



PRO VERITATE

EDITORIAL

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PRO VERITATE

EDITORIAL

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CHRISTIAN MONTHLY FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA CHRISTELIKE MAANDBLAD VIR SUIDELIKE AFRIKA

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KONFRONTASIE EN ONTWYKING

Gedurende die afgelope dae was verteenwoordigers van drie Suid-Afrikaanse kerke van gereformeerde belydenis in warm — soms heftige — diskussie gewikkel met Sinodale afgevaardigdes van die Gereformeerde Kerk van Nederland te Lunteren. Volgens die persberigte was dit 'n duidelike konfrontasie tussen die twee groepe o.a. die houding van die Afrikaanse kerke insake die rassevraagstuk in ons land en oor die Christelike Instituut. Die uitvloei-sel daarvan was o.a. dat die Sinode sy goedkeuring gegee het aan die besluit oor die verwerping van rassediskriminasie in die algemeen wat in 1968 deur die Gereformeerde Ekumeniese Sinode geneem is met nie-aanvaarding van die meer radikale voorstel waarin apartheid as sodanig veroordeel word. Die Sinode het ook volgens persberigte, besluit om die besorgdheid van die Gereformeerde Kerke aan die Suid-Afrikaanse susterkerke oor te dra oor die gevaar van toe te laat dat politieke en maatskaplike oorweginge hulle studie van die Heilige Skrif beïnvloed en om te waak daarteen om gelei te word deur die idee dat rassesuiwerheid in ooreenstemming met die Skrif sou wees. 'n Eksplisiete veroordeling van apartheid het dus nie geskied nie, heelwaarskynlik omdat die vergadering, na die reguit praat in kleiner kringe, nie iets wou doen wat die moontlikheid van die voortsetting van die kerklike gesprek kon verongeluk nie. Die weg van oorreding is dus verkies bo die weg van veroordeling en verwerping en daaroor is ons opreg dankbaar, mits die kerke in Suid-Afrika dit net nie verkeerdelik gaan interpreteer as 'n „groot sege” vir apartheid nie.

Die Sinode het ook die verhouding van die N.G. Kerk tot die Christelike Instituut bespreek en in die loop van 'n debat wat soms heftige emosionele reaksie van sommige Suid-Afrikaanse afgevaardigdes uitgelok het, is ernstige beskuldigings teen die Christelike Instituut en sy direkteur gedoen wat beslis nie onbeantwoord gelaat kan word nie. Dr. J. S. Gericke het byvoorbeeld die valse vergeliking gemaak van die Christelike Instituut as 'n „afgeskeie groep” terwyl dr. J. D. Vorster, die Actuaris van die N.G. Kerk, argwaan teen die Christelike Instituut wou opwek deur sy beskuldiging van twyfelagtige hantering van fondse ten bate van die Onafhanklike Bantoekekerke en deur 'n valse voorstelling rakende die verlies van predikantstatus van ds. C. F. B. Naudé. Die Christelike Instituut sal eersdaags 'n volledige verklaring oor bogenoemde sake aan die Gereformeerde Kerk uitreik met staving van feite waarvan drs. Gericke en Vorster bewus was of moes wees toe hulle hierdie ongegronde aantygings teen die Christelike Instituut gedoen het.

Dr. J. S. Gericke, die Moderator van die Algemene Sinode van die N.G. Kerk, het verder, volgens twee koerantberigte van 4 en 5 Maart (een 'n Suid-Afrikaanse middagblad en die ander 'n Nederlandse koerant) aan dr. W. B. de Villiers van die Christelike Instituut die aanbod gemaak tot samesprekinge met die Christelike Instituut, maar in 'n onderhoud met 'n Afrikaanse Sondagkoerant het hy ontken dat so 'n aanbod gedoen is. Op Maandag, 9 Maart is 'n

Editorial:

CONFRONTATION AND EVASION

During the last few days representatives of three South African churches of reformed confession found themselves in sometimes heated discussion at Lunteren with synodal delegates of the Reformed Church of the Netherlands. According to press reports there was a clear confrontation between the two groups over the attitude of the Afrikaans Churches to both the race question in our country and the Christian Institute. In consequence the Synod gave its approval to the decision taken by the Reformed Synod in 1968 to reject racial discrimination in general without accepting the more radical proposal in which apartheid as such was condemned. According to press reports the Synod also decided to convey its concern to its sister churches in South Africa about the danger of allowing political and social considerations to influence their study of the Scriptures and to guard against being led by the idea that racial purity could be reconciled with the Scriptures. There was not an explicit condemnation of apartheid probably because the meeting, after the direct talking in small groups, did not wish to do anything that would sever the possibility of a continuance of the dialogue between the churches. The way of persuasion was preferred to that of judgment and rejection. We are grateful for this provided the South African Churches do not interpret this as a "great triumph" for apartheid.

The Synod also discussed the relationship of the N.G. Kerk to the Christian Institute. In the course of a discussion that sometimes evinced strong emotional responses from some of the South African delegates serious accusations were made against the Christian Institute and its Director that cannot remain unanswered. For example, Dr. J. S. Gericke made the false comparison of the Christian Institute with a "seceded group" while Dr. J. D. Vorster, the Actuary of the N.G. Kerk, sowed suspicion against the Christian Institute by his accusation of dubious handling of funds of the African Independent Churches and by a false proposition concerning the withdrawal of ministerial status of Ds. C. F. B. Naude. The Christian Institute will shortly issue a detailed declaration to the Reformed Church of the Netherlands concerning the above matters with proof of facts about which Drs. Gericke and Vorster are aware or should have been when they made these groundless accusations.

According to two newspaper reports of 4th and 5th March (one a South African afternoon paper and the other a Dutch paper), Dr. J. S. Gericke, the Moderator of the General Synod of the N.G. Kerk has in addition made an offer to Dr. W. B. de Villiers, of the Christian Institute, to have discussions with the Christian Institute. But in an interview with an Afrikaans Sunday paper he has denied this. On Monday, 9th March, we received a cablegram from Dr. de Villiers from the Netherlands, in which he confirms: "Sinode het formeel kennis geneem onder-neming N.G.K. te onderhandel C.I.". ("Synod has

kabelgram van dr. de Villiers uit Nederland ontvang waarin dr. de Villiers bevestig: „Sinode het formeel kennis geneem onderneming N.G.K. te onderhandel C.I.“

Dr. Gericke beweer in sy onderhoud met die Sondagblad dat hy geen sodanige aanbod gedoen het nie aangesien hy „mnr. Naudé by drie geleent-hede ‚hartlik uitgenooi‘ het om te kom gesels“. Die uitnodiginge sou gerig gewees het deur dr. F. E. Geldenhuys, swaer, en ds. J. F. Naudé, broer van die direkteur. Die direkteur het in dieselfde blad verklaar dat hy van geen sodanige uitnodiging bewus is nie en sy persoonlike navraag by bogenoemde twee familieleden het bevestig dat dr. Gericke geen sodanige uitnodiging tot 'n gesprek tussen die N.G. Kerk en die Christelike Instituut gerig het nie, maar alleen sy spyt te kenne gegee het oor die feit dat Beyers Naudé „uit die Kerk“ is en dat hy graag sou sien dat hy weer terugkeer.

Ons sit hier dus met 'n ernstige teenstrydigheid: die Gereformeerde Kerk in Holland het formeel kennis geneem van die N.G. Kerk se onderneming tot sodanige gesprek, terwyl dr. Gericke dit subiet ontken. Dit kan nie anders as om die indruk te skep dat leiers van die N.G. Kerk bereid is, wanneer hulle oorsee gekonfronteer word, om sekere beloftes te doen ten einde sodoende die kritiek van susterkerke se lidmate af te weer, maar dat hulle daarna angvallig die verantwoordelikheid probeer ontwyk om hulle eie lidmate in Suid-Afrika wat aan die Christelike Instituut behoort te woord te staan. Die eer van die N.G. Kerk vereis dat aan sowel die Gereformeerde Kerk in Nederland as aan die Christelike Instituut duidelik gesê word wat presies gebeur het en dat dit bevestig word. Anders is die gevolgtrekking gewettig dat die N.G. Kerk 'n ontmoeting met die C.I. vrees en dus probeer vermy.

Tydens die Sinode is daar ook verwys na 'n brief van die N.G. Kerk van Noord-Transvaal wat handel oor die optrede van Hollandse sendingwerkers op sendingstasies van die N.G. Kerk in Suid-Afrika. Die kort beriggie oor die inhoud van dele van die brief (as dit korrek weergegee is) vereis dat dit in sy geheel bekend gestel moet word om ernstige misverstand by predikante en lidmate van die twee dogterkerke van die N.G. Kerk te voorkom en om te help aandui waarom die C.I. so besorgd is oor kerklike apartheid en die ernstig nadelige gevolge wat dit vir die koninkryk van God in ons land kan hê. Het dit dan nie ons broers van die N.G. Kerk in Nederland getref dat dit juis 'n Bantoeleraar van die N.G. Kerk van Zambië (ds. Jackson G. Phiri) wat volgens 'n Nederlandse koerant by Lunteren gesê het: „In Suid-Afrika heers geen gemoedsrus nie, maar 'n deur wapens afgedwonge rus. Wat moet ons doen, vra ek u, om 'n bloedbad te voorkom?“ En wie so 'n uitroep beluister teen die agtergrond van die waarskuwing wat biskop K. F. W. Scharf, biskop van die Evangeliese Kerk van Berlyn-Brandenburg verlede week in Suid-Afrika uitgespreek het oor die toenemende rassspanning oor die hele wêreld, moet dankbaar wees dat die Christelike Instituut van die oë van almal in Suid-Afrika wil open vir die ramspoedige gevolge van 'n kerklike en staatkundige beleid wat daarop bereken is om die skeiding tussen mens en mens en tussen Christen en Christen steeds groter en groter te maak.

formally taken notice of undertaking of N.G.K. to negotiate with Christian Institute.“)

Dr. Gericke maintains in his interview with the Sunday newspaper that "Mr. Naude was invited on three occasions to talks". These invitations were to have been made through Dr. F. E. Geldenhuys, brother-in-law, and ds. J. F. Naude, brother of the Director. The Director declared in the same newspaper that he knew of no such invitation and on inquiring from his brother-in-law confirmed that Dr. Gericke made no such invitation for a discussion between the N.G. Kerk and the Christian Institute but only expressed his regret that Beyers Naude has "left the church" and that he would like him to return.

We have here then a serious contradiction; the Reformed Church in the Netherlands has formally taken notice of the undertaking of the N.G.K. to a discussion while Dr. Gericke immediately denies it. It can only give the impression that leaders of the N.G. Kerk are willing, when confronted overseas, to make certain promises in order to prevent criticism from members of sister churches, but they are then anxious to evade the responsibility of giving a hearing to their own members in South Africa who belong to the Christian Institute. The honour of the N.G. Kerk demands that it be clarified both for the Reformed Church in the Netherlands and the Christian Institute precisely what happened and that this should be confirmed. Otherwise it can be legitimately concluded that the N.G. Kerk fears a meeting with the Christian Institute and hence tries to avoid it.

During the Synod reference was also made to a letter from the N.G. Kerk of the Northern Transvaal that treated of the actions taken by Dutch missionaries on mission stations of the N.G. Kerk in South Africa. The short report about the contents of parts of the letter (if indeed it is a correct reflection) demands that it be made known in its entirety in order to prevent serious misunderstandings between ministers and members of the two daughter churches of the N.G. Kerk. It will also help clarify why the Christian Institute is so concerned about apartheid in the church and the serious disadvantageous consequences that it can have for the Kingdom of God in our land. Did it not strike our brothers in the N.G. Kerk in the Netherlands that it was an African minister of the N.G. Kerk in Zambia (Ds. Jackson G. Phiri) who, according to a Dutch newspaper said in Lunteren: "In South Africa there is no peace of mind, but a peace enforced by weapons. I ask you: what must we do to prevent a blood-bath?"

And whoever hears such a call against the background of the warning given last week in South Africa by Bishop K. F. W. Scharf, of the Evangelical Church of Berlin-Brandenburg about the increasing racial tension throughout the world, should be grateful that the Christian Institute wants to open the eyes of all in South Africa to the disastrous consequences of a church and state policy that is calculated to progressively widen the separation between man and man and Christian and Christian.

(C. F. B. Naudé —

Direkteur, Christelike Instituut van Suider-Afrika)

AFRICANISATION OF THE CHURCH

—BY A. D. MABONA

In the last 70 years the Christian population in Africa increased from four million to 97 million and conservative projections estimate the figure to be 350 million by the year 2000.

In South Africa the 1960 census revealed 7.5 million black Christians (five million in the historic churches and 2.5 million in the Independent churches) and three million white Christians. Apart from the members of the Independent churches, African Christians have either not made or not been given the opportunity to make significant contributions to theology, worship, church government, and church policy in the churches in South Africa.

Last month, five Roman Catholic priests made public their needs as African priests. In their manifesto, which they released through the secular press, they also called for Africanisation of the Church.

In response, **Pro Veritate** invited the Rev. Dr. A. D. Mabona, one of the signatories, to introduce a discussion on the topic of Africanisation. We hope that this will encourage further debate in our columns and elsewhere such that we may all discover the meaning and implications of Africanisation of the Church of Christ in South Africa and then explore methods of implementing them.

AFRICANISATION AS NEED

The term Africanisation has been used in political discourse to indicate the appointment of native Africans to key positions in the system of civil administration especially in the newly independent countries. A similar term is localisation.

The need for Africanisation in civil life has been felt not only in the political but also in the cultural sphere. In the latter sphere Africanisation has also come to be known as indigenisation and has entailed a greater use of African vernacular languages in the schools or even the adoption of such vernaculars as official languages. Through the impact of this movement, art forms both plastic (sculpture, architecture) and choreographic (music, dance) have been modified

to suit traditional standards. The new spirit has been reflected also in the fields of literature. Africanisation or indigenisation then seems to be a "taking over" of authority, responsibility and initiative by people of native African origin in the political and cultural life of their nations or communities.

The term indigenisation has also been used by the churches especially to signify the adoption of African art forms in worship. To my knowledge the word Africanisation has traditionally not been used by the churches. The Roman Catholic Church has in its official documents spoken of autochthonous clergy and religious. Thus in terms of the use of native African personnel, the churches have spoken of indigenisation and autochthony. In the field of worship which involves cultural and religious elements they have mostly used the terms adaptation and indigenisation.

It can be said here at once that the term Africanisation rings an urgent note of the immediacy of a programme whereas indigenisation and adaptation are terms with an abstract, theoretical bias. In fact the churches in almost all the open discussions on the subject have concentrated upon the latter two terms, their connotation, and implications. This has become a regular but almost purely academic exercise except perhaps in the field of music. Let it also be said in the interests of fairness that an autochthonisation of teaching, preaching, and praying has been taking place in the form of more European missionaries trying better to master the native African languages and way of life and in the form of improved texts for worship.

AS PROGRAMME

In general, however, the churches do not seem to have taken Africanisation seriously as a programme. This haphazard, half-hearted approach is

not only proving inadequate and unsatisfactory but positively dangerous by rousing within the Christian community resentment and suspicions of unworthy motives. It is a truism that once a people or community realises that they have acquired sufficient capacity or resources to exercise certain areas of authority and responsibility by themselves then the basis of having those areas of authority or responsibility over them exercised by others has fallen and any continuance of such exercise becomes an imposition. Such imposition can be exercised only through moral or physical violence, because by definition it is never freely accepted by the people over whom it is exercised.

As for adaptation or indigenisation, it has been realised that it is not the Word of God which has to be adapted to a culture or religion but it is the cultural-religious forms of a people that have to be penetrated by the Word of God and hence imbued with His Spirit. It is bad theology to use Scripture to prove theses posed by the human mind; rather Scriptural themes are hermeneutically interpreted to enlighten a certain question or critical situation suggested or constructed by concrete historical circumstances.

In other words, the Word of God in our present existence is life for us and cultural-religious forms are only a means. There is no question therefore of adapting Christianity in its primitive sense of the Word of God in Christ to the religio-cultural forms of any particular people. It seems to be rather a question of the ways of life of all peoples being penetrated by the double-edged sword of the Word of God and being imbued with the Spirit of Christ.

It is legitimate to enquire how this can be done since Christianity has come to us clothed already in Western religio-cultural forms. This is a challenge to African Christian leaders. It is a challenge of courage and clear-mindedness on their part. It is a challenge of sincerity and co-operation on the part of their white colleagues and the rest of the white Christians. Christianity is already dressed in

Western robes, can't we all co-operate and clothe the Word of God in an African garb? Christianity should by definition be African in South Africa. Shall we leave this imminent fact in the realm of abstract realities?

This is not an emotional issue. The fact of the matter is that Western culture has wrought radical transformations in African society. Religio-cultural forms have changed. But the spirit of the original or traditional African culture and religion has been revived and, we hope, is being perfected in God's Power. If one listens, for instance, to township music with its perhaps brash courage, its nostalgic-tragic sensitivity, its communal-festive-liturgical appeal, one will feel how it calls for a human response in the rough-and-tumble, cruel conditions of township life.

In traditional society a sacral character was accorded to all those objects which were closely connected with man's vital needs. This was not a formulated concept but an attitude of behaving by which everything essentially connected with man's vital needs. This was not a formulated concept but an attitude of behaviour by which everything essentially connected with man's life and existence was treated with respect and, as it were, with a spirit of gratitude and solidarity. Thus a spiritual dimension was added to daily life and its apparent banalities.

AND ANCESTOR CULT

This attitude reached its depth in the feeling and behaviour towards

ancestors. Ancestor cult is deep and strong in all sections of the African community both rural and urban. It is ultimately based on the feeling of gratitude, solidarity, and human dependence.

I say human dependence advisedly, because, though we feel dependent also upon the things which essentially support our lives and existence, nevertheless our feeling of gratitude, solidarity, and dependence on our ancestors has understandably another dimension. Here there is participation, a two-way communication. Our mute co-beings, the natural objects, respond apparently only in mathematical terms to our overtures of feeling and action towards them, whereas in the case of our ancestors we have faith in a full, two-way communication on the same human level of sympathy, feeling and action. African spirituality seems to be based on the feelings of gratitude, of solidarity, and of universal participation or communion. I'm not trying to expound or defend a scientific thesis. These are just my general observations.

The above observations are also an indication of the lines along which I would move in seeking to formulate a living theology that would bear meaning in African society in terms of our traditional standards.

AS CHALLENGE

My conviction then is that indigenisation in the Church should be reduced from a theoretical problem to the concrete programme of Africanisation. This task is a challenge for

the whole Church, but one would expect it to be more deeply felt by responsible Christian native Africans.

If we believe that Christ is the Lord, then considerations of our weak and fragile position should not daunt us from facing any number of lions with gaping jaws or Goliaths on our path where we march in answer to His call. Many decisions will have to be made with soberness and foresight. The historic churches will probably have much to learn from the independent, pentecostal movements. The existing spirit of distrust should be exorcised and communication and dialogue should be established.

For more than three centuries the Word of God has been sown in this southern part of Africa; is perhaps the time not overdue that the action of the vivifying Spirit should be felt and manifested in our culture, in our religion, in our disposition of ecclesiastical administration with trust and confidence in new and unexpected ways. As long as this is done with fortitude in harmony and peace, there does not seem to be any reason for fear or misgiving.

Africanisation of the Church calls for a Church-wide dialogue, because so far the Church is westernised. Westernisation was an inevitable process, so is Africanisation which has apparently the advantage of taking place in what is called a sensate age. May the Almighty Father with His Son through the Spirit and all our Christian and non-Christian forbears guide us in this mighty task.

WE ARE FELLOW WORKMEN FOR GOD

This is the theme for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 1970, and the same bible readings will be used throughout the world. For each day of the week a simple meditation is suggested, as well as subjects for prayer. These have to be in general terms, but you can make them more personal and particular. Pray for people known to you by name. Other suggestions may come to your mind, and you should pray as the Spirit leads.

It is suggested that the services include an act of commitment either to the cause of unity or to some particular local project, and it should involve every member of the congregation. Where possible, provision should be made for some opportunity for members to meet one another afterwards.

It is hoped that the idea of unity will be present in the eucharistic services that the different churches celebrate during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Some may wish to include in the liturgy the prayer suggested in the leaflet or some adaptation of it.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be held this year in South Africa, as in the rest of the world: From 10th - 17th May.

Pamphlets are available in Xhosa, Zulu, Tswana, S. Sotho, Afrikaans and English. They cost R1.50 per 100. Orders should be placed early with:

The S.A. Council of Churches,
P.O. Box 31190,
Braamfontein,
Transvaal.

Die Doodstraf behoort afgeskaf te word

—deur PETER RANDALL

Alle gemeenskappe kom te staan voor die probleem van hoe om op te tree teen diegene wat die lewens van ander bedreig. Moordenaars, verkragters, ontvoerders, geweldadige diewe, saboteurs en verraaiers vorm 'n bedreiging vir die samelewing wat voldoende bestry moet word. Die eenvoudigste manier om teen mense op te tree wat hulle aan sulke misdade skuldig gemaak het, is om hulle dood te maak volgens die beginsel van 'n oog vir 'n oog en 'n tand vir 'n tand. 'n Verskeidenheid van metodes kan vir hierdie doel aangewend word: om 'n persoon op te hang (soos in Suid-Afrika); elektrokusie (soos in sommige state van die Verenigde State van Amerika); doodskiet (soos in Rusland, Algiers en Griekeland); onthoofding (soos in Frankryk en Suid-Vietnam) of verwurging deur middel van die wurgtou (soos in Spanje).

Die metodes verskil, maar die eindresultaat is dieselfde. Gedurende die afgelope twee eeue, egter, het regsgeleerdes, en veral kriminoloë, filosowe, en veral moraliste, politici, teoloë en sosiale hervormers besin oor die doel en waarde van die doodstraf. 'n Beweging is tans aan die gang dwarsdeur die lande wat hulleself beskou as deel van die „Westerse beskawing”, om die doodstraf af te skaf. Verlede jaar het die Britse regering die doodstraf permanent afgeskaf. Al die lande in Wes-Europa het dit reeds afgeskaf behalwe Frankryk en Spanje en dié lande waar dit behou word vir militêre misdade gedurende 'n oorlog. Buitekant Europa is die volgende lande afskaffers van die doodstraf: Kanada, Australië, Nieu-Zeeland, 13 state in die Verenigde State van Amerika, al die lande in Suid-Amerika (óf *de jure* of *de facto*), Senegal, die Ivoorkus, Dahomey en Gambia (almal *de facto*).

DIE TOESTAND IN SUID-AFRIKA

Alhoewel daar 'n beweging in die Weste is in die rigting van afskaffing van die doodstraf, of ten minste 'n beperking van die misdade wat met die dood strafbaar is, ontwikkel die toestand in Suid-Afrika op onrusbarende wyse in die teenoorgestelde rigting. Daar is ook nie 'n klimaat onder die leiers of die volk wat bevorderlik is vir 'n bewussyn wat sal lei tot die afskaffing van die doodstraf nie, terwyl daar 'n dramatiese uitbreiding was van die aantal misdade waar die doodstraf opgelê kan word.

Sedert 1917 is die doodstraf bevelend vir moord en toelaatbaar vir verkragting en hoogverraad. Sedert 1958 is die houe gemagtig om die doodstraf toe te dien vir roof, poging tot roof, huisbraak en poging tot huisbraak met die doel om 'n oortreding te begaan, waar verswarende omstan-

dighede voorkom in die pleging van hierdie misdade.

In 1962 het die Regering verreikende wysiginge aangebring aan die Strafwet deur middel van die Algemene Reg Wysigingswet (gewoonlik genoem die Sabotasiewet). Sabotase word in hierdie statuut baie wyd omskrywe. Daarby kan, in terme van hierdie wet, skuldigbevinding die doodstraf verdien en word daarbenevens die onus van onskuldbewysing op die beskuldigde geplaas (wat in sigself in stryd is met die konsep van die Regsorde soos dit gewoonlik in die Weste verstaan word).

In 1965 is verdere volmag aan die houe verleen om die doodstraf na goeddunke toe te dien vir kinderdiewery en ontvoering.

Die Wet op Terrorisme van 1967 het verdere misdade wat met die dood strafbaar is, geskep. Hierdie wet het drastiese inbreuk gemaak op die regsorde met sy retrospektiewe aard, sy wye definisies en die voorsiening wat gemaak word vir onbeperkte aanhouding vir ondervraging sonder toegang deur enigeen behalwe die Minister of 'n beampte van die Staat.

STATISTIEK

Die aantal persone wat in Suid-Afrika terdood veroordeel is, het gedurende die afgelope 20 jaar aanmerklik gestyg. Tussen 1911 en 1947 is minder as 25 persone per jaar opgehang. Vanaf 1948 tot 1966 het die getal gestyg tot meer as 66, terwyl dit tot meer as 89 gestyg het gedurende die dekade 1957-1966. In 1968 is 118 persone gehang. Daar word gemiddeld elke drie dae 'n persoon by die tronk in Pretoria opgehang.

Vanaf 1911 tot 1966 (insluitend) is 2,107 persone gehang. Die helfte van hierdie getal is gehang tussen 1953 en 1966. Die stelling is gemaak dat Suid-Afrika verantwoordelik is vir byna helfte van die wêreld se voltrekkings van die doodstraf.

Die oorgrote meerderheid van die persone wat in Suid-Afrika die doodstraf kry is nie-blankes en meeste van die misdade vind onder die nie-blankes self plaas. Die skrikwekkende misdaadsyfer is oor die algemeen direk toe te skryf aan die sosiale omstandighede waaronder meeste van dié mense in Suid-Afrika leef.

ARGUMENTE TEEN AFSKAFFING VAN DIE DOODSTRAF

- (i) Omdat die Bantoebevolking „nog in 'n toestand van babarisme verkeer”. Omdat die Bantoe minder eerbied vir die heiligheid van die menslike lewe het as die „beskaafde westerling”. Omdat die redes vir afskaffing elders nie hier toegepas kan word nie weens die „verskille van rasse en derhalwe van sosiale en ekonomiese omstandighede”. Bogenoemde is die bevindings van die Lansdowne-kommissie wat in 1947 deur die Suid-Afrikaanse regering aangestel is om strafreg- en gevangenhervorming te ondersoek. Die verslag bly nog steeds die enigste offisiële ondersoek wat nog ooit in Suid-Afrika ingestel is na die land se strafreginstelling en -beleid. Dit het die gevolgtrekking gehou dat die doodstraf nie afgeskaf moet word nie.
- (ii) Die argument wat meestal aangegee word ten gunste van die behoud van die doodstraf, is dat dit potensiële misdadigers weerhou. Weerhouding kan beskou word as die enigste redelike regverdiging vir die doodstraf. Dit is baseer op die veronderstelling dat die veroordeelde aan 'n klas van persoon behoort wie se gewete ernstig

afgestomp is en wat derhalwe slegs weerhou word deur vrees vir opsluiting of straf.

- (iii) Hierby sluit aan die begrip van versagtende omstandighede wat in 1935 ingestel is, waarby aan howe die reg verleen word om volgens diskresie die doodstraf toe te pas al dan nie, indien sulke omstandighede voorkom. Gevolglik maak die behoudingsargument aanspraak op die behoud van die weerhoudingsfaktor maar laat dit aan die hof se diskresie oor om dit te gebruik of nie.
- (iv) Nou verbonde aan die weerhoudingsargument is die begrip van opskorting. In die proses van rapporte, aanbevelings en studie ná elke doodstraf uitgespreek is kan 'n aanbeveling vir begenadiging gemaak word.

ARGUMENTE TEN GUNSTE VAN AFSKAFFING

Die afskaffingsargumente is hoofsaaklik negatief, d.w.s. hulle opponeer die behoudingsargumente.

- (i) Die gevolgtrekkings van die Lansdowne-kommissie waarna verwys is, is hoogs betwisbaar volgens selfs 'n oppervlakkige ondersoek van die geskiedenis van blankes in Suid-Afrika, van verskynsels soos Nazi-Duitsland en van 'n studie van Bantoeskiedenis en -kultuur. Daar is ook 'n inherente weerspreking in die argument dat indien die Bantoe min eerbied vir die menslike lewe het, hulle afgeskrik sal word deur vrees vir doodstraf.
- 'n Afleiding wat van die Kommissie se argument gemaak kan word, is dat sommige mense inherent wreedaardig is. Hierdie argument wat dikwels aangewend word, ignoreer blykbaar dat wydverspreide misdaad in die eerste plek die gevolg is van sosio-ekonomiese faktore. In plaas van die grondoorsake te bestry, bemoei die argument homself slegs met simptome.
- Die rede vir die groot aantal van persone wat gehang word en die algemene onverskilligheid oor die toestand, moet noodwendig gesoek word in die land se sosiale struktuur.

- (ii) Die **Royal Commission on Capital Punishment** wat in Engeland die weg voorberei het vir die afskaffing van die doodstraf, het tot die gevolgtrekking gekom dat daar geen aanduiding is dat die doodstraf enige wesentlike doel gedien het as 'n weerhoudingsfaktor teen moord nie.
- 'n Deeglike studie wat deur die Verenigde Volke uitgevoer is het daarenteen bewys dat alle beskikbare inligting blykbaar daarop dui dat afskaffing van die doodstraf nog nooit gevolg is deur 'n merkbare styging in die voorkoms van misdaad wat nie langer met die dood strafbaar is nie.
- (iii) Die argument ten gunste van versagtende omstandighede kan ook vertolk word as 'n argument teen weerhouding want die begrip self veronderstel 'n vermindering van die graad van misdadigheid. Dit kan gevolglik 'n vermindering van die weerhoudingsfaktor beteken veral soos voorgehou het tussen 1935 en 1946, waar 64 persent van die persone wat skuldig bevind is, versagtende omstandighede toegelaat is.
- (iv) Die begrip van opskorting is nie 'n argument ten gunste van die behoud van die doodstraf nie, aangesien daar 'n skerp daling in die persentasie opgeskorte vonnisse gedurende die afgelope 20 jaar voorgekom het.
- (v) Doodstraf laat geen ruimte vir menslike foutering nie. Gevolglik kan onskuldige mense tereggestel word. Sulke gevalle het al voorgekom. Die gestorwe slagoffers van juridiese foutering kan nie gekompenseer word nie.
- (vi) Dis teologies onjuis om te argumenteer dat die doodstraf menslik is omdat dit die veroordeeldes tot 'n dieper berou voer. Berou, volgens die Christelike geloof, spruit nie in die eerste plek uit vrees vir die doodstraf nie maar uit 'n bewussyn van die liefde van God wat die mens aanspoor tot vernuwning van sy ware natuur.
- (vii) Dis teologies onjuis om te beweer dat die majesteit en glorie van God bevestig moet word

deur middel van die oplê van 'n verskriklike finale en onherroeplike uitspraak. Die glorie en majesteit van God word na regte in hierdie lewe bevestig deur sowel die blymoedige, gehoorsame en gemeenskaplike aanbidding van sy kinders as deur die reëling van die hele lewe van die gemeenskap volgens die wet en geopenbaarde wil van God. As God se geopenbaarde doel van geregtigheid verkrog word deur die politieke en sosiale reëling van die mense se lewens, sal geen aantal afsonderlike teregstellings dit oorskadu en God se glorie bewys nie. Verder word God se glorie aangetoon deur die menslike houding van nederigheid: die doodstraf kan nie versoen word met die Christelike deug van nederigheid nie, omdat dit enige moontlikheid dat die uitspraak en straf verkeerd mag wees, uitskakel. Volgens 'n Bybelse begrip van God word God se glorie met groter werklikheid bevestig wanneer dat hulle die gebrekkigheid van hulle kennis en hulle oordele erken.

- (viii) Dis teologies onjuis om te argumenteer dat die geregtigheid van God aangetoon moet word deur die absolute onderskeiding tussen die skuldige en die onskuldige. Die doodstraf maak so 'n onderskeiding, aangesien dit sekere individue as absoluut skuldig identifiseer. Dit druk die onderskeid tussen sulke skuldige persone en die res van die mensdom uit in terme van die absolute onderskeiding tussen die lewende en die dode. Derhalwe maak dit 'n absolute onderskeid tussen die absolute skuldige en die res van die mensdom. Die Christelike evangelie beweer dat almal gesondig het (verg. Rom. 3.23).
- (ix) Dis teologies onjuis om te argumenteer dat die doodstraf vir die Christen „nie saak maak nie” omdat die Christen in die „onsterflikheid van die siel” glo. Die Ou Testamenteiese begrip van die skepping was duidelik herbevestig in die menswording van Christus, wat aangetoon het dat die lewe van die mens op aarde van wesens-
- (Vervolg op bladsy 16)*

SEMINARIANS SEEK TO EXPERIMENT WITH COMMUNAL LIVING

YOUTH'S EXPLORATION OF 'NEW LIFE STYLES'

Many of today's youth are seriously exploring and developing what they refer to as new life styles.

If we are to gain some understanding of their values, we must acquire some knowledge of the life styles to which not a few of them have become committed. For what is involved is nothing less than a significant shift in basic values.

By a 6-to-1 ratio American seminarians interviewed expressed their interest in new life styles. Most meant by this that they want to experiment with new forms of communal living. But what does that mean?

For many, this emphasis on communal living is closely linked with the Biblical stress on community, especially the experience of the apostles and believers following Pentecost in which, as recorded in Acts, "All that believed were together and had all things in common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need."

GREAT INROADS SEEN

Modern society has made great inroads on men's sense of community. These students are rebelling against the feeling of estrangement and alienation that comes with a huge impersonal, technological, urban society.

It would be a mistake to assume that experiments in communal living automatically mean shared sex and drugs. For some it will mean this, but for others communal living has no such connotation.

A student from Union Theological Seminary stated: "I am involved in a group trying to figure out how we can live communally next year. It is important on human grounds to learn to trust others and to get over property hang-ups. I believe, by the way, in the institution of marriage."

A girl from Union commented: "I am interested in people learning to really live and be honest with other people and themselves. We have a communal-living situation going for the next year. I also want to develop ways for people of the same sex to relate normally with each other, to touch, and the like."

SHARING — NOT COMPETING

"I would like to find a way in which this culture did not have to be so materialistic," remarked a young woman from the University of Chicago Divinity School. "Money is a

real hang-up. Sharing as opposed to competing would make a great difference. Christians must become concerned about the really important things."

A Harvard Divinity School student who said he has "participated in communal living for quite a time," also commented: "I am beginning now to understand what it means to have a deep and meaningful relationship simply living with my wife."

"Life style happens by circumstance or by choice," said a young woman from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. "My husband and I want it to be by choice. We would like to be as innovative as we can. We want to enrich our own lives by becoming as honest and open to each other as we can and to take on some outward-directed task as our major thrust."

Here are some random comments: "I'm working on some new form of extended family relationships." "I seek new forms of social relationships, a way to exist in a non-materialistic social situation." "There should be no social pressures placed on life styles unless they harm someone else."

Others said: "We need a change of heart; a change of life style may not be enough." "I favour all life styles except those that destroy mankind and the universe." "I favour a life lived in relationship to Christ which means we will be Christlike. It calls for a strong sense of love."

A student from San Francisco Theological Seminary put it this way: "I am for life styles that have a lot of commitment to them. They must challenge the history they come out of. If a style has content and affects the world for the better, I am for it. But it must not become a trap."

When the seminarians were asked, more broadly, about those values especially important to them, they mentioned ones which, if universally held and conscientiously practiced, would doubtless go a long way toward eliminating the monstrous problems troubling the human race.

By far the most frequently cited value was love. Also running through their responses were such closely related concepts as helping others, reconciliation, care for another, inclusion of others, respect for other people, selflessness, self-sacrifice, identification with others, sensitivity to others, kindness, brotherhood, and meeting human needs.

STUDENTS SUM UP

This quick survey of stressed values doesn't quite do justice to the response of individual seminarians.

A Harvard Divinity student replied: "My values? Reconciliation; a universalism breaking all parochialisms; inclusion; peaceful ways of settling disputes at all levels; respecting the value of human life, hence opposition to war and poverty; liberation—both of mind and of people—from political tyranny and impoverishment."

Said another from the Graduate Theological Union: "Honesty and integrity, meaning, openness; freedom to be oneself; freedom from the enslavement to which people in our society are subjected — enslavement, for instance, to monetary values, sensitivity to oneself; love, especially in my marriage relationship."

A young man from Chicago Divinity commented: "Sensitivity to those around you; the value of the embrace of another; the value of self-acceptance. We should try to appropriate and express soul without feeling guilty about it."

With the forcefulness of colloquial speech a student from the seminary at San Anselmo, Calif., responded "Not hassling people about what you don't have to hassle them about and hassling them about what you should. A community ethic should develop out of that."

An especially husky young man, also from San Anselmo, answered: "Not hurting other people; honesty; kindness. I'm not big anymore on the tough, manly values."

Summarising much of what many of the others were saying, a student from the School of Theology at Claremont replied: "Peace and love and commitment with openness."

Die Kerk Buite Suid-Afrika

— PROF. B. B. KEET

Die aantal kerke wat by die Wêreldraad van Kerke aansluiting soek, groei stadig maar seker. Die Uitvoerende Komitee van die Wêreldraad sal applikasies vir lidmaatskap ontvang (die aanname waarvan slegs 'n formaliteit is) van vyf kerke in Europa, Afrika, die Wes Indies en Australasië, wanneer dit in Februarie vergader. Ná goedkeuring, sal hulle na die Sentrale Komitee van die Raad se 120 lede by sy volgende samekoms te Addis Ababa in Januarie 1971 verwys word. Toelating van die vyf Kerke sal die getal lede te staan laat kom op 246 kerke van Protestantse, Anglikaanse, Ortodokse en Oud-Katolieke belydenis onder 90 volke en geweste in al die ses kontinente. Die vyf applikante is die Gereformeerde Kerk in Nederland, die Moraviese Kerk in die Oos-Karibese Provinsie, die Verenigde Kerk van Papua, Nieu-Ginnea en die Salomo eilande. Daarbenewens die Negerse Baptiste Konvensie en die Metodiste Kerk in Maleisia en Singapore. Die Komitee ontvang ook 'n rapport oor die samesmelting van twee lidkerke in België — die Verenigde Metodiste Kerk en die Evangeliese Kerk van België. Oorspronklik bedoel om in Praag te vergader sal die Komitee nou in die hoofkantoor van die Raad in Genève bymekaarkom. Deur die Tseggies-Slovakiese outoriteite is verseker dat die terugtrekking van die uitnodiging om in Praag te vergader, nie 'n verandering van die offisiële houding tussen die Wêreldraad en Tseggies-Slowakye beteken nie. Maar wéens die moeilikhede van die laaste twee jaar het die wenslik geword om nie so 'n groot internasionale vergadering op hierdie tydstip te hou nie. Dit word egter gehoop dat 'n kleiner Wêreldraad tot samespreking gedurende die laaste helfte van hierdie jaar gehou kan word.

Die agenda bevat 28 punte en dek al die aktiwiteite van die Raad, sedert hy verlede Augustus te Canterbury vergader het. Die Komitee sal gevra word om die aanbeveling van die Wêreldkonsultasie oor Ekumeniese Hulpverlening vir ontwikkelingsprojekte te aanvaar, wanneer hy einde Januarie naby Genève gehou sal word. Deur die Sentrale Raad se Komitee bymekaargeroep om aan die Wêreldraad en sy lidkerke aan te beveel, hoe die gebruik van Kerkfondse vir ontwikkelingsprojekte gebruik moet word, word beskou as een van die belangrikste konsultasies wat deur die Raad onderneem word.

Die Komitee sal ook verneem na voorlopige reëlins vir die Geloof en Liturgie (Faith and Order) Kommissie wat a.s. jaar gehou moet word. Dit sal die eerste keer wees dat Rooms-Katolieke teoloë sal deelneem aan 'n samekoms van die Kommissie.

Dit word veronderstel dat die Kommissie die aanbevelinge wat deur die laaste vergadering in Bristol gedoen is, sal uitvoer. Dr. Lukas Visscher, die Switserse teoloog, wat sekretaris van die kommissie is, het gesê dat dit nie langer handel oor vraagstukke van eenheid in konfessionele terme nie; dit behandel teologiese vrae wat die Kerke oor die konfessionele terrein konfronteer word en dit kan alleen deur gesamentlike studie en konsultasie verder verduidelik word. Die kerke sal ook verneem van 'n verslag tussen verteenwoordigers van die Wêreldraad en die Rooms-Katolieke Kerk oor die vraag van Roomse lidmaatskap van die Raad. Die Komitee wat die **pros en cons** (voor en teen) van Roomse lidmaatskap bestudeer is

'n sub-komitee van die offisiële Gemeentelike Werkgroep tussen die Wêreldraad en die Roomse Kerk. 'n Meer gedetailleerde rapport sal beskikbaar wees wanneer die Werkgroep na verdere samekomste in Mei vergader.

Die Raad ondersoek ook die toekoms van die mens en die gemeenskap in 'n wêreld op wetenskaplike en tegnologiese gebied, sodat die „toekoms” blyk een van die sentrale vrae van ons tyd te wees.

Die verslag lê klem op die noodsaaklikheid van die omstandighede van wetenskaplikes en die konsekwensies van hul interpretasies op die mens en sy gemeenskap.

Daar sal ook oor volle Roomse deelname aan die Christelike Mediese Kommissie beraadslaag word. En 'n interim rapport oor hoe die Wêreldraad verander moet word met die oog op die teenswoordige behoeftes van die ekumene. Die Komitee sal ook rapporte ontvang oor die verskillende dele van ekumeniese aksie: Interkerklike hulp, vlugtelinge en wêrelddiens, en die Kommissie van die Kerke oor Internasionale Sake.

HROMADKA GEHULDIG

Uit Genève kom die berig van 'n lofrede op die begrafnis van Josef L. Hromadka, die vermaarde teoloog, wat op 4 Januarie in Praag gehou is deur die Algemene Sekretaris van die Wêreldraad van Kerke, Dr. Eugene Carson Blake. Hromadka was boweal „'n man onder die Woord van God”, het Blake gesê. Ons herinner net daaraan dat hy op 26 Desember in die ouderdom van 80 jaar gesterf het,

die stigter en voorsitter was van die Christelike Vredeskonferensie, enkele jare in Princeton as besoekende professor dogmatiëns werksaam was en lank in die ekumeniese beweging gedien het.

In sy rede het Blake o.a. gesê: Die rede waarom nie-Christene nooit 'n Josef Hromadka kan verstaan nie: hulle kan nie glo dat hy waarlik verbonde was aan die regverdige regering van God, wat enige politieke verbondenheid aan enige aardse koningryk as afgodery verwerp. So baie Amerikaners het gedurende die koue oorlog gemeen dat hy 'n kommunist was en daarom 'n vyand, terwyl baie kommuniste sy getrouheid verdink het, al was hy 24 jaar lank die sterkste krag in Oos-Europa om sy medekerkmanne te beweeg dat hulle in geloof en hoop hul nuwe revolusionêre sosialistiese regerings en gemeenskappe moet steun. Gedurende dieselfde 21 jaar was hy die uitstaande morele vertolker aan die Weste van die ideaal van geregtigheid en vrede, wat die dryfkrag is van die beste in alle sosialistiese volke.

Dr. Blake het verklaar dat, ten spyte van sy diepe teleurstelling, Josef Hromadka tot die einde toe 'n man van hoop was. Sy hoop het hy op God gebou, wat Homself bekend gemaak het in Jesus Christus, wie se dood en opstanding die grond van die menslike hoop is. Tot die einde toe was hy 'n man wat selfs sy vyande liefgehad het en geweier het om te veg vir mag of wins. Hy het uitgesien na die Koningryk van God wat nie van hierdie wêreld is nie, wat gekom het en sal kom omdat Christus opgestaan het en aan die regterhand van God sit.

ECUMENISM IS FOR MISSION

— By THOMAS F. STRANSKY

If in Christian belief, the Gospel is the Good News that reconciles man to man, nation to nation, race to race, the family of man to the Family of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Christians must strive to shape the Church of Christ into a community of the reconciled who reconcile in selfless service. The striving for church renewal should thus be placed within the missionary-ecumenical intention.

Unity in Mission; Mission in Unity; the continuing renewal of the Christian Communion for the sake of the unifying mission. Here, I believe, is the authentic convergence in conviction and action among all the churches today: the continuing pressure of the Gospel insists that ecumenism means unity for mission through church renewal — the obligation to draw all Christians together through the renewal of the churches into one Church always in renewal, and the obligation of the whole Church to preach the whole Gospel to the whole world, as the sacramental servant of Christ to both that Gospel and that world. In short, only mission-conscious churches, and only renewed churches can find the true restoration or recomposition of unity. Unity cannot be restored by any process of "ecclesiastical joinery", as if the pilgrim Church were already complete in all things other than unity.

REALISM IN ECUMENISM

Realism in ecumenism — this we find more difficult to attain than ecumenical ideals. During the last decade in Africa, the political revolution has been only a curtain raiser for a general revolution that is taking its first awkward steps. The Africanisation of leadership in both state and church is joined to the population explosion, the staggering expansion of schools and universities, mushrooming cities, conflicting ideologies, the mental revolution in horizons, in accurate criteria of patient assessment, in hopeful and frustrating expectations. What do these facts say to the churches?

At the same time we are witnessing in other Christian Communion the same grace-filled movements that are stirring within the Roman Catholic Church in Africa: the renewal of worship, of preaching and catechetics, of the lay apostolate, of christian social teaching and activity, of international as well as national and local christian service. All the churches are facing the same challenges — and headaches. The one Spirit is arousing the whole Christian Family in Africa to re-evaluate its missionary purposes, institutions, manpower, etc., in view of a changing continent in a changing world.

WORKING TOGETHER

The questions are: Will the Roman Catholic Church work in isolation from, or parallel to, the other churches, almost competitively, in mission renewal? Will the other churches in Africa accept, in a self-critical spirit, the witness of the Roman Catholic Church in its post-Vatican struggle for renewal? Or will the churches take seriously the old formula: **to do everything together unless theological conscience regrettably forces us to act separately?** An analysis of the complaints of some critics today seems to show that this well-founded theological-pastoral law rings coldly on those who suspect that the present lack of Christian co-operation is not based on clear ecclesial scruples but rather on complicated rationalisation of church laziness, fear of experimentation, unwillingness to disturb vested interests of churches, congregations or church agencies, or just plain passive commitment to the total mission of

the Church in the world. Up to now, say these critics, we have always worked separately unless some great worldly threat has forced us regrettably to work together!

UNITY NEEDS DEMONSTRATION

Especially in Africa, I would suggest, it is fundamental to the mission of the Church that unity should be demonstrated among the churches in every possible, legitimate way, and that christian faith which is already shared in common should contribute to, and leaven, the understanding of future unity in the search for a new society in nation and continent.

This demands some kind of **joint action for mission**. The churches and related missionary agencies and communities in a given area come together to face their total missionary task. The objective is the pooling of christian resources, in imaginative brain-power, personnel and finance, within a common strategy that does not violate the theological principles of the confessional traditions. This is a flexible description. It allows also for those forms of co-operative action which do not immediately include all the christian forces in an area of all the area's mission concerns. Christians will learn what kind of bold and prudent sharing is required in actual situations more than by predetermined blueprints.

Co-operative study and action could erase the scandal of missing new evangelistic opportunities — viz., new developing cities, universities and colleges, professional associations, sudden immigrations — which do not have a priority because they are obviously not the exclusive concern of any one church. And priority is the key word for joint action for mission. It is relatively easy to list what more should be done; it is harder to insist on what should be dropped in order to do it.

NEW CHALLENGES

For example, in Africa the mission in the ever growing urban and industrial centres constitutes one of the most severe challenges and opportunities for the Church. But can any one church in Africa muster enough talent within its own ranks even to study properly the urbanisation problems: the novelty of most urban employment, the moral challenge of the anonymity of the individual in the crowd; the housing problem and the high rent and congestion that follows, the loss of privacy, and the breakdown of the clan into single-cell families, etc.? What old structures in the parochial life of all the urban churches — good though they may have been, good though they still must be — must die precisely to stress both the financial and manpower priorities in the new situation? What are the new forms of ministry which reach out to the city's planners, technocrats and decision-makers, thus ministries which are orientated to the different power structures of urban society as well as to the poor and helpless? Discussion of the goals of urban and industrial mission would constantly scrutinise and correct the theological sociological and technological presuppositions. Should any church exclude itself, or be excluded from this common reflection, or abstain from every action programme proposed for ecumenical collaboration?

I would like to suggest some ecumenical priorities in study and action on a world-level, and in particular, for Africa.

I—UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF MISSION (EVANGELISM AND SERVICE)

Here I outline what seems to be the central question in the missionary nature of the Church today: the relation between the proclamation of the Gospel (evangelism) and christian service, especially the whole movement of technical assistance to "developing" countries and the increase of church-aid (love of neighbour by disinterested service). It became obvious during the International Conference on Church and Society (Geneva, July 1966), and by the reaction to Pope Paul's *Populorum progressio*, that "the widening gulf between the **haves** and the **have-nots** constitutes a more serious threat to international peace

and security than any other rifts — either ideological or racial" (U Thant). The crucial issue is not that of economic justice **within** each nation, but of **international** social-economic justice. Yet at the same time when history requires that humanity should live as a coherent responsible world society, and not as fragments of the old familiar anarchy, men still refuse to accept worldwide responsibilities for their fellows. Dr. Visser 't Hooft told the Assembly of the World Council of Churches in July 1968: "It must become clear that church members who deny in fact their responsibility for the needy in any part of the world are just as much guilty of heresy as those who deny this or that article of the faith".

SODEPAX

Both the WCC and the Holy See are co-sponsors of the Committee for Society, Development and Peace (SODEPAX), which sees the need, at all levels of church life, of new joint-organs to establish the facts, to elaborate joint policy and to support programmes of education, build up effective lobbies and generally encourage and motivate the entire Christian Family to get to work in pursuit of world justice. Part of this programme is the evaluation, intensification and co-ordination of church-aid, and its integration, wherever possible, into the national and local development plans of governments.

But what is the relation of this work to evangelism? Attempts to define this vary from categorical insistence that service should be subordinate to evangelism to the exact opposite (and such judgments have immediate practical relevance in the allocation of funds, priorities of personnel assignments, etc.). How do the two form one inseparable whole? How does christian service "with no strings attached" become superior to merely humanitarian service? What is the **distinctive** task of the **churches** in the movement for rapid technical development in Africa. For example, the strength of the churches in Africa is found in the rural areas, and 90 per cent of the continent is rural. Governments are stressing improved methods of village farming, in order to quiet the flood of uprooted people to the cities. Is the only task of the churches to provide more ploughs and fertilisers?

II—STUDIES OF THE CHURCHES IN MISSION

"There is no dearth of up-to-date writing on either the theory of the practice of missions, but such missionary history is devitalised because it is denominational and therefore loses the big issues through painting on canvasses which are too small and coloured by propaganda considerations." This judgment, made by Dr. Victor Hayward, former director of the WCC Department on Mission Studies, is responsible for the high quality WCC studies which seek to combine the accuracy and objectivity of sociological investigation with the insights of theological reflection which start from the actual situation rather than the ideal. How do all the churches in an area act upon, and how are they affected by their social and cultural environment? What are their real successes and failures, and wherein lie their surprising weaknesses and unintentional achievements? Each particular study holds up a mirror to the life and work of the churches everywhere.

Should not Catholic experts share their own knowledge and experience in such studies? Can we not learn from each other precisely by studying the **whole** christian mission in an area? Recently, for example, surveys have been made of the total evangelisation "success or failure" among the 374 tribes in West and Equatorial Africa, where 180 churches and missionary bodies are at work. Only after this survey had been made were there revealed the numerous and unexpected trends in church growth (e.g., the uneven rates of tribes; the 50 distinct areas that can be called under-evangelised or totally unevangelised; the influence of Islam in various tribes). In practice, as a result of the above study, a new and delicate experiment in mission strategy was begun among the unevangelised Fon tribe of Dahomey. Nine French-speaking churches are sponsoring a team of men and women, clerical and lay, of different countries (Dahomey, Cameroun, Madagascar, France, Switzerland and Tahiti).

INDEPENDENT CHURCHES IN AFRICA

Careful study has finally been given to the phenomenon of the "African

(continued on page 15)

Spro-cas news release

INTERIM REPORT ON THE EDUCATION COMMISSION

Spro-cas is a two-year project set up by the South African Council of Churches and the Christian Institute of Southern Africa to examine apartheid in the light of Christian principles and to suggest practicable and morally acceptable alternatives. It arose out of the Message to the People of South Africa, a theological critique of apartheid issued by the Council of Churches in September 1968. The project consists of six commissions dealing with economics, education, law, politics, society and the church, and involving nearly 150 leading South Africans.

The Education Commission of the Study Project on Christianity in Apartheid Society (Spro-cas) held a further meeting in Johannesburg over the weekend 30th January to 1st February, 1970.

A number of comprehensive reports and memoranda had been prepared by members and working groups, and the commission considered these in relation to its terms of reference, adopted at its first meeting, viz., in the light of the Message to the People of South Africa:

- (i) To identify current principles and practices in South African education which are unacceptable;
- (ii) (a) to consider and set out briefly an acceptable order of society;
- (b) to sketch long-term changes in education to accord with (a);
- (ii) to consider what educational steps towards the acceptable order of society may most usefully be taken immediately.

The commission has identified seven major principles in South African education which it considers contrary to Christian principles.

These include:

- (i) The use of the education system to ensure the continuation of existing patterns of group divisions in the South African population and the retardation of processes of change within these groups.

- (ii) The deliberate use of the educational system to indoctrinate children with the belief that apartheid is the only acceptable policy for South Africa.
- (iii) The failure of those in control to allow representatives of the African, Coloured and Indian groups to take an effective part in the major decision-making processes of education policy and administration.

The commission likewise identified 21 unacceptable practices in South African education, including;

- * tardiness in applying compulsory education;
- * inequalities in the provisions of text books;
- * inadequate educational provision for African children; and
- * the salaries and conditions of service of African, Coloured and Indian teachers.

The commission gave detailed examination to the unacceptable principles and practices and formulated a large number of specific recommendations which will appear, in due course, in its final report.

The commission also considered comprehensive reports on church and private schools and on mother-tongue instruction in African education. The commission also considered Christian National Education under the following headings: origins and history, theory and practice, permeation of the educational system by CNE, and CNE in relation to Christian principles.

- (9) Jy moet aan jou naaste gee wat hom toekom en geen afguns in jou hart toelaat nie. Aan My, die God van jou lewe, moet jy jou hart en jou lewe gee. Ek is die Here!
- (10) Jy moet My, jou bondgenoot en jou bevryder, liefhê met jou hele hart en met jou hele verstand en met al die krag waarvoor jy beskik, en jy moet jou naaste liefhê, want hy is net soos jy. Ek is die Here!

(Hierdie geparafraseerde vertaling en omskrywing van die Tien Gebooië is van dr. J. J. Buskes — vry vertaal uit die Nederlands.)

DIE TIEN GEBOOIE

- (1) Ek is die Here, jou bondgenoot en vriend. Ek het jou in Jesus Christus vrygemaak en tot vryheid geroep. Ek vra één ding van jou: bly trou aan My verbond, bewaar die vriendskap en bly by jou bevryder. Jy moet my alleen liefhê, vertrou en gehoorsaam. Jy mag niks of niemand van die wêreld wat Ek geskape het, vergoddelik en in plaas van My liefhê, vertrou en gehoorsaam nie.
- (2) Jy mag van My geen voorstelling buite Jesus Christus om maak nie. In Hom het Ek My aan jou geopenbaar. Sien My in Hom, wees Sy getuie en bely My naam wat Hy aan jou bekend gemaak het.
- (3) Jy mag nie lewe om te werk nie, maar werk om te lewe. Leef voor My aangesig en hou die dag van Christus se opstanding in ere as die dag van bevryding en blydschap. Leef al die dae van jou lewe uit die Sondag. Ek is die Here!
- (4) Jou vader en jou moeder, laat hulle tot hul reg kom as jou vader en jou moeder wat Ek aan jou gegee het. Jou kinders, laat hulle tot hul reg kom as jou kinders wat Ek aan jou sorg toevertrou het.
- (5) Jy moet eerbied hê vir die lewe van jou naaste. Ook hy behoort aan My. Ek het hom ook na My beeld geskape. Ook vir hom het Jesus gesterf en opgestaan. Jy mag nie sy lewe aantast en vernietig nie.
- (6) Ek het jou geskape na My beeld, man en vrou. Julle moet mekaar in die huwelik liefhê en getrou bly aan mekaar. Julle moet mekaar as seuns en meisies, as manne en vroue eerbiedig en mekaar nie tot objek verlang nie.
- (7) Weet dat julle nie eienaars is nie, maar rentmeesters is van wat Ek aan julle toevertrou het. Die aarde en die volheid daarvan behoort aan My. Julle kan My en geld nie tegelyk dien nie. Julle moet gee en altyd opnuut gee.
- (8) In julle omgang met mekaar moet julle die waarheid en die reg liefhê en opreg en betroubaar wees in julle spreke oor jul naaste. Julle ja moet ja wees en julle nee nee.

PROGRESS TOWARDS JUSTICE AND PEACE

—BEYERS NAUDE

The concepts of justice and peace, as generally accepted and applied through the centuries by Christian communities, are on trial throughout the world today. This is due to a number of factors which are adversely affecting and even threatening world peace.

SOME FACTORS

- (i) The serious discrepancy in income, standards of living and economic growth between the industrialised mainly white communities of the world and the agricultural, developing, mainly non-white communities: A few facts will suffice to reveal the seriousness of this situation:
- * Western countries are increasing their incomes by more than \$20,000-million annually. That is more than twice the entire annual income of India or Africa.
 - * Out of the world's 3.1-billion people nearly 400-million actually go hungry and hundreds of millions are subject to horrible deficiency diseases caused by malnutrition.
- Small wonder that Barbara Ward in a speech delivered in Chicago in January 1966 said: "These are contrasts so startling, so incredible, that they do indeed begin a 'new history' for mankind. Never before have communities lived side by side in which the gap in wealth is on such a scale and in which — as far as we can see from our present knowledge — the gap is continuing to grow."
- (ii) The population explosion: The projections made by specialists of the enormous and rapid growth in the world population during the next 30 years present us with a picture of great seriousness, especially as the materially poor and undeveloped peoples multiply much faster than the affluent and developed countries.
- (iii) Recent world events and their effect on humanity: Two world wars, followed by continual smaller wars and combats, invasions by big and strong political powers of weaker nations (e.g., Russian and Czechoslovakia), outbursts of revolutions, suppression of minorities — these and such events have raised many questions in the minds of millions of people: e.g., the rights of man, just wars, the right of resistance against illegal legitimised violence, demonstrations, strikes and revolutionary actions as ways of inducing change. And in and through all these events numerous questions are being asked about the spiritual and moral bases for such actions, e.g., the justification of violence and war.
- (iv) The effect of media of communication: There have always been wars, poverty, distress — but previously the means of communication were lacking so as to make a whole world of teeming millions aware of such events. Today, however, news media (newspaper, television, etc.) have radically altered the situation to such a degree that the whole world is made aware almost simultaneously of any event in any other part of the world. This has led to an increased awareness of forms of discrimination, injustice, suppression and suffering which, in turn, have posed serious challenges to man's conscience and sense of social justice. Nations can no longer commit injustice or threaten peace in the isolation of their own boundaries — the whole world watches and judges.

- (v) The role of youth: This is another factor which previously played practically no role. Through massive education young people are completing their educational careers at a much earlier age and hence millions of young people have developed a sharpened sense of social justice. This in turn, has led to a much deeper involvement to eliminate all forms of discrimination and injustice.

CONCERN OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Why are these facts and factors of particular concern to Christians — or why should they be?

- (i) Because the majority of Christians live in the developed North and West and if its wealth is far in excess of the rest of the world (80%-20%), these Christians must account for their stewardship and responsibility.
- (ii) Because Christians bear a heavy responsibility for a world in which it can seem "normal" to spend \$150,000-million a year on armaments, yet difficult to mobilise more than \$10,000-million for the works of economic and social co-operation.
- (iii) Because Christians are totally committed to the unity and equality of all mankind under the headship of Christ, the Son of Man and hence to unity and justice in the world society in which the human family lives.
- (iv) Because they believe in man's God-given responsibility to use his resources to recreate and renew the face of the earth.
- (v) Because the desire for co-operation in development shows signs of slackening in

the wealthy North and West, while the need for growth grows steadily more urgent in the developing South and East.

WHAT HAVE CHURCHES AND ECUMENICAL BODIES DONE SO FAR?

1. World Council of Churches:

For many years the World Council of Churches has been especially concerned about the question of justice and peace especially as seen against the background of world development, world poverty, racial discrimination on a world scale and the tardiness of the churches as institutions to become involved. Under the auspices of the World Council of Churches a number of conferences were held in different parts of the world on Christian Responsibility in Areas of Rapid Social Change. The Assemblies of the World Council of Churches in Delhi (1961), Evanston (1964) dealt with these issues.

But the escalating dangers emerging from a series of revolutionary events in 1964-65 forced the World Council of Churches to organise the Conference on Church and Society (Geneva 1966) where for the first time in W.C.C. history expert laymen confronted theologians and challenged them to present the Biblical call for participation by Christians in the total needs of the whole world.

This conference was the necessary prelude to the Assembly of the World Council of Churches held at Uppsala in July 1968 where the official delegates of churches from all over the world debated, amongst others, the issues revolving around the concepts of justice and peace — especially in relation to the hungry and needy millions of the world.

2. Roman Catholic Church:

(i) In accordance with the wish of the Second Vatican Council, expressed in the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, the Pope established the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace in January 1967 and gave it the mandate "to arouse the People of God to full awareness of its mission at the

present time, in order on the one hand to promote the progress of poor nations and encourage international social justice, and on the other, to help underdeveloped nations to work for their own development". The Encyclical "*Populorum Progressio*" was published a few weeks later as the work charter of this new Commission.

- (ii) Within this Commission four Committees were set up to deal with this issue:
 - (a) Committee on Theological Reflection and Social Doctrine;
 - (b) Committee for World Co-operation for Development;
 - (c) Committee for the Issues of Peace and of the International Community;
 - (d) Committee on Human Development.

(iii) The Commission on Justice and Peace requested the Episcopal Conferences to establish National (or Regional) Justice and Peace Commissions to involve the whole local Church, the People of God as a whole and to stress that, seeing that youth throughout the world is so manifestly sensitive to the issues of international justice and peace and seeks to participate in the process of social change, it is imperative that they should be fully associated with this work within National and Regional Commissions.

3. Collaboration between the World Council of Churches and Roman Catholic Church:

Both are co-sponsors of the Committee for Society, Development and Peace (SODEPAX) to encourage and motivate the entire Christian Family to pursue more definitely world justice. Under the auspices of this Committee a Conference on World Co-operation for Development was held in Beirut from April 21st - 27th, 1968, which issued a report which should be studied by the Church

in every developed as well as developing country. In many other ways (since 1968) the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches are co-operating to face jointly the demands for building a world where justice could be upheld more clearly and peace be effected more lastingly than we are doing at present. This example has caught on in many countries where today much closer united social actions are planned by groups of denominations at local level.

WHY SHOULD THESE EVENTS BE OUR CONCERN IN SOUTH AFRICA?

- (i) Because the unity of the Church demands it:
 - (a) As far as the Catholic Church is concerned it is one institutionalised Church throughout the world and therefore needs to be bound much closer together in facing the hopes and the needs of its millions of members throughout the world. What happens to Catholics in Latin America or Biafra or Vietnam should concern every Catholic in South Africa — and vice versa.
 - (b) The same, in principle, holds also true for all Christians. The historic confessional ties which bind Protestants and Anglicans to their root churches are deep and real and require much deeper fellowship and mutual concern than we are practising today. The Christian Church in South Africa can never sever its links with the Universal Church without becoming less than Church. Our true unity in Christ demands our involvement in all issues affecting world justice and peace.
- (ii) Because South Africa is a microcosm of the whole world: Here, in a nutshell, is concentrated the main racial groups,

the basic problems arising from communities widely divergent in religious, cultural, social and economic background, but having, by force of circumstances, to face living together. I do not know of any other country in the world where the historic development and numerical proportions of different cultural and racial groups reflect more closely the world situation than South Africa. Here we have in one geographical surrounding, in one economic unit, in one parliamentary and legal system the haves and the have-nots, the economically privileged and the disinherited, the culturally developed next to those lacking opportunities for such development, the highest and lowest on the social scale. (E.g., 10 miles from Pretoria, a bustling urbanised community, we have the continuation of an African rural existence similar to that of 300 years ago.)

Whether South Africa likes it or not, she is being seen by many nations and millions of people as the testing-ground for the success or failure of effecting of justice and peace of a widely differing economical, social, cultural and religious community. This is God's providence and heritage given to us — and we should regard this as a privilege and not as a burden.

- (iii) Because our racial policies are seriously jeopardising the cause of justice and peace: In making such a statement I know that the immediate defence with which one is met is: South Africa is the most stable, orderly and peaceful country on the Continent. Look at the Congo, Nigeria, Zambia, Lesotho — and compare our large measure of justice and peace with the bloodshed, revolution and upheavals in these and other African states.

In reply to this I wish to state that there certainly is truth in such a statement and that in many respects we enjoy a measure of outward peace and prosperity which is the envy of many throughout the world.

But this statement only becomes full truth when we add that some of the reasons why this has been effected is because we have a 180-day detention law, an emergency-regulation still operating in the Transkei, the brutal and effective suppression of political action of Africans through legislation prohibiting such action, through security police intimidation and through many other measures silencing all voices of protest.

And we as whites are not willing to acknowledge that all such measures only remain effective as long as we are able to contain dissatisfaction, dissent and protest by such measures of stringent control. The more we suppress and deny to three-quarters of our total population their full, free and legitimate share on a basis of justice and equity of the privileges and opportunities we as whites enjoy, the more seriously we are unwittingly jeopardising the cause of justice and peace and threatening the future existence and security of the whites themselves. For justice and peace can only be built and insured on equality of opportunity and a reasonable freedom of achieving the human aspirations of all those living in the same community.

Do I need to give any more examples to prove my point than by reminding you about so many forms of discrimination based purely on the race or colour of one's skin, being defined and enacted by the laws of our country?

- * Discrimination in education where 10 times more is being spent on the education of a white school child than an African and four times more than for a Coloured or Indian child.
- * Discrimination in per capita income and wages where whites earn an average of 3-4 times more than Africans and twice more than Coloureds and Indians.
- * Discrimination in legal rights when at least 87 laws describe and determine the

most humiliating forms of discrimination based purely on colour or race. And these laws clearly reveal a pattern of deliberate erosion of the Rule of Law climaxing in the Boss Law which now virtually makes South Africa a police state — despite all the vehement or callous denials that this is the case!

- * Discrimination in social, cultural and sporting opportunities and amenities which create the one impossible situation after the other which is slowly but inevitably excluding South Africa from all participation in world cultural and sporting events.
 - * Discrimination within the life of the Church where serious discrepancies in education, salaries, positions of authority and sincere Christian Fellowship at all levels makes a mockery of our confessions of love, of brotherhood, of care of the weak and oppressed.
- (iv) Because in boasting our claim of being a Christian country we are fostering the aims of Communism by creating and increasing forms of injustice which are being expertly exploited by Communist propaganda to support their own false and unfounded claims to build a classless and free society. And do we not realise how this is harming the mission of the Church of Christ to the teeming millions of Southern Africa?

Progress is being made on a world-scale towards peace and justice. A consciousness of the pressing problems is emerging and a will to be just is developing. Here and there political and economic power structures are being critically examined, and development is becoming the way in which the concept of peace is being translated into action.

Will we in South Africa choose to develop separately in isolation from the world? Or will we decide to be part of the thrust towards establishing God's shalom on earth for all men. We alone have it within ourselves to decide.

(Continued from page 10)

Independent Churches". Within the past 50 years, two-fifths of the Sub-Saharan tribes have seen the spontaneous generation of over 5,000 schisms from the historic "mother" churches, and from each other. Most of these communities are small, but together they number over 7½-million members.

The causes of this uniquely African experience are complex. Initially, it was seen only as a massive schismatic reaction to foreign missionary work, coupled with personal conflicts of leadership and prestige. But careful study now shows that mixed with this motivation is a conscious desire to create a genuinely indigenous christian community on African soil.

Although these churches wax and wane, the phenomenon is of increasing size and importance, and deserves continuing study on the part of all the historic churches. The proliferation is a challenge to both the Catholic and historic Protestant Churches alike to examine their own life and to learn from those elements which are authentically Christian in the Independent Churches' struggle to root the Gospel in the needs of particular African communities. And learn from **renewal experiments**: how many are aware of the work of the Maryknoll Fathers among the Luo tribe in the Musoma diocese of Tanzania; they are developing indigenous, Pentecostal-type communities which are growing by leaps and bounds in an area where schismatic groups had been proliferating.

An African Church for an African Africa. As Pope Paul told the Catholic Bishops of Africa, in July 1969: "The expression, that is, the language and mode of manifesting the one faith may be manifold, hence it may be original, suited to the tongue, the style, the character, the genius and the culture of the one who professes this one faith." What this will mean in practice for Africa depends on that kind of collaboration among both Catholic and Protestant African theologians to develop "an African expression of christian theology". There are too few African theologians at present; an isolation of their talent only frustrates them and us. Should not there be an association of African theologians, co-sponsored by the AACOC and the Catholic Symposium?

III—CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND MISSIONARY FORMATION

The Catholic Pan-African Catechetical Study Week in 1964 (Kati-gondo) has given impetus to the catechetical renewal in Africa. Frankly, I see in the conclusions of this meeting, little difference from the education studies and programmes of the other Christian Communions which were shaped at their consultation on education held in Nairobi three years later. Cannot we study and plan together?

More exchange of information and experience is needed on the pattern and shape of church ministry in the changing environment of Africa, especially on missionary training, including language study and the use of short or long-term lay missionaries from overseas. The Protestant mission tradition has always included a strong lay force (in some areas up to 90 per cent!). Several times I have been told that this recent development in the Catholic Church could be immensely helped by the Protestant experience ("You Catholics could be repeating some of the same mistakes we already had corrected before the Second World War"). Up to now there seems to be a lack of contact between the 18 Protestant and 12 Catholic lay training centres and pastoral institutes in Africa.

SEMINARIES AND UNIVERSITIES

Up-to-date, solid seminary formation in mission and ecumenism is stressed by Protestants as well as by Catholics. The overall methods in all seminary teaching should make the student be at home in the open structure of dialogue and discussion, in the psychological qualities dialogue itself requires, the firmness of doctrine it implies. If the student is accustomed to this atmosphere in his own classes and scholarly work, he will enter more easily into dialogue with his fellow Christians. And ecumenical formation takes place not only in the classroom, but also in personal contacts; correct ecumenical attitudes and practice are learned best from "doing ecumenism". Seminary professors, both Catholic and Protestant, at least should have

regional meetings to discuss their common problems.

I would add the importance of common planning for christian witness in the secular universities and colleges. Besides concern for the spiritual welfare of students and faculty, the churches should also strive to work together in the planning, staffing, curriculum and intellectual exchange with departments of religious studies at universities and institutes of higher learning in Africa (e.g., at Dar-es-Salaam, Nairobi and Mindola). I see no reason why eventually the Catholic and Protestant seminary programmes could not be integrated into those of these new types of departments of religion.

Local Catholic authorities in Africa could even now co-operate, in some ways with the WCC and AACOC Christian Literature Fund, which carefully administers large sums of money for the development of indigenous writing talent, the inexpensive publication of good writing, and the sharing of strategically located printing presses.

IV—COMMON BIBLE

If the written word of God is "a precious instrument in the mighty hand of God for attaining to that unity which the Saviour holds out to all men" (**Decree on Ecumenism**), then it is urgent that there be as much Catholic co-operation as possible with the Protestant Bible Societies in Africa in the translation, production, distribution and promotion of the Scriptures. The urgency applies especially to those areas where up to now there has been no translation, at least of the entire Bible. In 1968 the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity and the United Bible Societies (a co-ordinating body of 37 national Bible associations) have issued a document, "Guiding Principles for Interconfessional Co-operation in Translating the Bible", in the hope that local churches will themselves initiate joint-projects.

If, in history, it has been the word of men that has divided us, it will be the word of God that will draw us together.

like belang is. Die kruisiging van die Seun van God is 'n duidelike demonstrasie van die waarheid dat om teen 'n persoon se liggaam op te tree, beteken 'n aanslag teen sy hele persoon. Die Christelike gemeenskap moet in die eerste plek 'n aanvarende en vergewende gemeenskap wees, gewillig om almal te verwelkom wat daarteen gesondig het, hoe ernstig hulle misdaad ook al mag wees.

- (x) Dis teologies onjuis om te beweer dat die waarde van die lewe bevestig word deur 'n veroordeelde moordenaar dood te maak. Die teenoorgestelde is waar. Die doodmaak van 'n moordenaar veronderstel dat die lewe 'n handelsartikel is wat heen en weer betaal kan word, net soos van 'n dief verwag sal word om die buit van sy roof uit te deel. Die teregstelling van die moordenaar slaag nie daarin om die van die werklike uniekheid van die misdaad te getuig nie. Dit toon bloot dat die staat, soos die moordenaar, die lewe as 'n verbruiksartikel beskou. Dit sal baie meer rasioneel wees, en daarom ook meer teologies juis, om aandag te gee aan maniere waarop die veroordeelde moordenaar gedwing kan word om sy energieë te gebruik om te werk vir die ondersteuning van die mense wat by beroof het.

Daarom lê al die verantwoordelikheid in die argument oor die doodstraf by die voorstanders daarvan. Die vernietiging van die lewe van 'n ander mens mag slegs geskied op 'n basis van onvoorwaardelike noodsaaklikheid. Die behoud van lewe en die vernietiging van lewe is nie gelyke opsies nie. As daar 'n duidelike en onvoorwaardelike oortuigende rede vir doodmaak is, moet daar doodgemaak word. As so 'n rede nie bestaan nie, mag daar nie doodgemaak word nie. Die enigste redes wat onvoorwaardelike oortuiging kan hê, is die rede van die terughouding van potensiële moordenaars en die redes van die fisies voorkoming van moord.

Maar terwyl dit onteenseglik die verantwoordelikheid is van die ondersteuners van doodstraf om hulle saak te bewys en om dit gedurig in die lig van veranderende omstandighede te bewys sal die besluit in 'n groot mate afhang van die arbeid van die hele gemeenskap in die volgende opsigte:

- (a) die verstaan van die oorsake en aard van misdaad;
- (b) die ontwikkeling van effektiewe weerhoudende en voorkomende masjinerie wat ontneming van lewe uitsluit;
- (c) die ontwikkeling van sosiale toestande waarin God se wet van geregtigheid en liefde duideliker uitgelewe kan word. Christene is noodgewonge betrokke by al hierdie dinge, want volgens die Bybel is aan die mensheerskappy oor sy omgewing gegee. Die behoorlike optrede teenoor probleme van misdaad en straf is deel van sy ware uitvoering van hierdie mag.

In die Suid-Afrikaanse situasie, rus daar derhalwe 'n besondere verantwoordelikheid op die kerke, naas ander liggame, om te poog om voldoende bewuswording van en besorgheid oor die doodstraf om te wek sodat die owerhede gedwing sal word om die saak ernstiger op te neem.

AANBEVELINGS

Die samelewing moet beskerm word teen gevaarlike misdadigers. Nogtans verkondig die Christendom die waardigheid en heiligheid van die menslike lewe. Doodstraf is voorbedagte juridiese moord en derhalwe onaanvaarbaar vir Christelike en gevoelige, beskaafde waardes. Verder verlaag en brutaliseer dit die gemeenskap en voeg juis by tot die klimaat van geweldpleging en gebrek aan respek vir die menslike lewe wat die plig van die gemeenskap is om te bestry.

Beskerming van die gemeenskap met straf van die misdadiger met die moontlikheid van berou of rehabilitasie, word beter gedien deur langtermyn gevangenisstraf.

- (i) Dit werp die vraag op van die aard van die gevangensdiens en of hulle hoofsaaklik plekke is vir straf of vir rehabilitasie.

Derhalwe is gevangenshervorming die eerste effektiewe stap tot die afskaffing van die doodstraf. Gevangensdiens behoort ingestel te wees op die effektiewe rehabilitasie van gevangenes met aanbieding van beroepsterapie, psigiatriese behandeling, ens.

- (ii) 'n Tweede stap sou wees om te konsentreer op die wye reeks misdade wat met die dood strafbaar is en om aan te dring op hulle vermindering.
- (iii) Die abnormale kenmerke van doodstraf in Suid-Afrika, naamlik die toenemende omvang van doodstraf en die reeks misdade wat met die dood strafbaar is, moet gedurig voor die aandag van die publiek gebring word.
- (iv) Dan is daar die duidelike noodsaaklikheid om publieke mening op te voed en in te lig. Die georganiseerde regsprofessie kan hierin 'n geweldige belangrike rol speel, 'n rol wat hy op die oomblik verwaarloos.
- (v) Die kerke sou kon help deur onomwonde hulle afkeuring van die beginsel van die doodstraf te kenne te gee, deur aan te dring op 'n uitgebreide regeringsondersoek, deur studie aan te moedig van sulke aspekte soos alternatiewe vorms van straf en 'n versekeringsfonds vir die slagoffers van die misdaad en deur gedurig die aanleentheid voor die mense van Suid-Afrika te hou.

Die afskaffing van die doodstraf is een van die belangrikste morele en sosiale aangeleenthede in die weste gedurende die middel tydperk van hierdie eeu, net soos die vrystelling van slawe en die emansipasie van die vrou in die voorafgaande tydperke.

Die doodstraf sal in Suid-Afrika afgeskaf word. Dis net 'n kwessie van tyd. Diegene wat daardeur geraak word kan, in die standpunt wat hulle inneem, bemoedig word deur hierdie gevolgtrekking van die Lansdowne-kommissie: „ . . . dit mag gesê word dat die openbare mening in Suid-Afrika nie ryp is vir die afskaffing van die doodstraf nie. Hoewel die Kommissie van hierdie mening is, voel hy dat hierdie argument nie te ver gevoer mag word nie: in 'n geval van daadwerklike sosiale hervorming, moet die hervormer die openbare mening vooruit wees en opvoed”.

LETTERS/BRIEVE

THE MANIFESTO AND ELECTORAL WITHDRAWAL

Johann Maree, 95 Summertown House, Banbury Road, Oxford.

Although the Christian Election Manifesto or "Twelve Statements" has already been much discussed in South Africa I would like to raise some objections to it from a rather different standpoint.

But before I do so I must say that I sympathise very strongly with the theme and objective of the manifesto and that I wish to compliment the compilers and signatories thereof for their courage, integrity and concern for South Africa. It is the most constructive Christian action in the country since the "Message to the People of South Africa" of the S.A. Council of Churches.

I agree with the manifesto's interpretation of the Christian Gospel and proposition that every Christian has a political responsibility. This responsibility can be held to be the furtherance of reconciliation, truth, justice and love in his society and, indeed, in the whole world. It is in the political means through which the Christian achieves these ends where I part ways with the manifesto. The signatories are unrealistic about the operation of political systems and therefore make impossible requests from Christian voters. At the same time they do not take their Christian application to politics to its logical conclusion.

Statement 11 of the manifesto reads, "In obedience to God, no Christian can support a political policy which is essentially based on group selfishness and the furtherance of sectional interests only". This theme is elaborated upon in Statement 12: "The Christian who has the vote must guard against the temptation to make decisions based on personal or group selfishness. His responsibility becomes even greater in a society where a small minority of citizens elect the members of the central parliament". But it is nearly a universal phenomenon in Western democratic systems that political parties represent the views of particular sections or groups and are elected by those groups. In Great Britain the Labour

Party is still largely considered to represent the workers' interests and the Conservative Party the upper and middle classes' interests. Likewise every country in Western Europe has evolved parties that gain their support from either a certain class, cultural, religious or regional group. That in itself is not immoral or undesirable and it is wishful thinking to hope that the White electorate in South Africa should behave differently.

The essential difference between South Africa and Western democracies is that in South Africa every group in the society is not allowed to participate in the democratic process. It is the denial of the basic right to the Africans, Asians and Coloureds to organise, canvass and vote for a central parliament that is entirely unchristian. Only when every section of the country is allowed to engage in the government of the country can we hope to set up a Christian society based on truth, justice and love.

I realise that two responses can immediately be made against my contention. The one is that of the Nationalists that the Africans, Asians and Coloureds have, or shall have at some time in the future, their own areas or states in which they can fully participate in their policy. But this is a totally misleading picture because they form as much part and parcel of the South African social and economic framework as do the Europeans. The other response may be that of the Progressives that their qualified franchise policy will extend the vote gradually to the other races in the country. But to introduce a qualified franchise in South Africa where the economic and educational opportunities are so grossly unequal is to perpetuate the status quo and power distribution in the country.

What then should the Christian electorate do in South Africa? To vote at all in such a system appears to me to be a denial of the Christian Gospel of Love because it gives support to a constitution that fundamentally contradicts Christ's teaching. The overwhelming size of the South African problem drives home to me in trying to think of a practical solution for the country. The only solution I

can suggest that is both feasible and peaceful, although highly unlikely in the present context, is that Christians should abstain en masse from the elections. Thereupon they should demand a convention attended by all the racial groups in South Africa to draw up a totally new constitution for the country in which each race shall have the full right to engage in the government of the whole country.

CONVERSION OF THE CHURCH

A. H. Clutton, Addo, Cape.

May I, as a layman of no distinction, be permitted to enter the lists in the present controversy? In his comment Archbishop Hurley refers to "the consciousness of his own failure to promote all the values contained in the Twelve Statements". The Archbishop is speaking for himself, but I feel that it behoves us to consider to what extent we, any of us, put into practice in our daily lives the precepts implicit in these statements.

All readers of the Epistles must have noticed how little the writers appear concerned about the shortcomings of the then "Powers that be", and how greatly about those of their flocks. They realised that the Church cannot convert the world until the Church, every member of it, is itself converted. It is not sufficient for us laymen to applaud the pronouncements of our Church leaders and then to bask complacently in their reflected sunshine. We must put the precepts into everyday practice. We need to be kept up to the mark and reminded constantly of our Christian duties from the pulpit, so that we come away from church with no option but to examine our consciences. Such sermons or exhortations need be no more "political" than say The Sermon on the Mount, or II Corinthians 13 or the Epistle of St. James. Preachers must not be fearful lest some of their congregation, like the young man in the Gospels, go away "sad".

In conclusion may I repeat that the Church cannot hope to convert the world until we ourselves are converted.

Prayer of young Ghanaian Christians

*Almighty, all loving,
wonderful and great God,
father of our Christian family
that lives all over the world,
we thank you
that today
we can gather in your name.
We are more than two or three.
We are here together
to hear your word,
and we know that you are with us.
We want to love our neighbours.
Give us your Spirit,
so that we may do so.
We love ourselves too much.
At most, perhaps, we love our friends,
and those who now gather with us.
Change that.
Let us see
the other young men in our city:
those loitering around the port,
who fill themselves with palm wine,
who drive heavy trucks,
and do not observe your laws.
Let us see our brothers
and all those
who suffer want
and all who live across the sea.
You see our brothers thousands of miles
away.
You hear how they pray for us.
You see what they do for us.
We want to return to them
what they have given us in your name.
Let us be brothers,
real brothers,
across all boundaries and barriers,
so that the world may see
how your love works...
O Lord, we pray for our brothers:
what hurts them also hurts us,
and hurts you too.
Keep them strong,*

*well, and in your family;
stand by them in their need and persecution.
We call to you
for our brothers
in South Africa, black and white;
for all our brothers
who carry on your work
in spite of persecution and pain.
Give them your power and your backbone;
so that they do not fall.
And they need your Holy Spirit,
so that they do not hate their persecutors
but love them.
Yes, dear Lord,
may we not strike out with words.
Quiet our hearts.
Let us not ask too much for ourselves.
As long as we have shoes on our feet,
let us pray for men who have no feet.
And see to it
that we share with those
who have nothing.
Be with the bread of men
who have none.
Be with those
who are suffocated by injustice.
Be with those
who have everything:
big cars, fine houses, and much money.
They are not happier than we.
Be with those
who hunger,
and those
who push away half-eaten plates.
We are all your children.
We need you.
We need your love
so that we can live with one another.
I am so happy
that I can belong to your tribe.
Bless us and our brothers in all the world.
Amen.*