

# PRO VERITATE



**MARCH 1972**

By die poskantoor as nuusblad ingeskrif



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**DIE BUIEBLAD**

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

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

*(1 Joh. 4:6, 11).*

**THE COVER**

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

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

*(1 John 4:6, 11).*

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PRO VERITATE verskyn elke 15de van die maand.

**NOW OR NEVER?**

During the past number of years the government has spared nothing and no-one in its efforts to force South Africa, by hook or by crook, through an iron race to a pre-determined point. The latest unchristian action is the cruel banning from South West Africa of three Christian workers, as usual without any reason being given. The final objective is clear, namely to take over *complete* control of every facet in South Africa, such as education, the radio, etc. Next in line appears to be *the church and the free press*. What everyone should realise is that, according to this set pattern, *THE ENTIRE CHURCH AND EVERY CHRISTIAN* will be included! Totalitarianism ultimately makes no exceptions.

Christians who value the Kingdom of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ above everything will accordingly come into real conflict with any unchristian law or regulation, like carnal discrimination between men created by God (race classification, 2 Cor. 5:16, Gal. 2:16) and forced apartheid (Eph. 2:13-19, Mark. 16:15, 1 Pet. 2:10, Gal. 3:28, Acts 2:6) which occasion much suffering, in the same way as Christ clashed with the ideologies of His day.

**D.R.C. MINISTERS?**

Everyone who realises that there is injustice in South Africa must, by word and deed, *now* testify publicly and fearlessly. The responsibility rests especially heavily on so many black, white and brown Dutch Reformed Church ministers who are aware that there should be a radical change in the present structure. At some time or another they, too, *must* come forward with their testimony—may it be timeously so that they can help to bring about change while it can still occur without violence. In a certain sense it is true that it should be said extremely urgently: Now or never, because the final structures for coming generations are being fixed during the present decade!

**NORMAL SITUATION?**

In a certain sense unchristian persecutions, defamation, (cf. so-called Communism or the trail-blazers thereof), bannings, detention without trial, etc., are normal circumstances against Christians, when social structures and the policy of a government is not formulated according to the gospel. Daniel, Elijah, Amos, Paul, etc., and also Christ, clashed with unchristian actions of governments. Jesus even branded the government in that region as a fox (Luke 13:32) because Herod wanted to stop His work.

Regarding the question of when to speak and

**NOU OF NOOIT?**

Gedurende die afgelope aantal jare het die owerheid feitlik niks en niemand ontsien om Suid-Afrika, buig of bars, deur 'n ystere drukgang na 'n bepaalde punt te dwing nie. Die jongste onchristelike optrede is die wrede verbanning sonder redes, soos gewoonlik, van drie Christelike arbeiders uit Suidwes. Die finale doelwit is duidelik, naamlik om *volkome* beheer oor alle afdelings in Suid-Afrika, soos die onderwys, die radio, ens., te kry. Die volgende blyk *die kerk en die vrye pers* te wees. Wat elkeen moet besef is dat *DIE HELE KERK EN ELKE CHRISTEN* nie sal uitbly volgens dié vaste patroon nie! Totalitarisme maak uiteindelik geen onderskeid nie.

Christene, wat die Koninkryk van God en die evangelie van Jesus Christus bo alles stel, sal gevolglik met enige onchristelike wet of maatreël, soos vleeslike onderskeid tussen God se geskape mense (rasseklassifikasie, 2 Kor. 5:16, Gal. 2:16) en geforseerde apartheid (Ef. 2:13-19, Mark 16:15, 1 Petr. 2:10, Gal. 3:28, Hand. 2:6) wat veel lyding veroorsaak, in wesenlike botsing kom, soos Christus wat met die ideologieë van sy dag gebots het.

**N.G. LERAARS?**

Elkeen wat besef dat onreg in Suid-Afrika geskied moet *nou* openlik en vreesloos deur woord en daad getuig. Veral rus die verantwoordelikheid swaar op so baie swart, wit en bruin Nederduitse Gereformeerde leraars wat besef dat radikale verandering in die huidige struktuur moet kom. Een of ander tyd móét ook hulle na nore kom met hulle getuienis—mag dit tog betyds wees sodat hulle kan help dat verandering nog sonder geweld kan plaasvind. In 'n sekere sin is dit waar dat uiters dringend gesê word: Nou of nooit, omdat die finale strukture vir geslagte wat kom in die huidige dekade vasgelê word!

**NORMALE SITUASIE?**

In 'n sekere sin is onchristelike vervolging, belastering, (vgl. sg. Kommunisme of wegbereiders daarvoor), verbannings, aanhoudings, sonder verhoor, ens., die normale situasie teen Christene, as die samelewingstrukture en die beleid van 'n owerheid nie volgens die evangelie gevorm word nie. Daniël, Elia, Amos, Paulus, ens., en ook Christus het met onchristelike optredes van owerhede gebots. Jesus het selfs die owerheid in daardie streek as 'n jakkals bestempel (Luk. 13:32) omdat Herodes sy werk wou stuit.

Oor die vraag wanneer gespreek en wanneer

when to remain silent, it must be said that, although a Christian can, by his silence and refusal to co-operate, also be a witness and even furnish a powerful testimony, the Scriptural rule is to testify, to refute, to rebuke and to admonish, and to do this in season and out (2 Tim. 4:2). It must be remembered that Christ's action in remaining silent at definite times before Pilate, Herod and Caiaphas was part of the history of salvation, which means that His action was unique in character, in order to achieve the unparalleled Salvation and Deliverance. It can also be proved by interpretation that His refusal at a particular moment also bore this characteristic with a view to His inevitable death on the cross.

Usually, the believers testified unto death. Stephen branded his interrogators as "stiffnecks", who always resisted the Holy Spirit, and testified against them literally unto death (Acts 7:51, 54-59).

### A TRANSITION PERIOD?

Some Christians remain silent and console themselves with the thought of a "transition period". Their contention is that it must be admitted that matters are not quite as they should be, but that changes are, nevertheless, taking place and that nothing can be done too hastily—South Africa is, after all, experiencing a transition period!

However, this view clashes fundamentally with the gospel. *Every person, time and situation has a singular, un-repeatable, irrevocable meaning.* "The mill will not grind with the water that has passed ... " An eternal finality clings to every moment.

If injustice is permitted and even condoned this is a denial of the *living* Christ and the gospel becomes twisted into an interim ethic and interim regulations. *In this way all values and standards become relative while the tyrant of the transition period acts despotically!* Such a regime is then also not a normal government, but a "transitory government".

A "transition period" is, however, just as completely history as any other period and the suffering caused thereby cannot be recalled. Permanent relationships and structures are also determined during the so-called transition period, that is a despotic "period" without standards!

Appropriately, the Scriptures say: "Agree with thine adversary *quickly* ..." (Matt. 5:25) and "Behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2). *Therefore no-one may keep silent, but every believer must, by word and deed, testify immediately, because if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us* (2 Kings 7:9)! *Now or never!* \*

geswyg moet word, moet gesê word dat al is dit so dat 'n Christen deur te swyg en medewerking te weier ook 'n getuie kan wees en selfs 'n kragtige getuie kan lewer, is die reël in die Skrif om te getuig, te weerlê, te bestraf en te vermaan, en dit tydig en ontydig te doen (2 Tim. 4:2). Daar moet onthou word dat Christus se optrede om op bepaalde momente voor Pilatus, Herodus en Kaiafas te swyg heilshistories was, dit beteken dat sy optrede, om die unieke Verlossing en Bevryding te bewerk, 'n eenmalige karakter gedra het. Met uitleg kan ook bewys word dat sy weiering op 'n bepaalde moment ook dié karakter met die oog op sy noodwendige dood aan die kruis gedra het.

Die gelowiges het normaalweg tot die dood toe getuig. Stéfanus het sy ondervraers as „hardnekkiges”, wat altyd die Heilige Gees weerstaan, bestempel en letterlik tot sy dood toe teen hulle getuig (Hand. 7:51, 54-59).

### 'N OORGANGSTYDPERK?

Sommige Christene swyg en troos hulle met die gedagte van 'n „oorgangstydperk”. Daar word volgens hulle beweer dat erken moet word dat alles nou wel nie pluis is nie, maar dat daar tog veranderings plaasvind en dat daar tog nie te haastig opgetree kan word nie—Suid-Afrika beleef tog 'n oorgangstydperk!

Hierdie beskouing bots egter wesenlik met die evangelie. Elke mens, tyd en situasie het 'n eenmalige, onherhaalbare en onherroeplike betekenis. „Met die waters wat verby is, sal jou meule nooit weer maal nie ...” Daar kleef 'n ewige finaliteit aan elke moment.

As onreg in 'n „interimstydperk” toegelaat en selfs goedgepraat word, is dit 'n verloëning van die *lewende* Christus en word die evangelie tot 'n interimsetiek en -bepalinge verdraai. *So word alle waardes en norme gerelativeer terwyl die magsmens van die oorgangstydperk willekeurig optree!* So 'n regering is dan ook nie 'n normale regering nie, maar 'n „oorgangsregering”.

'n „Oorgangstydperk” is egter net so volledig geskiedenis soos enige ander tydperk en die lyding wat daardeur veroorsaak word, kan nie herroep word nie. Deur die sg. oorgangstydperk word ook permanente verhoudinge en strukture vasgelê en dit deur 'n normlose en willekeurige „tydperk”!

Die Skrif sê juis: „Wees *gou* goedgesind teenoor jou teëparty ...” (Matt. 5:25) en „Kyk, *nou* is die dag van verlossing” (1 Kor. 6:2). *Daarom mag niemand swyg nie, maar moet elke gelowige onmiddelik met woord en daad getuig, want „as ons vertoef tot môrelik toe, dan sal ons skuldig staan* (2 Kon. 7:9)! *Nou of nooit!* \*



# CONTROVERSY

## READER'S DIGEST and W. C. C.

# REVOLUTION?

Clarence W. Hall

Dr. A.H. van den Heuvel

*In the October and November 1971 issues of the American issue of the Reader's Digest (November and December in South Africa) Clarence W. Hall wrote two articles questioning the actions of the World Council of Churches. Dr. A.H. van den Heuvel replies thereto and explains the attitude of the W.C.C.*

*A summons comes to the Christian, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1), as well as "... judge righteous judgement" (John 7:24). Therefore, both views are placed before our readers ...*

*If there is still any doubt in the minds of readers regarding the stand of Pro Veritate, a Christian magazine published by an independent company (as well as the Christian Institute which contributes towards its funds) on the issue of violence, its viewpoint is hereby clearly stated that violence is no solution to bring about change in society.*

*After a short introduction by Dr. van den Heuvel about the articles in the Reader's Digest, the latter's viewpoints appear first, followed by Dr. van den Heuvel's answers. The first instalment is published in this month's issue.*

### TWO VIEWS

Churches all around the world are translating their common abhorrence of racial injustice into constructive programmes, trying to clarify the many issues it involves, looking at their own structures, and acting together against racism wherever possible. Since the Christian community includes people of all races, this common search is often painful because the evil is widespread, cuts right through the churches, and has emotional and deeply personal connotations.

### HUMANITARIAN HELP

The World Council of Churches has tried to channel the concern of its member churches, which dates back more than 40 years, through a special Programme to Combat Racism. A year ago, funds were given to anti-racist organisations in order to help them strengthen their humanitarian programmes: legal aid, education, medical aid, etc. This decision became controversial because the money was given primarily —though certainly not exclusively—to organisations of black Africans which were reacting to the violent suppression of their governments, some of them with counter-

violence. A widespread essentially positive debate followed, both in the churches and in society at large.

### READER'S DIGEST

Then the controversy died down. The overwhelming majority of the member churches within the WCC supported the action. The 120-member Central Committee representing all the major member churches explicitly endorsed the anti-racism grants when it met at Addis Ababa early in 1971. The Programme was clarified, but not changed. Now in October 1971, the Reader's Digest comes with an all-out attack on the Programme to Combat Racism and the whole "new direction" of the World Council of Churches. All the issues involved have already been extensively debated, but apparently the Reader's Digest digested only half of the discussion. As Dr. Kent S. Knutson, president of the American Lutheran Church, wrote in a letter to all pastors of that Church:

### ERRORS

"There seems to be a concerted effort in the public press to discredit the World Council of Churches. A

recent article in the Reader's Digest is a case in point. Much of this information is slanted and unperceptive of Christian work. Some of it is motivated by political considerations, even planted in the American press by those with no interest in or real knowledge of Christianity, in order to lessen the influence of the Christian faith ..."

The Reader's Digest article contains both errors of fact and errors of interpretation. We will therefore do well to follow it paragraph by paragraph.

### READERS DIGEST

*Preaching the gospel of racial justice, the World Council of Churches is using church power and church funds to back insurrection in the United States and Africa. Is this what Christ taught?*

### WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

"Preaching the Good News of Jesus Christ, the World Council of Churches invites its 252 member churches to use their influence and support for racial justice. "It calls upon its member churches to move beyond charity, grants and traditional programming to relevant and sacrificial action leading to new relationships of dignity and justice among all men and to become agents of the radical reconstruction of society. There can be no justice in our world without a transfer of economic resources to undergird the redistribution of political power and to make cultural self-determination meaningful. In this transfer of resources a corporate act by the ecumenical fellowship of churches can provide a meaningful significant moral lead." (Central Committee, 1969).

### R.D.

*MUST OUR CHURCHES FINANCE REVOLUTION?*

### WCC

The Reader's Digest implies a negative answer: of course not! The WCC exists to help the churches to face *real* questions honestly. For the WCC the real question is: **WHEN THE POOR AND THE POWERLESS ASK FOR REVOLUTIONARY CHANGES IN SOCIETY, WHAT SHOULD CHURCHES DO?**

### R.D.

*In 1948 the World Council of Churches was born in a burst of ecumenical euphoria. To many Christians the event promised to end once and for all, the "scandal of division" that for centuries had divided Christendom into hundreds of competing and sometimes hostile sects.*

### WCC

The World Council of Churches was established after almost a hundred years of intense ecumenical activity in the form of interconfessional lay move-

ments, missionary cooperation, theological search for unity, Christian cooperation in the realms of social thought and liturgical rapprochement.

### R.D.

*During its 23 years of operation, the WCC's achievements have been considerable. It has managed to bring into common fellowship some 252 denominations in 83 countries committed to "study, witness, serve and advance the common unity". It has helped settle tens of thousands of displaced persons and feed millions of the world's hungry. And it has, quite properly, insisted that Christians have a duty to bring their Christian ethic to bear on their society.*

### WCC

Reader, beware. The Reader's Digest depicts the Council first of all as a social organisation, but the WCC has been engaged primarily in the search for unity of faith. Whole libraries have been written about the unity which the churches do have in Christ, even when they are divided in its expression. The ecumenical movement has learned to read the Bible together. It has provided a fellowship of continuous prayer for unity. Within this context it has contributed to relief, rehabilitation and social welfare as the Reader's Digest describes.

### R.D.

*Lately, however, the Council not only has involved itself in issues that many consider outside its rightful realm, but has entered into actions that are rapidly destroying the very unity it professes to support.*

### WCC

The rightful realm of the ecumenical movement is the whole life of man. It is the movement in which the whole church owes the whole of the gospel to the whole of the world.

### R.D.

*One such action was the launching in September 1970 of a "Program to Combat Racism". Using a special WCC fund to aid 19 "liberation" movements, most of them in Southern Africa fighting to wrest power from ruling white minorities, the program seemed laudable enough.*

### WCC

Careful! The Reader's Digest gives the impression that the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR) just dropped out of the sky. It was established however after 40 years of ecumenical pronouncements to the effect that racism is a denial of the gospel. It followed many calls by the Assemblies and Central Committee of the WCC to use all possible resources to combat racism. In 1961 the Third Assembly listed the many ways in which the churches should combat racism,

mentioning: conciliation, legislation, protest, litigation, mediation, economic sanctions, non-violent action, cooperation with secular groups, identification with the oppressed races in their struggle to achieve justice, as well as continuous prayer, teaching and preaching. Already in 1948 the First Assembly had made similar recommendations.

In 1968 the Fourth Assembly of the WCC called for a *special* struggle against *white* racism because of its invidious combination of ethnic pride and political/economic power. And for the first time it backed up pronouncements with action in the form of small financial grants to organisations of the racially oppressed.

#### R.D.

*But when old African hands read the list of recipients of this WCC largess (the first \$200 000 taken from Council reserve funds), they blinked in disbelief. Of the 19 beneficiaries, 14 were known to be engaged in guerrilla activities, many of them terrorist. Worse, four of the most generously financed groups are avowedly communist. At least three of the four, according to the London Institute for the Study of Conflict, are receiving arms from the Soviet Union. All four have records of bloody terrorism not only against whites but against those black Africans who repudiate their terrorist methods.*

#### WCC

Not correct. The nineteen organisations were based in Australia, the UK, the Netherlands, Japan, Colombia, Zambia, Mozambique, Angola, Guinea-Bissao, South Africa, South-West Africa and Rhodesia. All organisations received grants only for humanitarian programmes: education, legal aid, medical work, social work.

Nine of the nineteen use armed resistance against the violent repression practised by the state.

The grants stressed aid to victims of oppression. The Christian Church has always given help to all people in need, irrespective of their creed, political affiliation or colour. If help were given to only saints, no help would go anywhere ever.

This type of inflammatory writing obscures the basic questions: are churches willing to help victims of racism, who, through their humanitarian work, are contributing to a more just society? Can they exclude from such help people involved in warfare?

#### R.D.

*With announcement of the grants, the world press erupted in condemnation. The London Times declared: "Christian authorities have no business to support organizations avowedly engaged in the use of terror, whatever their grievances and however sincere they may be. Militant Africans will claim their*

*activities have church backing and blessing." Germany's Die Welt, blasting the "theologians of revolution", said flatly: "Christian faith and terrorist power are incompatible."*

#### WCC

A great discussion erupted, but the two newspapers quoted were in no way representative of the "the world press". In the UK and Germany the conservative press opposed the grants editorially; in the letters to the Editor the debate was about even. Other papers of equal repute, like the Guardian, the Süd Deutsche Zeitung, and the great majority of the press in Scandinavia, Asia, Africa (except South Africa) and the Middle East were firmly behind the WCC, with letters to the Editor expressing criticism.

Important to note: the two quotes do not debate the issue at all, they divert attention from racism to violence.

#### R.D.

*Perhaps the most acid reaction came from Malcolm Muggeridge, distinguished British commentator: "What is objected to in the contribution made to the freedom-fighters is not their cause, but the association of the name of Christ with it. The freedom-fighters seek to overthrow the white oligarchies now ruling over South Africa, Rhodesia and the Portuguese colonies. A perfectly laudable enterprise. What, however, have such upheavals to do with advancing the Kingdom of Christ—presumably, the essential purpose of the World Council of Churches? Is Kenya more Christ-like because Jomo Kenyatta now rules over it? Or the Congo because President Mobutu is in charge? Chuck it, World Council of Churches.*

#### WCC

Muggeridge is a distinguished commentator but his arguments here are hard to follow. The name of Christ is not associated with the overthrow of white minorities, but the New Testament clearly shows that Christ came to free people from bondage—bondage to fear, to sin and to death. Many Christians today believe that blacks are in bondage to white oligarchies. Hence the WCC's race programme.

The WCC does not have the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ as its main purpose—it is not that presumptuous. God builds his own Kingdom; all the churches can do is to live according to the Messianic promise: to announce the good news to the poor and to do justice in the gates of the city.

The reader will note that there are no quotes from people like Nyerere, Kaunda, U Thant, Queen Juliana of the Netherlands, or other supporters of the action. Why not?

#### R.D.

*But the WCC showed no intention of chucking it.*



Instead, it took a second action that raised hackles even higher. Late last year, the WCC, a longtime opponent of the Vietnam war, launched a campaign to raise \$210 000 in support of American draft-dodgers and deserters in Canada and Sweden.

## WCC

A beautiful reversal of the argument. After having "established" that the WCC is supporting violence, we now switch to a second attack on the Council for the opposite reason: it supports the non-violent. What is not said here—although the documentation provided clearly shows it—is that the WCC transmitted to the member churches a project of the Canadian churches which had begun to care for the American deserters in their midst. But that is only a detail. The issue is whether churches encourage desertion by caring for young men who have already deserted. If the answer is affirmative, the Reader's Digest should begin a campaign against the churches' work among drug addicts and alcoholics as well.

## R.D.

*While the Council piously disclaimed any intention to encourage evasion of military duty—which would be perilously close to inciting treason—its youth division was circulating an issue of the magazine, RISK, dedicated to the virtues of doing precisely that. "You must go beyond the question of conscientious objection", the editors told their young readers. "The just men desert." One author asserted that any commanding officer who gave orders offensive to the objector was "a criminal. The courage of those who openly and fearlessly resist men who issue such commands merits supreme commendation."*

## WCC

Then, the reader is supposed to see the underlying strategy of all this subversion by quotes from a WCC magazine, devoted to the discussion of issues. RISK, as its name indicates, is the Council's free debating forum, full of cartoons, sharp critiques and new ideas. It picks up issues which are alive in the churches but not always part of the agendas of our solemn assemblies. The Reader's Digest states that the editors told their "young" readers that just men desert. This is not correct. The phrase occurs in RISK as a clearly marked quote from another source.

Of course there are people who would like to avoid freedom of expression on controversial issues. They have every reason to be against the WCC. But to portray RISK as carrying policy statements by the Council and its churches is a perversion of that magazine's clearly announced purpose and function.

## R.D.

*Incendiary Imprecision. The storm whipped up by these two actions shows no signs of abating. Thought-*

*ful Christians everywhere are asking: Is it the churches' business to finance revolution, support violence, incite to civil disobedience?*

## WCC

I am glad that thoughtful Christians are asking this question everywhere. If they are interested in the WCC's answer, it is: No. Nor does it.

## R.D.

*Out of its long commitment to the "social gospel", the WCC counters: "It is not enough for Christians to seek to save souls and improve individual characters. Christians must be concerned for the structures of society." This, to the WCC, means changing the structures by whatever means are most effective.*

## WCC

The WCC has never committed itself to the social gospel—on the contrary. Its first General Secretary, Dr. W.A. Visser 't Hooft, wrote a critique of that movement for his doctoral dissertation. The Council's social thought has been led by an emphasis on the Responsible Society, which was defined as early as 1948 with the following words:

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

## R.D.

*"As Christians", says the Council, "we are committed to working for the transformation of society. In the past, we have usually done this through quiet efforts at social renewal, working through established institutions. Today, a significant number of those who are dedicated to the service of Christ and their neighbour assume a more revolutionary position."*

## WCC

The reader should notice that the Reader's Digest article is here quoting from a statement prepared by the World Conference on Church and Society and directed to the World Council of Churches. The conference did not speak for the council. These remarks are used as if they already contained a whole programme. An established method but not very good journalism.

## R.D.

*Reaching out to establish theological backing for their views, some churchmen reach absurdity. One freely quoted in WCC circles is William Stringfellow, an Episcopal lay theologian, who wrote: "According to the gospels, Jesus was not a non-conformist, not just a protester. He was a criminal revolutionary." Another,*

*Cont. on p. 22*



# die predikant en politiek?

brian johanson

*Mag die dominee aan politiek deelneem? Moontlik sal nie twee antwoorde van die gewone lidmate van die kerk op dié vraag ooreenkom nie, maar belangriker is die vraag wat God se wil daarvoor is! In dié deeglike artikel van prof. B. Johanson, lektor in teologie aan die Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, word al die sieninge teruggevind en belangriker, sy getuienis oor die verantwoordelikheid wat God ook aan elke leraar van sy kerk opdra ...*

Dit lyk of dit vir 'n predikant om in die politiek in Suid-Afrika betrokke te raak, nogal 'n waagstuk is, behalwe natuurlik as dit gebeur dat hy vir die parlement gekies word.

## WORD ALMAL VERTEENWOORDIG?

As politiek eenvoudig beteken om 'n lid van die parlement, 'n senator, 'n kabinetsminister, 'n eerste minister te wees, is dit duidelik dat geen predikant of enige „nie-lid“, volgens definisie, betrokke kan wees nie.

As lede van die parlement, senatore, kabinetsministers en die eerste minister egter daar is as verteenwoordigers van die mense, om die voortgang van regering te vergemaklik en om 'n demokratiese gemeenskap te administreer, terwyl hulle die sienswyses van die mense weergee, hulle begeertes formuleer en hulle gedagtes op 'n verligte en vooruitstrewende wyse lei, is die mense dan duidelik in die politiek betrokke.

In die verbygang moet dit opgemerk word dat dit 'n algemene dwaalbegrip is dat 'n lid van die parlement alleenlik sy ondersteuners verteenwoordig. Inteendeel, hy verteenwoordig sy kiesafdeling en tensy parlamentslede dit doen, word 'n groot deel van die land sonder verteenwoordiging in die parlement gelaat.

Sy verantwoordelikheid is om ernstig rekening met die sienswyses van alle mense in sy kiesafdeling te hou en nie om mense te repudieer wat opvattinge handhaaf wat hy nie deel nie. Dit is die groot probleem van 'n partypolitieke stelsel.

## ELKE BURGER SE VERANTWOORDELIKHEID

As die partypolitieke stelsel beteken dat sieninge, wat by die kiesers gevind word, nie tot uitdrukking in die parlement gebring kan word nie, of as dit onvoldoende gebeur, is daardie gesigspunt óf nooit ernstig gehoor nie, óf dit moet op 'n ander wyse bekendgemaak word. Dit is so selfs as die opvattinge uiterstes is—daarom is daar institusies in bekende vorme van

demokrasie soos „Hyde Park Corner“ en „the broad walk“ van die Lincoln-monument na die „Capitol“!

Politiek het alles met die „polites“ te doen—dit beteken met die burgers van die land. Terwyl die beoefening daarvan in die parlement 'n mate van gespesialiseerde kennis en ondervinding vereis, is politiek tog die verantwoordelikheid van elke burger wat nie met die uitbring van sy stem afgehandel is nie. Deur sy stem uit te bring, betrek die burger homself inderdaad in aktiewe belangstelling vir en deelname aan die sake van sy land.

Die spesefieke beginsel van die stem beteken dat alle mans en vroue die reg het dat hulle sieninge gehoor moet word en dat daar van hulle begeertes, as verantwoordelike burgers, ernstig kennisgeneem sal word. Die reg van opposisie moet selfs strek tot hulle, wat opvattinge het en wat nie na genoeg aan mekaar op een plek woon om 'n lid van die parlement te waarborg nie.

## POLITIEKE OPVATTINGS VAN PREDIKANTE

Predikante is nie 'n spesiale soort burger nie. Hulle is 'n groep wat normaalweg goed geleerd, goed ingelig en in baie noue kontak met die mense is. Hulle is trouens feitlik sekerlik meer in voeling met die burgers rondom hulle as wat die offisiële lede van die parlement is en hulle is nader aan hulle wat kennis van hulle omstandighede, hulle behoeftes en simpatie met hulle, betref.

Predikante het gevolglik nie net hulle eie gedagtes en oortuigings nie, maar hulle word ook deur dié van die mense, met wie hulle in hulle pastorale arbeid besig is, ingelig. Die gevolg is dat dit waarskynlik is dat hulle politieke sieninge feitlik net so gevarieerd soos dié van die mense van die land sal wees, met hierdie belangrike uitsondering: Hulle belangstelling as Christelike predikante sal wees om hulle kennis en ondervinding van God in 'n betekenisvolle verhouding met hulle interpretasie van die maatskaplike lewe te bring. Tot daardie mate lei hulle hul mense in hulle gedagtes.

## POLITIEK EN VRYHEID

Politieke sake in Suid-Afrika is baie omvattend. Dit strek tot in die hart van sosiologiese, kulturele, rasse, godsdienstige en tradisionele sake. Hier betrek politiek die begrip mens self, dit raak mense se vryheid om te studeer, hulle vryheid om 'n inkomste te verdien, hulle vryheid om rond te beweeg; hulle vryheid om te lewe;

hulle vryheid om hulle met ander te assosieer. Prakties is sosiale, morele en etiese probleme betrokke in elke deel van die wet wat deur ons parlement goedgekeur word. Alle politici en politieke partye weet dit natuurlik en dit is nie verrassend dat debatte dikwels die vraag van wat reg, billik en regverdig is, omring nie.

Is dit aanneemlik dat enige predikant in staat sal wees om in hierdie omstandighede buite die politiek te bly?

### 'N DREIGEMENT AAN PREDIKANTE!

'n Tyd gelede is predikante, wat in die politiek en politieke kwessies aan die verkeerde kant van die politieke heining betrokke is, beveel om hulle prediking en publieke uitinge tot sulke „geestelike” sake soos die „evangelie vir sondaars” te beperk, met die dreigement dat daar streng teen hulle opgetree sal word as hulle oortree. Ons dank God dat ons daardie opdrag oorspronklik van Een, wat baie meer belangrik as hierdie onlangse spreker is, ontvang het! Wat persone met hierdie soort denkrigting nie kan begryp nie, is waaroor die evangelie van redding vir sondaars juis alles gaan.

### DIE KERK SUIWER GEESTELIK?

Die houdings van predikante varieer.

1. Daar is diegene wat die eerste minister se siening sal onderskryf, terwyl hulle sal beklemtoon dat die taak van die kerk suiwer geestelik is, terwyl dié van die staat sekulêr is. Twee motiveringe kan vir hierdie standpunt gevind word:

(a) Daar is diegene wat dit oor *teologiese redes* inneem. Normaalweg is hulle 'n relatief-geslote groepe, terwyl die lidmaatskap afhanklik is van die aanvaarding van goedgedefinieerde leerstellige standpunte. Hierdie groepe neig daartoe oor om sosiologies eenvormig te wees, terwyl hulle hul lede van 'n taamlike goedafgegrensde kulturele groep of sosiale klas trek. Vanweë hulle neiging tot eksklusiwiteit raak hulle nie normaalweg met die samelewing buite hulle deure betrokke nie, behalwe met die doel om hulle bekeerlinge in stand te hou. As alternatief loods hulle spesifieke sendingtake wat dikwels 'n lewendige program van sosiale noodleniging insluit. Hulle doen gewoonlik hul bes om „binne die stelsel” te werk.

(b) Dit lei na die oorweging dat daar diegene is wat dié siening oor *pragmatiese redes* aanneem. Hulle mag persoonlik ernstig oor die wyse waarop baie maatskaplike en politieke kwessies hanteer word, twyfel, maar omdat hulle gemeentes uit mense met verskillende politieke sieninge bestaan, vind hulle dit die beste praktiese manier om dit nooit te noem

nie. As alternatief vind hierdie predikante dit nie noodsaaklik, of is dit ook nie hulle begeerte om gevaar te loop om deur die outoriteite as omstrede gebrandmerk te word nie. Dit is omdat hulle en hul gemeentes in goedafgegrensde geografiese gebiede geleë is waar die maatskaplike probleme van die land nie ondervind word nie, behalwe die uitsonderlike probleem om 'n pas vir 'n bediende te bekom en selfs dan ken hulle gewoonlik „iemand” wat dit kan „regsien”.

### KONSERWATIEF

2. Aan die ander kant is daar diegene wat in 'n mindere of meerdere mate van *politieke sake kennis neem*. Hulle kan gerieflikheidshalwe in drie groepe verdeel word:

(a) Daar is die wat *konserwatiewes* is en wat van tyd tot tyd op 'n versigtige wyse belangstel wanneer 'n spesiale kwessie voorkom. Hulle neem dan in hierdie vreemde gebied aan die „invalle” deel, miskien oor verskeie redes, waarvan die onbelangrikste nie is om te toon dat hulle tog *iets* van 'n sosiale gewete het en dat hulle nie bang is om dit te toon nie! Heelwaarskynlik is hulle verontwaardiging deur sekere nuwe onthullings deur die Rand Daily Mail of die Sunday Times veroorsaak. Hulle keer dan egter weer na die meer normale „geestelike” belange van die bediening terug. Hulle sal, algemeen gesproke, nie daarvoor droom om 'n „politieke” boodskap te preek nie en hulle sal nie daaraan dink om te probeer om kiesers in 'n verkiesingstyd te beïnvloed nie, behalwe miskien op die mees indirekte wyse. Dit is die tipiese blanke stadsdominee en sy onverklaarde slagspreuk sal iets in die rigting van „veiligheid eerste”, hê.

### DIE LIBERALES

(b) Daar is die *liberales* wat hulleself feitlik die hele tyd volledig met die politiek besighou! Hierdie manne is geneig om daar waar die probleem is, te wees en dit mag wees dat hulle so geword het soos wat hulle is vanweë die aard van die probleme waarmee hulle worstel. Terwyl hulle gekonfronteer is met die hulpeloosheid van sekere groepe mense wat nie in staat is om hulleself te help nie, het hulle lewe terwille van daardie mense, 'n



kruistog geword. In sy uiterste vorm sal dit 'n tipe Christelike sosialisme, 'n Engelse broer van die Amerikaanse „Social Gospel”, weergee. In die verbygaan sal 'n mens moet opmerk dat die „Social Gospel” in sy historiese betekenis iets van die verlede is. Dit was met die weelde van die Amerikaanse kapitalisme geassosieer en dit het die vereenselwiging van Amerika se sukses met sy Christendom as sy veronderstelling gehad.

Dit is egter opvallend dat selfs die vurigste kampvegters daarvoor, baie min oor die rasseprobleme van Amerika of selfs die vraagstuk van slawerny bekommerd was. Gevolglik is dit 'n verkeerde toepassing om dit met verwysing na hierdie groep predikante te gebruik. Hulle sal, om die waarheid te sê, die ooreenkoms daarmee ontken en sal liever daarop aanspraak maak om 'n „evangelie van sosiale aksie” weer te gee. Hierdie mense word deur 'n intense meegevoel vir die arme en die minderbevoorregte aangevuur en hulle politiek neig hoofsaaklik daartoe om alles te verwerp wat vir die armoede, hopeloosheid en hulpeeloosheid van die mense waaronder hulle werk, verantwoordelik is.

#### KAN DIE KERK AFSYDIG STAAN?

- (c) 'n Derde groep, onder wie ek hoop om myself te bevind, sal hulle *betrokkenheid in politieke sake teologies motiveer*. Ons is nie eenvoudig van tyd tot tyd in spesiale vraagstukke betrokke of ook pragmaties ingestel soos dié persone wat onder die mense werk nie. Hierdie mense se besorgdheid is om die teologiese basis vir 'n algehele betrokkenheid van die Christen met die sake van hierdie wêreld uit te werk en om aan te toon waarom Christene, of hulle predikante of lidmate is, in die politieke vraagstukke van hulle eie land betrokke is. Met ander woorde hulle stel die vraag: Is betrokkenheid wel 'n opsionele saak? Kan die kerk vraagstukke wat die lewe van miljoene mense raak, ignoreer en nog Christus se kerk bly? Selfs al sou die kerk uiteindelik na die grafkelders gedwing word, is dit dan nie sy protes teen die samelewing waarin daar vir hom nie langer plek is nie?

Die leerstuk dat *God die Skepper* is, vorm die basis van die begrip van die Christen oor die wêreld en sy betrokkenheid daarin. Afgesien van die wyse waarop die wêreld ontstaan het, begryp die Christen dit tog as die gevolg van God se aktiwiteit. Hy was en Hy is nog steeds die Skepper terwyl Hy op geen stadium sy belangstelling vir of sy verbinding met hierdie wêreld

laat vaar het nie. Christene wat hierdie wêreld ter wille van die een wat kom, afsweer, is verkeerd, want terwyl hulle dit doen, kom hulle gevaarlik naby daaraan om die Een, van wie gesê word „So lief het God die wêreld gehad ...”, te verloën. Die kwaad wat in die wêreld is, is geen verskoning vir die Christen om daarvan te probeer wegkom nie, want dit was juis dit wat God se historiese betrokkenheid daarin veroorsaak het.

#### GOD STEL BELANG

Die erkenning van God as die Skepper van hierdie wêreld en van alle mense, wat gevolglik in 'n besondere sin aan hom behoort, is 'n fundamentele tema van die Ou Testament. „Die aarde behoort aan die Here en die volheid daarvan ...” Hy word altyd voorgestel as die Een wat die sake van die nasies in sy hande het en inderwaarheid draai die grootste beloftes van die Ou Testament om sy belangstelling vir die „nasies”, die „heidene”. Hy regeer nie net oor die sake van Israel nie, maar ook oor die regeerdes van die groot ryke wat hom omring.

Omdat God die God van die arme en die hulpbehoewende is, pleit die profete in sy Naam vir geregtigheid, die vrylating van die gevangenes, vir hulpverlening vir die armes en hongeriges en vir algemene sosiale hervorming op 'n breë front.

#### CHRISTENE IS VERBONDE

Om hierdie insig nog 'n stap verder te neem sodat dit nie te veel as 'n argument vanuit die Ou Testament voorkom nie, kan ons verder gaan en beweer dat die Christen se begrip van en sy betrokkenheid met die wêreld deur *God die Skepper* wat mens geword het, gelei word. Ek stel nie daarin belang om hier te argumenteer oor die vraag of „die Woord” eenvoudig die Instrument van die skepping, of die Skepper self was nie, maar om te beklemtoon dat God Homself in die Menswording met die mensheid geïdentifiseer het. Om 'n mens te word was 'n daad wat alle mense betrek het. As gevolg daarvan dat Hy homself op hierdie wyse as die Broer en Naaste van alle mense aangebied het, is die Christen ook tot die beswil van alle mense verbonde aangesien hy in sy aksie van geloof en gehoorsaamheid met Christus geïdentifiseer is. *Jesus Christus is vir ons van fundamentele belang om die natuur van die mens en die struktuur van sy lewe in al sy verhoudinge te begryp*.

Verder is die wese van God se verbinding met sy skepping ook in terme van sy *verlossingsbesorgdheid* uitgedruk. Sy doelwit is baie duidelik die vernuwung van die mens deur vergiffnis en heropbouing. Sy redding is totaal omvattend en dit is nie maar net 'n veilige lewe hierna nie, maar dit is hier en nou, 'n oorvloedige lewe.

#### VERHOUDINGE FUNDAMENTEEL

Dit is algemeen om op hierdie punt te suggereer dat

die belangstelling van die Nuwe Testament meer geestelik as die meer materialistiese siening van die Ou Testament is. Die Ou Testament was „hoofsaaklik” met die maatskaplike sake betrokke, terwyl die Nuwe Testament na die „geestelike” sake afdaal. Die argument word gewoonlik nie so eenvoudig gestel nie, maar die kern is duidelik genoeg.

Op baie maniere ontwikkel die Nuwe Testament uit die Oue. Die onderwys van Jesus erken die provisionele en voorlopige aard van die maatskaplike etiek van Ou Testament, maar Hy verplaas dit geensins as vals nie, maar verryk dit, bou daarop voort en verhef dit. Hy neem die beginsel van menseverhoudinge wat fundamenteel vir die mens se lewe is, ernstig op en plaas dit in die raamwerk van ’n ryke en betekenisvolle woord: LIEFDE. Die Nuwe Testament is vër daarvan om die „maatskaplike besorgdheid” te mis en plaas die mens se verantwoordelikheid vir sy medemens op die hoogste vlak.

### OMSEILING VAN WETTE!

’n Interessante praktiese illustrasie sal help. In die Nuwe Testamentiese tyd het ’n wegloopslaaf die doodstraf ontvang. Paulus ontvang nie alleenlik so een nie, maar lei hom ook tot die kennis van Christus en stuur hom na sy Christelik meester terug met die dringende versoek nie net om sy lewe te spaar nie, maar om hom nog daarby as ’n broeder te aanvaar—en om nie eers skadevergoeding van hom te eis nie, maar om dit „op my rekening te plaas”. Dit is waar dat Paulus nie vir die opheffing van die wette oor slawerny geagiteer het nie, of ten minste sover ons kennis strek nie, maar hy het nie die minste geaarsel om hulle te omseil nie.

### BEKERING OF SOSIALE HERVORMING?

Daar is mense wat argumenteer dat die Christene wat hulle vir geregtigheid en maatskaplike hervorming beywer, die kar voor die perde span en dat die eintlike saak is om mense te bekeer, om ’n Christelike maatskappy te skep en dan sal sosiale hervorming outomaties volg. Dit klink aanneemlik. Die eintlike onverskilligheid vir maatskaplike geregtigheid wat hierdie gedagtegang egter móét toon—of dit diepe onverskilligheid is of nie—bring die eintlike boodskap, wat die dominee probeer bring, in diskrediet. Dit is juis hierdie versaking van die mens en sy nood wat die verwerping van die Christen se God in so baie oorde veroorsaak het. Om slegs die Kommunis se argument oppervlakkig te lees, toon dat dit hierdie gebrek vir praktiese besorgdheid vir die massas en die aanvaarding van die status quo is, wat so ’n vroeë kragtige vooruitgang aan die Kommunisme se populariteit vir die masses gegee het. Die moontlikheid om bekeerlinge op die basis van onverskilligheid teenoor die lewensomstandighede te maak, sal uiters gering wees!

As ons as Christene en predikante van die Christendom aan die Christendom getrou is, sal daar

’n geweldige beweging aan die kant van miljoene in Suid-Afrika, wat die Christendom bely, wees om vir die beswil van alle mense in ons land op te tree—die armes, die wat onteien is, die slagoffers van vooroordeel, dié sonder seggenskap en die magteloses. God se besorgdheid oor verlossing is sodanig dat dit die mens verlos en sal verlos om mens te wees en daarvoor word die Christelike bediening geroep en daaraan moet dit getrou wees.

### IN STRYD MET DIE PRAKTYK

Die Christen neem dus aan politiek deel, maar in die eerste plek is sy deelname indirek. Dit gebeur in die gang van die verkondiging en die toepassing van die evangelie. Onder sekere omstandighede sal dit nie noodwendig in konflik met die aanvaarde gewoontes van die land wees nie en sal dit dikwels daarmee in ’n positiewe harmonie wees. Waar dit egter wel in stryd is, word die aanklag gewoonlik gemaak dat die betrokke predikant hom met die politiek bemoei. Laat dit so wees. Geen predikant kan teen ’n politieke party as sodanig wees nie, want dit sal uiteindelik onhoudbaar wees, behalwe as dit spesifiek en uitgesproke anti-christelik is. Hy is en hy moet teen ongeregtheid in alle vorme wees omdat hy die dienskneg van „die Regter van die hele aarde”, wat nog steeds geregtigheid tussen alle mense begeer, is.

### PARTYPOLITIEK?

Die Christen mag hom wel met ’n politieke party wat toevallig die meeste ooreenstem met dit wat hy as ’n ware en regverdige plan vir al die mense van ons land in die lig van sy begrip van die evangelie sien, identifiseer. Aso so ’n party egter na beleide wat in stryd met dit wat hy as reg begryp, beweeg, moet hy weereens protesteer. As regeringsbeleid oor die jare geleidelik verander en in harmonie met dit, wat ons as vereiste van die evangelie begryp, kom, sal dit alleenlik grond vir dankbaarheid wees en sal dit ’n bevestiging van die Christen se hoop dat dit wat reg is ook uiteindelik prakties is, wees. Ook op hierdie wyse sal deelname aan partypolitiek normaalweg ook indirek wees, maar dit is die praktiese middel wat die Christen het om te toon waarheen sy oortuigings hom lei. Dit stel ook daardie praktiese masjinerie van demokrasie tot sy beskikking om politieke en, as ’n gevolg daarvan, maatskaplike verandering in sy land teweeg te bring. Hy doen dit nie terwille van die waardering en dankbaarheid van ander nie, maar vir dié Een wat sy doelwitte as versoening van mense met homself en met mekaar gestel het. Hierdie toeloesende betrokkenheid in politiek is dus ’n permanente voortgaande betrokkenheid gebaseer op ’n aanhoudende ondersoek daarin wat God besig is om in die wêreld te doen. Dit is ’n aanhoudende ondersoek in teologie en sy implikasies vir die menslike lewe en terselfdertyd ’n konstante besorgdheid oor en oorweging van die omstandighede van mans, vroue en kinders in ons maatskaplike omgewing.

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# SCIENCE AND LIFE

# — ABORTION?

*At the moment a fiery debate is raging in South Africa about wider legislation to allow legal abortion in certain circumstances. This month the third part of the report of the Working Committee on Church and Society of the World Council of Churches is published. It deals with abortion and the very interesting subject of genetics.*

## 1. DETECTION AND GENETIC COUNSELLING

### DOUBLE DOSES

A LARGE MAJORITY of the most serious genetic disorders are recessive. That is to say, the affected person carries a double (paternal and maternal) dose of the defective gene and has no normal gene counterpart. It is now possible, for about 60 different biochemical disorders, to detect the presence of the defective gene in the parents of such a sufferer, or in any other carrier of the defective gene. These delicate biochemical or blood tests may be applied to all individuals related to a defective person or to the partners in a consanguineous marriage, who are more likely to carry the same genes than are unrelated persons. Again, certain ethnic populations have high frequencies of particular defective genes, for example, sickle hemoglobin and anaemia and the currently incurable Tay-Sachs disease, a mental degenerative disease that kills in childhood.

### PROPOSITIONS

We recommend that the WCC establish a panel consisting primarily of *geneticists and theologians* with due regard for representation of the views of fathers, mothers and children to study the following propositions:

—that the WCC encourage the churches greatly to *extend their marriage counselling services* by including elementary genetic counselling and referral in all cases of need (consanguineous marriage; presence of known probably genetic, physical or mental defect among relatives, etc.) to appropriate human genetic and medical clinics for tests;

—counsellors should be instructed in elementary human genetics. Persons contemplating marriage who are found to be bearers of the same recessive defective genes, or any bearers of dominant defective genes,

should be *advised not to have any children* if the condition is severe, as determined by a professional medical geneticist. In cases where defective children are born the church should provide needed counselling and support;

—alternatively, if the probability of a defective child is one in four or lower, the parents might wish to run the risk. By means of the method of amniocentesis (see 2), prior to the twentieth week of pregnancy, it may be determined whether the foetus is defective; and, in case that proves to be so, *to undertake an abortion*. The churches should be prepared to endorse the personal right of parents to choose an induced abortion to prevent the birth of a gravely defective child. Wherever the laws of the state make this illegal, the churches should press for a modification of the law to permit such options to take place.

## 2. FOETAL DIAGNOSIS AND ABORTION

### CHROMOSOME ABNORMALITIES

Amniocentesis is the withdrawal, by surgical needle, of a small amount of amniotic fluid surrounding a foetus. In the amniotic fluid are floating cells derived from the foetus, and sometimes cells of placental (maternal) origin. The foetal cells may be examined directly under the microscope for chromosome abnormalities or may be cultured until sufficient quantities are available for biochemical tests. Thus such extra-chromosome aberrations as mongolism (Down's syndrome) or the abnormal numbers of sex chromosomes (XO, XYY, XXY, XXX, etc.) may be detected. Also 60 or more biochemical deficiencies, such as amaurotic idiocy, may be diagnosed.

### ABORTION

When the conditions produced by diagnosed genetical diseases are severe and untreatable by present medical means, the defective foetus may be aborted. This option to reduce severe and hopeless psychological and financial burdens on family and society leaves the parents free to try again to have a normal child. This procedure in fact simply extends nature's own way of eliminating severe physical or mental defect by including those cases that are incapable of a normal self-reliant life.

## A RECOMMENDATION

We recommend in regard to foetal diagnosis and abortion:

That the WCC direct the following proposal to the panel of experts for their judgement:

recognizing the freedom of parents to decide finally about the birth of their child, we nevertheless question whether it is not personally and socially irresponsible to bring into the world a child known before the 20th week of pregnancy to be severely defective; that is wherever and whenever our knowledge can provide every child with the capacity for life without severe mental or physical defects. We propose that *the paramount right* in reproduction is the right of the child to a *sound genetic endowment rather than the right to procreate*. The churches should be prepared to support parents in their right to choose an induced abortion to prevent the birth of a gravely defective child and to support them in the care of defective children who are born.

Panels of geneticists, physicians and ethicists would need to give continuous attention to the criteria for performing abortion, because of the rapid shifts in methods of effective treatment for specific conditions.

There is an urgent need to extend the availability of procedures of foetal diagnosis from the few centres where it is now available to the peoples of the world.

## 3. GENETIC CORRECTION

Ordinary medicine proceeds with growing knowledge from:

- (a) a treatment of mere symptoms to
- (b) a specific supply of a missing metabolic product or a regulator substance, and thence
- (c) to the supply of a missing or inactive enzyme. It will soon become possible
- (d) to deal more directly with the defective gene by supplying the particular messenger-RNA which is required to produce the needed enzyme.

Not much farther in the future lies

- (e) the possibility of real cure of a genetic disorder by providing the correct DNA of the defective gene. At this stage the bio-

chemical treatment moves from the level of eugenics (changing the phenotype) to eugenics (changing the genotype). The treatment is, however, no less biochemical. A harmless virus may be used as a carrier of the functional DNA needed to replace the inactive DNA.

These procedures raise a number of ethical questions, all of which relate to the propriety of experimenting on humans:

- (a) Should the treatment be extended to the reproductive organs in order to substitute a sound gene for the defective gene that might be transmitted to the next generation and thus increase the frequency of genetic defect in the population?
- (b) Probably the easiest case material to "cure", both somatically and genetically, would be the defective embryo. The ethics of human experimentation is thus raised. To produce from parents who are carriers of a genetic defect a number of embryos in the laboratory and to treat these so as to alter the said defect and make them functionally normal, and then to implant the embryo in the mother is clearly feasible, and most of the techniques already exist. Should it be permitted?
- (c) Or should implantation of an embryo produced by other, selected parents be permitted (prenatal adoption)?
- (d) Should the human embryos produced in the laboratory be studied during their development under various physiological conditions?
- (e) Should the effect of new drugs be tried out on embryos before those drugs are released for use by expectant mothers?
- (f) Should other methods of experimentation with the unimplanted embryos be permitted?
- (g) When artificial placentas and wombs are produced, should experimentation with embryos be carried to later stages? Undoubtedly much medical information that can be gained in no other way and of great value to the future health care in the prenatal months, could be learned, but should it be permitted because good may come of it?

We recommend that the WCC request the panel of experts to study these questions in anticipation of developments in this rapidly advancing field.

*To be cont.*



# AUTHORITY IN AFRICA 2

*In this second and final part of the speech by Dr. Klaus Nürnberger, he reaches the climax and proffers a very interesting solution to the problem of authority, which is a major one for the church as a whole.*

## Klaus Nürnberger

### II. THE IMAGE OF THE EARLY MISSIONARY

We must now consider the historical figure that seems to have mediated the tribal structure to the church in Africa and "chieftainship" to the African minister. To bring out the point we will consider the extreme (but common) case of the *mission farm*, on which a Christian community constituted itself under the leadership of a missionary. In such cases the formation of a Christian "tribe" had every chance of success, and the missionary quite naturally assumed the role of a comprehensive tribal leader. In fact he accumulated functions that go far beyond those that any single one of the above-mentioned traditional figures could ever hope to assume. He was father, chief, diviner, herbalist and far more than all that! Let us briefly look at this accumulation of vital functions.

In the first place the missionary was a father. That means that he was the central religious figure—religion now understood in that comprehensive African sense of the word. Just as the father represented the lineage and embodied its regenerative life-forces, the missionary was the embodiment and source of the new religious life. As the only competent interpreter of the sacred book and the mediator between the congregation and its new Lord in prayer, liturgy and sacrament, he mediated the new life to the community in all respects. It is well-known how in most cases he was minutely followed by his followers even to the details of dress.(8)

#### SOMETHING LACKING

The missionary also took the place of the chief. He assigned fields for ploughing, collected rents and summoned residents for community works. He presided over all sessions of the elected councils of the community, whether judicial or administrative in character. He fixed the times for services and prayer, as the chief had fixed the times for communal sacrifices. The great number of scattered satellite congregations gave the impression of a wide empire even beyond the limits of the mission farm. With his exhortations, prayers and sacraments the missionary also took the place of the diviner. With his knowledge of simple cures and first-aid measures he took the place of the herbalist. Soon he could delegate more serious cases to the clinic and hospital with their astoundingly effective cures.

Quite obviously in all these things there was something lacking deep down in the consciousness of the

African Christian—something that was connected with the protective and productive power of the community and the destructive power of sorcery—both being rooted in the dynamistic apprehension of reality which the missionary didn't share. The first generation of Christians seem to have been too deeply impressed by what he brought, but subsequent generations couldn't help to feel the lack and try to make up for it in secret. However that may be—where his authority is concerned the missionary made up this lack by the novelty of his additional powers.

#### NEW TITLE: TEACHER

Without doubt the most important of these was the mediation of modern education, which soon became apparent as the panacea for all difficulties and the key to all success. It has often been observed that for a century mission and school were almost identical. It is not an accident that the most favoured title of the new leaders was "Teacher" (Sotho: *moruti*, Nguni: *umfundisi*). He was the teacher of the Bible, the teacher of the new way of life and the mediator of modern education in general. And with his book-knowledge the missionary combined such immensely useful skills as carpentry, house-building, metalwork, waggon-building or tailoring.

Going further than that, the missionary knew the intricacies of the civilisation of the new colonial rulers, their methods of control, their attitudes and motives. Being accepted as a White among Whites, that means as one who is to be taken seriously, he could intervene with the authorities on behalf of his flock. Moreover he had access to the resources of the overseas mission bodies and churches, which means to that fairy-land of phantasy from which all those new powers and influences sprang. So on balance it is hard to overestimate the enormous authority of the early missionary on the mission farm, although it must be granted that he was and remained a stranger—adored and feared at the same time, ever respected but never viewed completely without suspicion.

#### ONE REAL RIVAL

The early missionary had, I believe, only one real parallel and rival: the leader of one of those innumerable new religious communities which the turmoil of the social situation, the cultural clash, the political deprivation and the melting pot of religious ideas produced. Since the program of this conference includes an expert lecture on the ministry in the "Independent Churches" I will not presume to go into

further details. It suffices to say that these charismatic men also assumed the role of comprehensive leadership, but in their own way. What the missionaries lacked—the typical African religious, psychological and social undercurrents—these men were able to provide and to develop. Conversely they lacked the coveted powers of the dominant white civilisation. Whether the scale of prestige went down the one or the other way obviously depended on the priorities certain individuals or groups cherished.

### THE MINISTER AS AN HEIR

The early missionary set the image which the African minister of our “established churches” inherited through various stages. But these stages of inheritance were marked by a progressive decline of authority and status of the original image. One function after the other disappeared. The African pastor of today is no longer *the* embodiment of the new faith. There are others beside him, notably the prayer women. He has theological training, but he no longer holds the monopoly of Biblical knowledge. Moreover, this is the only training he has. He is not trained in administrative skills, nor in the knowledge of simple trades or cures. He is no longer the indispensable mediator of modern education and medicine, since both have gone over into the control of the state. Neither has he the enviable position of apparent “untemptability”(9) in the eyes of the congregation. He is a family man with tribal adherence, rooted as everybody else in the African context.

### RESETTLEMENT SCHEMES

The art of mediating to the dominant white state machinery is practised by the black state official or negatively by the black police-man. The control of land rights was never transferred to the African successor of the missionary. Moreover, most of the closed Christian settlements have been dispersed by resettlement schemes. Here the state-sponsored tribal authorities took over control of the administrative and judicial functions.

The African minister also did not inherit the privileges of “whiteness” from the missionary, with all that this means in terms of social, political and economical status and power. On the other side of the scale he could not possibly inherit from his Western predecessor the advantages of his black counterpart in the “Independent Churches”. In fact he would despise

The African minister also did not inherit the privileges of “whiteness” from the missionary, with all that this means in terms of social, political and economical status and power. On the other side of the scale he could not possibly inherit from his Western predecessor the advantages of his black counterpart in the “Independent Churches”. In fact he would despise these as being backward and uncivilised, unworthy of an educated man. Again we arrive at a figure of deprivation!(10)

## III. MODERN FORMS OF AUTHORITY

Apart from the historical images treated above potent rivals arose for the minister in our times where status is concerned: the teacher, the lawyer, the doctor and the nurse. In the economic field the trader or shop-keeper has become the central figure. All these professions—and we can add some more, especially for the cities—daily demonstrate their indispensability to everybody, irrespective of ethnic allegiance or creed. Their role is honoured and underlined by educational pedigree and high income. And all that at the cost of the status of the minister!

As mentioned already, in the cities the process of secularisation and the emergence of a new pluralistic, socially mobile industrial society is starting to edge out even the rurally and patriarchally orientated Christian congregation itself. The churches still seem to be the haven for the conservative, who are, psychologically speaking, homesick for the passing age. Church membership may still be large. But attendance of services conspicuously reveals the dominance of the women and the aged over the men and the youth. For this remnant the minister may still be the leading figure, especially if he has the talent of organising and activating. But how long will it last?

### FEEDING ON PAST GLORY

On the other hand there is a great longing and thus a great potential for true comprehensive leadership in our African population. The breakdown of traditional political structures, the political deprivations and the controversial substitutes offered by the State are the direct cause for this apparent vacuum. Many seem to expect from the Church what they don't find elsewhere: independence of judgment, impartiality and true self-sacrificing service to the community in need of leadership. Due to its divisions and the great variety of denominational loyalties the ordained ministry is scarcely able to realise this potential. Moreover, this place is filled by politicians and journalists, wherever they get a piece of dry ground to stand on. Some ministers are tempted to join their ranks, following in the footsteps of their great colleague, Martin Luther King. But to be a politician you need not be a minister after all!

The status of the minister is, as already hinted at, further watered down by the great multitude and variety of “colleagues”, who call themselves by his title, but who are more or less despised by the upper classes of society. A teacher is a teacher and a lawyer is a lawyer. But how can you demonstrate your status as a minister against all those others, who also wear dog-collars? A large, well-furnished parsonage with an ice-chest, a fine church building, a set liturgy devoid of all traces of emotion and enthusiasm and a car might help. But surely they cannot substitute socially appreciated function, which is increasingly eroding! Again we come to the same conclusion as in the cases before: the status of the minister may still be feeding on past



glory, but slowly and surely this glory is fading away!

#### IV. THE TRADITIONAL FUNCTIONS OF THE ORDAINED MINISTRY.

So let us finally turn to those functions which are the traditional *proprium* of the ordained minister in the Western churches: the proclamation of Law and Gospel, the administration of the sacraments, teaching, pastoral care and spiritual oversight, church administration and the prophetic ministry as opposed to the secular authorities. Looking closer we will soon realise that even here the minister in our African churches has lost almost all his ground. The structure of the South African Churches stands in marked contrast to the development in Western countries—a fact which is often overlooked. While it is normal for each congregation to have its own minister in the case of the latter, we have clusters of congregations arranged around some centre in the case of the former. These small, scattered and far-apart congregations inevitably led to the emergence of a fairly strong lay leadership in the local congregations, simply because the minister in charge is unable to be everywhere all at once. A pastor who is in charge of up to a dozen scattered congregations sees each part of his flock only once a month or even once a quarter. To a certain extent this may increase his status as the exceptional high visitor, and church attendance on those Sundays is higher than usual. But it would be presumptuous to assume that a mighty spiritual influence goes out from such scanty visits. The pastor remains to all intents and purposes a stranger. Situational pastoral care and spiritual guidance is impossible.

#### DOGMATICS IMPOTENT

I would be the last to shed tears about this development. At least this once lay participation and responsibility—the coveted but unattained ideal of the Western one-man church—has materialised. Let us be frank: with some investment in further training of these laymen and laywomen it could function very well. The result of this structure is, however, that the ordained minister is practically edged out of even his very own spiritual *proprium* according to the traditional patterns of the Western mother-church. Some theological schools would say that these laymen function on behalf, and on the authority, of the ordained minister, or even of the bishop. But dogmatic interpretations will not alter social realities!

All these functions—with a few exceptions—can be, and are in fact, performed by men and women of ordinary life, often without much formal education, and mostly without any remuneration. In many cases, especially in the cities, they already function quite efficiently. This fact demonstrates to everybody who cares to see that the minister is not indispensable. If he were suddenly to drop out, there would perhaps be a slight deterioration, but with greater responsibility put

officially on the local men the church would continue to live in its normal patterns. The time of the minister may be filled to the brim with rushing around to administer the sacraments, with serving on committees and commissions, with fighting his way through an administrative jungle and with a host of other odd jobs. He may still prove to be more capable than the local man, whenever his turn comes to visit a congregation. He may still somehow focus the ministry even in this form. He may still represent the church as such. But is this vague idea sufficient to substitute indispensable social function?

#### MORE HARM IN PREACHING

The exceptions mentioned above are the administration of sacraments, confirmation, the blessing of marriages and burials. In the African context, where symbolic and sacramental actions impart more reality than mere words, this last stronghold is of considerable significance. We said earlier that up to now the greatest concentration of power for the minister is to be sought in this field. We also said that this may gradually change with the decline of the dynamistic world-view. But of greater importance, I think, is the fact that this reserve creates a completely artificial indispensability for the minister. In terms of Protestant theology it is indefensible to entrust the preached Word to a man, but not the sacraments. From a practical point of view the non-trained can do much more harm in preaching than in performing liturgical or sacramental rites. And it is very difficult to explain why those who actually do the job are neither trained nor ordained, while those who are trained and ordained do so very little of the actual job.

#### V. THE WAY INTO THE FUTURE

We have come to the end of what would seem to be a premature, shocking and provocative *post-mortem* of the “vanishing clergyman”. What started in earlier days as comprehensive leadership with enormous authority ended up as the figure of a church functionary with a training he hardly uses, with rather undefined functions and without demonstrable indispensability. This statement does not reflect on the magnificent incumbents of the office who make the best of a sorry situation. It reflects on the structure itself. There is always enough scope to fill even worn-out and obsolete vessels with precious contents. But we are not here concerned with that. Our aim is to show that the structure seems to be wrong. And this problem cannot be tackled by appeals to a stronger sense of calling and responsibility on the side of the minister, or by bewailing the materialism and indifference of the modern youth, who doesn't want to make sacrifices to Christ. It can also not be tackled by continuously redefining the theological significance of the ordained ministry in dogmatic terms. The problem we are concerned with now is neither one of spirituality nor one of theology, but one of church structure.

## SEED OF FRUSTRATION

As I said in the beginning this paper only poses a problem. It formulates nothing more than an hypothesis. Whether the diagnosis will stand the test of reality is another question. But we certainly can't afford to move into the future blind-folded. Such an office is not only too expensive for the African church; it may in the long run even be spiritually harmful. Uncertainty of role and insecurity of status are quite naturally the seed of frustrations. We should not brush this fact away with appeals to self-denial. The Apostle Paul himself was not afraid to fight a heavy battle over his personal status. A man without recognition is no source of inspiration. Ministers will always be tempted to make up their lack of prestige by non-spiritual and often undesirable means. The profession will increasingly be shunned by the most promising among our youth. And the self-perpetuating image may retard healthy developments and necessary reforms.

Of course there is still a wide scope for an all-round ministry in the less developed areas of the country. Where there is a vacuum in leadership the Church should step into the gap for the sake of the community. Our rural pastors should perhaps acquire more all-round skills and a more open and informed attitude for the requirements of a simple pre-industrial society. But this is a transitional phase. It will disappear as soon as the less developed societies get more sophisticated. And ministers should never operate as rivals to emerging secular leaders. This comprehensive leadership is an *opus alienum* which they perform as long as nobody else can do it. So there is no great hurry in the rural areas. But the Church should be ready to change as the time gets ripe. And for that she must know where she is going. In the cities the situation seems to be more urgent. But even there we have time for a well-planned transition.

## WAY INTO FUTURE

The way into the future is not hard to find, I think. No spectacular structural revolutions are necessary. We are already on our way. It is only a matter of taking up the emerging patterns into our conscious planning. The congregations are in fact led by laymen. So give the laymen official recognition and authority for their work by ordaining them. The ministers are trained to be theologians. So liberate them from their unnecessary burdens and let them do what they were trained for. Administration is an art that increasingly calls for professionally trained men. So introduce the office of the professional administrator and let him take over the machinery.

The Church in Africa is extensively run by the laity. For the foreseeable future this will remain the only realistic alternative—and a very desirable one at that. But this lay ministry should not be as crippled as it is. On local level the most suitable lay members should be ordained for the full range of spiritual functions. They should remain in their normal occupations and receive only a token remuneration to cover their expenses.

They should be entrusted with communities small enough to be coped with on a part-time basis. The spiritual and the administrative spheres can be shared in a sensible way by such preachers and the local elders.

## TWO PROFESSIONALS

The present office of the parish pastor should develop into two offices: that of the trained theologian on the one hand and that of the trained administrator on the other. Both should operate on a regional basis. They are the only full-time professionals really needed by the Church of the future, apart from certain specialists serving the whole church. Heads of churches could then be elected both from these professionals and from the ordained locals, who will without doubt include some brilliant men.

The function of the professional theologians would be to do what they have been trained to do. Surely we do not train our pastors for four or six years to hurry around from congregation to congregation and administer the sacraments. Surely we do not train them to run an impeccable bookkeeping and administrative system. Surely we do not train them for the intricacies of building matters, legal procedures, non-theological committee sittings, laying foundation stones, playing master of ceremonies and the host of other odd jobs performed by a minister of today. We train them to be theologians! A theologian is a man who has learnt the art of hermeneutics. His indispensable function is to comprehend the Word of God in the historical setting of the Biblical and ecclesiastical traditions, so as to be able to place it authoritatively into the situation of the Church here and now. For this purpose his training should have two poles: the historical and the situational. And the emphasis should lie on the ability of comprehension and translation of theological content from the one to the other. This is a function without which the Church cannot live. And for this function she needs professionally qualified men. Once these are allowed to really practise their indispensable profession, they will be recognised as professionals and their status and authority will be based on their actual function.(11)

## WAY OUT OF DILEMMA

Practically, these theologians would be the educators and enablers,—who equip the ordained locals. They would also be the conductors of study conferences for groups of men, women, students or youth. They would be those who have the time to keep abreast of theological and ecclesiastical developments elsewhere. They would do the brain-work necessary to tackle difficult problems of situational theology and social ethics. They would provide the necessary literature. Thus doing what they were trained for, being relieved of everything else, they would without any doubt be a far greater asset to the Church than they are now. And because the Church would need these men only on a regional basis, they could all be well-trained and well paid within the limited resources of our churches.



# **Parlementêre Gekose Komitee** **'n besluit** **Duitse Evangeliese Sendingraad**

*Aangesien die Parlementêre Gekose Komitee met sy aangewese taak om die C.I., N.U.S.A.S., S.A.I.R., en U.C.B. te ondersoek, besig is, kan die meriete van die saak nie op hierdie stadium bespreek word nie.*

*Intussen het die C.I. van die Duitse Evangeliese Sendingraad 'n reaksie op hierdie ondersoek, wat baie hoog waardeer word, ontvang. Dit word hier geplaas.*

\*

Die Duitse Evangeliese Sendingraad het op sy vergadering van 22-23 Februarie 1972 in Hamburg daarvan kennis geneem dat die Suid-Afrikaanse eerste minister, mnr. Vorster, op 4 Februarie 1972 in die parlement aangekondig het dat 'n Gekose Komitee aangestel sal word om die werk, metodes en doelstellinge van 'n paar organisasies, onder andere ook die Christelike Instituut in Johannesburg, te ondersoek.

Die Christelike Instituut word deur kerke en kerklike hulporganisasies van die Bondsrepubliek van Duitsland moreel sowel as met aansienlike finansiële middele ondersteun en wel veral omdat die Christelike Instituut onmiskenbaar optree vir 'n vreedsame oplossing van die bestaande rasseprobleme waarmee Suid-Afrika te kampe het en alle vorme van geweld verwerp.

Die Duitse Evangeliese Sendingraad wat self, asook deur verwante genootskappe, baie nou kontakte met die kerke in Suid-Afrika instandhou, verseker die Christelike Instituut van sy solidariteit met hom en versoek die Suid-Afrikaanse regering om die uitdaging te aanvaar wat ds. Beyers Naudé, die direkteur van die Christelike Instituut, saam met die presidente en leiers van die drie ander organisasies aan hom gerig het, nl. om die werk van die vier organisasies deur 'n kommissie, bestaande uit onpartydige regters in plaas van 'n politieke kommissie, te laat ondersoek.

Die Duitse Evangeliese Sendingraad versoek die ondersteuners van die Christelike Instituut in die Bondsrepubliek van Duitsland, veral die Raad en die lidkerke van die Evangeliese Kerk in Duitsland, sowel as die kerklike hulporganisasies, om alle noodsaaklike stappe te neem om die voorneme van die regering van die Republiek van Suid-Afrika teë te staan en hulle vrees en besorgdheid tot uitdrukking te bring, nl. dat die toekomstige werk van die betrokke organisasies in gevaar gebring sal word en nuwe spanninge in die Republiek van Suid-Afrika sal ontstaan.

Die Duitse Evangeliese Sendingraad versoek die afvaardiging van die Lutherse Wêreldfederasie om gelyktydig met hulle besoek aan Suid-Afrika en in hulle gesprek met die eerste minister, mnr. Vorster, met klem op hierdie besorgdheid te wys. \*

## **AUTHORITY 2**

There is, of course, the danger that they would develop into a kind of super-clergy. But this danger is far greater with the existing structure than with the proposed one. Once locals are ordained the ordination itself will lose its artificial status-giving power. It will become what it should be in theological terms: the commission and authorisation to perform the spiritual functions which are vital for the life of the Church. The status of the trained men will then be derived from their professional work as theologians, creating a far more sober and factual climate. (To put it bluntly: these men need not even be ordained at all, although I foresee that in practice they would be and should be.) And they should be given a new title to mark them as professionals distinct from the ordained locals. Such a new structure could, I think, solve our present dilemma, which is going to become ever greater if present trends continue. \*

### FOOTNOTES

8. The role of the missionary as the embodiment of the new life was, I think, greatly enhanced by the fact that he came from outside the social context of the African. He was tempted neither by ancestral powers, nor by sorcery and magic, nor by discarded social orders like polygamy. He didn't normally get involved in all those intricate and embarrassing local family affairs, nor was he easily drawn into partiality by clan or tribal loyalties. He was simply not part of the social order. And so he must have appeared to be the ever-dependable "rock of faith", standing almost beyond temptation.
9. See footnote 8 above!
10. It must be said that the missionaries of today share in this loss of prestige to a considerable extent. Their only remaining advantages are connected with their "whiteness", which means privilege in all spheres, in our country. On the other hand this advantage is largely off-set by the loss of intimate contact with his congregations.
11. Our training and the actual job done by ministers are completely out of step. To say this has become commonplace. But it is basically not our training that is wrong - although it can certainly be improved a great deal by becoming more situational and functional. The trouble is rather that we do train men for an essential job, which is, however, practically non-existent, much to the detriment of the whole church. We should not covet the days of comprehensive leadership. The old missionaries were disgusted because they had to do everything, save what they had come to do, and for which they found no time. We should covet the days when theologians are free to do what they were trained for!

# **SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS of THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

*The third part of the important address by Prof. B. Johanson shows how relevant Christian theology is for practically every area of man's life ...*

**Brian Johanson**

*HOW ARE WE TO STRUCTURE a viable and valid theological anthropology?*

## **MAN MEASURE OF ALL THINGS?**

Feuerbach, like the later Marx and Freud, represents the logical extreme of humanism. Seeing religion as a "gigantic projection of man's own being", he argued that theology was nothing more than anthropology. There was no doubt some justification for his reaction in the light of theology's constant claim to superior knowledge and final truth which it established on the grounds of the authority of God. To call God in to support one's claims and views does not commend itself to scientific man. Yet is it possible, scientifically, logically or morally to get by without any reference to the transcendent? Is man really the measure of all things?

The sociologist, Peter Berger, recognises the necessity of a transcendental reference for the understanding of religion, and argues that the "Rumour of Angels", or the "signals of the transcendent" can be detected in such human experiences and concepts as order, play, even man's conviction regarding the demand for damnation, and paradoxically humour! (16)

## **CONTACT WITH GOD?**

But it is not only secular man, the man who finds faith difficult and problematical, that needs a recovery of the sense of the transcendent. Langdon Gilkey, of the University of Chicago, asks a series of disturbing questions: "Is there in American Protestantism a living and real transcendence? Is there any sense of a transcendent Word that enlightens and forms the church and its life, any real sense of the presence of God in worship, of a transcendent standard by which the church measures its own ethical life and the behaviour of its people? Is there any real element of the holy in our contemporary churches? All around us we see the church well acclimated to culture: successful, respected, wealthy, full and growing. But are the trans-

cent and the holy there? ... our American churches are in danger of merely reproducing in pious form the cultural world ... that surrounds them. And the reason is that they have, in the process of growth, *lost that relation to the transcendent which alone can make them relevant and creative in our national life*".(17) And if there is this world of the transcendent, how is the sense of it to be achieved? One feels that any man given an uncompromisingly positive encounter with the presence of the transcendent God would experience a decisive change in both his personal and social life. But is it not precisely the ineffectual nature of the church's claims to contact with the living God that incur for it the devastating critique of those who see through its pretensions?

## **INTO GOD'S REALM ...**

And yet it is exactly here that we *must* begin if we are to arrive at a Christian understanding of man. Over against Feuerbach we must say again, in the words perhaps of David Jenkins: "The idea of revelation implies that men ... have been enabled to form ideas, impressions, and insights about the nature and possibilities of themselves and of the world under the particular guidance and influence of God". (18) Revelation speaks of a breaking through, an unfolding of that which could not be discovered had there been no revelation. It implies the transcendental initiative, in positive antithesis to all forms of natural theology which have as their implication the possibility that we men are ultimately able to break through into the realm of God, find Him, and perhaps even use Him to achieve our goals.

## **FROM GOD TO MAN ...**

It was in the tumultuous chaos at the outbreak of the First World War that Karl Barth found himself forced to question the humanistic theology and its attendant ethics of his former teachers and their predecessors. Forced back to a renewed study of the Bible he published his commentary on the letter to the Romans,



and precipitated a theological revolution. "Let God be God" was his theme. In his infinite "otherness" he has nevertheless broken through to men, the "vertical" which finally defines and establishes man's place on the "horizontal".

This God is the determination of man's being. For forty years Barth continued his painstaking and thorough explication of this theme, carrying its implications into practically every area of man's life. It made him the trenchant opponent of National Socialism and its parallel concept of the German Christian, an opposition which earned the Fuehrer's displeasure and lost him his chair at the University of Bonn in 1934. And then, in 1956, he made explicit a theme which had already been implicit in his thinking for some time. This concept is of decisive importance for a theological anthropology. He addressed a gathering of Swiss Reformed Ministers in 1956 on the theme: "The Humanity of God". (19) He calls this a "change of direction" in his thinking, and quotes: "See the moon in yonder sky? 'Tis only half that meets the eye!". But this was not a mere return to "a religionistic, anthropocentric and in this sense humanistic" theology. This had been decisively set aside in the theological revolution which began in 1914, and yet looking back to those earlier years in a disarmingly frank passage he writes: "It is nevertheless true that it was pre-eminently the image and concept of a 'wholly other' that fascinated us and which we, though not without examination had dared to identify with the deity of him who in the Bible is called Yahweh-Kurios. We viewed this 'wholly other' in isolation, abstracted and absolutised, and set it over against man, this miserable wretch—not to say boxed his ears with it—in such a fashion that it continually showed greater similarity to the God of the philosophers than to the deity of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob".(20)

### GOD IS NEAR

Then he goes further and makes this admission: "*But did it not appear to escape us by quite a distance that the deity of the living God—and we certainly wanted to deal with him—found its meaning and its power only in the context of his history and of his dialogue with man, and thus in his togetherness with man?*".(21) The point is that nowhere in the Scriptures are we dealing with either man in the abstract or, worse still, God in the abstract. We do not observe from a neutral, objective position a God "who in his deity exists only separated from man, distant and strange and thus a non-human if not indeed an inhuman God". Barth continues "*In Jesus Christ there is no isolation of man from God or of God from man ... No, God requires no exclusion of humanity, no non-humanity, not to speak of inhumanity, in order to be truly God. But we may and must, however, look further and recognise the fact that actually his deity encloses humanity in itself ... In him the fact is once and for all established that God does not exist without man*".(22)

### JESUS, GOD AND MAN?

The church has always found it necessary, and very important to give full weight to the deity of Christ, and simultaneously to his humanity. The insistence on the latter arose from the early docetic heresies. But there has always been a struggle to understand the relationship between the human and the divine in Jesus Christ. Essays on the humanity and divinity of Christ by the score have debated the point, and have attempted to achieve a balance between the two, although the problem of allocating his life, work and words to his humanity and deity respectively has always presented something of a puzzle. The problem has arisen from the assumption that the divinity and humanity were in some way separate and incompatible. Traditionally it has been accepted that he is the merciful revelation of God, with all that this involves for man's sinfulness, lostness and hope. It has thus also been accepted that he can bring about a change in man's being and his destiny. Furthermore, as the Son of Man he has been recognised as the revelation of what man should be like, with all the implications for man's behaviour that flow from this. In this way his divinity and humanity are regarded as exercising fairly distinct functions.

### CHRIST A UNITY

A re-reading of the evidence however, might point to the fact that he did not see himself as a dichotomy at all, but as a unity, and his work, not as dual but as single. In other words, his life and work do not then represent something external, which affects man from without, but are rather a sign of the fundamental structure of man's being. This ontological significance of his existence for the existence of man has not always been clearly seen. But it is only in this light that his claims to be "the life" can have any meaning at all. Thus his very existence is the ground and guarantee of the being of man, not contingently, or partially, but totally and definitively.

### CHRIST IS A COMPANION

Within three years of the address referred to, Barth published the next major section of his *Church Dogmatics*, (23) in which he worked out fully his theological anthropology on this Christological foundation. Here it becomes increasingly emphatic that the ontological determination of humanity is grounded in the fact that one man among all others is the man Jesus. Jesus is the one creaturely being in whose existence we have to do immediately and directly with the being of God also. It belongs to every man, regardless of whether he acknowledges it or not, that Jesus too is man, and that in him he has a human Companion, Neighbour, Brother. He has no choice in the matter, and he cannot break free from this Neighbour. We are men, in fact, as in the person of this

*cont. on p. 21*

# WOMEN IN CHURCH SERVICE 2

*Last month Dr. Strassberger dealt with Biblical arguments favouring the ordination of women in the ministry of the Christian church. This month she goes on with this question, living in the mind of the church throughout the world—whether or not women should be allowed into the ministry.*

Elfie Strassberger

## II. THE PRACTICE OF ADMISSION OF WOMEN TO CHURCH ORDERS.

Before we proceed to the African situation, it would be helpful to a balanced view, to summarise the situation as regards the position of women in the church, generally.

### (a) The Reformed Churches.

A number of the larger Reformed Churches admit women to some or to all church offices.

In 1929 the United Free Church of Scotland admitted women to its ministry. In the following years various other Reformed Churches followed the same procedure: in 1946 the United Church of Canada; in 1956 the English Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.; in 1958 the Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk; in 1964 the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.; in 1966 the Presbyterian Church in Canada. In 1966 the Synod of the Gereformeerde Kerken confirmed in principle that women be admitted to the ministry. (13)

The Committee on the ordination of women, of the same Synod, recommended that the office of woman deacon be restored in the Reformed Churches and that the question whether all ecclesiastical offices be opened to women be further investigated. (14)

### (b) The Evangelical Church in Germany.

The various 'Landsinoden' between 1951-1962 decided that women would be admitted to the office of the proclamation of the Word and the serving of the sacraments and that women ministers would be accepted as pastors of congregations and would enjoy the same privileges as men.

### (c) The Methodist, Baptist and Congregational Churches.

Accepted women as ministers for many years.

### (d) The Lutheran Church.

In 1960 the first three women were ordained in the Swedish Lutheran Church. In 1961 the first woman was ordained in the Lutheran Church in Norway. Previous to that the Lutheran Church in the Netherlands and the Danish Lutheran Church allowed women to be ordained.

### (e) The Roman Catholic Church.

No one in the Roman Catholic Church admits that women are spiritually inferior, but that they are by their sex disqualified from the higher grades of the ministry. Only the office of deaconess has been opened to women in the Roman Catholic Church. A large proportion of women serve the church in a full-time capacity as members of Religious Orders. They have rendered their fellow men the most selfless service as nurses, teachers, parish workers, etc. (15)

### (f) Member Churches of the World Council of Churches.

By 1960, 48 member churches of the W.C.C. had allowed women to the office of the ministry; 9 allowed women to a limited office; 90 did not allow women to be ordained.

### (g) Movements.

In Movements like the Student Christian Association women have ministered on equal terms with men for many years. In South Africa we have examples of excellent work done by women as traveling secretaries of the Student Christian Association. To many students this was the only form of ministry to which they responded. The argument that the ministry of women is as effective without ordination as with ordination, is an argument which lessens the importance of the sacraments and which claims that the sacraments are not essential. It is clear that we cannot believe in the vital importance of the sacraments *and* in the ministry of women, if we do not claim the need for the ordination of women.

## III. WOMEN IN CHURCH LIFE IN AFRICA.

In Africa women are rising to a new position. Hedwig Thoma tells of the role women are playing as wives of ministers, hostesses, sympathetic and understanding listeners to problems, leaders and teachers of Sunday schools and catechism classes, pastoral visitors to the sick, organizers and leaders of girls' and womens' camps, etc. (16)



'African women have now assumed new responsibilities, become more highly educated, work in the professions and in business, take their share in the financial provision for the home and assume responsibility for the management of the household. African women are being accepted as partners and the assumption of new duties and responsibilities should now be reflected in their position in the church.'(17)

In 1924 in the report of the International Missionary Council on "The Place of Women in the Church on the Mission Field" it was stated that in many parts of Africa in some churches (Congo, Nyasaland, South Africa) women are "elders" in the congregations and take their part in the general work of the church.(18) It is of interest to note that at the same period there was a desire in the East that Chinese women should be given theological training. The Norwegian, Swedish, Paris Evangelical and Swiss missions reported that profound changes had been effected in regard to the position of African Women through the teaching of Christianity and through contact with white civilization.(19)

### WOMEN MORE ENERGETIC!

The Manyanos or Women's Groups play an important role in the church life of women in South Africa. In 1906 the Methodist Church began to organize Women's Groups on an extensive scale. Mia Brandel-Syrier says that African women in South Africa have progressed further in education and organization, than in the rest of Africa. In the Manyanos they have achieved great independence from the whites.(20) In the Anglican Church the priest has maintained a measure of contact as the Associations are centralised in the church, but on the whole the Manyanos "go entirely their own, and generally unknown ways."(21) She comes to the conclusion that generally speaking "neither the 'European' nor the 'African' churches can 'hold' their Manyanos. The women are much more energetic and enterprising than the men. They get things done, they get the funds. The African minister is very much in their hands. If they do not agree with him, they find ways and means of getting rid of him."(22)

The Manyanos serve many purposes, but not the least (is) to give an opportunity to practice leadership with authority. The leaders achieve the position "entirely by their own efforts."(23) The leader appears to play an important role. Brandel-Syrier expressed the opinion that, "group coherence is maintained by personal loyalty to the leader who acts, encourages, admonishes, advises and resolves quarrels."(24) The leader plays an important role in proclaiming the Gospel to the group, especially in the Methodist Church and American Board Mission (now part of the United Congregational Church). The "African Bible Women" form an order in the Methodist Church of women in full time service, with special training in Evangelism. The group or 'Class Leaders' are also trained.

*To be cont.*

## SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS (cont.)

One, we are confronted by the Other; because it is this transcendent and divine Other which constitutes man, which gives man his being. In fellowship with Jesus therefore, to be a man is to be *with* the One who is unlike us, to be *with* God.

This then is the first constitutive fact of real man, namely, that he is man with God, before whom he is called upon to live in joy and gratitude. But this leads to the second aspect:

### MAN FOR OTHER MEN ...!

Just as real man does not live without God, so too is his life defined as being-in-encounter with his fellows. Just as Jesus, the Son of God, showed that real man is primarily *man for God*, so too in his humanity, he shows us real man as the *man for other men*. Moreover, this is not a superficial, or external attachment to his fellow-men, but is proper to him and belongs to his innermost being. In fact, the glory of his humanity is simply to be fully claimed by his fellows, by their loneliness and misery. In this way he belongs to every member of humanity, and he is for man because God is the God who is for men.

Jesus Christ is thus man in two relationships, in which the second is the reflection, or image, of the first. As in relation with the Father he is the divine Counterpart, so in his relationship with man he has in man his human counterpart. This relationship in community with him in which man finds himself is the image of the community in which God has his being. Consequently, *the fact that man exists in relationship with his fellowmen is not incidental to, or a dispensable element in his humanity. It is a basic structural fact of his being from which he cannot disentangle himself, in spite of the titanic efforts that he has made.*

*To be cont.*

(16) Peter Berger, *op. cit.* He regards his argument as perhaps "a gigantic joke on Feuerbach" (p. 57).

(17) Langdon Gilkey, *How the Church can Minister to the World without Losing Itself*, Harper & Row 1964, pp. 2, 3, 4.

(18) David Jenkins, *What is Man?*, S.C.M. 1970, p. 72.

(19) Karl Barth, *The Humanity of God*, Collins 1961. In this translation it appears as one of three important essays in a volume which takes its title from the one to which we are referring.

(20) *Ibid.*, p. 44.

(21) *Ibid.*, p. 45.

(22) *Ibid.*, pp. 46 and 50.

(23) Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. III, parts 1, 2 and 4. The summary of his thought can scarcely do justice to the extended and closely sustained arguments of these three big volumes. For a fuller, and excellent summary see Verne H. Fletcher, "Barth's Concept of Co-Humanity and the Search for Human Community" in *South East Asia Journal of Theology*, vol. 9, No. 4, April 1968, pp. 36-48.

# CONTROVERSY (cont.)

*Harvey Cox, Harvard professor of divinity, recently commented that Jesus "died the death reserved for those guilty of insurrection."*

## WCC

Mr. Stringfellow, whom I like personally but whom I have not heard quoted in any WCC meeting for about four years, may have some trouble to find exegeses to back him up; Dr. Cox's remark can hardly be disputed. But what in the world is the function of these two quotes here?

## R.D.

*Although church liberals talk glibly of revolution, they become vague when pressed to spell out what they mean by the incendiary word. "Revolution means one thing to church leaders in one area," a WCC spokesman at its Geneva headquarters told me, "and quite another elsewhere. People in a given situation must figure out for themselves what form it should take." Such imprecision leaves the door wide-open everywhere. If violent action can be mandated to South Africa, then why not to any social order, including the American, which one might deem inequitable?*

## WCC

On the contrary, liberals tend to talk glibly about evolution. They are by definition against revolution. One of the great debates in the Christian Church is between liberals who trust that the necessary changes in society can be brought about without violent revolutions, and those who are convinced that the time for such gradual change has passed. Indignation, fear and defensiveness ventilated in the way done by the Reader's Digest, cannot prevent these questions from being asked.

One of the elements in the debate is the clarification of terms which are used in different cultures in different ways. Everybody of course knows that the word "revolution" is used in many ways. The automobile industry has "revolutionary new models", the hippies proclaim "a revolution of love", while Fidel Castro has yet another idea. The WCC, where people from six continents come together as Christians, can hardly be expected to standardise this semantic confusion.

The last phrase erroneously states—again—that the WCC mandates violence in South Africa. Here the article turns remarks made by the critics of the WCC into statements of fact.

## R.D.

*Natural Choice. The World Council's progression from peaceful change to revolution first became plain*

*at a "World Conference on Church and Society" which it sponsored in Geneva in 1966. To this two-week meeting came 420 participants representing 164 churches in 80 countries. The usual clerics and theologians were there. But, in addition, a number of the economists and political "experts" present were of such a stripe that the conference became, as one observer noted, "a debate between leftists and extreme leftists".*

## WCC

To be read carefully! The WCC called a conference. It was made very clear that it would not speak for the WCC—but to it. And so it did. The reports and preparatory volumes, some five hefty books, were not binding on the churches.

Its reports were used not only in churches, but in all the international conferences of the UN, and praised not for their revolutionary content but for their inclusiveness. They showed the spectrum of Christian lay thinking and contributed to a debate going on everywhere.

The clever phrase referring to a debate between leftists and extreme leftists—which is taken out of Barron's Weekly of January 9, 1967—does not accurately reflect an event in which Britain's present Tory Minister of Defence, Peter Kirk, chaired one of the sections, and the speakers included: Jean Rey, Max Kohnstamm, Jacques Ellul, Roger Mehl and many others.

## R.D.

*Speakers called for a fundamental "restructuring of the world economy," a shifting of millions of employed workers from developed countries to those in the developing stage, even though such forced migration would "necessarily imply temporary dislocation and possible suffering for a large number of people." All this was to be financed by an "international tax" levied on the "have" nations, of at least two percent of their gross national product. Examining these grandiose suggestions, one observer commented: "If this is not a call for world socialism, what is it?"*

## WCC

In 1966, Nobel Prize-winner, Dr. Jan Tinbergen, inspired the Conference in a major way to accept recommendations about a restructured world economy. So far so good, but this paragraph, in great confusion, mixes things which speakers are alleged to have said to the 1966 Conference, what the Conference said, false interpretations of what the Conference said, and the biased comment of a conservative propagandist herein called an "observer".

Examine the elements: Speakers called for a fundamental restructuring of the world economy (the purpose of the meeting was to discuss needed changes); but *nobody* called for a "shifting of millions of



employed workers from developed countries to those in the developing stage" since that is an absurd proposition when developing countries are already overburdened with unemployed labour; nobody advocated the opposite, either; some international migration was recognised as desirable; nobody recommended "forced migration", and nobody advocated an international tax to finance forced migration; the idea of an international tax to finance development is only mentioned as a point for study by professional economists.

The quotation from the "observer" is in fact a quote from 1966 article by Alice Widener (later reprinted in Barron's Weekly) entitled "The Gospel of Revolution". The article of Miss Widener has already been challenged as a confused and distorted interpretation of the 1966 Conference, based on an ideological prejudice which sees every appeal for change as a threat to the North American business establishment!

#### **R.D.**

*By the time the 1966 conference was over, the WCC was firmly committed to aiding revolutionary change. But where to start? Boggled down in the complexities of "restructuring" the world economically, socially and politically, yet chided by radicals to get going on some clear-cut issue, the conference settled on racism. To WCC activists, the choice was a natural, since in their view radical injustice is society's worst evil today and is largely at the root of lack of economic development.*

#### **WCC**

There is no sign that the WCC's Central Committee accepted anything like a "theology of revolution". A call to revolutionary change does not even appear in its official report. Those who spoke for such a theology often despaired at the slowness by which the WCC and its member churches took serious notice of their words and needs.

Between 1966 and 1968 the race issue was not the main preoccupation of the Council at all. At that time the "WCC activists" (whatever that means) were trying to assist the churches to study the wider question of "development partnership" in the light of their overall commitment to church unity. The race issue during that period was seen as an element in this wider debate. A somewhat closer look at WCC publications during that time would make this clear.

#### **R.D.**

*Blackmail and Bombast. The methods used to engineer acceptance of the Program to Combat Racism provide sharp insight into the World Council. First, the Council's secretariat submitted a summons*

*to action at the 1968 General Assembly in Uppsala, Sweden. Heavy emphasis was put on what WCC staffer Baldwin Sjollema (now the Program's director) called "the church's complicity in benefiting from and furthering white racist oppression."*

#### **WCC**

Nonsense. What made the Assembly sit up was a disturbing address by James Baldwin, the American pastor's son, who did not ask the church to do anything but condemned it bitterly for having betrayed its faith and its Christ. His words overshadowed all other things said about race in Uppsala. Most of the rest had been spelled out more sharply in the three earlier Assemblies (1948, 1954, and 1961).

#### **R.D.**

*Though nobody explained how the church had so benefited, the Assembly contritely agreed to the development of a "crash program" of unspecified nature.*

#### **WCC**

Perhaps the Reader's Digest should read the books by Martin Luther King, Albert Luthuli or any other black leader in the world to be reminded of the way in which our white societies and therefore our white churches have materially benefited from slavery or colonialist policies.

#### **R.D.**

*With this mandate, the WCC staff and a "committee on race" heated up the issue by sponsoring a "consultation" at London's Notting Hill in May 1969. Its purpose: To advise the WCC on an ecumenical program of action to eradicate racism." Its chairman: Sen. George McGovern. Participants included a number of black-power militants.*

#### **WCC**

The WCC, rather than relying on the wisdom of its staff, always starts a new phase of its programme by "consultation". Why these quotation marks? The Notting Hill Consultation again did *not speak for the WCC but to it*. It meant the first fully-fledged WCC encounter with black militants and it was very difficult.

*To be cont.*

# Letter to the Editor:

## CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE?

*To promote dialogue about the question of civil disobedience, a letter by Mr. Martin van der Ploeg, which is a reaction to Dr. Ernlé Young's article on civil disobedience and which appeared in the December issue, is hereby published. Dr. Young was asked to reply to this letter and his answer is also published.*

### M. van der Ploeg

*I draw attention to a few possibly obscure implications of Ernlé Young's article.*

Quoting four Calvinist Biblical Scholars it appears that three of them included violent measures as moral means of opposing evil laws:

Calvin: "... (in case an) earthly prince ... rises up against God ... we ought rather ... seize upon his throne and draw him down from there."

Althusius: "... The tyrant is to be resisted ... by force of arms ..." Karl Barth: "... possible consequences of forcible resistance may certainly not be excluded in advance."

Only Cullmann seems to differ: "But it is not our business to take the sword, to wage war ... against the State in order to destroy its existence."

I object against Young's conclusion that Karl Barth is thus seen standing ... with the NT itself ... in affirming the duty of Christians ... to resist the unjust State ... with violence as the occasion demands. Where does the NT suggest violence as a means to promote the cause of God, of Love? The command of turning the other cheek suggests differently.

But with the advance of communism in Africa, guerilla activities on our borders and the potentiality of violence within our borders as a logical consequence of discriminatory laws I submit, firstly, that it does do the Government credit to allow an article suggesting the morality of violence to be published at all; secondly, that the C.I. and its affiliated organisations should again unequivocally reject violence as a means of achieving any good and consequently stand behind the Government's efforts to prevent violence and thirdly, that insofar as its efforts are directed at the evolvment of a just society (and thereby reduce the potentiality of internal violence and communist infiltration) it will do so by peaceful means, i.e. means lawful, indeed necessary, in terms of Christian conscience.

Furthermore I submit as (obscure) implications:

- that (quote Calvin): "Even bad rulers are to be obeyed ... because princes do never sofar abuse their power, by harassing the good and innocent, that they do not retain in their tyranny some form of just Government."
- that our Government, which regrets (in its opinion temporary) "inconveniences" for certain groups as a result of its path towards a just apartheid society, is fully entitled to exact obedience to its laws by all means it deems best and necessary;
- that Christian charity demands believe in the sincerity of the rulers, a thing which I personally have never found difficult considering, that prejudice is not a sin but a sickness. Prejudice can lead to conclusions which are incomprehensible to those who think that they are not prejudiced;
- that Christians, who believe that means and ends are one, i.e. that unjust laws will never achieve a just society, have according to the article under review the sacred duty to resist evil laws by words and deeds;
- that at least their deeds are bound to be in conflict with civil laws, and they must expect to be dealt with accordingly;
- that the process of convictions, restrictions, bannings etc. of good Christians by the Government or its Courts may be considered as being in order in terms of moral law in respect of the Government as well as the man or people who are at the receiving end of the Government's or Court's order.
- that by a peaceful procedure as above outlined the non-violent resister is willing to accept fines and jail and therefore suffers. These procedures will continue until such time that either the Government or the resister admit that it (he) is wrong and makes amendments accordingly;



- that this process of evolvment may be considered as normal, indeed as essential and unavoidable if a nation has reached a status of internal conflict as our country has;
- that this process has a great, inherent potentiality for the good of all people involved, which is precisely why Dr. Beyers Naudé calls it: an enormous challenge, but also a unique privilege.

In the same article Mr. Young quotes Mr. Vorster, who referring to the Gandhian method as applied by Martin Luther King, says: "Cut the thoughts of this method out immediately, for the (religious) cloak you carry will not protect you if you try to do this in South Africa."

We may assume, that Mr. Vorster is aware of the non-violent resisters' willingness to accept jail, and therefore, the meaning of his sentence is somewhat obscure, unless he refers to the fact, that the non-violent resister in America was at least *de jure* protected by the Constitution, whereas, in South Africa, he is not. In principle, there is little difference. In practice, whilst not counting on any support but acting solely on the dictates of his Christian conscience, he should be supported by reaction from other Christians. This is for instance implied in Archbishop Hurley's statement when he admits insufficient support for his banned or deported priests.

In view of the complexity of the South African situation I beg again for understanding of the difficult position in which the Government finds itself and I may add, that the Government is far more moral than would appear from its discriminatory laws. It is up to the South Africans to show their loyalty to the nation by acting as their conscience demands in terms of Christian charity.

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## E. Young

Thank you for affording me the opportunity of replying to Mr. van der Ploeg's criticisms of my article in the December issue of *Pro Veritate*.

Despite the clear indication in the sub-title that my paper dealt with the subject of civil disobedience and not with the *mode* of resistance to an unjust state, Mr. van der Ploeg appears to have interpreted it as a paper on violent opposition to a demonic regime. Therefore, I refuse—at this stage—to be drawn into a discussion of violence as a legitimate or illegitimate option for the

Christian. However, I would like to draw Mr. van der Ploeg's attention to certain glaring inconsistencies in his own arguments.

First, the writer objects "against Young's conclusion that Karl Barth is thus seen standing ... with the NT itself ... in affirming the duty of Christians ... to resist the unjust state ... with violence as the occasion demands." Van der Ploeg believes that Christians should rather "turn the other cheek" to the unjust state. May I point out that shortly after Barth's Gifford lectures were delivered, World War II broke out. Barth supported to the hilt the Allied war effort because, in his view, the Nazi state represented the absolute perversion of the just civil order. Is Van der Ploeg suggesting that the Allies should have "turned the other cheek" to Hitler and his bullies? If so, he will not have the support of many of his fellow-Hollanders!

Second, the writer obviously believes that our present government is morally justified in being prepared to resist—by violence if necessary—those who further "the advance of communism in Africa, guerilla activities on our borders and the potentiality of violence within our borders as a logical consequence of discriminatory laws." On what grounds would Van der Ploeg justify the use of violence by our government in the light of his own premises—"turning the other cheek", "loving", etc.? If violence is wrong for those who resist evil in one form, then surely it is equally wrong for those who resist evil in other guises?

Third, Van der Ploeg asserts that "Christian charity demands believe (sic!) in the sincerity of the rulers, a thing which I personally have never found difficult ..." Even if I were persuaded of the sincerity of those presently in power in South Africa—which I am not—this would be no guarantee whatever of the justness of their cause. Hitler himself was terribly sincere. But Auschwitz, Treblinka, Belsen, and Buchenwald bear tragic testimony to the evil of his political programme. Christian charity not only needs to be directed towards those presently in authority in our country, but also towards the deprived, the dispossessed, and the discriminated against.

Finally, Van der Ploeg believes that "it is up to the South Africans to show their loyalty to the nation by acting as their conscience demands in terms of Christian charity." Need I remind the writer that the nation is not the same as the *volk*, and that South Africa is (still) a multi-racial country? Loyalty to the nation then most certainly does demand action in terms of Christian charity. But action towards whom? The *volk*? Or South Africa's peoples of all races and colours? It may well be—and this is the dire challenge facing white Christians in South Africa—that charitable action aimed at *all* the peoples who make up this great nation of ours will soon be possible only at the risk of engaging in civil disobedience against those who represent the narrower loyalties and claims of *volk*.

\*