matters relating to press statements, conferences etc. could be discussed and agreed together at the meeting itself.

(4) It is suggested that the meeting begins at 3.00 p.m. Monday July 26th. We are hoping to fly

into Johannesburg from Nairobi as a delegation on BOAC 021 arriving at 11.25 a.m. on Tuesday 27th July. Therefore we suggest that the consultation begins one day later than your proposal and, if you wish, that it continues twenty-four hours longer, that is, to end no later than Saturday 31st at lunch-time. I note also that under this point that Mr. de Gruchy is anticipating no difficulty in housing and hospitality of all delegates. I presume that this means that the delegates will live and eat together in a church institution and that there will be no discrimination as to room assignments, etc.

(5) We have noted that you do not wish to invite observers and of course accept your decision on that matter. We appreciate your making available the names of some non-member churches with whom members of our delegation may want to consult also. I note that you hope, as do we, that the visas granted will be for a long enough duration so that "the delegates will have all the opportunity they need to visit whomever they wish". I hope that we can understand this assurance to mean that there will be no difficulty in official passes to visit townships or Bantustans.

Finally, we note that you have appointed the Rev. Seth Mokitimi to be Chaplain of the meeting. We are happy to accept this and propose that there ought to be several periods of bible study which might be offered by two or more of the following members of the World Council's delegation: Canon Burgess Carr, Paul Verghese, Pauline Webb and Jan Lochman.

I hope that you will share this memorandum with Mr. de Gruchy and so far as it is possible with the members of the South African delegation who were responsible for the decisions which resulted in his letter of May 19. May I in closing urge that as soon as possible you send me the official response to the questions raised in this memorandum. We are anxious to have the specific answers in order that we may be able to announce that the World Council has accepted your invitation for the Consultation.

Very sincerely yours,  
(Sgd) Eugene C. Blake

cc. WCC staff members of delegation.

## ***PM to SACC***

*Letter from the Prime Minister, Hon. B.J. Vorster to Rev. A. Borraine of 26th May, 1971.*

Prime Minister's Office,  
CAPE TOWN,

Dear Dr. Borraine,

I have received the letter dated 19th May, 1971, from Mr. J.W. de Gruchy, and submit my comments as

follows:

I am sorry that I cannot agree with your wording of the point on the agenda. I do not know of any "guerrilla forces" in Southern Africa. I am only aware of terrorists who have received aid from the World Council of Churches.

It was furthermore pointed out to me that the South African churches consider the decision an "abhorrent" one and that they wished to "confront" the World Council of Churches with it.

I suggest therefore that the point should be worded as follows:

"The grants made by the World Council of Churches to terrorists in Southern Africa and the reactions of the South African member churches in terms of their respective resolutions against this abhorrent decision".

I must furthermore point out that I am not prepared to allow the visiting delegates to go further than the International Hotel at Jan Smuts Airport and to stay longer than the actual duration of the confrontation. Conference facilities are available at the Hotel.

I also fail to see why it should be necessary for the World Council of Churches to bring such a large contingent to debate such a clear-cut issue.

You will do well to take into account that our people as a whole are deeply shocked at this decision and that it will be a grave mistake if South African member churches were to treat this matter lightly.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) B.J. Vorster

## ***SACC to WCC***

*14. Letter from Rev. Alex Borraine to Dr. Blake of 1st June 1971*

Dear Dr. Blake,

I have today received a letter from the Prime Minister in which he makes the following conditions in relation to our proposed meeting in July.

1. He suggests that the Agenda should be as follows:

"The grants made by the World Council of Churches to terrorists in Southern Africa and the reactions of the South African member churches in terms of their respective resolutions against this abhorrent decision".

2. He will not allow visiting delegates to go further than the International Hotel at Jan Smuts Airport nor to stay longer than the actual duration of the 'confrontation'.



3. He fails to see why it should be necessary for the World Council of Churches to bring such a large contingent "to debate such a clear cut issue".

You will appreciate our own feelings in terms of these conditions and after talking with Bishop Zulu it seemed right to communicate this to you immediately.

We would ask you not to make this public until such time as you have responded to these conditions and see whether it is possible to reach a common mind regarding our proposed meeting in July and considering the enormous difficulties placed upon us by the Prime Minister.

As soon as we have heard from you we will be in touch with the Prime Minister.

Please direct all correspondence on this matter directly to me. At our recent meeting as you will know from our letter, Bishop Zulu was nominated as Chairman and I have been asked to act as Conveyor to handle correspondence with the Prime Minister and yourself, Press releases and the working out of final details for our proposed meeting.

With good wishes,

Yours sincerely,  
(Sgd) Alex L. Boraine

cc. Bishop Zulu  
Mr. John Rees.

## **WCC to SACC**

15. *Letter from Dr. Blake to Mr. Boraine of 7th June 1971*

Dear Mr. Boraine,

Your letter of June 1st containing the new conditions imposed by the Prime Minister, Mr. Vorster, in connection with the proposed consultation between the World Council of Churches and its member churches in South Africa makes such a consultation as had been envisaged by you and us quite impossible.

It appears that the Prime Minister, when he gave his original undertaking to Mr. Rees to permit the consultation, entirely misunderstood the nature of our relationships and the kind of meeting you desired to have with us or else he has since changed his mind. In any case, it is clear that the issue is now between your churches and the Government of South Africa.

Unless I hear from you promptly that you have succeeded in changing the position of the Prime Minister, I shall take it for granted that you agree that the consultation must be postponed indefinitely. This I regret, for I assure you that from the beginning we wished to speak directly to you and to hear direct-

ly from you concerning the important matter of racism and its incompatibility with the Gospel.

With regard to the conditions newly imposed by the Prime Minister, let me comment as follows:

1. This wording of the "agenda" or rather the theme of the consultation is not what was proposed by Mr. Rees in his letter of March 9 nor does it take into consideration any of my comments on agenda in my letter of April 2 or my memorandum to Mr. Rees of May 26. It is entirely unsatisfactory.

2. Surely the Prime Minister, by imposing the condition that the World Council delegation be confined to the International Hotel at Jan Smuts Airport, is attempting to back out of his agreement to give visas to our delegation since people without visas can normally stay in any international airport.

Let me here list the people who had agreed to come to South Africa on my invitation and whom the Prime Minister thus collectively and individually insults:

Dr. M.M. Thomas	Chairman of the Central Committee
Miss Pauline Webb	Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee
Dr. Ernest Payne	A President of W.C.C. and of the Executive and Central Committees
Prof. Dr. L. Raiser	President of the Synod of the Evangelical Church in Germany
Rt. Rev. John Hines	Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church of the United States and member of the Central Committee
Rev. Jean Bokeleale	Member of the Executive and Central Committees and President of Eglise du Christ au Congo
Mr. S.H. Amisshah	Retired General Secretary, All Africa Conference of Churches
Canon Burgess Carr	New General Secretary, All Africa Conference of Churches
Prof. J. Lochman	Member of the Central Committee
Father T. Paul Verghese	Member of the Central Committee
<i>Staff</i>	
Dr. Eugene C. Blake	General Secretary
Rev. Philip Potter	Director, Commission of World Mission and Evangelism
Mr. Baldwin Sjollema	Executive Secretary, Ecumenical Programme to Combat Racism
Rev. Charles Spivey	Secretary for Ecumenical Programme to Combat Racism



# SACC Press Release

On developments in the proposed discussions with the World Council of Churches

I wish to confirm that the information given by the Prime Minister as regards the correspondence which passed between my office and his office is correct. However, there is one letter to which he has not as yet made reference and that is his last letter in which he imposes two new conditions upon which the Consultation would be able to take place.

I have recently returned from a two month tour of Europe and spent two days in Geneva near the end of that trip. Amongst the many people that I met, I had an opportunity to spend some time with Dr. Blake where I explained at length that our Prime Minister saw this not as a Consultation but as a Confrontation and despite this difference in phraseology, the World Council of Churches was still prepared to come to South Africa. Dr. Blake has now objected to the two new conditions imposed by the Hon. The Prime Minister and it is on these grounds, not over the use of the word 'consultation' or 'confrontation' that the delegation has floundered.

I regret that this has happened and that the Hon. the Prime Minister has seen fit to impose additional conditions as it is very clear in my mind that there would have been some very straight talking had the Consultation taken place.

Further, I would like to correct a wrong impression that it was the South African Council of Churches who called for this meeting. The Council of Churches can only act when it is called upon to do so by its member Churches. In this instance, the member Churches of the World Council of Churches who also happen to be members of the South African Council of Churches, called upon the Council of Churches in South Africa to organise a meeting on their behalf. Once the Council had discharged its obligation in this regard, it should be noted that the detailed planning of the meeting passed from the hands of the Council into the hands of the member Churches themselves.

Lastly, the South African member Churches thought it was only courtesy to invite the World Council of Churches to come to South Africa. They were very well aware from the outset that there was a possibility of holding this meeting outside the borders of the country but felt that it would be advisable for the meeting to take place within South Africa so that the delegation could learn from personal experience the feelings of a large number of South Africans concerning the grants which were made to certain organisations operating in Southern Africa.

*Press Release 4  
June 16, 1971.*

## **Black Theology Resolution**

*In June we printed a talk given by seminary-lecturer Dr. Mabona on 'White Worship and Black People' given at the seminar on Black Theology. We also tried to show in both that issue and the July issue something of the breadth of Christianity as it affects black people. To keep our readers abreast of this thinking, we publish a resolution on Black Theology passed at a Transvaal Regional Seminar held at St. Peter's Seminary, Hammanskraal.*

Christianity as propagated by the white-dominated churches has proved beyond reasonable doubt to be a support for the *status quo* which to the black people means oppression. This is clearly manifested by their over-emphasis of interracial fraternisation as a solution to the problem of this country whereas they are fully aware that the basic problem is that of land distribution and the consequent disinheritance of the black people. Therefore we are making a new departure to make the Christian message a really healing and saving message for the people of God. In this effort we embrace the movement of Black Theology.

Black Theology is not a theology of absolutes but grapples with the existential situation. Black theology is not a theology of action and development. It is not a reaction against anything but is an authentic and positive articulation of our reflection on God in the light of our black experience.

We understand the starting point of this theology to be Christ's declaration of His Mission in the following words: "The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favour". Black theology is a theology concerned with the future of the black man in the light of Christ as liberator.

As a consequence we turn our backs on the biased interpretation of the Christian message which the white-dominated churches have been feeding to the black people. We understand Christ's liberation to be a liberation not only from circumstances of internal bondage but also a liberation from circumstances of external enslavement. Christ's message, therefore, to black theology means taking resolute and decisive steps to free the black people not only from estrangement to God but also from slave mentality, inferiority complex, distrust of themselves, and continued dependence on other men culminating in self-hate.

an open letter  
concerning nationalism  
national socialism  
and christianity

Supplement to Pro Veritate July 1971

PRO  
VERITATE

## an open letter to south africans

Near the end of last year a crowd of friends and sympathizers gathered at the D.F. Malan Airport in Cape Town to bid farewell to the Rev. Bernard Chamberlain. One of those in the crowd was the Rev. Robert Mercer. Chamberlain and Mercer were colleague priests at Stellenbosch who had recently been served with deportation orders. Many there were ministers of the Church. Others were university students from Stellenbosch or Coloured and White parishioners.

A large part of the crowd met first in a building nearby to pray together before proceeding to the airport. It was an emotional farewell in which all who had come to say goodbye to Chamberlain were convinced, 'this man has done nothing wrong' (Lk. 23:41) - except to criticize apartheid outspokenly. Someone in the crowd lowered the flag at the airport to halfmast as a sign that South Africa should be mourning this day. (The Afrikaans press incorrectly reported that the flag had been dragged down to the ground).

Something else also happened at the airport. Some weeks before Dr. J.S. Gericke of Stellenbosch University, the Retiring Moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church, had bitterly attacked critics of South Africa for suggesting that there might be parallels between South Africa and Nazi Germany. As an act of protest many at the airport added their signatures to a statement drawn up in reply to Dr. Gericke. Since then it has been decided that the issues in the statement were of more permanent concern to all South Africans and it has been expanded. It now appears here with the signatures of those who have signed it in its expanded form, not addressed to Dr. Gericke particularly but as an Open Letter to South Africans.

IN OCTOBER last year Dr. J.S. Gericke, as the retiring Moderator, opened the General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in Pretoria with an address in which he attacked churchmen and other critics of our apartheid society whom he accused of drawing "an evil and untrue comparison" between South Africa and Nazi Germany.

*Hoofstad* (15.10.70), for instance, reported: "Dr. Gericke went on to say that if this land were to be attacked with armed force and blood were to flow over our fields and through our streets because the world wanted to prevent a recurrence of Nazism, then it would be because a lie is believed, a lie which also churchmen have proclaimed with the aim that it should be believed". The ones to blame for such a disaster, in other words, would be these critics.

This address was given considerable prominence and comment in the press. In the long run it has proved important in two ways:

*Firstly*, it was a powerful example of support within the Christian Church for the Government in its actions against churchmen and others who criticize apartheid in a radical or outspoken way. In fact, it eased the way for the Government's increasing confrontation with the Church that was then commencing.

It appeared clear that Dr. Gericke's attack was meant to refer partly to the Rev. Robert Mercer. The previous month, Mercer had distributed a pamphlet to his congregation in Stellenbosch in which he discussed the possible motives of the World Council of Churches in deciding to grant money to "liberation movements" and suggested as one such possible motive that *the WCC* might think that South Africa was not "all that different from Nazi Germany". In spite of the fact that further on in the same pamphlet he made clear *his own* opposition to the WCC decision on the grounds that, as he put it, "Violence of this sort is likely to prevent that very multiracial harmony it is meant to encourage." Mercer was subsequently deported from South Africa for daring to discuss the matter in this way.

Dr. Gericke's address therefore provided support for the Prime Minister who, on 15th September, (Hansard 9 col. 4204f) had attacked Mercer in Parliament (quoting only the first part of the pamphlet out of the context of its later criticism of the W.C.C. decision), and subsequently had ordered Mercer and his colleague priest in Stellenbosch, Bernard Chamberlain, to be deported. After that the Government's persecution of ministers of the Church and others who have been outspoken in their criticisms of apartheid (but have *not* in any way advocated violence) continued to increase in intensity. Between the end of August 1970 and the middle of March 1971 at least 18 ministers and fulltime workers in the Anglican, Congregational, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and Ro-

man Catholic Churches were served with deportation orders or had their passports withdrawn or were refused entry or re-entry into South Africa. They included, besides Mercer and Chamberlain, Dale White, Cosmas Desmond (who, incidentally, the Minister of the Interior himself admitted had done nothing unlawful), Tad Mitsui, Pauline Webb, Dr. Marcus Braun, Colin Davison, Casimir Paulsen, Reed and Tammy Kramer, Gus Kios, Howard and Marjory Trumbull (and David, Pamela, Michael and Ginger Trumbull, who all received deportation orders as well), Richard Llewellyn, Mark Collier and Francis Horner. George MacArthur, a missionary in the Transkei, was also expelled from there. Later, a young student for the ministry, John Aitchison, was banned for 5 years. Most recently banning orders were issued on Cosmas Desmond and he was placed under house arrest. (In the meantime Collier's passport was returned and Horner was allowed to remain in South Africa conditionally).

Besides these ministers and church workers, in this same period the Witwatersrand University SRC President, Rex Heinke, and Psychology Lecturer, Richard Rock, were served with deportation orders and Mabel Balfour, John Marinus and Mogamat Barden were three people banned from all meetings. Then there were the police raids on the offices of the S.A. Council of Churches in Johannesburg and Cape Town (as well as on those of various other organizations), and the 4.15 a.m. raid on the seminar of churchmen at Wilgespruit, when the Anglican Bishop of Zululand and several others were arrested and detained for a while. (The Bishop was then charged with a passbook offence which was later withdrawn. Incidentally, in spite of his long campaign in opposition to violence against Whites, the Bishop was also deprived of his passport until 1968). All these actions were only the latest in a long series of similar steps that the Government has taken against its critics, both in and outside the Church.

Following up on all this, Nationalist newspapers like *Hoofstad* and *Die Vaderland*, without being able to produce any evidence, attempted to arouse suspicion against churchmen. Tragically, *Die Kerkbode* did the same from within the Church. In its issue of 10.3.71 it sought to justify the Government's action against all these churchmen - with a foolish argument that their Churches were involved in a dangerous conspiracy!

*Secondly*, Dr. Gericke's address proved important in raising the issue whether the Nationalist ideology and policies by which South Africa is governed are good (so that churchmen like himself are right to defend and support them) or evil (to the extent that Nationalist South Africa may be compared to Nazi Germany).

Was Dr. Gericke right so vehemently to denounce this comparison as a lie? We would answer: Yes, he *was* right - against critics, if there are any (for we

do not know of any) who make a simple equation between the two! For such historical comparisons can never be precise. South African Nationalism had quite separate origins from National Socialism and there are important differences between the two. For instance, we thoroughly agree with him that there are no gas chambers in South Africa! The South African Government may by no means be accused of various kinds of atrocities that Nazism committed, especially in its later stages. There are, moreover, some important ideological differences between South African Nationalism and National Socialism.

Nevertheless, we feel that the kind of attitude which Dr. Gericke expressed and the support it gave the Government need to be deplored. Some things must be said on the other side in reply to it. The fact that there are important differences between Nationalism in South Africa and National Socialism does not mean that there are not also important points in which they can be compared.

But before we point these out we would like to make certain things quite clear. We do not write this on behalf of any political party but as a group of Christians who love our country and are deeply disturbed about the direction in which it is heading. We do *not* wish to express support for the WCC decision or to advocate violence against South African Whites. We have not been in the past, and are not even now, concerned to encourage the impression overseas that South Africa is a second Nazi Germany. Nor do we mean this as a personal attack on anyone. Rather, we are seeking to address with this Open Letter the thinking of those who stand where Dr. Gericke stands - and all those who sit on the fence. For the significance of his address was that it expressed, and encouraged, the attitude already so prevalent among White South Africans (both Afrikaans *and* English-speaking) that extreme condemnations of our country have no justification to *any* degree at all, and that we may therefore self-righteously put all the blame for such condemnations, overseas or here, on the "lies" of those who criticise us. This implies that we have no real need of repentance ourselves. It is a complacent attitude amongst us that is both extremely dangerous for the future of our country and one that stands under the terrible condemnation of God, our eternal Judge. Most unhappily, it has even provided from within Christ's Church itself support for the Government's policies and justification for the Government's persecution of its critics, including those in the Church! We are also seeking, therefore, to sound a clarion call to the Church to be more concerned about the injustice in our land and to stand up and speak out for those who are hungry or aliens or naked or sick or in prison because of these policies.

Nevertheless we do not write this in a spirit of antagonism or self-righteousness but rather in a spirit which acknowledges our own share in the guilt

of our society and therefore our need to speak in humility and repentance. Those of us who are Whites recognize also in ourselves how much easier it is to justify the *status quo* in which we have so many privileges than to recognize as truth that which accuses us - for we are like the Christians in Germany who also found it hard to believe the truth which condemned them. We would therefore ask all those who read this Open Letter to accept it as written in that spirit.

Making comparisons between Nazi Germany and South Africa is painful for us - but such comparisons are infinitely more painful for those who suffer because they are true. We would wish not to blacken the name of South Africa. Nevertheless, *because of the injustices and oppression under which so many are suffering and dying in our land*, we as Christians, are bound to speak out. For to be frank, we must say that we find fantastic the charge made by Dr. Gericke and others that if armed force is ever used against South Africa it will be the fault not of those who for years have perpetrated the injustice and those who have condoned it but on the contrary of those who have protested against it! Is it seriously meant that Christians should not criticise the evils of their society too drastically - in spite of the example Jesus and the prophets have left us?

There are indeed parallels between Nazi Germany and South Africa. It is true that they are only partial but that does not make them any the less real and unhappy. It is also true that certain very limited comparisons can be made between aspects of National Socialism and the nationalism or racialism of (and even genocide by) other countries. (Modern nationalism was first fully manifested in England and was later also to be a cause of suffering - to Afrikaners!) But this is quite beside the point: the faults of others cannot excuse us, and the real point is that our whole society is basically structured according to the same principles of nationalism and racialism as Nazi Germany was. Some of these parallels between Nazi Germany and South Africa could be listed as follows:-

## 1. NATIONALISM

In his book *Mein Kampf* Hitler characterized himself and his philosophy as essentially and primarily "nationalist". Moreover he despised and rejected the kind of patriotism which embraced the many-peopled State of Austria and instead exalted against it the nationalism limited to a single *Volk*. Whereas the term "nation" ordinarily "comprises all those who are citizens of the State concerned" the Nazis made the novel assertion that "the term must be restricted to those persons who are racially akin to one another" (*Germany Speaks*, the officially approved interpretation of National Socialism for English readers, P. 37).

Is the dominant political ideology in South Africa not similarly a neurotic nationalism? And does our

Government not similarly insist that the peoples of South Africa must not regard themselves as one nation but as many "nations" which must be separated from one another and can claim not one common loyalty within a common fatherland but only separate loyalties?

The Nazis used this principle to argue: "The Jews in Germany constitute a group of aliens who can expect to enjoy the hospitality of the country just like the members of other races. But no Englishman would want to see the key positions in the politics, art and culture of his country occupied by, say, the Japanese ... The Nuremberg Laws, therefore, exclude members of the Jewish race from obtaining Reich citizenship" (*Germany Speaks*, p. 77). The Nationalist Government uses this same principle to argue concerning the rights of Blacks in so-called "White" South Africa: "No country can allow the citizens of another State to enter the country at will" (Dr. Koornhof), and on this basis, "All the so-called rights of the Bantu which lead to integration and equality in white South Africa will be removed by us" (The Minister of Bantu Administration). As F.E. Auerbach (Rand Daily Mail 24.2.1971) has pointed out, the flaw in both these arguments is the same. The Jews in Germany were not aliens, having lived there since the 4th century A.D. at least. Similarly African people have lived in the whole of the Transvaal for more than 5 centuries. Indeed archeologists have uncovered 900 year old furnaces which Africans (evidently the ancestors of the Sotho) used to smelt iron in the present area of Johannesburg in 1060 A.D. (See R.J. Mason: *Prehistory of the Transvaal*). The difference is that in Germany it was a minority who were deprived of their rights while in South Africa it is the majority.

The two nationalisms have similar historical roots: humiliation in the face of French imperialism in the case of the one and humiliation in the face of British imperialism in the case of the other. Their affinity for each other is shown by the deep sympathy which South African nationalists used to have for National Socialism. Admittedly this must be partly explained by the Afrikaners' natural sympathy for Germany against their traditional enemy, Britain. This was an important factor. But many nationalists, especially those who joined the Ossewa Brandwag, the Grey Shirts, the Brown Shirts, the Black Shirts and the New Order (which all clearly espoused National Socialist ideas) sympathised fundamentally with National Socialism on *ideological* grounds and were in turn deeply influenced by it. Some Nationalists, like Dr. Malan, strongly opposed these organizations but this was often because their separate existence weakened the Nationalist Party rather than because they themselves had no sympathy for any of their ideas. In 1943, in a court action against Dr. Verwoerd as editor of the *Transvaler*, the judge found that he "did support Nazi propaganda, he did make his paper a tool of the Nazis in South Africa and he knew it". F.E. Auerbach (Rand Daily Mail

24.2.1971) points out that in 1942 Mr. Vorster, who was a general in the O.B., said, "Christian Nationalism in South Africa is an ally of National Socialism". In 1940 Dr. Piet Meyer in his book, *Die Afrikaner*, sought to identify the "racial characteristics" of the Afrikaner with those of the Nordic Aryan of Nazi theory and in 1943 he welcomed the fact that "National Socialism will determine the character of the ensuing centuries" (Rand Daily Mail 24.2.1971). This sort of thing was said before the war-time atrocities of National Socialism were publicised and would of course not be affirmed or held today. It nevertheless points to the psychological affinity and ideological parallel between the two movements which caused the one to have such sympathy for the other at the time. For, essentially and primarily, both are different forms of the same phenomenon, namely *racialistic nationalism*.

## 2. NATIONAL MESSIANISM

Hitler called on the Germans to fulfil "the mission appointed for them by the Creator of the Universe" (*Mein Kampf*). In 1938 he told the diplomatic corps in Berlin: "We believe in the task which Providence has laid upon us". Dr. Malan said, "Afrikanerdom is not the work of man but the creation of God" - with the implication that it was uniquely so and for a unique purpose. "Our history is the highest work of art of the Architect of the centuries." Hence "no power of earth or hell can kill our nationhood because God created our nation" (F.A. van Jaarsveld: *The Afrikaner's Interpretation of S.A. History*, p. 21 Cape Argus 3.5.37). Dr. Verwoerd said in 1961, "South Africa has a greater task than that of establishing Christian civilisation in Africa. It must become the firm base of the *white man*" (van Jaarsveld, p. 25. van Jaarsveld's italics). This national messianism is constantly reiterated in, and refuelled by, Day of the Covenant speeches. Nationalist politicians still speak of the separate "destiny" (Mr. P.W. Botha, Cape Times 17.12.68), "eternal calling" (Dr. N. Diedrichs, Cape Times 26.2.68) and "divinely ordained mission" (Dr. P. Meyer, News/Check 26.7.68) of the Afrikaners, who are "a chosen people" (Dr. C. Mulder, Cape Argus, 15.10.70).

## 3. RACIALISM AND BLOOD

Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf*: "A people that fails to preserve the purity of its racial blood destroys the unity of the soul of the nation in all its manifestations". "The most accursed of all crimes", he maintained, was "cross-breeding". Therefore "what we have to fight for is ... our race and nation ... and purity of its blood".

Is it not a parallel to this when the Nationalist Party states in its official *Programme and Principles* that it is its "basic principle" to prevent all "blood



mixing" (bloedvermenging) between White and non-White, and that for *this* purpose it will endorse segregation in every possible sphere? Or when an official Government Fact Paper gives its sympathy to the attitude of those Whites for whom, it says, "the preservation of their biological character is of primary and overwhelming importance". The Fact Paper admits that it is for the sake of this fundamentally ideological principle (not any pragmatic or practical reason) that the whole programme of apartheid legislation was being constructed - the massive structure of oppressive legislation which causes so much human suffering and tragedy among the Black and Coloured peoples of our land in the name of a never-never (and false) utopia of blood-pure races in racially pure Group Areas.

As Mr. J.G. Strijdom, later to be Prime Minister, said in 1942, "German National Socialism strives for race purity. That philosophy (lewensbeskouing) is most certainly the nearest to our National-Christian philosophy in South Africa" (Hansard, Col. 2070).

The preamble to the Nuremberg Law for the Protection of the German Race began by stating as its principle: "The purity of the German stock is indispensable to the continued existence of the German nation". How often have our Prime Ministers, Dr. Verwoerd and Mr. Vorster, not argued on the same basis that the continued "existence" of the White people as a *pure* and therefore *separate* race must at all costs be preserved, and that this ideological principle therefore justifies whatever apartheid legislation may be passed?

Are our laws against intermarriage and extramarital relations between White and non-White in South Africa not parallel to the infamous Nuremberg Law that forbade the same things between Aryan and Jew in Germany? Is it not parallel to the Nazi myth of "das Blut" that in hospitals the blood of Whites and non-Whites is carefully labelled as such and stored separately for transfusion, even though scientifically there is no justification for this? "White" blood may be given to non-Whites but "non-White" blood may not be given to "Whites"!

The Nazis were fanatical about enquiring into the racial ancestry of people who lived in Germany in order to classify them according to how much Aryan blood they had. So also in South Africa we have a degrading system of race classification and registration which has sometimes been applied with detailed physical inspection of hair and nails, which has destroyed marriages and torn families apart and which has led to several suicides.

#### 4. HERRENVOLK

The Nazi doctrine of the Herrenvolk or master race, with its ideas of the Übermenschen and the Untermenschen, is well known. As leader of the

Nationalist Party in the Transvaal Mr. Strijdom said: "Our policy is that the Europeans must stand their ground and must remain *baas* in South Africa. If we reject the Herrenvolk idea ..., if the franchise is to be extended to non-Europeans and if non-Europeans are developed on the same basis as the Europeans, how can the Europeans remain *baas*?" (*The Observer*, Dec. 1952). Is there no parallel here? Today of course (partly due to the pressure of international opinion) the Government no longer talks in these tones but rather somewhat more earnestly in terms of the "ideals" of separate development and separate independence. We do not deny that there are many Afrikaner "verligtes" in academic and Church circles who take these new ideals seriously in their theories of apartheid, but beneath the verbal veneer of the Government's new terminology do not the facts of *baasskap* remain to a very large extent? Africans are denied skilled work, opportunities and positions on a par with Whites in a way that immigrants of the White race are not - and the Government has repeatedly declared that no White will ever take orders from any Black man! Moreover, even when, or if, all the Bantustans eventually have "separate independence" the small White minority will retain domination of 86% of the land, including nearly all its wealthy areas and its mines, industrial centres and ports.

In 1953 when Dr. Verwoerd introduced the Bantu Education Act as Minister of Native Affairs he proclaimed that except for the small elite minority who would fill higher positions in their homelands the vast majority of African children should be educated to fill inferior positions in society. They should be taught from childhood not to expect too much for themselves (Hansard 83, 17.9.1953). The brutal fact is that while the Government spends over R228 per annum on every White pupil it still spends only about R15 per annum on every Black pupil - and this latter figure omits all those children not at school, including the many not able to attend because of the shameful shortage of schools in the cities and in the homelands (Survey of Race Relations, 1970, Topical Talks 23). African parents have to pay directly out of their own meagre earnings the wages of nearly one teacher out of five in their schools (Race Relations News, Oct. 1970). They also have to pay at least R30 p.a. for books for every child in high school while White children receive theirs free (Sunday Times, 17.1.1971). This with the school fee and the uniforms every high school child is forced to buy amounts to about R90 (Star, 13.2.1971. This figure was for a girl). The effect of this is that extremely few African children are financially able to go to high school. (While a much poorer neighbour like Zambia spends 20% of its national budget on education South Africa spends a meagre 5% (Cape Argus 26.8.1967).

## 5. LABOUR POLICY

The Nazis compelled all workers to have "work-books" without which they could not be employed. They outlawed all the normal means by which labourers could protect themselves, such as the right to bargain collectively, to form trade unions of their own, to organise in any way, to exert economic pressure, to strike for better wages and to move freely from one job to another. Which of these rights have not been outlawed for our African labourers? As the Nazis banned all trade unions except the "German Labour Front", which they controlled, so in this country is it not true that the Government does not permit the African workers any effective voice in any trade union? And is it not because these rights to bargain for wages and sell their labour in a free market have been taken from them in all ways that Africans in the "White" areas (where of course the very great majority of employment will continue to be) are confined in principle (wherever possible) to the most unskilled work, they are forced to work at drastically lower wages and their earning power is thus artificially held down? Is it not as a result of this brutally selfish policy of the Whites that of the 800,000 Africans in Johannesburg, just for instance, seven out of every ten live on an income below the breadline or poverty datum line (Star 25.11.1969) - while the Whites have one of the three wealthiest income levels in the world? In some areas, like Pretoria, more than eight out of ten Africans live below the breadline without adequate food, clothing or shelter, according to Prof. H.W. van der Merwe (Argus, 20.3.1971).

The Nazis converted the lands around Germany into huge reservoirs of labour units. Vast numbers of people in them were moved completely from one area to another. Many were shipped to Germany to work in its mines and factories and forced to leave their families behind. Have we not let the Reserves become huge labour reservoirs around our White Group Areas? Do we not refuse to spend more than a tiny fraction of what the Government's own Tomlinson Commission declared necessary to develop them into anything better? According to the 1970 census figures the population of the Reserves has, largely as a result of our policy of "endorsing out", increased by 69 per cent, since 1960, without a very appreciable increase in the number of jobs available there or in the agricultural productivity. According to figures collected by Mr. Eric Winchester, M.P., about one million people (mainly Africans and only 3,000 Whites) have been ruthlessly "resettled" in terms of the Group Areas Act and other legislation - many of them to suffer in the terrible poverty of our notorious "resettlement camps" in the Reserves, like Limehill and Morsgat.

Has legislation such as the Bantu Trust and Land Act No. 18 of 1936, the Bantu Urban Areas Act No. 25 of 1945, the "Pass Act" (Natives (Abolition of

Passes and Co-ordination of Documents) Act No. 67 of 1952), the Labour Act No. 67 of 1964 and the Bantu Laws Amendment Act No. 42 of 1964 not reduced millions of workers to mere units of labour? And is not the declared intention of the Government to place all the 8 million Africans who live and work outside the Reserves on the migratory labour system? These migrant labourers are not physically forced, as in Germany, to work in our industrial areas but they are nonetheless compelled by economic circumstances. Moreover, is our migratory labour system not already shattering thousands upon thousands of African families every year, forcing many in the cities to live together in sin rather than be "endorsed out" if they marry, and destroying the basic stability of African society - so that the Dutch Reformed Church has called the whole system a terrible cancer?

## 6. ABSOLUTISM

On the ground that it was necessary for the security of the State, Hitler gradually dismantled the rule of law in Germany. The Nazis began to dispense with the law courts and to imprison or ban people without trial. Even people acquitted by the courts were re-arrested or banned. They were detained without recourse to family, friends, legal advisor or minister of religion. Some were brutally treated or tortured to extract confessions, and some died in mysterious circumstances. Goebbels dismissed reports of these things as *Greuelmärchen* (atrocious fairy stories). People who did not conform to the rigid control of the Government's ideological laws were arrested. The police were instructed not to protect protest demonstrators from the assaults of Nazi hooligans - until protest marches and demonstrations were restricted out of existence. Steps were taken against ministers of religion who did not kowtow and remained critical of the Government and its ideology. (Their passports were also withdrawn). Lecturers and professors who were critical were dismissed from their universities or forced to go into exile.

Which of these things is not happening in South Africa? Do we not also have laws which enable the Government to dispense with the law courts? Do the 90 Day and 180 Day Laws, and the Terrorism Act not all enable it to hold people incommunicado in this way and for indefinite periods? At the end of 1969 there were at least 355 banning orders still in force against people remaining in South Africa (*Race Relations Survey 1970*), and perhaps as many again against those who had fled from the country or left on one-way exit permits. Almost 1000 people in the country were subject to some form of "punishment without trial" last year (Daily Despatch, 1.8.1970). As regards the deportation of university lecturers we have already mentioned Richard Rock. Another notorious example is Dr. Hoffenberg, Senior Lecturer in Medicine at the University of Cape Town.

Evidence of the injuries to detainees has been led in our courts a number of times. For instance, when James Lenkoe was found hanging in his cell after interrogation by the police, an expert medical pathologist gave detailed physiological evidence which, he asserted, he had "positively" identified as the result of an electrode being applied to his foot. He was convinced that Lenkoe had been tortured with electrical shock just before committing suicide (Argus, 25.5.1969, 29.5.1969, 6.6.1969). A district surgeon gave evidence at an inquest that marks on Nichoodimus Kgoethe's body were consistent with having been caused by a sjambok and that wounds on his body could have been caused by a belt buckle (Argus, 17.6.1969). There are other detainees who have died in mysterious circumstances during interrogation, like the Imam Hadjee Abdullah Haroun who died in 1969 with 28 separate bruises, some of them as large as 4 by 8 in. and 4 by 3 in., on the front, back and sides of his body, a haematoma on his back and a fractured rib (Cape Times, 19.9.70). Was it not strange that the Government, instead of contesting his widow's claim for compensation, paid her R5 000, thereby avoiding a court case and public enquiry? The Imam was the 12th detainee since 1963 to die in prison while being held for interrogation by the Security Police (Cape Times, 19.9.1970). Before that, in 1960, seven detainees died at different times in one year allegedly as the result of assaults (Art. in Survey of S.A. Law 1970, Race Relations News Dec. 1970). Yet, like Goebbels, our Government tends to brush away the constantly recurring evidence of torture, and to ban the books of ex-detainees in which they are detailed. It also usually shows reluctance to open public and full scale judicial enquiries into deaths like these, even to clear its own name.

Do our police not also stand by while peaceful student demonstrators are assaulted (e.g. in Johannesburg in April 1969)? Have other peaceful demonstrators not been photographed, asked for their names and addresses or arrested and fingerprinted in order to intimidate them? And is it not being made increasingly difficult to hold any protest marches at all?

The latest step in this direction in our country is banning people not for any crimes they are supposed to have committed but for any they might commit in the future! On the 1st December 1969 the trial commenced of 22 men and women on charges under the Suppression of Communism Act, an Act which is so broad in its terms that recently a British M.P. stated half-seriously that 90 per cent of members of the House of Commons would be statutory Communists under South African Laws (Star, 10.2.1971). Five witnesses stated that they had been assaulted by the police (beaten, kicked, punched or suspended by the hands) (Race Relations Survey 1970 p. 58). On the 16th February 1970 the accused were found not guilty by the Supreme Court. But they did not go free; they were immediately re-arrested and held in

solitary confinement for 4 months. After protest demonstrations had been held by the Black Sash, the English-speaking universities and the Witwatersrand Council of Churches they were then brought to trial again, well over a year since the first arrest was made - again found not guilty. They did not go free even now; 17 were banned for 5 years, 2 prevented from taking up their previous jobs and 1 placed under house arrest for 5 years. The Minister of Justice excused this action by saying that (as they had been found not guilty) he was not banning them for what they had done but to prevent what they might do in the future (Race Relations Survey 1970 p. 63)!

As long ago as 1940 the Nationalist Party produced a publication, *The New South Africa*, which stated: "Nationalist Afrikanerdom longs for the death of that system" of democracy which emphasised "the freedom of the individual". As in Nazi Germany, so in South Africa today the rights of the individual are being destroyed in all these absolutist ways because the rights of the *Volk* are regarded as paramount.

## 7. SECRET POLICE AND INFORMERS

The system of secret police and the honeycombing of the German people with secret informers which Hitler copied from Communist Russia are notorious. By the Edict for the Protection of People and State of 1938 they were given the right to open mail and tap telephones. Germans who might otherwise have expressed criticism of the Government more freely and publicly lived in fear of visits or interrogation by the Gestapo, the Secret State Police set up under Goering to suppress dissent.

Have similar things not been introduced into South Africa? And has the new Bureau for State Security not been made directly responsible to the Prime Minister as the German secret police apparatus was directly responsible to the Führer only? Moreover, are the aims of our security police, their constant spying and their attempts to intimidate into political conformity so different from those in Germany? Earlier this year we were told in the press once more, for instance, of how Coloured teachers are constantly being visited by the Special Branch, how Special Branch men were twice discovered in private meetings of the Coloured People's Labour Party ... Even those of us who are white and who are publicly critical of the Government constantly find themselves being spied upon, or visited, or their mail opened and their telephones tapped, and live in fear of visits or interrogation by the Special Branch. And if this generates as much fear as it does among those of us who are Whites how much more must such fear prevail among the Coloured and African people of our land?

Is all this so very different from Nazi Germany? Is it so different from Nazi Germany that here critics of the Government are constantly being harassed and deprived of their passports or deported from South Africa?

## 8. PRISON POPULATION

The number of those imprisoned in Germany was so large that special "concentration camps" had to be built to accommodate them. It is true that a large proportion of prisoners in Germany were imprisoned without trial whereas this is not so in South Africa. Nor do we wish to compare conditions in certain of the German concentration camps with the conditions in South African jails. Nevertheless the point we wish to make is that in South Africa today the number of those in prison is enormous. It is very much higher than that in many countries with a far larger population and proportionately to total population it is the highest in the world. In the year 1968/69 88,079 people, or about one out of every 225 in South Africa, was in prison (Star 7.8.70). The official number of actual political prisoners (although not described as such) in September 1970 was 809 but probably well over 1,000 others were convicted under the security laws (Star, 6.2.71). But beyond this there are all those people arrested for offences against ideological laws; for instance an average of 1,732 persons were arrested *per day* for the year 1968/69 solely for infringements of the pass laws (Race Relations Survey, 1970)! (The rate in ordinary crime is also enormous compared to other countries and to African tribal societies. Sociologists point out the following main causes besides the unsettling effect of industrialisation and urbanization on Africans from rural areas: lack of opportunity for decent jobs, economic and social insecurity, the tremendous contrast between the impoverishment of non-Whites and the wealth of Whites, deep sense of injustice economically and before the law, poor housing and social amenities, unsettling effect of Group Area removals, families broken up by migrant labour system and general poverty, deep social and economic frustration).

According to the latest official figures the average daily number of people in South African prisons increased over the 10 years between 1959 and 1969 from 49,886 to 88,078, that is, by 76 per cent. (South Africa's total population rose in that period by only 24 per cent). Nearly half a million people were actually sent to prison during the year ending on 30th June, 1969 (Argus 25.2.71). While the general population is increasing by only 3 per cent, the prison population is now increasing by 15 per cent every year (Star 22.2.71).

## 9. ANTI-LIBERALISM

The Nazis regarded the civilization of Western countries as decadent and a dangerous undermining influence on the German *Volk*. Against it they exalted the purity and superiority of their own Germanic *Kultur*. Particularly they opposed the "liberalism" of the West because it regarded the individual person

as primarily important rather than the collective *Volk* or race, and therefore the freedom of the individual as more important than racial difference and segregation. They rightly saw this as undermining the basis on which the theory of the right of the Aryan *Volk* to dominate was built.

Is a similar attitude not held in South Africa? Does our Government and its supporters not also choose the right of the collective over that of the individual? Is "liberalism" not opposed in the name of the *Volk* and the race here too? And in order to smear political liberalism, that is, the attitude which is primarily concerned with the political freedom of the individual, is it not conveniently and deceitfully lumped together by nationalists here as in Germany with moral permissiveness (and here also with theological modernism)? When the simple truths of the Bible concerning the dignity of every individual and the primacy of our common humanity over our racial differences are proclaimed against our racial ideology and practice are they not also in our country as in Germany dismissed with the same easy smear-word: "sickly liberalism"?

## 10. ANTI-COMMUNISM

The Nazis branded their radical critics as "Communists" or "fellow-travellers" and tools of Communism in order to silence them or discredit them and excuse action against them. A famous case of a Protestant minister who was condemned as "red" by the German nationalists because he dared to question some aspects of their ideology on the basis of the Bible was that of Gunther Dehn. In 1933 Rust, the Nazi Minister for Cultural Affairs in Prussia, sought to confront the Churches with the alternative: either you are anti-Communist and support us or you are anti-nationalist and helping the Bolsheviks with their "cultural invasion" of Germany.

We do not deny that there have been some real Marxist Communists in South Africa - as there were indeed in Germany. But the question is: how often is the same smear technique used against radical opponents of apartheid who are not Communists in order to arouse the bogey of Communism in the popular, indiscriminating mind and so force them to be silent or to justify steps taken against them? Even in South African law, the Suppression of Communism Act defines "the aims of Communism" in such broad terms that they have been described as including some of the aims of Christianity!

## 11. PROPAGANDA

Hitler took over complete control of the German radio and used it as an instrument of one-sided party propaganda. All books and magazines regarded as too critical of National Socialism were banned. In the schools the children were taught a distorted version of German history which supported the Nazi ideology.

In South Africa also there is a constant stream of subtle propaganda from the radio, of which the programme, "Current Affairs", is only the most blatant example. Only views sympathetic to the Nationalist ideology are expressed in such programmes and when organizations like the Christian Institute, the South African Council of Churches or English-speaking Churches or churchmen are attacked no right of reply or defence whatsoever is permitted. Preachers on the radio are not allowed to criticise the Government or its ideology in any way. And when a dissenting voice like Prof. Verkuyl was given time on the air in 1970 there was ranged against him a whole battery of speakers who kept him off his stride (in this case also the referee!).

There is fairly extensive freedom of the press still in South Africa, though this is curtailed by law in certain limited ways and though it has been threatened with much more severe curtailment by Government speakers at times. But books and magazines suspected of being critical of, or out of line with, South African policies are banned. Meanwhile our school children are taught from special history books which gravely distort the true facts of what is happening and what has happened between White and non-White in our past and thus effectively indoctrinate their uncritical minds in the official ideology. (See e.g. F.E. Auerbach: *The Power of Prejudice in Education. An enquiry into history textbooks and syllabuses in Transvaal high schools*). This is of course not only the Government's fault but recently it has approved SABRA youth congresses in which blatant political and racialist indoctrination is being fed to high school students (Argus 20.3.71).

## 12. MORTALITY RATE

Even concerning the fact that "there are no gas chambers in South Africa" we do not think that we have a right to be too self-righteous. First of all we have reason not to be too proud of our past in this regard. For did not our ancestors on the Cape frontier regard the Bushmen as a species of vermin and (also because they stole cattle!) make it their general and even official policy to "annihilate and exterminate" them by means of shooting commandos? (See P.J. van der Merwe: *Die Noordwaartse Beweging van die Boere voor die Groot Trek*, p. 41-65).

Then as regards the present we need to see a quite different point. The Germans brought about an extremely high mortality rate with their mass extermination techniques among the races they oppressed. Certainly there is no direct analogy to this in South Africa today. We would not imply this. Nevertheless, even though it is *not* caused with deliberate intention, an extremely high mortality rate also occurs among the oppressed races in South Africa. Partly this is due to ignorance and stubborn traditions about food among Africans. But *indirectly* this is also very largely our fault as Whites, through our lack of concern

and compassion and through the policies which so largely cause it in an indirect way. For our labour policies today which, as we have seen, artificially depress the earning power of Africans and keep their wages low, maintain the cycle of poverty and ignorance which causes the high rate of malnutrition among them and thus the high rate of deaths (as well as the widespread physical and mental stunting which results from inadequate nourishment).

In a typical Reserve area (in Sekukhuniland) research discovered that at least one out of every two children born alive died before the age of five (*Race Relations News*, Jan. 1970). In Port Elizabeth over six out of every ten non-White children die before the age of five (MOH Report, Post 4.7.68). In Cape Town nearly one out of every two Africans who died were under the age of five (MOH Report, Cape Times 18.6.68). (Only about one out of every fifty White children in this age group die). It is agreed that the main causes of these deaths are malnutrition and the diseases which malnutrition leaves no adequate resistance against, or exacerbates when they occur. A very rough analysis (Cape Times, 26.1.70), based on these and other figures, concluded that of the deaths of African and Coloured children in this age group close to 200,000 every year (about one every three minutes) are the result of unnecessary starvation and food deficiency diseases like kwashiorkor, and other diseases made fatal by malnutrition, and therefore could be prevented.

It is true that the Government has done much to relieve the situation in the way of food subsidies and distribution of skimmed milk powder to pre-school children. On the other hand one of the first acts of the Nationalist Government when it came to power was to abolish the school feeding system - in spite of the high rate of malnutrition also among school children. For instance, Dr. Naser of the National Nutrition Research Institute found that at least eight out of ten African children at school in Pretoria "suffer from malnutrition or undernutrition" (S.A. Medical Journal, *Race Relations News*, Jan. 1970), and in a rural school investigated it was found that virtually every child suffered from malnutrition (Progress, May, 1970). As the expert on malnutrition, Prof. John Reid, has said, the point is that the Government should have done, and should be doing, much more than it has (*Race Relations Survey*, 1970). We in South Africa have the money to tackle the vicious circle of malnutrition on a very much larger scale - but the money is not used in that way. As the title of a long article on the matter put it, "We can banish all this death" (Star, 6.2.71) - especially if we can spend R782 000 000 on primary military equipment alone in 10 years (Argus 6.3.71)! - but we do not. Indeed not only the Government but all of us should be doing much more than we are - in the way of paying higher wages and contributing more to voluntary organizations like Kupugani and Inter-Church Aid (there are many others) which run feeding and self-help schemes.

For we would not blame the present Government exclusively, or even primarily, for this - or indeed any of the other parallels we have listed above. After all, is the Government not only practising the policies that the electorate really wants and for which it voted the Government into power? And the mind of the electorate in South Africa is shown by the fact that even the main Opposition Party, though not so controlled by ideology, has compromised more and more with the Government's ideological principles and does not offer the country a radically different or more compassionate and pragmatic form of Government in which the Black man is cared for as much as the White. The ultimate problem is not how much the Government but how many of us Whites really care that so many African children are suffering and dying in this way. Indeed, how many of us secretly do not care that they are dying because thereby the numbers of the "black peril", with which we have so often and so long been threatened, will for the time being not be even greater?

Is then everything really so rosy in the South African garden that those who so radically criticize our society must be making "evil and untrue comparisons" and we can sit back without calling our people to radical repentance? Or is it really so hard to understand how people overseas who care have come to hate our policies so much? Or even how the Churches overseas have supported the WCC's decision? (We emphatically do *not* mean to align ourselves with the WCC in this decision but only to ask: is it not possible to understand psychologically why it has received support from sincere Christians overseas?) As Dr. Jan S. Marais told the graduates of the University of Pretoria, "With every second which ticks past on our clocks the whole civilized world will be less willing to condone any form of discrimination on the grounds of birth, colour or background". (Argus 27.3.71).

### 13. CHRISTIANITY

In his speeches Hitler made many pious references to the Almighty and His providence and called Christianity "the basis of our whole morality". Indeed the official *Programme* of the National Socialist Party laid down as one of its principles that it would tolerate what it called "positive Christianity". What this meant in effect, however, was toleration for only that pietistic form of Christianity which strictly limited its own sphere of concern to so-called "spiritual" things and ignored sin, injustice and oppression in the political and economic spheres. When some Protestant pastors concerned themselves with such broader issues Hitler told them that their proper concern was heavenly and ecclesiastical matters only and that they must therefore stick to these and leave earthly and political matters to him and the National Socialist Government.

A few days after the publication of the *Message to the People of South Africa* our Prime Minister

denounced those who criticize the political *status quo*, as he put it, "under the cloak of religion". He added, "(From) the pulpit which stands in the House of the Lord ... the Word of God must be proclaimed; from that pulpit we expect the gospel of Christ to be preached to us as sinful men. Men must not abuse the pulpit to try to attain political ends in South Africa". The following month he again attacked those who "demeaned" their pulpits into "political platforms" and specifically an Anglican priest who had preached on the theme of the *Message*: "I repeat that if clerics take the stand of a certain Reverend Wimmer: "The Government, like us, cannot serve two masters, and in serving apartheid it has rejected God and cannot therefore claim to be Christian" then you will get a reaction on my part ... I again want to make a serious appeal to you to return to the essence of your preaching and to proclaim to your congregations the Word of God and the Gospel of Christ" (quoted in *The Message in Perspective*). Is there not a very clear parallel here?

It is a parallel, of course, which also occurs in the Old Testament, where the prophets of God insisted on denouncing the political sins and economic oppression in their nation and were persecuted by the rulers of their day for it. Jesus himself insisted that his followers should concern themselves not only with the details of private morality but also the weighty social issues of "justice, mercy and faithful dealing" (Mt. 23:23).

Whereas the *true* "Word of God and the Gospel of Christ" claim authority over the whole of human life, including also its social and political areas, the Government in South Africa, like that in Germany, is seeking to limit this authority to only its private and "spiritual" aspects. In other words it is seeking to deny that the Resurrected Lord has authority over all things in heaven and on earth (Mt. 28:18) and is thus Lord over all kings and Governments too (Rev. 1:5, 19:16). On this basis the Church, which is the herald of His Gospel and Law, is denied any right to proclaim these to the State as well as to the individual. Thus what Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Christian theologian executed by the Gestapo, pointed out, "The Church has the task of calling the whole world under the Lordship of Christ", is denied also by our Government. This is also a denial of the teaching of Luther and Calvin that the Sovereignty of God is over all things and therefore the Church must serve as a "watchman" vis-a-vis the State as well and in the name of God "beard" any ruler who ruled unjustly.

The result of this attitude on the part of the Government has been the same as in Germany: an increasing clash between State and Church. Hitler, of course, protested that the German churchmen misunderstood him and misinterpreted his intentions: "Peace" - that was all he wanted - "peace between Church and State!" The Prime Minister in South Africa recently stated: "It has become the fashion in certain circles to talk about a clash between Church

and State. The State has never at any time taken action against Churches" (Cape Times 8.3.71). Those with longer memories may remember that Dr. Malan was reported to have said in 1948, "Churches and societies which undermine the policy of apartheid and propagate doctrines foreign to the nation will be checked" (M. Ballinger: *From Union to Apartheid*, p. 246). But the point is that just as the National Socialist Government began to take action not against the Churches as a whole but against individual churchmen like Pastor Niemöller, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Paul Schneider, Müller and many others, so our Government is increasingly following the same action of seeking to isolate and persecute individual churchmen. The action is no less antagonistic and no less an attempt to silence them.



What disturbs us as churchmen most profoundly is not the attitude of the Government in this State-Church confrontation but the attitude of large parts of the Church. As in Germany, the Church in South Africa divides into three rough groups on this issue:-

*A. The minority who are faithful to the Word of God as the only norm by which all the activities of men are to be judged and who therefore, against the stream and at some cost or risk to themselves, criticize the policies of the Government in the light of it.*

Like the seven thousand in Israel who with Elijah refused to bow the knee to Baal, these are the few, the small minority in the Afrikaans and English-speaking Churches, who have refused to bow the knee to the false gods of nationalism and racialism. In Germany these men stood in solidarity with the ecumenical movement and the international Church over against those who sought to have a nationalistic "German" Church. They were therefore condemned for their lack of patriotism. In the end, because the established Churches were under the control of men who either sympathised with or refused to take a stand against the National Socialist Government these people found it necessary to form the famous "Confessing Church". They took their stand against the Nazi and "German Christian" view of the limited claims of "the Word of God and the Gospel of Christ" in the famous Theological Declaration of Barmen: "Jesus Christ is ... God's mighty claim upon our whole life ... We reject the false doctrine that there could be areas of our life in which we would belong not to Jesus Christ but to other lords". Therefore the Church rightly "calls to mind God's Reign, God's commandment and justice, and with these the responsibility of rulers ...." (Theses 2 & 5).

They realized that one cannot serve both the God of Jesus Christ and the god of nationalism or race. Or as Jean Lasserre, Bonhoeffer's friend, once put it: "Do we believe in the holy universal Church, the community of saints? Or do we believe in the eternal

mission" of our nation? "It is impossible to be both a Christian and a nationalist". Men like Niemöller and Bonhoeffer saw that a Christian could not be a member of a Church which excluded men and women of another race. Some of them issued a declaration that a Church which rejected Christians who were not Aryan was heretical and schismatic. The Pastors' Emergency League, preceding the Confessing Church, issued a declaration to inform the established Church Government that the Evangelical Church of the Old Prussian Union had, by accepting the Aryan Clause, separated herself from the Church of Christ.

One of the parallels to the above in South Africa was the *Message to the People*. Another was the declarations issued by a group of clergymen in Cape Town which stated: "We deplore the Prime Minister's attack ... on ministers of religion for mentioning politics in the pulpit because his statement, in effect, denies that Christ and His gospel may make any claims to Lordship over the political arena and community life". "The Word of God may not be fettered nor excluded from any part of life, but is sovereign over the whole of society" and therefore "part of the calling of the Church is to proclaim the Word of God in Judgement upon the injustices that occur in any society".

In some ways we even have a very rough parallel to the German confessing movement in the Christian Institute in South Africa, though this does not wish to leave the established Churches but to encourage thinking and dialogue about these matters within them. This was started and is still led by Afrikaners. (The confrontation between State and Church does not involve only English-speaking Christians!). The highest ecclesiastical courts and many leaders of the English-speaking Churches have also declared that the ideology and policies of the State are condemned by fundamental Christian principles, though these Churches often do little really to live by these pronouncements on the congregational level.

*B. Those who condone what the Government is doing by their silence, either because they believe that the Word of God and the gospel of Christ have nothing to do with political sin and righteousness or because they are just apathetic about the suffering of their fellowmen or because they are too afraid to take a stand.*

There were many in this group in Germany. They form a very large proportion of White Christians in South Africa and perhaps the majority in the English-speaking Churches. They are not actively in favour of the crueller practices of discrimination but sit by passively while these are implemented. Their Church leaders may speak out against apartheid but they give them no active support, perhaps even no moral support. And because they are so many, responsibility rests on them as much as on any group for the failure of the Church to witness more effectively for justice and reconciliation together in the South African sit-

uation. There is much truth in what the Natal leader of the Coloured Labour Party said early this year against the hypocrisy of the English-speaking Churches, namely, that they stand for integration but practice apartheid and that they have let the hour of Sunday worship become the most segregated hour of the week (Natal Mercury 19.1.1971). But because this position does not defend apartheid theologically there is little more we can say against it here than to point out that it is a drastic failure not to be concerned about those who are hungry, naked, sick and in prison (Matt. 25:31ff.), and a cowardly hypocrisy from which Christ calls us to be free.

*C. Those who distort the Word of God and the gospel into a theological appendage to, and thus support for, the Government's nationalist ideology.*

In Germany a large proportion of laymen and clergy, including those in key positions in the Church, were infected by National Socialism. Some of them saw the National Socialist Party as the only party in Germany which had a "moral and religious basis". Nationalist professors of theology were in control of many of the theological faculties. Most theological students sympathized with Hitler's party, especially at first. In 1930 *Die Christliche Welt* reported of one university that "nearly all the theological students are Nazis". These Christians as a whole went along with the Nazi idea of the right of "self-preservation" of the race as a biologically and culturally pure entity, and many believed that God sanctioned the right of the Aryan race to exercise power. Most sympathized with the idea of a purely Aryan Church. From 1933 the idea was constantly advanced that "for the sake of the weak in faith", i.e. the Germans prejudiced against Jews, racial separation should be allowed in the Church and the Christians of Jewish or partly Jewish blood should be asked to form their own separate Churches (Bethge: *Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, 219., 247).

The most extreme of this group were those who called themselves the "Deutsche Christen". In this way they expressed the fact that for them their *Deutschtum* or Germanity, i.e. their nationalism, was on a level with (and therefore really more important than) their *Christentum* or Christianity. Thus they sought to fuse Christianity with the ideology of National Socialism. They saw Hitler as a kind of new German Moses and Germany as a nation uniquely chosen by God, who was revealing His will to them through the medium of Germany's history. They stated in their *Richtlinien* ("Guiding Principles"): "We see in race, *Volkstum* and nation orders of life given to us by God and for whose preservation it is God's law for us to be concerned. Therefore race-mixing is to be opposed. On the basis of its experience the German Foreign Mission since long ago calls to the German *Volk* to 'Keep your race pure!' and tells us that the Christian faith does not destroy

but deepens and sanctifies race." They therefore adopted the Nazi principle that "racial conformity" should be observed in the Church and that Aryans should not permit non-Aryans to be their ministers or to worship with them. They also supported all Hitler's steps against those who were critical of the Nazi Government or ideology. Even before Hitler came to power the nationalist Christians in Germany joined in the denunciation of a Christian minister like Gunther Dehn as "Communist" because he had questioned some of their nationalistic dogmas.

As in Germany, so in South Africa there are a large number of White Christians who support the Government's nationalist and racialist ideology. They have fused Christianity and nationalism into what they call "Christian-Nationalism" and seek to worship at the shrines of both.

When Prime Minister Strijdom died in 1958, for instance, were there not *roudienste* held in Dutch Reformed Churches at some of which Dr. Malan was called the Moses and Mr. Strijdom the Joshua who had led the *Afrikaner volk* into the promised land of their political Canaan? Do some churchmen not still speak with the politicians of the unique and eternal calling, the divinely ordained mission, of the *Afrikaner*? Do they not, like the Nazi Christians, abandon the Reformation principle of *Sola Scriptura* and find the revelation of God's purposes and will for them not only in the Scriptures but also in the history of their *volk*? Was it not, for instance, the dominee, Dr. Malan, who said, "Throughout our history God's plan is evident" (Cape Argus 3.5.37)? And on the Day of the Covenant do some dominees speak so very differently from the politicians?

Moreover, besides in Scripture and in the history of their *volk*, do some important churchmen and even theologians not find God's revelation in nature or in the "orders of creation" that the *Deutsche Christen* theologians used similarly to buttress their racial theories? For instance, do not some (perhaps many) of them think basically the same way as Dr. A.P. Treurnicht when he says: "Colour difference is for me much more than mere difference of pigmentation. We must begin to think about whether the Creator did not have a purpose in it. (Colour is) not only an indication of culture - difference (but) also serves to indicate difference in identity in the framework of the diversity of *volke* which is willed by God ... If, therefore, the Creator instituted colour to indicate identity then the maintenance of colour-difference comes very near to being a matter of principle" (Rapport 31.1.71.) Do not many churchmen in South Africa, like their *Deutsche Christen* counterparts, on this very same basis of the orders or law of nature erect their own support for the Government's ideology of nation, *volk* and race? (In the Dutch Reformed Church, some prominent theologians seek to argue from the phrase "after its kind" in Gen. 1 that this was an order of creation and from Gen. 11 that this order of creation was divinely confirmed at the Tower of Babel. But



in any case the phrase in Gen. 1 concerns plants and animals and Gen. 11 concerns languages: neither refer to the races of mankind! If this *were* an "order of creation" it would have prohibited the fusion of Dutch, German and French speaking settlers in South Africa and the emergence of the Afrikaner *volk!* Do they not, again like the *Deutsche Christen*, on the same grounds oppose race or blood-mixing and "cross-breeding"? (All this of course in convenient forgetfulness that Calvin stood on Scripture against the *lex natura* or so-called law of nature of the Roman Church of his time!).

The Dutch Reformed Church originally recognised and proclaimed that the sharing together of Holy Communion by different races in the same church must be seen as "an immovable rule founded in the infallible Word of God" (Synod of 1829). Then it began to permit racially separate services and buildings as a concession to "the weakness of some" prejudiced White members (Synod of 1857). Today the official DRC (though not all its members) has become such a supporter of the Government and its ideology that it seeks to argue from the order of creation that "mixing and integration ... or the obliteration of dividing lines ... must be resisted with every resource as wrong and sinful, and ... opposed in principle" because thereby "the distinctiveness of peoples (would be) destroyed, and their particular culture bastardised". On this basis also "the Christian state (is) justified in taking legislative action and prohibiting racial mixing and mixed marriages". (Synod of 1966)! Does this not show that the official DRC largely agrees with Hitler's principal ideological Lieutenant, Rosenberg, that "God created man not as an individual, nor mankind as one whole, but individual races as the basic units of creation" and that therefore the idea of a separate "national religion" for each *volk* is to be opposed to the doctrine of an international brotherhood?

What could be more like the infamous "Aryan Clause" of the *Deutsche Christen* than the notorious "Artikel III" of the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk which prohibits people who are not White from belonging to it? But even in the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk has it not again become evident that Africans may not even attend certain churches, like the one in East London where a year or so ago some of them at a white man's funeral were told to stand outside in the street. Has it not in fact become clear more recently that an African may not attend certain N.G. Churches without the Special Branch being summoned to interview him and the White minister (Dr. Marcus Braun) who brought him, while the dominee refuses to continue with the service until they leave?!

Do not these same churchmen, like the Nazis and the *Deutsche Christen*, smear their opponents with the names of "Communist" and "fellow-traveller"? In fact, is the notorious *Antikom* not a journal started by Afrikaans churchmen, and was the fanatical National Council to Combat Communism not also

instigated by them? (One of the people most guilty in this regard is the former O.B. member, now Moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church, Dr. J.D. Vorster).

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion we would ask: Does the above not demonstrate that in reality the parallels between Nationalist South Africa and National Socialist Germany are not less but in fact rather more than many people have realized? Have we not begun to move along the same path, and who can say that it will not end in a comparable disaster? Once we have begun to move along the road of racial discrimination and oppression, the denial of the rights of the individual and rejection of the true Word of God which judges our society, who can know what the final outcome will be in His judgement? Are we after all so much more intelligent and spiritually superior a species than the German people that God cannot judge us in the same way as He did them? And must the Church not for this very reason sound with the prophets of old the warning of that judgement? Or should we join the false prophets who cry 'Peace, peace' when there is no peace?

It is not because we have wished to provoke that we have written all these things but because we love our people, both Black and White and would call them back from the abyss of such disaster. It is not in the first place the Government that needs to repent and be converted but we the people, and above all we *the Church*. For as Bonhoeffer wrote in 1934 in criticism of an attempt to convert Hitler: "It is we who need to be converted, not Hitler." Surely judgement begins in the household of God!

As Dr. Martin Luther King once wrote: "We must learn to live together as brothers or otherwise perish as fools".

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