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SECURITY IN SOUTH AFRICA?

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SEKURITEIT IN SUID-AFRIKA?

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METROPOLITAN PORTUGAL

The overthrow of the 48-year old dictatorship of Dr Marcello Caetano of Portugal by General Antonio de Spínola has far-reaching and serious consequences for the whole of Southern Africa—and it is of the greatest importance for South Africa to consider closely the implications that the coup d'état holds for Mozambique and Angola especially insofar as these concern the future of our country. While it is as yet too early to determine the full effects which will follow this revolutionary change the following may be asserted fairly positively.

- * The coup d'état and its direct effect on South Africa, seen from the South African point of view, is the most important political event since the National Party came to power in 1948.

- * Whatever the final form of government that eventually emerges in Mozambique and Angola it is undoubtedly true that within the foreseeable future a black majority government will take over in both countries.

- * Every white man in South Africa who would like to understand something of the radical political and social changes which have taken place, should grasp the clear message of these events, viz. that the ruling white group in South Africa has only a few years (in our opinion not longer than, say, five to six years) in which to put its house in order by granting a share of political and economic power to the black population groups in our country. It is only by such an approach that we can prevent a serious clash of violence in our country.

- * The psychological and political initiative afforded by these developments present the leaders of our black community in South Africa with a unique opportunity of repeating the call for a round-table conference where representatives of all culture and colour groups of the whole of South Africa can come together to deliberate on the best way of implementing a peaceful change-over from the existing white-dominated political structure to a body-politic in which all citizens of the country will have an equal say.

- * The coup d'état in Portugal and the consequent reactions particularly in Mozambique came as a complete surprise to the people of South Africa, revealing divergent views as between white and black. Among the whites the first general reaction was one of uncertainty and fear and among the blacks one of joy and hopeful anticipation; uncertainty and fear because the whites presume that this new development poses a serious threat to white rule in South Africa, while the black community feels intuitively that this is the beginning of a new era which will undoubtedly bring with it emancipation from racist systems.

Hence it is advisable that white South Africa—and especially the Christian Churches—should take careful note of the developments in Portugal, Mozambique and

Angola. Since the role which the churches are to play in this connection, the points of view which they adopt and the witness they bear are of far-reaching significance for the future of the Church of Christ in South Africa—indeed in the whole of Africa. Because of its dominating position in Mozambique the Roman Catholic Church has a special responsibility via the Roman Catholic Church in South Africa to inform its members as well as the members of all other churches of what has been happening over the years in Portugal and Mozambique where the official leadership of the Church has so identified itself with the political status quo that in the eyes of the people the Church is seen as an institute hand-in-glove with the regime of the oppressors.

Furthermore, the South African member churches of the A.A.C.C. (All Africa Conference of Churches) which is to meet in Lusaka from 11th-25th May, will be faced with grave problems and challenges. The new status of esteem and authority with which a movement such as Frelimo is now to be invested, because of the fact that this organization is now undeniably acknowledged by the black inhabitants of Africa as the liberator of an oppressed people, will subject the black Christian leaders of South Africa to greater pressures in demanding when they return from Lusaka that all forms of racism in South Africa be eliminated immediately—not tomorrow, or the next, but here and now; they must be eliminated if we are to look to a future without violence.

In making their preparations for the forthcoming talks with delegates of the *Nederlandse Gereformeerde Kerke* in September and October of this year on the subject of the support given by the latter to the World Council of Churches P.C.R. (*Programme to Combat Racism*), it is essential that especially the *Nederduitse Gereformeerde* and the *Gereformeerde Churches of South Africa* should consider the fact that the political revolution in Portugal, Angola and Mozambique has bestowed a very strong political and strategic advantage on the W.C.C. and all other Churches which have supported guerilla movements such as Frelimo, (Mozambique), M.P.L.A. (Angola), and P.A.I.G.C. (Guinea-Bassao). If by that time the new Portuguese government has succeeded in coming to a satisfactory and peaceful agreement with Frelimo, many of the arguments which were put forward by the delegation of the South African Churches recently in Lunteren against the action of Frelimo will appear as obsolete and no longer relevant.

But whatever happens one fact clearly emerges: the events in Mozambique contain an unmistakable message—particularly for South Africa—and that is that the Churches in our country must now bear witness that the Gospel of Christ with its message and testimony of justice, unity and the brotherhood of man, is stronger than any force of weapons and violence.★

—Beyers Naudé

METROPOLITAANSE PORTUGAL

Die omverwerping van die 48-jaar lange diktatuur van dr Marcello Caetano van Portugal deur generall Antonio de Spinoza het verrykende en ernstige gevolge vir die hele Suider-Afrika—en dis van die grootste belang vir Suid-Afrika om die implikasies wat hierdie staatsgreep vir Mosambiek en Angola inhou, noukeurig te oorweeg veral in soverre dit die toekoms van ons land raak. Hoewel dit nog te vroeg is om die volle uitwerking van hierdie staatsommekeer te bepaal kan die volgende met stellige sekerheid beweer word:

* Die staatsgreep en die direkte uitwerking wat dit op Suider-Afrika het is, uit Suid-Afrikaanse oogpunt gesien, die belangrikste politieke gebeurtenis sedert die Nasionale Party in 1948 aan bewind van sake gekom het.

* Wat ookal die finale regeringsvorm gaan wees waartoe Mosambiek en Angola gaan kom, beteken dit ongetwyfeld dat 'n swart meerderheidsregering in albei die lande binne afsienbare tyd sal oorneem.

* Elke blanke in Suid-Afrika wat iets wil verstaan van die ingrypende politieke en sosiale veranderinge wat plaasgevind het, behoort die duidelike boodskap van hierdie gebeure op te vang naamlik dat die heersende blanke groepe in Suid-Afrika 'n paar jaar, (na my mening nie langer as ongeveer vyf tot ses jaar nie), oor het om sy huis in orde te bring deur politieke en ekonomiese mag met die swart bevolkingsgroepe van ons land te deel. Dis alleen deur so 'n handeling dat ons 'n ernstige botsing van geweld in ons land kan voorkom.

* Die leiers van ons swart gemeenskap in Suid-Afrika word deur die psigologiese en politieke inisiatief wat dié verwickelinge hulle bied, 'n besondere geleentheid gebied om die beroep om 'n rondetafel-konferensie te herhaal, waar verteenwoordigers van alle kultuur- en kleurgroepe van die hele Suid-Afrika kan saamkom om te beraadslaag oor die beste manier om 'n vreedsame oorskakeling te bewerkstellig van die huidige blankedomineerde politieke struktuur na 'n politieke staatsbestel waarin alle inwoners van die land 'n eweredige seggenskap sal hê.

* Die staatsgreep in Portugal en die gevolglike reaksies veral in Mosambiek het as 'n volslae verrassing vir die inwoners van Suid-Afrika gekom, met 'n uiteenlopende reaksie by wit en swart. By die blankes was die eerste algemene reaksie een van onsekerheid en vrees en by die swartes een van vreugde en verwagting; onsekerheid en vrees omdat die blankes vermoed dat hierdie nuwe verwickelinge blanke heerskappy in Suid-Afrika ernstig bedreig, terwyl die swart gemeenskap intuitief aanvoel dat dit die begin is van 'n nuwe era wat ongetwyfeld die bevryding van sisteme van rassisme gaan meebring.

Daarom is dit gerade dat blank Suid-Afrika—en by name die Christelike kerke—noukeurig kennis neem van die verwickelinge in Portugal, Mosambiek en Angola.

Want die rol wat die kerke in dié verband gaan speel, die standpunte wat hulle gaan inneem en die getuienis wat hulle gaan lewer, is van verreikende betekenis vir die toekoms van die kerk van Christus in Suider-Afrika—ja, in die hele Afrika. Vanweë sy oorheersende posisie in Mosambiek het die Rooms-Katolieke Kerk 'n besondere verantwoordelikheid om deur middel van dié kerk in Suid-Afrika sy lidmate, asook die lidmate van alle ander kerke, in te lig oor wat presies al die jare in Portugal en Mosambiek gebeur het waar die amptelike leierskap van die kerk hom so vereenselwig het met die politieke status quo dat in die oë van die bevolking die kerk as instituut gesien is as kop in een mus met die regime van die onderdrukker.

Ook die Suid-Afrikaanse ledekerke van die AACC (All Africa Conference of Churches)—wat vanaf 11-25 Mei in Lusaka vergader—gaan voor geweldige probleme en uitdagings in hierdie konferensie geplaas word. Die nuwe status van aansien en gesag waarmee 'n beweging soos Frelimo tans bejeën en beklee word, vanweë die feit dat dié organisasie tans deur die swart inwoners van Afrika onteenseglik as bevryders van 'n onderdrukte volk erken word, gaan die swart Christenleiers van Suid-Afrika onder groter druk plaas om na hulle terugkeer van Lusaka te eis dat alle vorms van rassisme in Suid-Afrika nie môre of oormôre nie, maar vandag en nou verwyder moet word as ons 'n toekoms sonder geweld verlang.

Maar ook—en veral—die Nederduitse Gereformeerde en die Gereformeerde Kerke van Suid-Afrika sal, in hulle voorbereiding van die verwagte gesprekke met die afvaardiging van die Nederlandse Gereformeerde Kerke in September en Oktober vanjaar insake die steun van laasgenoemde kerke aan die Wêreldraad se PCR (Program to Combat Racism), moet kennis neem van die feit dat die politieke omwenteling in Portugal, Angola en Mosambiek 'n baie sterk politieke en strategiese voordeel aan die Wêreldraad van Kerke en alle ander kerke besorg het, wat steun aan guerilla-beweginge soos Frelimo (Mosambiek), M.P.L.A. (Angola), en P.A.I.G.C. (Guinee-Bissao) gegee het. As teen daardie tyd die nuwe Portugese regering daarin geslaag het om tot 'n bevredigende vreedsame skikking met Frelimo te kom, gaan baie van die argumente wat die afgevaardigdes van die Suid-Afrikaanse kerke onlangs in Lunteren teen die optrede van Frelimo gebruik het, as verouderd en nie langer ter sake nie, voorkom.

Maar wat ook al verder plaasvind een feit spreek ons duidelik aan: die gebeure in Mosambiek hou 'n onmiskenbare boodskap in—ook en veral vir Suid-Afrika—dat die kerke in ons land nou bewys sal moet lewer dat die evangelie van Christus met sy boodskap en bewyse van geregtigheid, saamhorigheid en medemenslikheid sterker is as enige mag van wapens of geweld.★

—Beyers Naudé

W.A. DE KLERK'S CRITICISM OF SPRO-CAS AND THE CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE

Ten articles on the above theme are printed in this edition of *Pro Veritate*. Comprehensive extracts have been made of the articles which have been published in newspapers to provide a balanced picture, and they are printed in smaller print. The other articles have been printed in full and in the usual type. Two letters by Mr. Peter Randall are not reproduced as these overlap Dr. André du Toit's more comprehensive writings. As a help to our readers these articles have been numbered from 1 to 10.

Nos. 1 + 2: In the *Cape Argus*, 18.12.'73, 19.12.'73, Mr. W.A. de Klerk, the well-known Afrikaans writer attacked and criticised Spro-cas and the Christian Institute severely.

No. 3: Dr. André du Toit, a lecturer in Political Philosophy at Stellenbosch and a co-author of the political report of Spro-cas, replied to Mr. de Klerk's criticism in *The Argus*, 2.1.'74.

No. 4: Mr. Peter Randall, who was director of Spro-cas

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until the project ended in December 1973, also replied in *The Argus*.

No. 5: Mr. James Moulder, a lecturer in philosophy at Grahamstown, wrote an article which did not appear in the newspapers. He answered Mr. de Klerk's criticism on the Christian Institute.

No. 6: The above articles were written in English, but in the meantime a summary of Mr. de Klerk's articles appeared in "*Die Vaderland*", the Transvaal afternoon paper, 20.12.'73.

No. 7: André du Toit answered this Afrikaans article in "*Die Vaderland*", 8.1.'74, eliciting

No. 8: a reply by W.A. de Klerk in "*Die Vaderland*", 31.1.'74.

No. 9: André du Toit again replied to W.A. de Klerk but this article was not published.

No. 10: Roelf Meyer, editor of *Pro Veritate*, wrote an article as an answer to W.A. de Klerk's presentation of John Calvin's views.

1

**christian institute and radical politics
—chasing alternative · w.a. de klerk**

For years critics of the National Party, with its revolutionary political philosophy from the radical Right, were taunted to produce an 'alternative' for apartheid.

This 'alternative', in the eyes of the radical Rightists, meant another kind of radicalism—another 'lewens- en wêreld-beskouing' providing the answer to the human situation in South Africa.

All that was really necessary to answer the taunt was to examine the validity of radical politics as such; to question the legitimacy of system-building; the rationalised attempt to structure the future of any society in terms of a comprehensive and detailed programme for the future; its 'unfolding' step by logical step.

The questioning would then have shown, at the same time, what the true limits of politics were, of its inherent inability to deal with the communal life of man in fundamental terms, in what John Calvin called the 'société provisoire.'

Civil Government, Calvin had clearly stated in the final chapter of the Institutes, was no 'apostolic ministry'. This, in effect, was what had been meant when Christ had said that we

should pay Caesar what was due to Caesar, and pay God what was due to God. Caesar, ordinally within his bounds, should be obeyed, even where, as St. Paul was later to imply (Romans 13), the civil authority seemed to be acting unjustly. The time for an out-and-out refusal of Caesar's authority would come when he exceeded his bounds, became absolute, made absolute claims, set himself up, in fact, as another kind of deity.

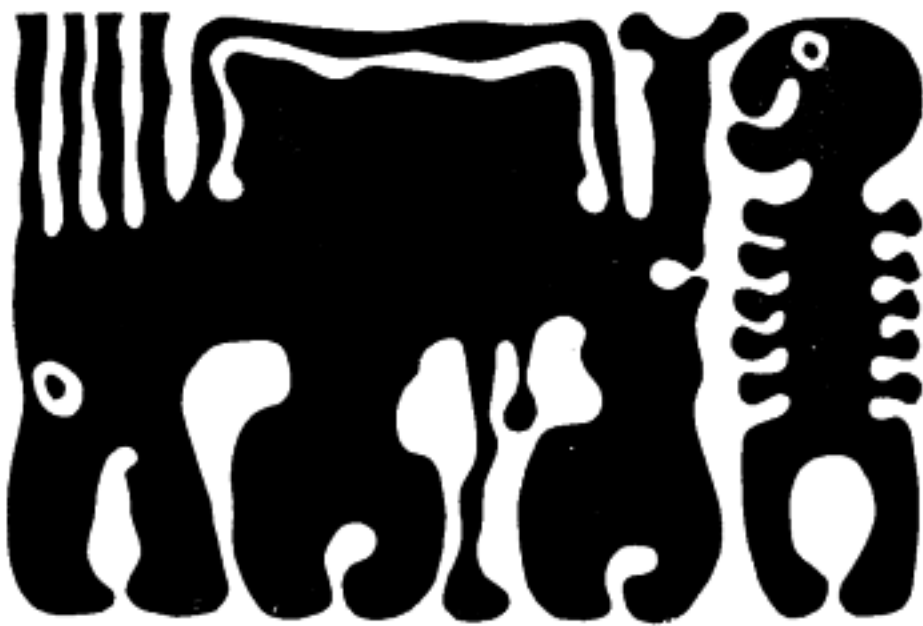
As André Biéler has shown, however, before that stage would be reached, there was, indeed, in human things this double regime (Calvin himself refers to it as a 'twofold government in man'—Institutes 4:20:1. See also 3:19:15, 16 on the spiritual and temporal kingdoms): that of politics-and-the-law; and that of the Gospels. (*La Pensée Economique et Sociale de Calvin* pages 208, 209.)

This accords with what St. Thomas Aquinas has to say on human law in the *Summa Theologica*. Temporal happiness in a well-governed community is not man's final end. Human law does not presume to take man to his final end. It aims at a subordinate end ...

The law was obviously part of what Bieler calls the 'morale minimum' on which things within the provisional order of civil government would operate—something lesser than the concept of love which is at the heart of the Gospels.

The law operates at its best, not in terms of a giving of the undercoat while only the top coat is due, nor of walking the second mile, while only the first is called for. This is the way of love. The law operates at its best merely on the basis of value for value—a quid pro quo, symbolised by the blindfolded figure of Justice, holding in her hands the scales.

Christian love, the morale optimum, does away with this balancing act, transcends the quid pro quo, acts with a kind of abandon giving all and demanding nothing. But the law, as one aspect of the civil order which already demonstrates the lower scale on which it is bound to work by the measure of violence necessary to its proper administration. Without police, courts of law, and certain sanctions, both a civil and a criminal nature, the law just cannot operate.



Human law, St. Thomas says in the Summa, contents itself with the graver vices and more harmful acts of man which disturb the solidarity of the community. Divine law imposes duties and obligations binding in conscience. An obvious metaphor from modern living is the rules of the road. The traffic of our day just could not do without this minimum code of road conduct being enforced. For the sake of good driving and a human society on the roads, however, more would be necessary than just the rules. Common decency (love, if you like) would point to a better way. At the same time, it would be the height of folly to demand that the rules of the road be scrapped and good driving and manageable traffic be left to everyone's common decency.

At the same time, and by the same token, it would be equal folly to demand that the 'law of Christ' find its way in to statutes and ordinances. What could be workably legislated for moves on a lower level. This is precisely the morale minimum of which Bieler speaks. It is also the meaning of Calvin's own insistence in the Institutes that politics—the 'royal office'—is not the apostolic ministry. (Institutes 4:20:7.)

The immense intelligence of Calvin saw, deeper than almost anybody else, that in this matter of civil government there were basically two ways in which man could err. Both, when examined fully, constituted a breach of limits—the attempt to exceed what is properly civil government, to pretend to an 'apostolic ministry'.

On the one hand there were those who fell victim to the

vanity of trying to 'include the kingdom of Christ under the elements of this world' (Institutes *ibid.*) and on the other there was the 'king (who) has exceeded his limits, and not only been injurious to men, but by raising his horn against God, had virtually abrogated his own power' (Institutes 4:20:32). In our metaphor of the road-users, this would accord with those who would regulate traffic in terms of the 'law of Christ' and those who would regulate traffic in terms of some all-inclusive authoritarian presence alone. The latter could be anything from the king who believed in his divine right (as was still the case in Calvin's day) to modern radical politicians who attempt to redeem society in terms of another kind of divinity.

This is the ideological framework within whose embrace man and society is to be saved. In both these instances of political man exceeding his bounds, we have to do with a spurious religiosity—that of those who insist on the rule of the 'law of Christ' in civil matters; that of those who demand confession to a secular religion; such as ideological democracy, the various fascisms and Marxism, apartheid, etc.

What inevitably happens is that these two categories sooner or later discover they are, in fact, sharing a common field. This, it seems, is precisely what has happened in the case of the Christian Institute and Spro-cas.

In key Spro-cas publications in 1972 a demand was made for radical national change to come about by means of a general redistribution of resources. Only through 'participatory democracy' could the 'disadvantages of the Blacks' be repaired. This would require a 'rapid and massive' displacement of White private ownership. For ownership to change hands, however, political power would also have to change hands.

Although the view was expressed at the time that all this was merely a talking point, the present writer had reason to object. Claims had also been made that South Africa, too, was in need of Utopian thinking. But Utopian thinking, the present writer pointed out at the time to Mr Peter Randall, Director of Spro-cas, was precisely the prime difficulty of all ideological system-building. It was, by the same token, also the prime difficulty of apartheid. Utopian thinking, in fact, also constituted the kind of excess of the limits of civil government (trying to be an 'apostolic ministry') which Calvin so correctly rejected.

This would precisely apply where the 'kingdom' took the form of a secular gospel, such as also 'participatory democracy' sought to be.

"I myself have little doubt that if we are really serious about bringing about real change in South Africa, we shall have to move in the direction indicated", Peter Randall duly replied. "The full implications of this have still to be spelt out."

Even more significant were the words—"it seems to me that this (direction) (participatory democracy)" represented an organic outgrowth of the work of Spro-cas, and its challenge could not be avoided'.

So much for the 'talking point'. This proved, in a sense, to be correct. Far from the approach being nothing more than a 'basis for discussion' it, indeed, indicated the way, the direction, Spro-cas, and with it the Christian Institute, would go—and, in fact, went. By this is meant that, increasingly, it became the socio-political 'alternative' to apartheid, which Spro-cas was dedicated to find, which conclusively also gave content to the work of the Christian Institute.

What remained of the original ecumenical ideal was largely in name only. After all, what meaning could it have in the South African context, when it had failed not only to attract to

its membership more than a handful of members of the largest of the White religious communities in the country—members of the Dutch Reformed Churches—but had gradually forfeited the interest and enthusiasm of many of such who were prepared to support it at an early stage.

The Spro-cas project, after an enormous amount of deliberation on the 'alternative' for apartheid and after a great deal of money spent on the project (emanating mainly from extra-territorial sources), finally produced its definitive document—South Africa's Political Alternatives: report of the Spro-cas political commission. This lengthy and scholarly study, manifestly undertaken and conducted with a high degree of integrity, erudition, and even passion, was, probably unwittingly as far as its contributing authors and advisers were concerned, doing precisely what Peter Randall had envisaged.

In the most detailed and meticulous way, it has formulated the alternative socio-political system. After all the many months of deep deliberation, writing, publishing, its authors had fallen into precisely the same error as those they had been so deeply critical of—the apostles of apartheid or separate development. What they presented to South Africa was yet another manifesto of radical, redemptive politics; yet another all-including socio-political system—a political idealism

within which a new South Africa would arise, finally purged from its inhumanities, its basic errors, its sins. Most strangely, and most ironically, the document reminds one strongly of what was produced by Dr Geoff Cronje in 1942 ('n Tuiste vir die Nageslag) and again in 1947 (Regverdige Rasse-Apartheid)—two most erudite, lengthy and sincere studies on the matter of a 'political alternative'—the system which would finally put an end to the errors, the indulgences, the rottennesses, the bankruptcy of the existing political order.

Its predominant note, too, was a shining Christian idealism. It was a system based on the idea of ethnic identity, ensuring a 'home for posterity', not only for the Whites of this country, but for all its various ethnic groups.

It was a new, all-providing structure which would not only ensure survival for the Whites but would also ensure justice for all the country's ethnic groups. It was a redemptive, a messianic, a radical system. It was the blueprint for a definitive order of justice, the new order of separate development. At the time it formed not only the result of Dr Cronje's own intensive thought, idealism and concern, it also provided the field of a widespread study by members of the Broederbond. It was utterly impossible to envisage to what injustice this very concern with ultimate social justice would lead.★

—The Argus, 18.12.73

2

'matters of civil government — 'as far as we can see' · w.a. de klerk

As far as the present 'political alternative' as contained in the Spro-cas report (South Africa's Political Alternatives) is concerned, one need only to look at the human calibre of those who participated in its formulation to understand how difficult it may well be for those close to them, or even reasonably acquainted with them, to envisage anything like the present injustice of the apartheid system to become a part, too, in time, of what they see as a new order of justice for the South African society.

But this is exactly what the irony of history is all about. Time and again it has been demonstrated. Think of the Declaration of Independence and its noble Rights of Man, which within a decade (as *liberté, égalité, fraternité*) became the ultimate Terror of the Jacobins.

Pascal was right: he who would become an angel, will discover himself to have become a devil.

Precisely in the way in which it was claimed that participatory democracy was nothing more than a basis for discussion (even though Peter Randall had positively indicated that it pointed to the direction in which we would have to move if we wished 'real change' to be brought about in South Africa), it was now said that the Report of the Political Commission, sought nothing more. No doubt, this is what was in the minds of most of those who took part in the deliberations. An examination of the report itself, however, shows a multiplicity of positive statements, which could only mean one thing as far as the reader was concerned: *Here was the true alternative for apartheid.*

Reference has been made to the writing of Dr Geoff Cronje

in the forties: his meticulously constructed framework, *based on 'sound Christian principles'*. The report also sets out in Part One to establish the (Christian) ethical basis for what is to follow. Part Two is concluded by stating the *ideal* which this ethical basis must serve: 'They can achieve security only by admitting their black citizens to an effective share of political participation and by collaborating with them in building an open society whose foundations are justice, liberty and mutual esteem'.

Wrestling at length with the problem of a long-term goal—again, precisely in the matter which characterised the deliberations of countless study groups, on the writings of Cronje and others, consisting not only of Broederbonders, but also of concerned Afrikaners of the forties generally—the Report was finally formulated.

With various 'models', including Westminster models, having been examined and rejected, the ideal is stated in Chapter Twelve as that of the 'open pluralist society'. On page 217 all doubt as to the measure of commitment of the commission to this ideal is dispelled, when there is stated: '*The Commission is committed to the ideal of an open pluralist society tolerating social and cultural diversity within the bounds of a necessary common consent.*'

'Model'

It is specifically stated that 'our model of transitional change is not intended as a projection of probably future developments in South Africa' (p. 219), 'attempting only to extra-



polate the positive opportunities for political change in a specific direction'. The difficulty here—and all programmes for *radical* socio-political change have proved this; not the least being that of apartheid itself—is that the moment a system of 'multiple strategy', that is a 'model for transition', is constructed, it is no longer merely a matter of extrapolation; of merely pointing the way for all interested parties. *The model is, indeed, the framework within which action will take place; and whatever the 'shifts of emphasis' may be, the model itself is bound to its 'basic ethical principles' and its 'longterm goal'.*

This is borne out in the present case by the very positive tone of Chapter 13, in which the various stages of transition are set out in meticulous detail. Moreover, in radical politics it never happens that governing parties allow themselves to be pushed or even coaxed in a particular direction by other radical groups.

The recurring theme in the Report is that of commitment to a system in which such freedoms (that is personal and civil liberties) will be progressively increased until they are substantially enjoyed by all citizens (p. 217); commitment to 'the ideal of a non-discriminatory, open and democratic society' (p. 215).

Borne out

All this is borne out fully by the ever-recurring insistence in various C.I. documents on *radical* change in the political set-up in the country. 'The C.I. seeks deep and radical change ...

obedience to the will of God and transformation of society ...' says a *Programme of Action for the C.I.* And Christian Change requires: 'This way of life should be radically and peacefully changed towards a life of justice and obedience to Christ'. From the *Christian Principles of the C.I.* we learn that 'Christian change means bringing every facet of life under the Gospel of Jesus Christ'. (Question: What happens to those who refuse to be Christians—Jews, Moslems, Hindus, Agnostics, Buddhists, and so on? How are they to be tolerated in the body politic?).

In the Report (p. 226) it is categorically stated that freedom of expression and association will mark the new order; the 'democratic freedom of all citizens to oppose the ruling government within the bounds of the law, and assuring the effective exercise of their right to dissent from or protest ...'. The question which immediately arises is: would this apply to say radical groups from the Right who would go about writing, speaking, demonstrating, and otherwise actively undermining the very concept of the 'non-discriminatory, open and democratic society', the new political system concerned with bringing about its own *radical change*? Could those who are committed to the long-term goal, to the socio-political ideal, suffer *this* kind of opposition? Could it stand by and in the name of 'freedom of expression' allow its whole so carefully thought out, so expensively established programme for transition, to be undermined? Could they allow such Rightist radicals to go their destructive ways, knowing that should they succeed, even in a limited way, it would spell the end of the goal the now governing party has been *committed* to? The dangerous articulate Rightists would simply have to be banned, confined, interrogated and so on. As the saying goes, we would then be back to square one. And once again the irony of history will have been exquisitely demonstrated.

The true 'alternative' for Apartheid in South Africa is not yet another socio-political ideal; not yet another all-inclusive system, whether it remain the property of the Christian Institute and Spro-cas, or whether (as seems highly unlikely) it substantially becomes part of the 'model for transition' of some group with a true potential for government. Our task as already indicated, is to re-discover the *true limits of civil government*; to find a new clarity about the relationship between church and state.

Love

This would primarily entail an understanding anew of the *double regime* in human affairs. Civil government, operating on a lower level, would (as is best demonstrated by the law) be called upon to govern equitably, with compassion, and generally reasonably. This is precisely what John Calvin also required (Institutes 4:20:15, 16). This, indeed, is a certain moral code; but it still falls considerably short of the concept of love, which is the essence of the Gospels.

Any pretence, moreover, on the part of the civil authority to proclaim *absolute truths*, to speak as it were in terms of its own secular religion, would not be tolerated. Here the Church would immediately have to raise its voice, demanding that Caesar return to his limits and not attempt to usurp the work of Providence.

Civil government, brought back in this way to its true confines, will then be seen to be very much a matter of finding the best possible way in the circumstances. This would almost certainly mean, at times, making a choice, not between good and evil, but between a greater and a lesser evil.

All radical politics which attempts to structure the future, which attempts to guarantee man an enduring order of human happiness, is by the same token trying to do the work of Providence.

We can only deal with the matters of civil government as far as we can see. And we can never see very far. History has taught us this again and again.★

—*The Argus*, 19.12.73

3

spro-cas views answered andre du toit

Mr. W.A. de Klerk's two extraordinary epistles in *The Argus* of December 18 and 19 deserve a proper reply.

My quarrel is with Mr de Klerk's argument and with the totally and indeed dangerously misleading presentation that he gives of the report's nature, and by implication of the objectives of the Spro-cas programmes and the Christian Institute. Despite the length and learning of the two articles Mr de Klerk's basic argument is in fact very simple and straightforward. It consists essentially of three main steps:

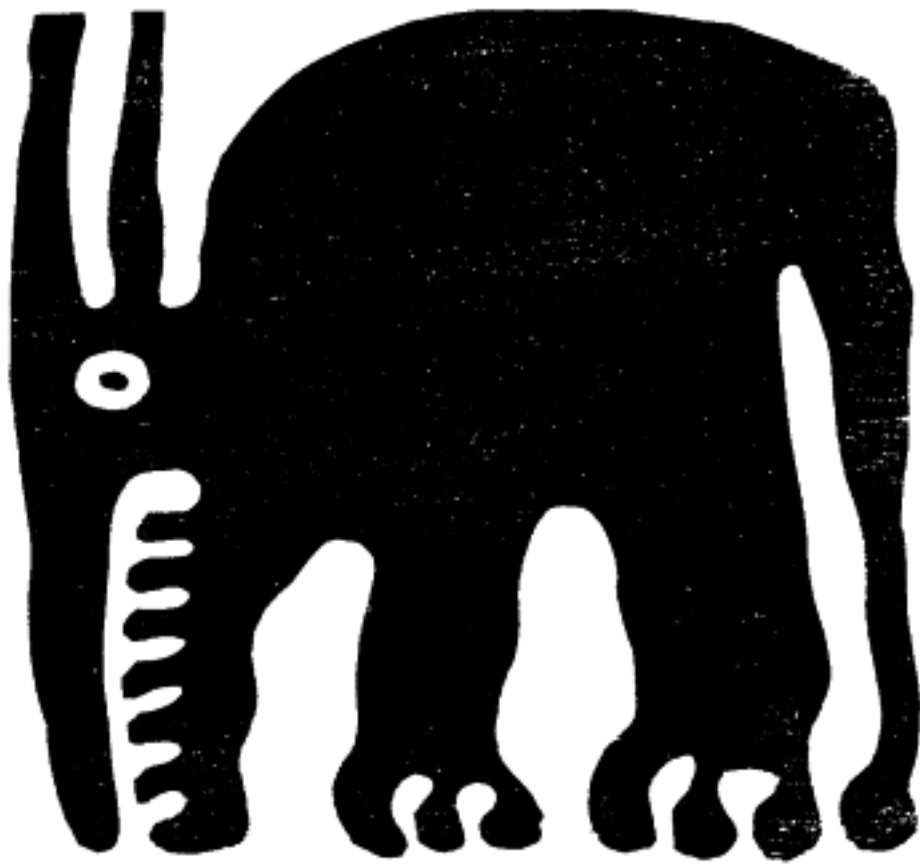
- * In the first place Mr de Klerk reduces all the great variety of political views, policies, philosophies and ideologies that the world has known to a single alternative; either they recognise the proper and human limits of politics and civil government, or they are attempts at radical and Utopian reform, ideological systems with absolutistic claims to provide comprehensive and final solutions to all social and human problems.
- * The second step is a dual move corresponding to the two sides of the basic shibboleth. Thus on the one hand Mr de Klerk invokes a number of authorities from St. Paul to Aquinas and Calvin in support of his distinction and of the limited view of politics. For this purpose the major and fundamental differences between the political philosophies of these great thinkers are simply ignored, as are all the aspects of their thought which do not fit in so easily into this simple dichotomy. On the other hand, and this is where Mr de Klerk's argument packs its punch, all other political views are
 - (a) Declared to be essentially similar and compatible in their ideological nature—communism, fascism, liberalism, apartheid. Christian-Nationalism, and so on, are just so many varieties of the ideological heresy—and
 - (b) they are all intrinsically associated with the worst excesses of the French Revolution, Hitler Germany and apartheid.

With this crude but effective polemical weapon, Mr de Klerk can easily play havoc with almost any variety of political thinking except that of the most pragmatic and conservative status quo politics. The moment that you begin to consider a set of possible alternative policies for, say, migrant labour then bingo, you are guilty of ideological system building, you are attempting the radical or Utopian solution of social problems which by the nature of things are outside the human scope of politics, and you will be guilty of all sorts of totalitarian repressive measures in your attempt to enforce this on society at large.

There remains the problem of what to do with those varieties of political thinking which are as aware as Mr de Klerk of the dangers of ideological thinking and as sceptical of the uses of revolutionary utopias, but which nevertheless do not wish to evade the political problems of the day. This brings us to the third step in Mr de Klerk's procedure.

- * The third step simply consists in maintaining that the political proposals or programmes that he finds uncongenial are ideological systems and aimed at radical blueprints no matter how much they may deny this themselves. Thus it does not matter how many times the report on 'South Africa's Political Alternatives' have denied in the most explicit and emphatic terms that it is not aimed at providing a theoretical blueprint for some final solution to our political problems— Mr de Klerk calmly announces that it does just that. It does not matter how many times the report on 'South Africa's Political Alternatives' have denied in the most explicit and emphatic terms that it is not aimed at providing a theoretical blueprint for some final solution to our political problems— Mr de Klerk calmly announces that it does just that. It does not matter that the Report takes great pains to qualify in precisely what sense its 'Multiple Strategy for Transition' should be taken.
- * The third step simply consists in maintaining that the political proposals or programmes that he finds uncongenial are ideological systems and aimed at radical blueprints no matter how much they may deny this themselves. Thus it does not matter how many times the report on 'South Africa's Political Alternatives' have denied in the most explicit and emphatic terms that it is not aimed at providing a theoretical blueprint for some final solution to our political problems— Mr de Klerk calmly announces that it does just that. It does not matter that the Report takes great pains to qualify in precisely what sense its 'Multiple Strategy for Transition' should be taken.

Let me give just one example of the way in which Mr de Klerk twists round the views of the report into complete misrepresentations. It is part of his own argument that coercive and administrative measures overriding the Rule of Law are an inherent part of all politics, and that ideological regimes in particular need excessive coercive measures in order to enforce their own systems even if they are themselves committed to liberal principles. The Spro-cas report, according to Mr de Klerk, is bent on an ideological scheme of Utopian reform, hence it will need totalitarian measures to enforce this, ergo 'the dangerous articulate Rightists would simply have to be banned, confined, interrogated and so on'. Now Mr de



Klerk must know that the very same 'Transitional Model' of the report which so enrages him contains a series of specific suggestions and proposals on the way in which the present Security Legislation can be reformed so that precisely those 'articulate Rightists' *cannot* simply be banned, confined and so on whenever a more reform-minded government deems this to be 'administratively' necessary.

This is like a supporter of capital punishment refuting someone who wishes to abolish it by:

- (a) Maintaining that he believes that capital punishment will always be necessary, that therefore:

- (b) Even the opponents of it will find it necessary to use the death penalty in certain circumstances, and that therefore;
- (c) Those who are opposing capital punishment are really in favour of it!

Mr de Klerk thinks he knows what must happen if the Spro-cas report's proposals begin to be realised, and for all I know he may even be right. But it is one thing what Mr de Klerk believes will happen, and it is another thing what the aims and objectives of the report, Spro-cas and the Christian Institute actually are. Mr de Klerk has no business to impute other aims and objectives to these bodies than those to which they openly subscribe.

It was not for the very critical position in which the Christian Institute and Spro-cas find themselves at the present time one could be tolerant with Mr de Klerk's crude dichotomies and patently fallacious arguments.

The fact of the matter is, however, that Mr de Klerk has earned a wide reputation as a thoughtful and verligte, even a liberal, Afrikaner thinker. His forceful criticisms of various aspects of the Government policy is well-known and his pronouncements on the Christian Institute will therefore generally be regarded in a very different light from those emanating from Government circles. If he finds it necessary to enter into public debate with the Christian Institute and Spro-cas he therefore has a special obligation not to give rise to misrepresentations of their aims and objectives. Let the Institute and Spro-cas be judged for what they have actually said and done, and not for other and different imputed aims and objectives even if according to Mr de Klerk's private logic that is what their aims and objectives must really be, only they did not say it. ★

—*The Argus*, 2.1.74.

4

a distortion of the spro-cas political commission's report · peter randall

I have read W.A. de Klerk's two lengthy articles on the Christian Institute, Spro-cas and South Africa's political alternatives with great astonishment. His misrepresentation of the report of the Spro-cas Political Commission is so complete that the only reasonable conclusions are that he has not, in fact, read the report in full; or that he is so blinded by his own private fixations that he is unable to form anything like an objective and dispassionate assessment of what he admits to be a work of scholarship, integrity and erudition.

If Mr de Klerk is implying that the compilers of such a report were unwitting tools in the service of some sinister and absolutist political theory. Unwittingly ... (doing precisely what Peter Randall had envisaged) then he is insulting their intelligence and attributing to me manipulative powers which I do not own. I unhesitatingly admit the superior intellect and ability of the signatories of the report of the Spro-cas Political Report, who include Professor Rodney Davenport, Mr. René de Villiers, Mr. A.B. du Toit, Mr Leo Marquard, Professor A.S. Mathews, Dr Beyers Naudé, Dr David Welsh and Dr Oscar Wollheim.

One of the most obvious and important features of their report is a profound distrust of any absolutist political or social system and a refusal to indulge in any attempts at the sort of 'blueprint solution' which Mr de Klerk finds so abhorrent.

I honestly cannot believe that Mr de Klerk has read their report in full before pouncing on it as further 'evidence' to suit his own purpose, which seems to be a kind of ideological laissez faireism. His tactic of taking isolated snippets out of context is familiar to all of us. He does the same with a personal letter from me, conveniently ignoring my own expressed misgivings about any form of 'perfect' political system, whether advocated by the left or the right, and my own pragmatic approach to politics, both of which I conveyed in that same letter, and instead somehow seeks to impute sinister motives to my belief that we must move in the right direction of 'participatory democracy', which is after all merely a democratic system in which all citizens participate. What kind of democracy would Mr de Klerk have us believe in? ★

—*The Argus*

The Christian Institute has declared that it

seeks deep and radical change, in repentance and faith, obedience to the will of God and transformation of society in His name.

The Christian Institute is also convinced

that the apartheid system ... should be radically and peacefully changed towards a life of love and justice in obedience to Christ; and

that bringing every facet of life into obedience to Christ *means rejecting the heresies of racism, apartheid and "Christian nationalism"*.

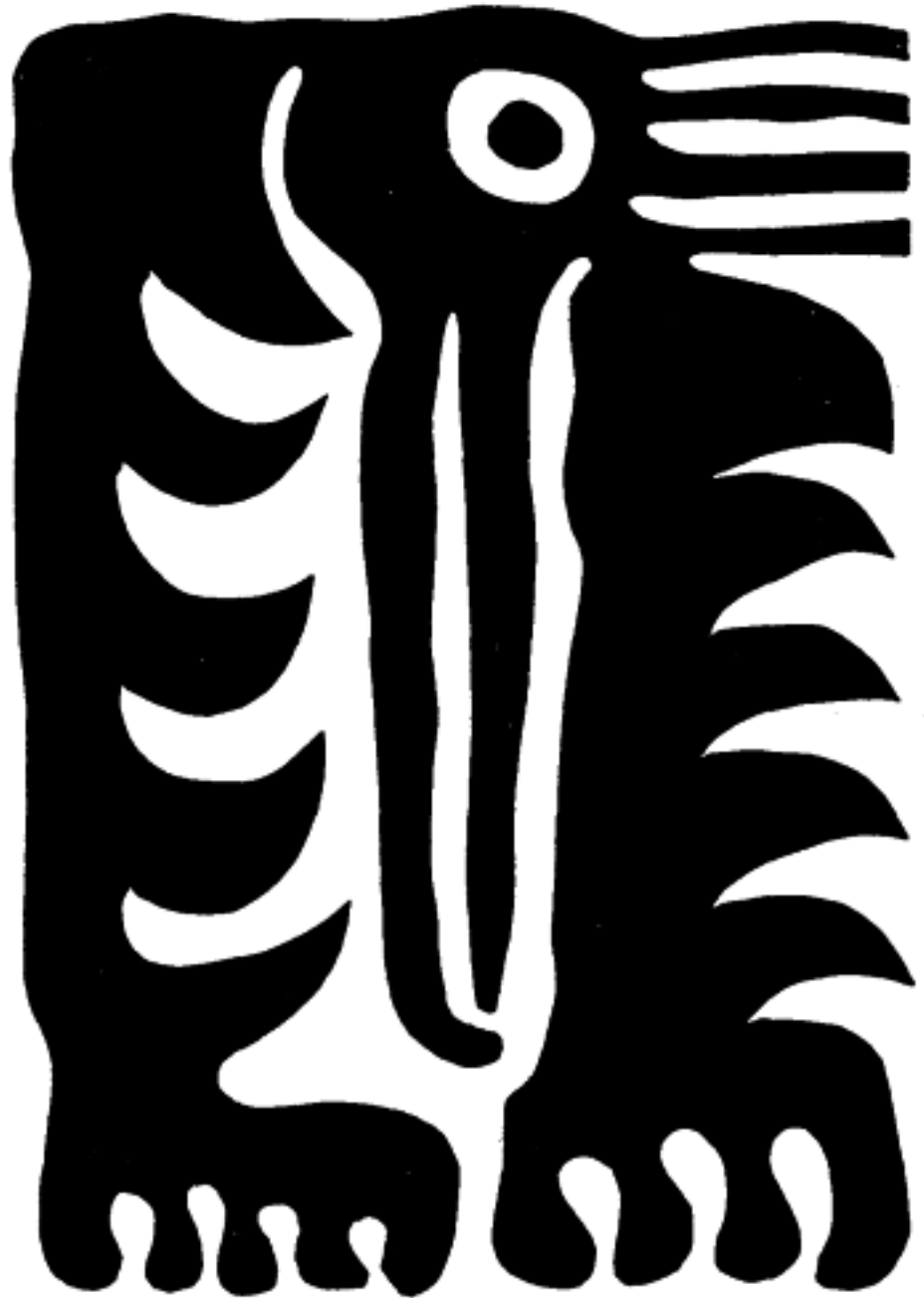
W.A. de Klerk has employed these quotations (but without the phrases which I have underlined) to argue that the Christian Institute should not attempt to provide us with a radical political alternative to apartheid.¹ Instead, it should use its resources to contribute towards a rediscovery of 'the true limits of civil government' and towards the discovery of 'a new clarity about the relationship between church and state'. In his opinion, radical political programmes are both dangerous and doomed to failure. They are doomed to failure because no group can either 'structure the future' or 'guarantee man an enduring order of human happiness'. And they are dangerous because no group is prepared to tolerate 'the kind of dissent which will ... spell the end of the system' that embodies their political ideals.

SPRO-CAS

I share de Klerk's misgivings about radical political programmes. But I do not share his opinion that the Christian Institute and Spro-Cas either have or want to construct a detailed and comprehensive programme for the manipulation of the future economic, political and social development of South Africa. In fact, I find it incomprehensible that this charge has even been brought against Spro-Cas. Since Spro-Cas ceased to exist at the end of December, 1973, how is it possible for it to be or to provide an alternative to apartheid? And how therefore will it manage to manipulate and control the future development of South African politics? But the answers to these questions are so obvious that I will simply ignore de Klerk's remarks about Spro-Cas and concentrate on his case against the Christian Institute.

CALVIN'S DISTINCTION

All de Klerk's misgivings about utopian politicians and radical political programmes, as well as his appeal to and evolution of the Christian Institute, rest upon



Calvin's distinction between civil government and the apostolic ministry or church. It is necessary therefore to understand what this distinction is and why it is made.²

In general and in summary terms, Calvin's distinction between the duties and functions of civil government and those of the apostolic ministry is the distinction between a minimum and a maximum moral code. It is the difference, for example, between walking the mile which Roman law required and the extra mile which Christ required. And it is the difference between being as fair to one's enemies as the Geneva Convention demands and loving them as much as the Gospel demands.

Calvin employs this distinction to argue against two errors. On the one hand, believers ought not 'to include the Kingdom of Christ under the elements of this world'. De Klerk takes this to mean that believers have no right to expect a government to enforce the moral demands of

the Gospel by legislation. They may however call upon a government to govern equitably, with compassion, and in general, reasonably.

On the other hand, it is wrong for a government to expect its citizens to have absolute faith in its programmes and to give it that kind of loyalty and obedience which belongs only to God. More specifically, it is wrong for those who govern (and for those who are critical of the way in which they are governed) to believe that they can manipulate and control the future of their society in terms of a detailed and comprehensive programme which will guarantee human happiness.

According to de Klerk, both the errors against which Calvin warned are due to an unwillingness to accept that we are not in control of, and therefore cannot manipulate, the future development of our society to any significant degree. In his own words:

Civil government ... is very much a matter of finding the best possible way in the circumstances ... it almost certainly means, at times, making a choice, not between good and evil, but between a greater and a lesser evil.

De Klerk therefore quotes two maxims with approval: politics is *the art of the next best thing* or *the art of the possible*. And it is this which distinguishes it from utopian and radical political programmes which attempt to provide

an ideological framework within whose embrace man and society is to be saved.

HOW USEFUL IS CALVIN'S DISTINCTION?

One can hardly fail to approve of the distinction which de Klerk wants to draw on the basis of his understanding of Calvin.³ And therefore one can appreciate why he has asked us to consider its implications and to learn what it can teach us. But how useful is Calvin's distinction? What are its implications? And what are the lessons which we have to learn?

I want to begin to answer these questions by making some observations about Marguerite Patten's *Junior Cook Book*. On the one hand Miss Patten's book contains simple recipes 'for more than ninety mouth-watering dishes'. On the other hand, it contains some useful advice and warnings: Use hot cookers with care! Clear up as you go—it's easier! Knives are sharp—so please be careful!

I mention all this because, although de Klerk treats Calvin's distinction as a recipe for curing our political ills, it is actually no more than some timely advice and a useful warning. Just as Miss Patten's book does not tell us which of the ninety mouth-watering dishes we should choose, but admonishes us to heed her warnings and advice whichever we choose; so Calvin's distinction and de Klerk's discussion of it does not tell us which form of government is best, but warns us to be careful and not to expect too much from any government.

In other words: there is nothing in Calvin's distinction

and de Klerk's discussion of it which prevents us from choosing or from concocting a particular political recipe. Athenian or some more modern form of participatory democracy; Danish parliamentary democracy; South African parliamentary oligarchy—Calvin's distinction does not tell us which of these is the best political recipe for the future of South Africa. All that it does—and this is its great merit—is remind us that it is the duty and function of every government to govern equitably, with compassion, and generally reasonably.

And it warns us that, since government is in the hands of ordinary people like ourselves, it is often necessary to call upon those who govern us to do so more equitably, with greater compassion and, in general, more reasonably.

THE CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE

If I have understood Calvin and de Klerk's interpretation of him correctly, then what should we do with his argument that the Christian Institute should not attempt to provide us with a radical political alternative to apartheid? And what should we do about his plea that the Christian Institute should contribute towards a rediscovery of the true limits of civil government?

Everyone must answer these questions for himself. As far as I am concerned I know what I want to do with de Klerk's argument and with his plea. I want to support his plea and I want to accept his argument. In other words: I agree that the Christian Institute should not attempt to provide us with a radical political alternative to apartheid; that is, it should not attempt to manipulate South Africa's political development and it should not pretend that it can guarantee South Africans 'an enduring order of human happiness'. Fortunately, it has never even been tempted to engage in such manipulations or to offer such guarantees.

I also support de Klerk's appeal. More specifically, I too believe that the Christian Institute should use its resources to contribute towards a rediscovery of the true limits of civil government; that is, that it should continue to remind both those who govern us and those who devise alternative ways in which we could be governed that we are only satisfied when we are governed equitably, with compassion, and generally reasonably.

Fortunately the Christian Institute has never hesitated to issue this reminder and warning. And it has encouraged, and it will certainly continue to encourage, all of us to understand more fully what it is to govern equitably, reasonably and with compassion.

But in all this we should not lose sight of de Klerk's observations about the ironies of history and about our inability to control our political future. Although he has placed most of his emphasis on the dangers which surround political innovations, these same dangers exist where people try to maintain the *status quo* long after it has served its purpose. And although de Klerk is correct when he declares that new political programmes cannot guarantee 'an enduring order of human happiness', it is

important to remember that old political programmes are just as impotent. I therefore want to end as I began—with a quotation from the publication which seems to have triggered off de Klerk's reflections and guided some of his arguments. In *Christian Change* the Christian Institute reminds us that

- the pressure of faith, the power of love and the promise of hope challenge and overcome the fear, pessimism and bitterness in the apartheid society of South Africa.

This reminder—and its call to repentance—makes the

Christian Institute both more radical than the radicals and more conservative than the conservatives!★

FOOTNOTES

1. *The Argus*, Cape Town, December 18 and 19, 1973.
2. W.A. de Klerk's exposition of Calvin's distinction is open to dispute; see, for example, Roelf Meyer's *Die Evangelie en die Politiek Volgens Calvin* in this issue of *Pro Veritate*. But at the moment I have other fish to fry; and so, for the sake of argument on de Klerk's own grounds, I will accept it.
3. The qualification which this sentence contains is important. See footnote 2

6

indien die linkses aan bewind kom w.a. de klerk

Kritici van die Nasionale Party met sy rewolusionêre politieke filosofie aan die radikale regterkant, is jare lank uitgedaag om 'n alternatief vir apartheid daar te stel. Of dit, of hulle moet stilbly of minstens hulle kritiek wysig.

Na geweldig baie oorweging aan so 'n „alternatief”, nadat 'n groot hoeveelheid geld bestee is (geld wat hoofsaaklik van buite die landsgrense gekom het), het die Spro-cas-projek (van die Christelike Instituut) uiteindelik sy bevindings gepubliseer: Suid-Afrika se politieke alternatiewes: 'n Verslag van Spro-cas se politieke kommissie.

Idealisme

Wat hulle aangebied het, was nog 'n manifes van radikale, „verlossende” politiek.

Dit was net nog 'n allesinsluitende, sosio-politieke stelsel; 'n politieke idealisme waardeur 'n nuwe Suid-Afrika sou herrys wat finaal gesuiwer is van sy onmenslikhede, sy basiese foute, sy sondes.

Die ware toets vir 'n sosio-politieke stelsel om 'n nuwe orde van menslike geluk tot stand te bring, is die verdraagsaamheid daarvan teenoor dié soort opposisie wat, uit die aard van sy eie radikaalheid, die einde van die stelsel wil meebring.

In die Spro-cas-verslag word dit kategories gestel dat vryheid van uitdrukking en assosiasie die nuwe orde sal kenmerk: Die demokratiese vryheid van alle burgers om die regering van die dag te opponeer binne die grense van die wet; die reg van verskil en protes.

Die vraag wat onmiddellik ontstaan is of dit ook sal geld vir byvoorbeeld radikale groepe van regs wat met geskrifte, toesprake, betogings en andersins aktief sal poog om die „nuwe oop en demokratiese, nie-diskriminerende gemeenskap” te ondermyn?

Kan diegene wat hulleself verbind aan 'n langtermyn doel hierdie soort opposisie duld? Kan dit toekyk hoe die hele fynuitgedinkte program vir verandering ondermyn word in die naam van „vryheid van uitdrukking”?

Kan dit sulke regse radikales toelaat om hul vernietigende pad te loop, wel wetende dat indien hulle sou slaag, selfs op beperkte skaal, dit die einde van die doel van die nuwe regerende party sal wees?



Kenmerkend

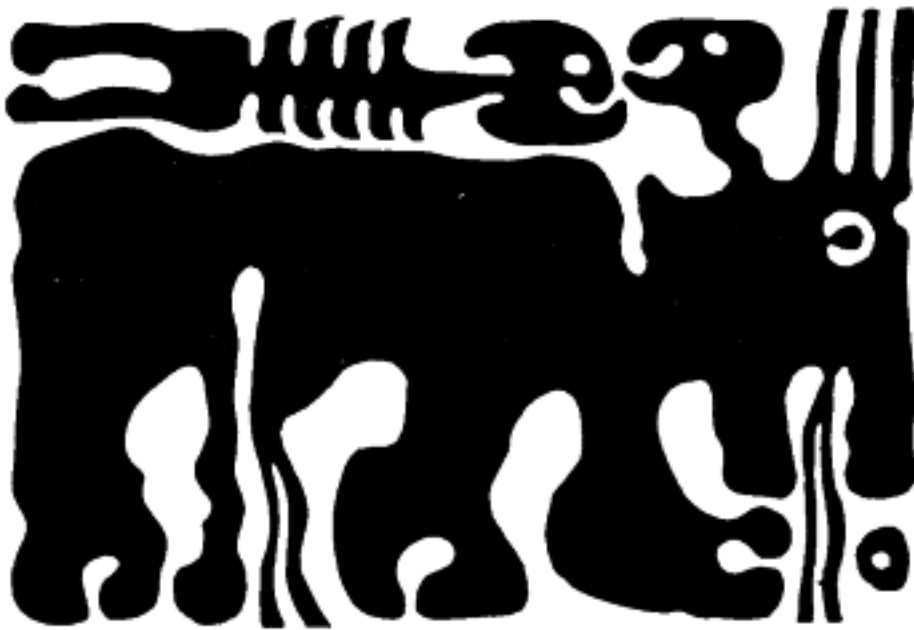
'n Mens kan dan in die vooruitsig stel dat presies dieselfde ding gebeur wat vroeër die bedrywighede van die vorige, radikale, administrasie gekenmerk het.

Baie gou word gevind dat die normale wetsprosesse hope-loos ontoereikend is om die nuwe sisteem teen sulke toegewyde vernietiging te beskerm. Die nuwe regering sal dan sy toevlug moet neem tot administratiewe maatreëls.

Die „gevaarlike regsgesindes” sal eenvoudig ingeperk, in die ban gedoen, ondervra word en so meer.

Ons sal terug wees waar ons begin het. En die ironie van die geskiedenis sal weer eens, op uitnemende wyse bewys word.

—Die Vaderland, 20.12.'73



Vir sover mnr. W.A. de Klerk se artikel in Die Vaderland van 20 Desember voorgee om te slaan op die verslag van Sprocas se politieke kommissie oor Suid-Afrika se politieke alternatiewe (waarvoor ek mede-verantwoordelik is), bestaan dit feitlik volledig uit basiese misverstande en/of flagrante wanvoorstellings.

Vergun my om twee van die belangrikste punte kortliks reg te stel:

Onjuis

Wat ook al die meriete van die verslag mag wees, is dit sonder meer 'n onjuiste voorstelling van sy strekking en doelstelling. Die twee basiese uitgangspunte vir die oorweging van politieke alternatiewe word in die verslag self baie duidelik as volg gestel: (i) die verwerping van gewelddadige rewolusionêre verandering en (ii) die vermyding van die denkfout om na abstrakte bloudrukke of teoretiese „oplossings” te probeer soek (bl. 174).

Op talle ander pertinente plekke word hierdie standpunt prominent gestel, herhaal, gemotiveer en verder uitgewerk.

Vervolgens stel hy die vraag of die Sprocas-verslag, wat kategoriees vryheid van uitdrukking en assosiasie voorstaan, dit ook van toepassing sal maak op moontlike radikale „regse” ondermyning daarvan.

Dit is billike vraag en ook een waaroor geen misverstand kan bestaan nie.

Afgesien van algemene beskouings in die loop van die rapport word 'n aantal heel spesifieke voorstelle gedoen (op bladsye 226, 237 en 239-240) oor hoe dié vryhede versoen kan word met die vereistes vir staatsveiligheid sodat ook „regse ondermyners” nie blootgestel sal wees aan arbitrêre inperkings en „administratiewe maatreëls” nie.

Ingeperk

In lynregte teenspraak hiermee stel mnr de Klerk egter 'n aantal retoriese vrae en kom vervolgens tot die slotsom dat „die gevaarlike regsgesindes eenvoudig ingeperk, in die ban gedoen, ondervra sal word en so meer”.

Afgesien van sy vrugbare fantasie bied hy geen enkele bewysgrond hiervoor aan nie, maar plaas dit op rekening van die skrywers van die verslag—sóveel so dat hy 'n algemene waarskuwing teen die gevolge van dié linkse onverdraagsaamheid moet uitreik!

Hoe gebeur dit dat 'n vooraanstaande skrywer so verskriklik sleg lees?

Dit sou alles bitter snaaks kon wees as dit nie so bitterlik ernstig was nie. Dit is algemene kennis dat die Schlebusch-kommissie besig is met 'n ondersoek na onder andere die Christelike Instituut en Sprocas en dat dit moontlik kan uitloop op „administratiewe maatreëls” soos verdere inperkings.

In dié situasie kom mnr de Klerk nou en gee voor dat hy baie bekommerd is oor moontlike onverdraagsaamheid en willekeur van die owerhede teen sogenaamde „ondermyners”. Hy maak dit egter nie van toepassing op die Schlebusch-kommissie en sy metodes nie, maar op diegene wat besig is om dit te ondergaan!

Hy gee 'n presiese beskrywing van die huidige situasie, draai net die rolle om en hou dit dan as skrikbeeld van die toekoms voor.

Skotvry

Die (ironiese, nee skreiende) resultaat is dat die bestaande voorbeelde van arbitrêre veiligheidsmaatreëls skotvry gaan, terwyl die huidige slagoffers van presies hierdie maatreëls skuldig staan aan die hipotetiese toekomstige gebruik daarvan!

Indien mnr de Klerk dit nodig vind om in die huidige situasie die Schlebusch-kommissie, die besondere metodes en die moontlike gevolge daarvan, te ondersteun—wat hom natuurlik vrystaan om te doen—laat hy dit dan ronduit en openlik doen.

Standpunte

Indien hy dit nodig vind om die Christelike Instituut, Sprocas en sy politieke verslag te kritiseer—wat hom eweneens vrystaan om te doen—laat hy dan asseblief eers seker maak dat die standpunte en opvattinge wat hy aan hulle toeskryf, nie bloot uit sy eie duim gesuig is nie.

Per slot van rekening is dit nie hy wat die risiko van die moontlike gevolge van sulke wanvoorstellings moet loop nie.★

—Die Vaderland, 8.1.'74

Mnr. André du Toit se reaksie op 'n skrywe van my oor die Christelike Instituut en Spro-cas se invaart in die radikale politiek vra repliek.

Mnr. Du Toit betoog dat ek 'n oorvereenvoudigde, maar ook growwe indeling tussen politieke kategorieë maak: dié tussen radikale sisteme met 'n totale antwoord, 'n heilsplan, vir die mens in sy sosio-politieke verband; en dié van die politiek wat sy perke ken en op die vlak van redelikheid en billikheid 'n werkbare, ordelike samelewing in stand probeer hou en ontwikkel.

Natuurlik is dit 'n oorvereenvoudiging. Daar is ander politieke indelings van groot belang.

Buitendien, dit is die radikale oftewel messiaanse, alreërende politiek, wat by uitstek ons tyd kenmerk.

Feit is dat die radikale politiek, met sy lang geskiedenis van bloed en stryd, hom nog steeds aangebied het in die vorm van 'n skynende, dikwels Christelike idealisme.

Dié „revolusies van die heiliges” keer telkens terug: En net so telkens die bose gevolge wat dit meebring. Daar was geen hoër, heerliker ideaal as dié van die „Regte van die Mens” nie. Elkeen van hierdie sosio-politieke idealismes het egter sy diepe ellendes meegebring: Die Jaokbyne (die Franse Rewolusie); Sowjet Rusland (Stalinisme ens.); die Derde Ryk; en ja, ook by ons die ergste van ideologiese apartheid in sy, hoë dae.

Wat méér is, dié wat die totale sisteme of vermeende totale sisteme, hartstogtelik met hul eie, alternatiewe wil teegaan, behoort te weet dat hulle daarmee hulleself juis aan die kwaal blootstel.

As jy met die duiwel baklei, sê Franz Kafka, is dit soos die rusie met 'n vrou: Dit eindig in die bed.

Getuienis

Daar is reeds véél meer getuienis as waarna ek hier kan verwys oor die Christelike Instituut en Spro-cas se aanvaarding van 'n eie absolutistiese of radikale denkpatoon in hul dikwels hewige teenstand teen die huidige politieke bestel in Suid-Afrika.

Ek kry die gevoel dat mnr Du Toit egter grootliks salig onkundig hieroor gebly het.

In my oorspronklike skrywe het ek verwys na 'n brief aan my van mnr Peter Randall, Direkteur van Spro-cas, in Mei 1972. Daarin verklaar hy dat die Christelike Instituut en Spro-cas die pad sou volg soos uiteengesit in 'n hoogs aanvegbare Spro-cas publikasie uit die pen van iemand wat sedertdien ingeperk is.

As dié Deelhebbende Demokrasie—*Participatory Democracy*—geen radikale sosio-politieke stelsel was nie, wat was dit dan? Wat méér is, mnr Randall het in Junie 1973 in *Pro Veritate* alle twyfel oor sy eie denkpatoon verwyder, toe hy duidelik te kenne gegee het dat „*the fundamental change envisaged is the alternative offered by a socialist form of society*”.

Dat dit geen *obiter dictum* was nie, is ook bewys toe mnr Randall laat verlede jaar die hele Spro-cas-onderneming afrond met sy eie samevatting in sy boek *A Taste of Power, A radical re-allocation of land, wealth, and income*, skryf hy, (lees ook *Pro Veritate* van Oktober 1973) is die *precondition* tot die *more socialistic, egalitarian social order envisaged*.

Swart mag, in die breedste sin van die woord, sou sorg vir die *transference of power*. Die sleutelsin van die boek, een wat reeds oral aangehaal is, en iets wat noodwendig die sleutelsin vir die ganse Spro-cas-onderneming moet word lui:

Blacks have begun to have a taste of power and Whites are not going to be able to indefinitely to prevent them from enjoying the whole meal.

Kan daar dan nog twyfel bestaan oor wat die ware doeleindes van die Spro-cas-direktoraat is?

Jaarverslag

Dat dit alles egter nie net tot mnr Randall beperk is nie, is ook duidelik uit die jaarverslag van die direkteur van die Christelike Instituut, dr Beyers Naudé, gelewer op 31 Augustus 1973. Die Christelike Instituut, sê mnr Naudé, *is committed to recognise and respond to Black aspirations and goals whilst at the same time striving to make Whites more conscious of the urgent need for attitudinal change towards the Blacks, ter voorbereiding van 'n toestand waar more and more Blacks will take the lead in society as a whole.*

Ek dink graag dat mnr. Naudé min begrip gehad het van waarmee hy eintlik besig was om hom te vereenselwig.

Maar, aan die ander kant, ook die Christelike Instituut is al lank in 'n groot verskeidenheid van publikasies besig om te pleit vir 'n radikale, fundamentele verandering in die sosio-politieke struktuur van die land. Dit word grootliks saamgevat in die Christelike Instituut se stuk—*The Christian Principles for which the C.I. stands* (lees *Pro Veritate*, Julie 1973).

Christian change means bringing every facet of life under the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

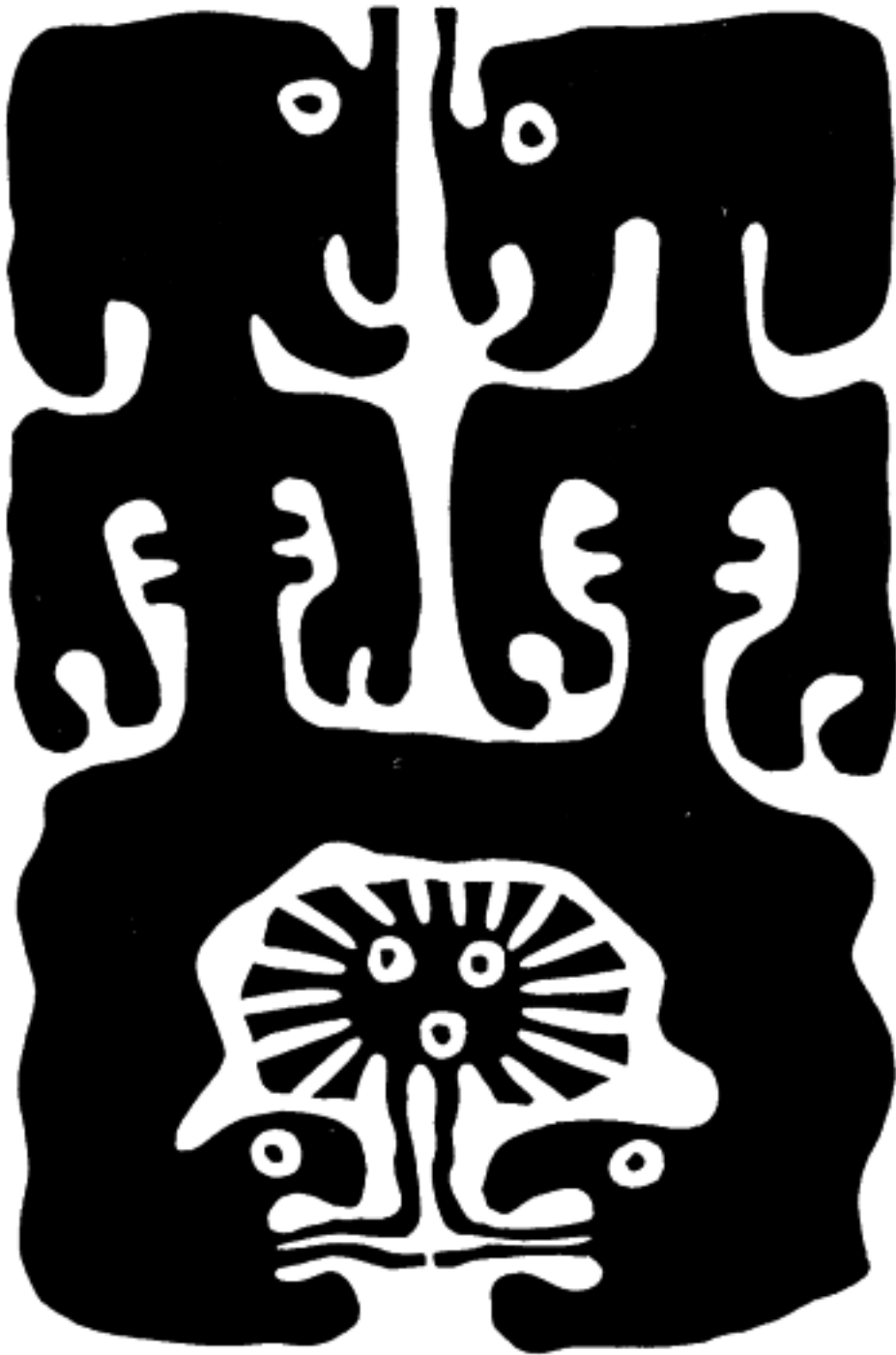
Die totale lewensfeer moet daarin vervat word.

Absolutisme

Christelike Absolutisme het in die geskiedenis (vreemd maar waar!) gelei tot 'n totalitarisme wat om sy subtiliteit miskien nog die vernietigendste van almal was. Was dit dan nie presies die kwaal van die Middeleeuse Kerk nie.

Feit is dat van één vorm van absolutisme na die ander, is maar 'n kort stappie. Dáárom ontmoet die uiterstes mekaar altoos. Daarom ook dat daar tussen mnr. Randall se *full meal* van *Black Power* en die absolute eise van die Christelike Instituut om 'n „Christelike” bestel, geen groot gaping lê nie. Hulle sit trouens bymekaar.★

—Die Vaderland, 31.1.'74



Ons leef in moeilike tye, en die betoog van mnr. W.A. de Klerk in *Die Vaderland* van 30 Januarie oor wat hy beskou as die „ware doeleindes” van Spro-cas en die Christelike Instituut toon hoe selfs ’n vooraanstaande skrywer in verwarring kan verval. Ongelukkig het mnr. de Klerk se wanvoorstellings en vergesogte konstruksies ook ’n gevaarlike angel vir die betrokke persone en organisasies. Helaas is dit dus nogmaals nodig om ter wille van die waarheid die saak reg te stel.

Wat is naamlik die geval? In *Die Vaderland* van 20 Desember het ’n (grootliks verkorte) artikel van mnr. de Klerk verskyn waarin hy twee spesifieke en belangrike aantygings maak t.o.v. die Spro-cas-rapport oor Suid-Afrika se politieke alternatiewe. As medewerker aan hierdie rapport het ek in *Die Vaderland* van 8 Januarie geantwoord dat sy artikel „feitlik volledig uit basiese misverstande en/of flagrante wanvoorstellings”

bestaan. Met vers en kapittel is vervolgens aangetoon dat albei mnr. de Klerk se aantygings *presies die teenoorgestelde* is van wat uitdruklik en herhaaldelik in die rapport voorgestaan word. Wat doen mnr. de Klerk nou in sy „repliek”? Naas ’n erkenning dat sy oorspronklike volledige artikel „natuurlik ’n ooreenvinding is” (waarom natuurlik?), rep hy verder *geen enkele woord* oor sy twee aantygings of selfs oor die inhoud van dié Spro-cas-verslag nie.

In plaas daarvan kom hy met wat hy noem „getuienis” oor die „ware doeleindes” van die Christelike Instituut en Spro-cas. Sodoende sou die Spro-cas-verslag dus ’n betekenis hê wat die skrywers daarvan self ontgaan het. Kortom, in plaas daarvan om ruitelike te erken en verskoning te maak vir sy foutiewe voorstelling van sake, kom hy eerder met ’n reeks van nog ernstiger aantygings. In die skadu van die Schlebusch-kommissie moet hierdie beskuldigings oor die radikale doelwitte van Spro-cas en die Christelike Instituut in ’n baie ernstige lig beskou word. Dit is nodig om mnr. de Klerk se „getuienis” noukeurig te ondersoek en te weeg.

Mnr. de Klerk grond sy konklusies oor die doelstellings van hierdie organisasies op ’n aantal uitsprake van leidende C.I.-en Spro-cas-persone self. Dit lyk na ’n aanneemlike en regverdige prosedure. Op die eerste gerig voer hy ook duidelike en oortuigende bewysstukke aan. So haal hy byvoorbeeld ’n artikel aan wat die direkteur van Spro-cas, mnr. Peter Randall, in *Pro Veritate* van Junie 1973 publiseer het. Volgens mnr. de Klerk het hy daarin geskryf dat „the fundamental change envisaged is the alternative offered by a socialist form of society”. Op grond hiervan sou ’n mens met reg kon konkludeer, soos *Die Vaderland* ook in sy opskrif doen, dat die verklaarde eind-doel van Spro-cas „swart sosialisme” is. Die enigste moeilikheid is net dat dit glad nie is wat mnr. Randall geskryf het nie. Wat in *Pro Veritate* van Junie 1973, p. 8, staan is (en ek kursiveer die gedeeltes wat mnr. de Klerk weggelaat het): „*The question must arise whether our, „traditional” economic structures are capable of enabling the kind of fundamental change envisaged or whether we should be exploring more vigorously the alternatives offered by a socialist form of society*”. Afgesien nog daarvan dat dien dat die sleutelwoordjie „is” in sy sitaat mnr. de Klerk se eie toevoeging is, is daar, om dit sag te stel, nogal ’n aansienlike verskil tussen mnr. Randall se versigtige aan die orde stel van ’n belangrike kwessie as iets wat ondersoek kan word, en die kategoriese bewering wat mnr. de Klerk daarvan maak!

mooi Christelike getuienisse

In ander gevalle is mnr. de Klerk se sitate wel heelte-

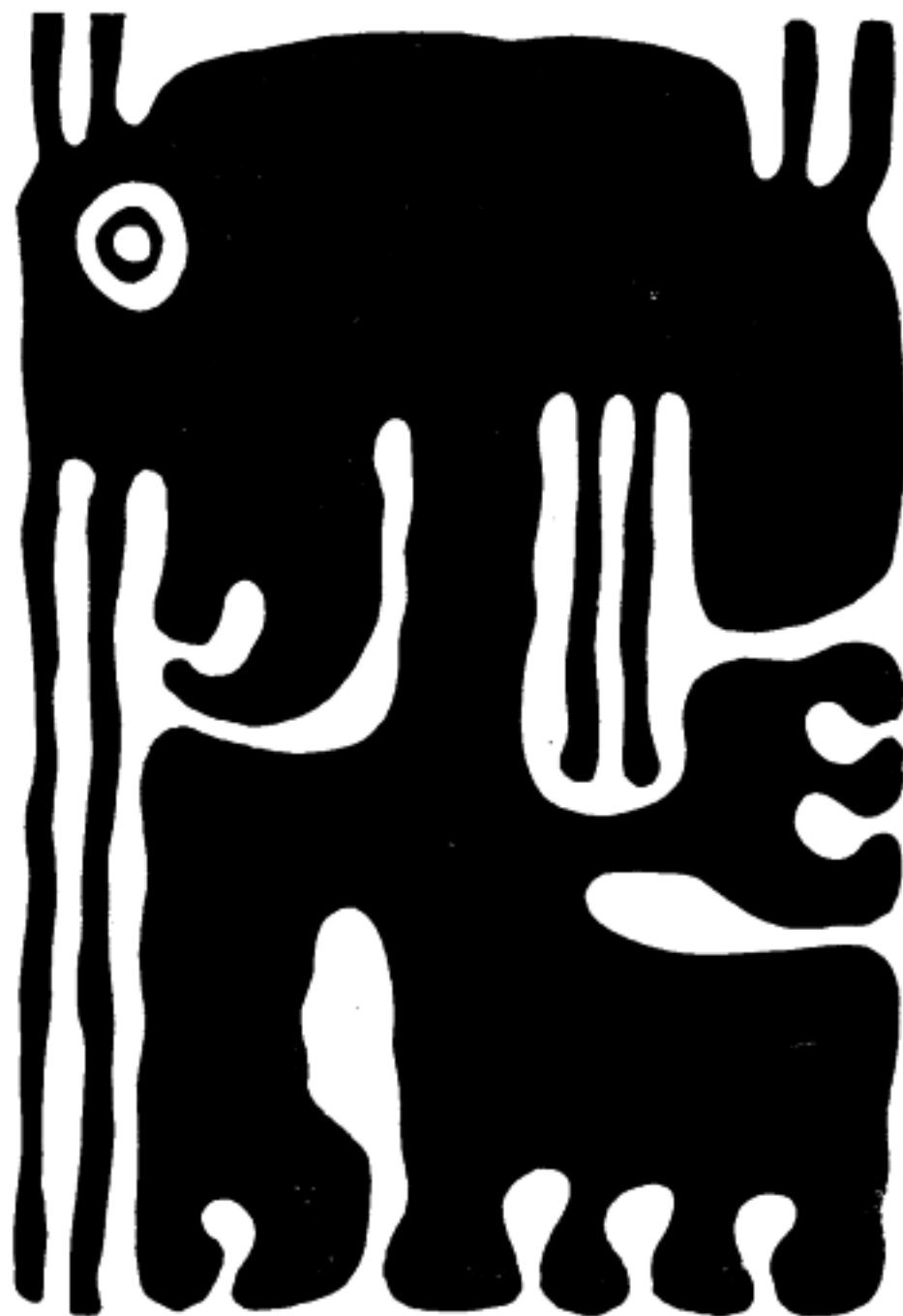
mal korrek—maar is dit hoegenaamd nie duidelik wat dit moet bewys nie. So haal hy byvoorbeeld in dik swart letters die volgende twee uitsprake aan uit die C.I. se beginsel-verklaring van Julie 1973: „Christians should seek to have laws passed which are in accordance with the Gospel of Christ”, en „Christian change means bringing every facet of life under the Gospel of Christ”. Let wel, dit is veronderstel om getuienis te wees oor die „absolutistiese en radikale denkpatrone” van die C.I. Ek verstout my om te sê dat hierdie stellings deur elke belydende Christen onderskryf kan en sal word. Om die waarheid te sê, dit is die soort uitspraak wat al sinds jaar en dag gemeengoed is ook en veral in die Afrikaanse kerke, skole, universiteite en selfs die kulturele en politieke lewe. Mnr. de klerk moet omtrent alleen staan as hy dit as radikaal en revolusionêr verwerp. (Ek moet uit sy stuk aflei dat hy dit wel as sodanig verwerp.) In 'n sekere sin is hy waarskynlik korrek dat as hierdie stellings werklik ernstig bedoel word, hulle 'n radikale betekenis het. Maar dan moet sy verwerping daarvan geld vir elke ernstige Christen en kerk, die N.G. Kerk net soveel as die Christelike Instituut!

As slot op die rekening haal mnr. de Klerk hierby nog die volgende aan uit die C.I. se *Program van Aksie*: „Die C.I. streef na 'n diepgaande en radikale verandering deur *berou en geloof* in gehoorsaamheid aan die wil van God en na die transformasie van die samelewing *in sy Naam*”. Weereens sou 'n mens kon wonder wat so onthullend radikaal is aan hierdie mooi Christelike geloofsbelydenis. Die verklaring hiervoor is inderdaad onthullend—maar eerder van mnr. de Klerk se metode van redenering as van die C.I. se doelstellings. Mnr. de Klerk het naamlik in sy oorspronklike volledige artikel ook hierdie sitaat gebruik, *dog sonder die woorde wat ek gekursiveer het*. In 'n reaksie hierop het mnr. James Moulder hom daarop gewys dat die weglating van „deur berou en geloof” en van „in sy Naam” heeltemal 'n ander strekking aan dié uitspraak gee. Nou haal mnr. de Klerk wel die sin volledig aan—maar kennelik het dit vir hom nog dieselfde betekenis as wat dit sonder hierdie belangrike kwalifiserings gehad het!

Dit moet so langamerhand duidelik wees dat mnr. de klerk in hierdie saak nie 'n onbevooroordeelde of betroubare „getuie” is nie. Hy sien in oënskynlik normale Christelike uitsprake allerlei duistere en sinistêre betekenis wat ander lesers daarvan helaas ontgaan. En hy is geneig om uitsprake so te „wysig” dat hulle wel bewys wat hy graag wil sê, maar nie noodwendig meer ooreenkom met die oorspronklike betekenis daarvan nie. 'n Mens kan nie anders as om die indruk te kry dat mnr. de Klerk hom nie deur die beskikbare en relevante feite laat lei nie, maar gewoon soek na enigiets wat, buig of bars, kan „bewys” wat hy graag aan die C.I. en Spro-cas wil toeskryf. Hierdie merkwaardige wyse waarop hy met sinate omgaan moet in gedagte gehou word wanneer ons kom by sy sentrale „bewysstuk”.

„The Eye of the Needle”

Die belangrikste en blykbaar beslissende stuk



„getuienis” vir mnr. de Klerk kom uit 'n persoonlike brief wat mnr. Peter Randall in Mei 1972 aan hom geskryf het. Voordat die hele korrespondensie (hopelik met beide here se toestemming) gepubliseer word, is dit natuurlik moeilik om mnr. de Klerk se gebruik daarvan te evalueer. Mnr. Randall het reeds self in 'n brief aan *The Argus* beswaar gemaak dat sy brief uit verband aangehaal en verkeerd geïnterpreteer word. Maar selfs daarsonder is dit net uit die gedeeltes wat mnr. de Klerk self aanhaal al duidelik dat hy nogal vreemd met Randall se woorde omspring. Volgens mnr. de Klerk het Randall naamlik van Richard Turner se boek *The Eye of the Needle*, was as 'n Spro-cas-publikasie 'n jaar voor Turner se inperking verskyn het, geskryf: „It seems to me that this represented an organic outgrowth of the work of Spro-cas, and its challenge could not be avoided”. Hieruit kan kwalik meer opgemaak word as dat Randall van mening was dat Turner se boek 'n integrale deel vorm van die Spro-cas -publikasie-program, 'n program wat 'n groot aantal verskillende werke van uiteenlopende aard en standpunte omvat. Volgens mnr. de Klerk sou Randall later nog verder geskryf het dat “I myself have little doubt that if we are really serious about bringing about real change in South

Africa, we shall have to move in the direction indicated". Weereens kan hier moeilik meer ingelees word as dat Randall sy *persoonlike* oortuiging uitspreek—maar mnr. de Klerk vat dit as volg saam: „Daarin (d.w.s. in die brief) verklaar hy (Randall) dat *die Christelike Instituut en Spro-cas* die pad sou volg soos uiteengesit (in Turner se boek)". Die spronge wat hier gemaak word is eenvoudig duiseligwekkend. Uit Randall se opmerking dat *The Eye of the Needle* belangrik genoeg is om deur Spro-cas publiseer te word, en sy verdere opmerking dat hy persoonlik hierdie gedagterigting ernstig opneem, konkludeer mnr. de Klerk dat nou bewys is dat die C.I. as organisasie en die hele Spro-cas-projek verbind is tot die uitsluitlike einddoel van „partiserende demokrasie” en „swart sosialisme"! Die ander medewerkers aan die Spro-cas-projek, soos ek self, is „onbesorg en onbewus” van hierdie radikale ontwikkelings. Selfs dr. Beyers Naudé as direkteur van die C.I. het „min begrip van waarmee hy eintlik besig was om hom te vereenselwig”. Dit help natuurlik ook nie dat Randall self (in ’n brief aan *The Argus*, 2 Januarie 1974) protesteer dat hy persoonlik net nie in staat is om soveel ander individue en instansies vir sy eie doeleindes te manipuleer nie—of dat hulle getuig dat hy dit nooit eens probeer doen het nie. Mnr. de Klerk het sy vermeende bewyse oor die „ware doeleindes” van die C.I. en Spro-cas, en dit is duidelik dat niks hom van sy oortuigings sal afbring nie. Maar genoeg, die kritiese leser sal voortaan ook weet watter woorde om aan sy bewerings te heg.

Dié ervaring bewys: geen geheime ondersoek!

Vergun my ten slotte twee opmerkings om die hele aangeleentheid weer enigsins in perspektief te probeer

bring. Die Spro-cas-projek was ’n belangrike, omvangryke en gevarieerde onderneming. Net aan die verskillende studie-kommissies het bykans 130 persone meegewerk, vooraanstaande kerkmanne, akademici, politici (insluitende mnr. de Klerk self!). Naas die 7 rapporte is byna 20 ander werke deur Spro-cas gepubliseer. Hulle is gekenmerk deur groot verskille in strekking, standaard en standpunte. Ongetwyfeld bevat hulle, naas dinge waaroor elke denkende Suid-Afrikaner dit eens sal wees, ook belangrike nuwe perspektiewe, opsienbarende of twyfelagtige bewerings, goeie en slegte argumente en kontroversiële stellingnames. As sodanig verdien dit deeglike en sekerlik ook kritiese bestudering en bespreking—iets wat veral in die Afrikaanse pers tot dusver nog nie gebeur het nie. Maar dit is iets totaal anders as die verdagmakingskampanje wat mnr. de Klerk met behulp van oorvereenvoudigings, onvolledige en verdraaide sitate buite verband wil voer.

Ten slotte mag hierdie hele eskapade dit miskien ook duideliker maak waarom persone verbonde aan Spro-cas en die C.I. weier om deel te neem aan ’n ondersoek waarby getuienis en aanklagte nie in die openbaar gelewer en weêrlê kan word nie. Mnr. de Klerk se veelvuldige foutiewe sitate, ongeldige argumente, wanvoorstellings en skewe interpretasies kan aan die kaak gestel word—*omdat dit in die openbaar geskied het*. Maar watter verweer sou enigiemand teen dergelyke aantygings kan hê indien dit in camera en sonder sy wete aangevoer word voor ’n tribunaal wat aan sulke konklusies omtrent die ware doelstellings van die C.I. en Spro-cas ’n ingrypende en verreikende gewig sou moes heg?★

10

die evangelie en die politiek volgens calvyn . roelf meyer

Inleiding

Mnr. W.A. de Klerk het die Christelike Instituut, Spro-cas en publikasies van die twee organisasies oor hulle doelstellings in verskeie blaaie aangeval en afgemaak. Peter Randall (voormalige direkteur van Spro-cas), en André du Toit (medewerker van Spro-cas se politieke rapport) het daarop geantwoord en aangetoon dat sy beoordeling en kritiek van die politieke rapport van Spro-cas feitlik volledig uit „basiese misverstande en/of flagrante wanvoorstelling” bestaan omdat hy onder andere gladnie die rapport „objektief weergee” nie en selfs „presies die teenoorgestelde” beweer van wat die verslag sê. James Moulder het op W.A. de Klerk se kritiek en aanval op die Christelike Instituut geantwoord deur daarop te wys dat die Christelike Instituut nooit probeer doen het wat W.A. de Klerk aan hom

toeskryf nie, nl. om ’n utopiese messiaanse ryk in Suid-Afrika tot stand te bring.

WAT NOU OORBLY IS OM PRESIES NA TE GAAN WAT CALVYN SE STANDPUNT OOR DIE HOUDING VAN DIE CHRISTENE TEN OPSIGTE VAN DIE POLITIEK EN DIE SAMELEWING IS

1. Die evangelie staan in ’n direkte verband met die politiek

W.A. de Klerk het ’n bepaalde standpunt ingeneem en hy word bewustelik of onbewustelik daardeur beïnvloed. Dit is naamlik dat hy daarop aanspraak maak dat Calvyn en André Biéler, (wat Calvyn interpreteer en aanhaal), hom geïnspireer het om ’n skeiding tussen die

twee ryke, dié van die politieke veld en dié van die Christelike kerk, die „tydelike” en die „geestelike” sferes, die ryk van die „politiek en die wet” en die ryk van „die evangelie”, te maak.

Volgens W.A. de Klerk se interpretasie van Calvin se uitsprake en van Biéler se verduideliking moet die maatskappy *slegs* volgens 'n sg. „morale minimum” 'n minimale morele kode ingerig word. Die „voorlopige orde van die siviele regering” moet dan alleenlik daarvolgens funksioneer. Hierdie „kode” is dan volgens De Klerk, (en soos hy Calvin interpreteer), iets „laer en minder” as die liefde wat deel van die kern van die evangelie vorm. As die Christene sou probeer om die politiek met die evangelie te beïnvloed, sou hulle hulself te buite gaan in die lig van bogenoemde omdat hulle dan sou probeer om „die Koninkryk van Christus onder die elemente van hierdie wêreld in te sluit”, en sê hy, 'n mens kan bv. nie die verkeer op die paaie volgens die „wet van Christus” inrig nie.

W.A. de Klerk se interpretasie van Calvin moet egter krities nagegaan word. As 'n mens Calvin se uitsprake *in hulle verband* en in die raamwerk van *sy hele teologie* en in sy toepassing daarvan nagaan, kom 'n mens tot die verrassende slotsom dat Calvin én Biéler presies die teenoorgestelde beweer van wat W.A. de Klerk aan hulle wil toeskryf.

Dit is dan meteens duidelik dat W.A. de Klerk sekere geïsoleerde uitsprake, sinsnedes en selfs begrippe (vgl. „morale minimum”), wat in sy vooropgesette denksisteem pas, aangryp en hulle gesag vir sy idees opgeëis het. Maar uit billikheid teenoor W.A. de Klerk moet dit duidelik aangetoon word presies wat Calvin se posisie ten opsigte van die „ryk van die evangelie” en „die politieke ryk” is.

Calvin het 'n groot en aktiewe belangstelling en deelname in die politiek gehad omdat hy hom daarvoor beywer het om die politiek onder „'n godsdienstige norm en kontrole te bring”.¹

Tog moet 'n mens Calvin se gedagtes self weergee om die krag van sy oortuiging, nl. dat die evangelie die politieke terrein direk moet beïnvloed, tot sy reg te laat kom. Hy sê dat 'n mens jouself deeglik misgis as jy lang voorspoed in 'n staat verwag wat nie deur die septer van God, d.i. naamlik sy Heilige Woord, geregeer word nie.²

André Biéler konkludeer dan ook dat die reformatie se geestelike aspekte sy uitwerking op die sosiale aspekte gehad het en dat die geestelike sy alle vlakke van die lewe sonder onderskeid ingedring en almal op elke terrein bereik het.³

Calvin het 'n beroep op die koning gedoen om beskuldiging wat teen die reformatore ingebring is, as onwaar te beskou en daarvoor gesê: „'n Mens kan nie die politiek en geestelike waarheid skei nie. U eerste taak as regeerder is om u ryk op geregtigheid te bou. Maar as u nie in die godsdienstige vraag geïnteresseerd is nie, as u uself toelaat om mislei te word deur die beswadding van hulle wat die evangeliese Christene revolusionêr noem, sodat die lastige vrae wat deur hulle gevra word,



ontwyk kan word, maak u uself 'n deelgenoot van ongeregtigheid en is u regering niks anders as straatboewery („mais brigandage”) nie.”⁴

Calvin gaan voort deur te sê dat die koning homself nie moet mislei nie aangesien die grootste politikus ... homself geheel en al mislei as hy meen dat hy 'n voorspoedige regime sal opbou sonder om homself met die waarheid wat in Christus is, te bemoei. Dit is nie 'n vraag van godsdienstige of privaatsake nie: dit betrek die politiek direk.⁵

Volgens Biéler sien Calvin en die reformatore die hervorming van die kerk egter nie slegs as 'n geïsoleerde „geestelike”, teoretiese saak wat deur die Woord van God aangevuur is nie, maar is dit „by sy oorsprong 'n revolusionêre geestelike krag wat noodwendig sosiale ongeregtigheid bevraagteken”.⁶ Biéler beskryf selfs Calvin spesifiek met betrekking tot sy politieke aksie as Christen soos volg: „Calvin wat katoliek, humanisties en konserwatief was, het na sy bekering die hoof van die populêre „subversiewe” beweging geword.”⁷ Volgens Biéler doen Calvin veel moeite om aan te toon waarom 'n Christen altyd in 'n onregverdige sosiale orde die steurende element moet wees. Calvin „doen moeite om te verduidelik dat getroue Christene in werklikheid altyd in 'n sekere mate versteurders van die sosiale orde moet

wees omdat hulle die onregverdigheid en ongeregtheid van die samelewing waarin hulle hul bevind, eksplisiet of implisiet aantoon terwyl hulle die Woord van God ernstig opneem en daarvolgens lewe; dit doen hulle op dieselfde wyse as wat hulle dit met die onsuiverheid van konvensionele godsdiens doen".⁸

Calvyn maak dit dan glashelder duidelik dat dit juis die konserwatiewes is wat die status quo van 'n onregverdige regime wil behou, en wat die ware oproermakers is: „Dit is nie die gereformeerde Christene wat die instigators van wanorde is nie, maar dis juis hulle wat die herniende orde, wat God graag wil sien heers in die godsdiens sowel as in die samelewing, wil vasstel. Die ware oproermakers is hulle wat godsdienstige en sosiale wanorde verleng deur dit te beskerm: dit is die reaksionêre konserwatiewes wat deur hulle ongeregtheid en geweld onwaarheid verkondig en weier om na waarheid te luister.”⁹

Dit is gevolglik duidelik dat Calvyn se „subversiewe aksie” niks anders is as om die *onreg* in die samelewing en regering, in die politiek te „saboteer” nie. Die „outentieke Christene” het, „behalwe dié een doelwit wat vanuit hulle getrouheid aan die evangelie tevoorskyn kom, geen ander revolusionêre doelwit nie”.¹⁰ Dit is gevolglik volgens Biéler onomwonde duidelik dat die regeerder nie die politiek van die evangelie kan skei nie.¹¹

2. 'n Minimale burgerlike orde sonder die evangelie as maatstaf is van weinig nut

As Calvyn 'n direkte verband tussen die evangelie en die politieke sfeer handhaaf, wat beteken sy onderskeiding tussen die ryk van die „politiek en wet” en dié van „die evangelie”, „die morale minimum” en „die morale optimum” dan?

W.A. de Klerk interpreteer dié onderskeiding van Calvyn so dat dit moet beteken dat die politieke terrein *alleenlik* deur 'n minimale morele standaard van reg en billikheid beheers moet word en dat die evangelie nie die norm daarvoor moet wees nie. Sy oplossing vir die politieke situasie volgens die interpretasie van die twee sfere is gevolglik dat „die ware grense van die siviele regering vasgestel word; om 'n nuwe duidelikheid oor die verhouding tussen kerk en staat te verkry”.

Weereens moet eers na Calvyn se uitsprake self en ook Biéler s'n gekyk word om vas te stel presies wat hul uitsprake beteken.

Biéler maak Calvyn se gedagtes oor die „minimum morele kode” soos volg duidelik: Hy sê dat dit noodsaaklik is dat die Christene, sowel as die mense wat nie Christene is nie, ten minste op 'n minimale morele lewensvlak gehou moet word selfs al is dit deur die krag of fors van 'n uitwendige morele wet. „Hierdie uitwendige morele wet sal deur 'n ‚uitwendige’ of ‚politieke’ invloed op die ongelowiges inwerk; dit sal hulle dwing om binne 'n bepaalde morele raamwerk te bly, wat hulle van destruktiewe uitspattighede sal weer-

hou ... en op die gelowiges sal dié wet die uitwerking hê om hulle aan die morele vlak te herinner waarin hulle geroepe is om in vryheid, wat aan hulle deur Christus aangebied is, te lewe”.¹²

Wat egter van die allergrootste belang hier is, is dat Biéler Calvyn se gedagtes hier weergee in die raamwerk van Calvyn se verduideliking van die „gebruike van die morele wet wat aan die mense deur Moses geopenbaar is”. M.a.w. die „uitwendige of morele wet”, die „minimale morele kode” wat uitwendig of politiek toegepas moet word, *is volgens Calvyn niks anders nie as 'n afleiding van die tien gebooe*.

In die hele verband sê Calvyn dat die mens in homself „'n natuurwet” besit wat die wil van God uitdruk.¹³ Dié wet is egter vir die mens fragmentaries van aard vanweë sy sonde „sodat hierdie wet vir hom in laaste instansie van geen nut is om sy gewone bestaan daarvolgens in te rig nie”.¹⁴ Calvyn verklaar dan die doel van hierdie „lex naturae” soos volg: „Die doel dus van die natuurwet is om dit vir die mens onmoontlik te maak om homself te regverdig.”¹⁵ Wat vir ons insig hier belangrik is, is dat Calvyn van hierdie wet sê dat „dit aan so baie foute (van die mens) onderworpe is en oor so baie dwalings struikel ... dat dit heeltemal onmoontlik vir hierdie wet is om ons op 'n sekere (vaste) weg te lei”.¹⁶ Die gevolg is dus dat „hierdie natuurwet deur 'n spesiale genade van God verlig moet word om bruikbaar te wees ...” En: „Die wet van God is dus 'n geestelike wet voordat dit 'n morele wet is”.¹⁷ Daarom sê Calvyn het 'n mens Jesus Christus, wat alleen die wet vervul, nodig. So wil Calvyn dan 'n direkte verband tussen die evangelie en die politieke lewe, of die minimale morele kode, of die minimale wet handhaaf.

Ten spyte daarvan bly die „geforceerde geregtigheid” nog op die politieke terrein nodig. Hy sê: „Desnieteenstaande is die geforseerde geregtigheid vir die gemeenskap nog nodig vir die vrede of stabiliteit wat ons Heer aan ons gee as Hy alle sake beheer om nie in oproer te kom nie ... wat sal gebeur as alles aan almal toegestaan word”.¹⁸

Op grond van bogenoemde konkludeer Biéler dan ook: „Ons sien dus dat in die gereformeerde leer daar geen outentieke moraal buite dié is wat van die geestelike lewe uitvloei en wat die natuurlike vrug van die lewe in gemeenskap met Jesus Christus is nie”. Dit het gevolglik geen sin om met losstaande begrippe en sinnes van Calvyn en Biéler, soos bv. „morale minimum”, te opereer, sonder om dit in verband met die evangelie te bring soos Calvyn dit wel doen nie.

3. Geen skeiding van die politieke en geestelike terreine moontlik sonder afwyking van die evangelie nie

In die lig van bogenoemde is dit dan ook nog nodig om vas te stel wat Calvyn met die „geestelike en tydelike ryke” bedoel en of W.A. de klerk korrek is as hy op grond daarvan die Christelike Instituut se doelstellings om die politieke lewe met die evangelie te beïnvloed, afwys.

Die tradisionele gereformeerde siening wat op Calvyn gebasseer is, wil nie twee *onafhanklike* kringe of sferes, nl. dié van die politieke en dié van die kerk, handhaaf nie „omdat hierdie afsydigheid van die kerk ... 'n geestelike vakuum binne-in die sekulêre ryk skep, wat dan geneig is om homself met ideologieë en wêreldsieninge te vul. Gevolglik ontstaan daar 'n hopelose breuk tussen kerklike en politieke, of geestelike en sekulêre verantwoordelikheid”.¹⁹ Dit is dan ook presies wat in Suid-Afrika gebeur, nl. dat die nasionale regering die kerk teenstaan om hom met die evangelie op die terrein van die politiek te beweeg omdat hy dié terrein vir homself met sy wêreldse apartheidsideologie wil opeis. Wat die Christelike Instituut betref, is hy, soos in sy beginselsuittesing, besig om sy deeltjie te probeer bydrae tot die „profetiese taak” van die kerk ook op die politieke terrein.

As Calvyn van die onderskeiding van die sfeer van die politiek en die sfeer van die evangelie praat, doen hy dit teen die agtergrond van sy oortuiging dat „'n teoretiese onderskeiding tussen hulle (kerk en staat) onmoontlik is”.²⁰ Prakties maak Calvyn tog 'n onderskeid, maar dan is dit nie om die invloed en gesag van die evangelie en die kerk uit die politiek, as 'n sogenaamde onafhanklike terrein te hou nie, maar oor blote pragmatiese redes om hulle onderskeie take uit te voer.²¹ Wat die struktuur van hulle arbeid betref, verskil die terreine, maar *wat die inhoud van die politieke sfeer en die geestelike sfeer betref, bly die evangelie die norm vir albei*.²² Christus en sy evangelie bly dus die norm oor beide onderskeie sferes t.w.v. hul funksie, maar die twee sferes vorm tog 'n „ondeelbare geheel”.²³

Biéler bevestig dan ook die eenheid tussen die twee onderskeie sferes in Calvyn se denke. Hy sê: „Calvinisme is nie 'n spiritualisme soos die humanisme dit verstaan wat die materiële lewe van die bestaan van die gees skei nie. Die gereformeerde leer is gekant teen hierdie soort vervreemding van die menslike bestaan”.²⁴ In sy konklusie sê Biéler dan ook dat volgens Calvyn dit so is dat „die totaliteit van die menslike bestaan deur God ingeruim en bestuur word: Dit is in ons aardse (materiële) lewe dat hy ons ontmoet en ons geloof toets”.²⁵

Dit is duidelik volgens Calvyn dat die evangelie die maatstaf op alle terreine van die lewe moet wees, en waar hy 'n onderskeid maak tussen die siviele en die geestelike lewe, beteken dit dat die siviele regering slegs 'n „uiterlike orde” daar moet stel, maar dat hy nie mag of gesag oor „die innerlike lewe” van die mens mag eis nie.²⁶ Aan die anderkant word die terrein van die geestelike sfeer onderskei „omdat dit fanaties is om in die naam van ons Christelike leer te redeneer dat daar nie 'n uiterlike orde oor ons gestel moet word nie”. Hy sê dat dié fanatieke standpunt „Joodse ydelheid is om te probeer om Christus se Koninkryk onder die elemente van die wêreld in te sluit”.²⁷ Verder is die uiterlike orde en die handhawing daarvan dan ook nie vir Calvyn die kerk se „apostoliese taak” nie.

Vir Calvyn het die regering dus die taak om die

„uiterlike orde” te handhaaf, wat *nie* die „apostoliese taak” van die kerk is nie. Hierdie uiterlike orde moet daar wees om die nie-Christene sowel as die Christene „in toom te hou”. Nou was daar egter mense wat gesê het dat hierdie „uiterlike orde” nie nodig was nie omdat die samelewing eenvoudig volgens die evangelie moes leef. Daarteenoor sê Calvyn dat dit nie sou kon nie omdat dit sou beteken dat 'n mens sal probeer om „die Koninkryk van Christus onder die elemente van die wêreld in te sluit”, wat „Joodse ydelheid” sou wees. Wat Calvyn hier stel, is nie 'n skeiding van die *terreine* van kerk en staat elkeen met sy eie norme en onafhanklikheid, soos W.A. de Klerk hom interpreteer, nie, maar 'n bevestiging dat 'n uiterlike politieke orde nodig is en dat dit die spesifieke *taak* van die regering is. **WAT DIE UITERLIKE POLITIEKE ORDE BETREF, VERSKIL DIE TAAK VAN DIE KERK EN STAAT DAARIN DAT DIE REGERING DIE UITERLIKE POLITIEKE ORDE MOET VASSTEL, MAAR DIE CHRISTENE (DIE KERK) MOET, VOLGENS CALVYN, DIE NORME VOLGENS DIE EVANGELIE VIR DIE POLITIEKE ORDE VASSTEL.**

Uit bogenoemde is dit dan duidelik dat Calvyn 'n spesifieke afgebakende taak vir die siviele owerheid het, nl. die handhawing van uiterlike orde, terwyl die geestelike terrein hom oor alles sonder perke uitstrek en die evangelie as maatstaf vir die ganse lewe aanbied.

4. Dié standpunt is ook die tradisionele gereformeerde standpunt in Suid-Afrika

Die bogenoemde interpretasie van Calvyn word nie net deur die Fransman, André Biéler, en die Duitser, Helmut Thielicke, so weergegee nie, maar ook in S.A. word dit so deur Suid-Afrikaners uitgelê. Een voorbeeld vir dié artikel sal genoegsaam wees. Willie Jonker, professor in teologie te Stellenbosch, skryf soos volg: „Die mees belangwekkende aanpak van sosiaal-etiese vrae vind ons in die tyd van die Reformasie by Calvyn. Dit is die geval, omdat Calvyn die Heilige Skrif as norm aanvaar het, óók vir die vrae wat met die inrigting van die menslike gemeenskappe te make het”.²⁸ Volgens Jonker dink Calvyn glad nie daaraan om op grond van die algemene genade van God 'n etiek, (óf 'n minimum moraal-eie toevoeging), op te bou nie, al is die begrip algemene genade belangrik vir die handhawing van die burgerlike geregtigheid in 'n ordelike samelewing. Hy sê: „Calvyn handhaaf die Heilige Skrif as die enigste norm vir alle etiek. Dit beteken dat die natuureg (lex naturae, en die sg. morale minimum kan onses insiens ook bygevoeg word), vir die teologiese etiek nie tot 'n norm mag word náás die Heilige Skrif nie. Vir die sosiale etiek hou dit in dat die institute nie eenvoudig as God-gewilde gegewenhede aanvaar word soos hulle nou eenmaal bestaan nie. Hulle moet almal onder die kritiek kom van die Woord van God”.²⁹

Oor vandag se situasie is dit ook belangrik wat Jonker verder skryf: „Agter die uiterlike terughoudendheid van die kerk op politieke gebied skuil dikwels niks anders nie

as 'n ondersteuning van die heersende politiek".³⁰ Verder sê hy dat die Bybel hom uitvoerig met politieke kwessies besig hou. „Nie alleen die Ou Testament is 'n „politieke boek' nie, maar ook in die optrede van Jesus gaan dit om dinge wat politieke betekenis het".³¹ Verder stel hy dit dat ons nie ons oë mag sluit „vir die onreg, armoede, onderdrukking en frustrasie waaronder baie mense in die wêreld gebuk gaan nie".³²

Jonker sê dan ook onomwonde dat die evangelie die norm ook op die politieke terrein moet wees en dat dit altyd die Calvinistiese en gereformeerde weg was. „Die vlymskerpe kritiek van die Heilige Skrif teen elke vorm van onreg moet ons opskrik om ons nie neer te lê by toestande waarin mense veronreg word of ellende verduur nie. Daarom is die weg van piëtistiese wêreldmyding wat beweer dat kerk en toelogie niks met die brandende maatskaplike en politieke vrae van ons dag te make het nie, eenvoudig vir ons afgeslote. Wie dié weg wil gaan, verlaat nie alleen die weg waarop die Ned. Geref. Kerk in die verlede nog steeds gewandel het nie, maar hy verlaat ook die gereformeerde spoor en openbaar daarmee dat hy van die konkrete betekenis van die evangelie vir alle terreine van die menslike lewe niks verstaan nie".³³

Miskien sou dit ook 'n goeie doel kon dien om, terwyl ons met Calvin se beskouing besig is, die Christelike Instituut se standpunt, wat hy vanuit die evangelie teen die apartheidstruktuur van die regering probeer handhaaf, aan Calvin se uitsprake te toets. Mnr. W.A. de Klerk het die Christelike Instituut, met 'n beroep op Calvin, wat egter op 'n misverstand van Calvin en sy standpunte berus, probeer afmaak, maar ander soos bv. dr. A.P. Treurnicht het weer van die ander kant, volgens 'n berig in „Hoofstad", 11.4.1969, „afsondering ontwikkeling", ens., aan Calvin probeer ontleen. Daarom sal dit goed wees om met 'n paar uitsprake van Calvin oor dié sake af te sluit:

„Die menslike geslag is saam verbind deur 'n heilige band van gemeenskap. Almal is almal se naastes. Sodat elkeen ons naaste is, is dit genoeg dat hy mens is; want ons het nie die reg om ons gemeenskaplike natuur uit te wis nie."³⁴

„Die Bybel bewys dat die mense gebore is die een vir die ander, en dat hulle by gevolg onderling met mekaar omgang moet hê ten einde die gemeenskap van die menslike geslag te bestendig."³⁵

„En nou dat ons sien dat God die menslike geslag so geskape het, dat ons saamverbonde sal wees, en dat niemand homself en sy vermoëns moet spaar nie, maar dat ons al ons vermoëns moet bydra om alles tot gemeenskap te laat dien, moet ons nie aangespoor wees tot so 'n mededeelsaamheid nie?"³⁶

„God het gewil dat ons almal voortkom uit dieselfde fontein, sodat ons des te groter behoefte aan onderlinge onderhoud en eenstemmigheid sal hê, en dat ons die een die ander sal omhels soos ons eie vlees ... En wat die ongelikheid betref, wat strydig is met sy bedoeling, dis niks anders as 'n korrupsie wat uit die sonde voortkom nie."³⁷

„God wil dat daar so 'n analogie en gelykheid tussen ons sal wees, dat elkeen die behoeftiges volgens sy vermoë sal bystaan, sodat party nie oorfloed sal hê en die ander gebrek ly nie".³⁸

„Let ook daarop dat God gebied dat elkeen die vreemdeling so lief as homself moet hê. Want daaruit is dit duidelik dat die naam „naaste' nie beperk is tot familie en bure en bekendes nie, maar uitstrek tot die ganse mensdom, soos Jesus Christus dit bewys in die persoon van die Samaritaan ..."³⁹

In die lig van dié artikel oor mnr. W.A. de Klerk se kritiek op grond van Calvin, wil ons konkludeer dat ons geensins enige rede kan insien waarom die Christelike Instituut hom van sy beginsels moet afkeer om 'n ander rigting in te slaan nie. Samevattend beoog die Christelike Instituut volgens sy program van beginsels en sy program van aksie die volgende:

„Om elke faset van die lewe tot gehoorsaamheid aan Christus te bring."

„Die apartheidsstelsel word met geweld teenoor onskuldige mense gehandhaaf en dit lok revolusionêre geweld uit. Hierdie lewenswyse moet op 'n radikale vreedsame wyse verander word na 'n lewe van liefde en geregtigheid in gehoorsaamheid aan Christus."★

VOETNOTAS

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2. „La Pensée Economique et Sociale De Calvin", André Biéler, Geneve, 1961, p. 77.
3. Ibid., p. 30.
4. Ibid., p. 76.
5. Ibid., p. 76, 77.
6. Ibid., p. 30, 31.
7. Ibid., p. 65.
8. Ibid., p. 80.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., p. 81.
11. Ibid., p. 77.
12. Ibid., p. 211.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., p. 209.
15. Calvin se Institusie, II, 2 :25.
16. Ibid.
17. A. Biéler, a.w., p. 209.
18. Calvin se Institusie II, 7 :10.
19. H. Thielicke, a.w., p. 568.
20. Ibid., p. 593.
21. Ibid., p. 595.
22. Ibid., p. 596.
23. Ibid.
24. A. Biéler, a.w., p. 307.
25. Ibid.
26. H. Thielicke, a.w., p. 595, Calvin, a.w. II 8 :6.
27. Calvin, a.w. IV, 20:1,2.
28. Sol Justitiae, P.A. Verhoef, e.a., N.G. Kerkgewers, 1973, p. 84, 85.
29. Ibid., p. 85.
30. Ibid., p. 92.
31. Ibid., p. 92.
32. Ibid., p. 96.
33. Ibid., p. 97.
34. Calvin, Kommentaar op die Nuwe Testament, Luk. 10:30.
35. Calvin, Kommentaar op Ex. 22:25.
36. Preek oor 1 Kor. 11:11-16. Opera Calvini. Tome XLIX p. 740.
37. Calvin, Kommentaar op Gen. 1:27.
38. Calvin, Kommentaar op 11 Kor. 8:13.
39. Calvin, Kommentaar op Ex. 22:21-24.



AN HONORARY DOCTORATE IN LAW

DR. BEYERS NAUDE HONOURED IN SOUTH AFRICA

Citation by Professor E Kahn BCom LLB (Witwatersrand) LLM LLD (Natal), of the Middle Temple, Barrister, DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PROFESSOR OF LAW, ON THE OCCASION OF THE CONFERMENT OF THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF LAWS, HONORIS CAUSA, ON CHRISTIAAN FREDERICK BEYERS NAUDE at the University of the Witwatersrand, 26.4.74.

★ ★ ★

On the tenth day of May 1915 at Roodepoort in the Transvaal there was born to the Reverend Joshua and Mrs Naudé a son. His parents did not follow the custom of assigning him the given names of his maternal grandfather. Instead, they called him Christiaan Frederick Beyers after General Beyers, who had drowned in the Vaal River in the course of the 1914 rebellion.

Mr. Naudé senior was a firm supporter of the movement for the recognition of Afrikaans. His son remembers the outcry when Mr Naudé was accused of defiling the pulpit by delivering at Graaff-Reinet the

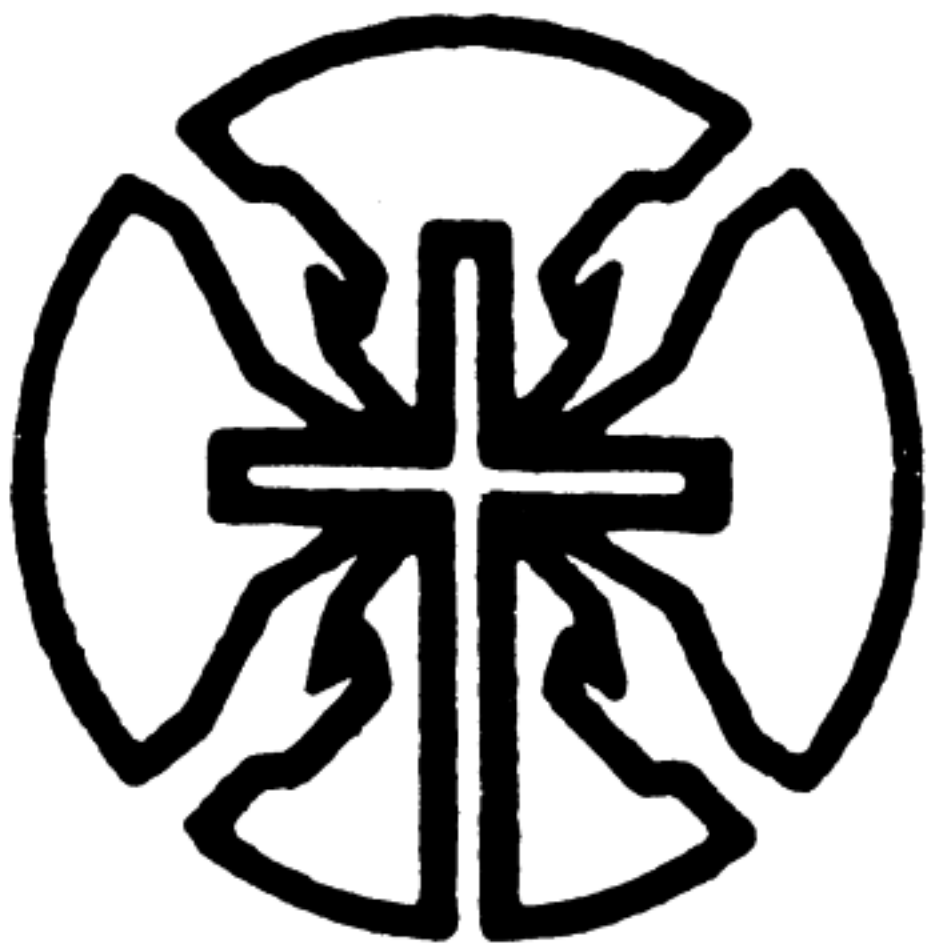
first sermon in Afrikaans, instead of High Dutch. But his aim was to prevail. The first Afrikaans-medium school in the Transvaal was named after him—the Joshua Naudé Primary School in Roodepoort.

The young Beyers Naudé received his schooling at Graaff-Reinet, where he matriculated at the Hoër Volk-skool, which his father had founded as the first Afrikaans-medium school in the Cape Province. Thereafter Beyers Naudé became a student at the University of Stellenbosch. He obtained the degrees of Bachelor and Master of Arts after four years' study, and his theological qualifications after a further four years' study.

Then, he, too, answered the call of the church. He served a number of congregations, and for a while was chaplain at the University of Pretoria. At the beginning of 1963 he became Moderator of the Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk.

The youthful clergyman trod the orthodox path until the tragedy occurred in 1960 that today is called by the metonymy 'Sharpeville'. Then—and this figure is used with disrespect to none—he made his journey to Damascus and underwent his Pauline conversion.

Towards the end of 1963 he became the director of the Christian Institute of Southern Africa. For the past ten



years he has urged the community of Christians to make a search of conscience. In sermons and speeches Beyers Naudé has dwelt on the need for what he believes to be a more relevant faith that seeks social, economic and political justice for all who are not Whites—for the Blacks, as he prefers to call them. The Whites must share their rights and privileges with the Blacks.

In the reconciliation between White and Black, he believes, there is need for the giving of the clear witness; and, he says, the Christian Institute must and will continue to be witness to the reconciliation. To him, too, his institute in the past decade has stimulated ecumenical awareness in our country.

In the sermon delivered at St. Mary's Cathedral in Johannesburg on 9 December last year during a service to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of Human Rights Day, Dr. Beyers Naudé warned the Whites of the dangers in remaining silent in the face of what he believes is the injustice meted out to and the oppression of the Blacks.

Why, he asked, do countries and peoples never learn from the past and 'repeat time and again the follies, the injustices and the inhumanities of previous epochs'?

We 'as Whites have devised and developed over half a century a political, economic, educational and social system that ensures selfishly and effectively the rights and privileges of a white minority—through the denial of almost all basic human rights to the vast majority of the people in our land'.

Do white South Africans, he continued, realize how deeply they hurt the frustrated and embittered millions of their countrymen who have a different colour of skin; and the dangers they are so entrenching for themselves?

'Sincerity of intention', he went on to say, 'is no

excuse for ignorance and no justification for oppression, and the recognition of the good being done, to have any moral value, must come from the recipient and not the giver.'

Christians, he said, should prepare themselves 'spiritually and emotionally' for 'the coming crisis'. It is our duty 'to offer ourselves to stand on the side of Christ and of justice—regardless of whether this be on the side on which the Whites or the Blacks may be—and to give ourselves and all that we have in the peaceful struggle for truth, justice and love, regardless of whether we will be accepted or rejected. For what matters eventually is not whether we be expedient, but whether we be right; not whether we succeed in the eyes of man, but whether we are obedient in the eyes of God; not whether we "ensure" our racial identity and security, but whether we prepare for the victory of the Kingdom of God in our land'.

These brave and eloquent words will inspire, or sear the consciences of some, and arouse the anger of others. But none will deny the sincerity of the man who uttered them.

Beyers Naudé is an international figure, the embodiment of the liberal spirit in this land. The Free University of Amsterdam honoured him with an honorary degree of doctor in October 1972. It is worthy of note that no university of the Netherlands confers an honorary degree without the concurrence of all the other universities of their country. For a while Beyers Naudé's presence was confined to South Africa. But his voice still travelled the entire world. As he spoke on his last visit abroad in 1972, so he speaks today of working for a peaceful solution of our problems, and he seeks to persuade churches in Europe that violence is not the answer.

Integrity, utter honesty in word and deed, and courage, deep courage: these are the words that spring to mind when one tries to describe the intimate essence of this striking character.

In conferring the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*, on Christiaan Frederick Beyers Naudé the University seeks to honour a man of sincerity and conscience who, at whatever cost to himself, strives to build bridges to cross the gulf between Black and White, and whose every act flows from love of his fellow man, whatever he be.



IVOR SHAPIRO

the vischer incident in perspective

Dr Lukas Vischer, head of the World Council of Churches Faith and Order Commission, was expelled from South Africa during March. In this article, Ivor Shapiro summarises the events leading up to and following this incident, and states three fundamental problems for the church of Christ which it highlights.

"We want social change to take place by peaceful means—non-violent means—as much as possible. We share in the sorrow if there are victims of violence, people killed. But we have come, I think, to learn that it is not a very useful way of putting the problem—simply in terms of violence and non-violence. And to see violence only where a gun has been used, or an attack has been made. There are different forms of violence..."

One day in March, top World Council of Churches' theologian Dr Lukas Vischer made these comments on the Council's controversial Programme to Combat Racism (PCR).

The next day, Dr Vischer's permit to visit South Africa was withdrawn, and another heated mass of statements, allegations and counter-allegations over the World Council's stand on Southern African guerilla movements vied with election news for dominance of the news columns.

A minister of the Swiss Reformed Church, Dr. Vischer is head of the Faith and Order desk of the W.C.C. His visit to South Africa was aimed, he said, at strengthening the bonds of fellowship between member churches here and the World Council, and to prepare for the next meeting of the Faith and Order Commission in Ghana during August.

He came to discuss, he said, "not to make proclamations".

But the pressure for proclamations from the first W.C.C. officer to visit South Africa in some years was strong. On the last day of his visit he agreed to hold a press conference in Johannesburg, and the first shots were fired in a battle of words that was to last several weeks.

not an apologist

Dr Vischer told South Africa that he was not an apologist for the PCR. But he wanted to correct an impression that seemed to prevail in South Africa—"namely that the W.C.C. is doing nothing else than just to entertain the PCR".

Outlining a number of different World Council activities, he said its image in South Africa was distorted "in that sense ... that attention is drawn exclusively to that point (the PCR)."

He said the Programme's aim was to promote international social justice, and went on:

"We have come to the conviction that in building up international social justice one of the basic fundamental obstacles is white racism. Why white racism? Because white racism is combined with economic and political ... power, and is therefore not merely a matter of personal attitudes between people—respect, mutual respect—but it is a matter of social relations affecting society in a much larger and sharper way than simply to put the problems in terms of personal relations.

He said the W.C.C.'s concern was international, but what South Africa faced was something of a microcosm of the world's problems.

"You have in a nutshell tensions and conflicts in this country which in fact need to be faced also by other countries.

"Therefore I want you to take my word on one point. Don't think that I as white, or the W.C.C., just sits in judgement on Southern Africa ... the problems we are seeing here are in fact our own."

"misreported"

Dr Vischer's comments were extensively reported—some have said misreported—on the SABC's news bulletins that evening.

He was quoted as saying *the white race* was an obstacle to international social justice and that there were various forms of *violence*—constructive violence and institutional violence. In a later news bulletin on the SABC this was changed and the correct expressions were used.

(He referred to white *racism* as an obstacle to justice, and to *structural and institutional* violence.)

Within a few hours, Dr Vischer was told to leave the country. According to reports an expulsion order by the Minister of the Interior, Dr Connie Mulder, was served on him at Jan Smuts Airport only minutes before his

scheduled departure for Ghana.

Commentators—including the Rand Daily Mail editorial columns—inferred that Dr Mulder took this action on the basis of the incorrect SABC report on his statement.

The S.A. Council of Churches, “taking a serious view” of the expulsion, contested the accuracy of the SABC bulletins and published a tape recorded transcript of the press conference to support its charges of misreporting.

irrelevant

Replying to these charges, the SABC editorial commentary, “Current Affairs”, said it was “irrelevant” whether Dr Vischer had attacked white racism or the white race.

“Our concern, and the country’s concern, is the essence of what he said.

“Stripped of its semantic camouflage, it is that there is no hope of peaceful solution in South Africa, and that the violence of terrorist movements is not only politically justifiable but is in keeping with Christian principles.”

The SABC accused the S.A. Council of being “un-South African and unrepresentative”, calling for the Council’s withdrawal from the W.C.C., where it has observer status.

The government-controlled radio service was not alone in welcoming Dr Mulder’s action against Dr Vischer, and using the occasion to launch an attack on South African member churches of the World Council.

S.A. bloodletting

The Moderator of the Cape Provincial Synod of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, Dr J.S. Gericke, said the W.C.C. leaders were doing all in their power to let the blood of people in South Africa flow.

Interviewed by SAPA, Dr Gericke said that if he correctly understood, Dr Vischer thought South Africa’s race policy was right and good, but would take too long to bring about social justice. Therefore the alternative of violence must be advocated.

Editorials in both Johannesburg Nationalist newspapers supported the government action. The morning “Transvaler” said no-one could regret Dr Vischer’s sudden departure from the country.

Dr Vischer had “exposed” the controversial actions of the W.C.C. that “there is now no doubt in the mind of any South African about the unchristian practices of this organisation”.

The Moderator of the N.G.K. General Synod, Dr Koot Vorster, wrote in the church’s magazine, “Die Kerkbode”, that Dr Vischer had shown the W.C.C.’s “true colours”.

“He has done our country the favour of obliging churches and organisations which have not yet broken with the W.C.C., to make their choices now and finally.”

“terrorists sharpening their claws”

“To The Point”, the pro-government weekly news-magazine, featured the Vischer incident with a cover story under the banner, “Africa’s terrorists sharpen their claws”. Its editor wrote:

“If only the Republic of South Africa were officially atheist, what a lot of trouble it would save itself! For then the World Council of Churches might look on it with some favour, or at least be neutral about South Africa’s policies.

“This is one of the things one has to infer from remarks made ... last week by Dr Lukas Vischer ... When asked why the W.C.C. did not concern itself more with racism in countries such as Uganda or Russia, he answered that South Africa claimed to be founded on Christian principles, and ‘in the situation here it’s really the name of Christ which is at stake’.”

The cover illustration of this issue of the magazine showed a grotesque, bright red gorilla-like hand, with talons dripping blood. A sash across an upper corner read: “W.C.C.’s brand of social justice”.

isolation or dialogue?

Somehow in this furore the real issues of the W.C.C. stand have, far from being clarified, become more obscured than ever.

Three basic questions remain which churches and churchmen in South Africa must tackle with honesty and soul searching.

All South African member churches have rejected the PCR support for liberation movements. They are being called upon to reinforce their stand by withdrawing from the Council. Yet the government, while rejecting most of the United Nations’ policies on Southern Africa, remains in UNO in the interests of dialogue.

And the Calvinist churches retain their links with the world Reformed movements despite their support for the W.C.C.

“The agonising choice,” said an editorial in the Cape Town evening “Argus”, “is in fact between isolation from the world Christian community or continued association with a body of church opinion which on many issues is rich and rewarding.”

roots of violence in South Africa

Are the guerilla movements purely motivated by a desire to spread communism in Africa, as pro-government spokesmen contend? Or does their struggle spring from black aspirations for justice in this country?

The late Dr W.F. Nkomo, once a president of the S.A. Institute of Race Relations and a noted pacifist, said some years ago:

“I pray for the terrorists. When a man feels in his own land that he is less than a man in the eyes of other men, then what is left for him?”

“We cannot walk upright in the streets. We walk apologetically in the land where we were born.”

If the churches accept this view of the guerillas' motivations, while rejecting their violence, the obvious course for them is to renew their commitment to peaceful change in this country.

Can violence be christian?

Is violence ever just? Can war ever be right in the eyes of God?

The church can hold, with the Latin American Archbishop Helder Camara, that "you cannot love your brother while pointing a gun at him". But this belief is absolute and universal.

At the 1970 Methodist conference in Johannesburg, a minister said the church had always supported violence. "The church sent out young men, with its blessing, to do violence in the last war.

"We support giving weapons to the police for possible violence in their jobs. We are asking Britain to supply arms to this country ...

"It seems that we support violence in our own cause but not in another's cause."

That is a challenge to the sincerity of the church's professed pacifism which has still not been answered.



Quote:

The World Council of Churches, which hides behind a cloak of religion and Christ, is in fact a devil's council of churches.

—*Dr Connie Mulder*

"If blood runs in the streets of South Africa it will not be because the W.C.C. has done something but because the churches in South Africa have done nothing.

We shout about the terrorism on our borders while we tolerate (and sometimes support) the terrorism within our country. We criticise the government for discriminatory policies while we allow discrimination in the church."

—*Rev. Theo Kotzé*



Acknowledgements: David Thomas (SACC Information Officer), Die Burger (26.3.74), The Argus (16.3.74., 2.4.74), The Star (22.10.70), Daily Dispatch (13.3.74), Rand Daily Mail (15, 16, 28.3.74), To The Point (22.3.74).

Dr Vischer's comments are taken from the transcript of his press conference.★

HIS CHILDREN

Does God see them Black and White
or just as children?

Does He love them as the little
ones He made?

As He hangs upon the Cross
Where Man has nailed Him,
Does He watch them -
from the cradle to the grave?

'Neath a blood-stained Crown
with all its weight of sorrow,
And dying eyes that yet see
everything,
Will His dear Heart break with
all its pain and anguish
As He looks upon the children's
suffering?

His companions on the hill
were naught but felons
And they paid the heavy price
Man pays for sin,
But the Christ of God Who loves
the little children
Was unspotted - yet the rabble
murdered HIM.

When the leopard and the kid
lie down together,
When the lion and the lamb
in peace abide,
When the sucking babe plays
with the evil serpent,
Then a little child will lead
them to His Side.

Does God see them Black and White
or just as children?
Is He the Friend Who watches
when they fall?
As He hangs upon the Cross
Where Man had nailed Him
O, surely He is Lord and God
of ALL.

Isa. 11: 6-9

Naomi R. Pucher

