



PRO VERITATE

DAVID PERK

The Sacrifice of the Individual to Communist Materialism

ALBERT GEYSER

Ideologie

B. B. BURNETT

Why there must be an Ecumenical Movement

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Wie is die Voorbok onder die Sondaars?

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EDITORIAL

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Editorial:

Fatalism or Obedience?

After the commemoration of the Reformation, during which the gospel of "justification through faith alone" was once again gratefully reviewed as the greatest Biblical treasure rediscovered by the Reformation, it is surely not inappropriate to warn against the abuse to which this doctrine is sometimes subjected.

How pernicious this abuse can be has become clearly evident also in our country, especially during the past few years in which an obvious tension has arisen between Christian witness and the prevailing trend in the life of our community. An influential movement in church circles has set itself up in opposition to the witness that obedience to God's Word should also be practised on level of citizenship by recourse to the argument that the Church should solely preach faith in Christ. The insistence upon obedience to God's commandments, also in the arrangement of political, social and economic life constitutes, so it is alleged, a "social gospel" which runs counter to the biblical and Reformed doctrine of "justification through faith alone". This view is in some cases closely allied to the idea that the preaching of sanctification in the life of the individual Christian should summarily be discarded as unbiblical moralism.

There can be no doubt that many Christians in our country are confused and uncertain on this score. What it boils down to basically is the question: What constitutes the essence of Christianity? In the first place this question has a personal application, of course. The individual's claim to be a Christian has to be proved legitimate in the particularity of his being a **Christian** among men, i.e. by the manner in which he finds himself "officially" situate amongst men as participant in the anointment of Christ. But especially and particularly in a country like South Africa it also has a collective application. The claim to Christianity is in our country a definite national claim: We are a Christian people.

That such a claim, viz. that a people can indeed be a Christian people, may bear the quality of truth must be conceded for Christ's sake. His sovereignty does not only encompass individuals, but also nations and peoples. To be sure, Christ will take shape in the nation in a different fashion than in the life of the single Christian, but it must be affirmed without question from the gospel itself that He does not only want to reign in the heart of the believer, but also in the life of the people.

As regards our claim to be a Christian people, then, it must be firmly stated on the strength of the truth of justification through faith alone that the reality of our Christianity is already inherent in the claim itself. The claim upon Christianity, in other words, can only be made on the strength of its factuality. The individual or the people who lays claim upon the name Christian is Christian in the most real sense, predestinatively so to speak. The truth of this claim does not lie within man

himself as he appears in this world, but outside himself, in Christ. The Christian as he appears in this world is a contradictory figure. On all fronts he is always at variance with himself. By virtue of the claim God laid upon him in Christ, on the strength of which he in turn lays claim to being a Christian, he is, as St. Paul puts it, a new creature. He is no longer a sinner — despite every evidence to the contrary which his sinful appearance may offer. The Christian stands upon the firm ground in Christ of no longer being a sinner. He stands within a reality, therefore, which cannot be annulled by any contradiction either by himself or by someone else.

He who understands this fatalistically, however, and especially preaches it thus, violates the very heart of this gospel. It runs completely counter to the essence of the Biblical doctrine of justification through faith alone, for instance, to interpret the well-known pronouncement of St. Augustine: "Believe in Christ and do what you want" as a description of Christian life in the sense of the attitude which St. Paul rejects so decidedly in Rom. 6:1-2: We shall persist in sin so that grace may abound. The truth that the sacrifice of Christ is the only basis of our salvation can surely not be tampered with without incurring the danger of destroying the gospel itself in so doing. This truth must be upheld to the point of realising that real Christianity is the basis and presupposition of pseudo-Christianity, quasi-Christianity, perverted Christianity. However firmly founded, it is an abomination whereby the gospel itself is relinquished when this gospel be fatalistically preached, understood and experienced. We stand upon the firm ground of God's grace in Christ either to be condemned or to be saved. The final word as regards our being Christian in the world falls in the frame of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

For surely, the gospel that we are "new creatures" in Christ has to find appropriation and application in ourselves. And this is the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit wants to express in our lives what happened outside ourselves, in Christ. That is why obedience is the essential and necessary component of faith. The Holy spirit wants to do to us and together with us what Christ did outside us and completely without us.

Scripture stands with us and with all men on the firm ground of our indubitable salvation when it admonishes us: Aim at a holy life, for without that no one will see the Lord (Heb. 12:14) — our "seeing" of the Lord in no way being made dependent upon the degree of holiness we are able to attain in our lives, but in fact upon our obedience as such, however "small in principle". The warning of Jesus: "Not everyone who calls me "Lord, Lord" will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only those who do the will of my heavenly Father" (Matth. 7:21) refers to Christians who, even unto condemnation and rejection by Him, remain nothing but Christians. And in the third supplication of the Lord's Prayer: "Thy will

be done," we are taught no dumb resignation in a blessed or unblessed fate which an inexorable God allotted to us beyond our own determination, but a prayer for the obedience of faith: "Grant that we, and all men, should relinquish our own will and be obedient to Your will, which alone is good, without any contradiction; so that everyone may practise his calling and profession just as faithfully as the angels in heaven", thus states the Heidelberg Catechism.

With our claim of being a Christian people we do indeed stand unwaveringly firm. He who doubts or denies this, doubts and denies something concerning which God himself has decided. But **noblesse oblige**.

The essence of our Christianity, also as a people, lies in the practice of obedience to his Word; our life in faith, also as a people, is a life of active sanctification. The biblical and Reformed character of our national life, on which we pride ourselves, can only then prove not to be vain pride if we voluntarily and faithfully observe the will of God, as He revealed it to us in his Word. This claim can spell salvation for us only if we understand it fully and treat it with the utmost seriousness that the way of obedience to God's Word leads us as a Christian people towards a future of light, whereas the way of disobedience to his Word leads us — as a Christian people, precisely! — into the abyss.

Inleidingsartikel:

Fatalisme of Gehoorsaamheid?

Na die Hervormingsherdenking, waartydens die evangelie van die „regverdiging deur die geloof alleen” weer dankbaar betrag is as die grootste Bybelse skat wat deur die Reformasie herontdek is, is dit stellig nie onvanpas om te waarsku teen die misbruik wat daar soms van hierdie leer gemaak word nie.

Hoe verderflik hierdie misbruik kan wees, het helaas ook in ons land, veral gedurende die afgelepe aantal jare waarin daar 'n duidelike spanning gekom het tussen die Christelike getuienis en die heersende maatskaplike koers, sterk tot openbaring gekom. Teenoor die getuienis dat die gehoorsaamheid aan Gods Woord ook op die maatskaplike vlak beoefen moet word, het 'n invloedryke kerklike stroming hom in verset opgestel met die argument dat die kerk alleen die geloof in Christus moet verkondig. Die aandrang tot gehoorsaamheid aan Gods gebod, ook in die inrigting van die politieke, maatskaplike en ekonomiese lewe sou dan 'n „social gospel” wees waardeur die Bybels-Reformatoriese leer van die „regverdiging deur die geloof alleen” verloën word. Hierdie siening hang in sommige gevalle ten nouste saam met die huldiging van die gedagte dat die prediking van die heiligmaking in die lewe van die individuele Christen sonder meer as 'n onbybelse moralisme afgeskryf moet word.

Dat daar oor hierdie saak by baie Christene in ons land verwarring en onsekerheid bestaan, ly geen twyfel nie. In die grond van die saak kom dit neer op die vraag: Waarin lê die wese van ons Christen-wees? Hierdie vraag het natuurlik in die eerste instansie 'n persoonlike gerigtheid. Die aanspraak van die individu op die Christen-naam wil in die besonderheid van sy **Christen**-wees onder die mense, d.w.s. in die wyse waarop hy hom onder die mense „smptelik” bevind as deelhebber aan die salwing van Christus, gelegitimeer word. Maar veral en met name in 'n land soos Suid-Afrika het dit ook 'n kollektiewe strekking. Die Christen-aanspraak is hier te lande 'n definitiewe volksaanspraak: Ons is 'n Christenvolk.

Die realiteitsgehalte van so 'n aanspraak, nl. dat 'n volk inderdaad 'n Christenvolk kan wees, moet om Christus ontwil toegegee word. Sy heerskappy wil hom nie slegs uitstrek oor individue nie, maar ook oor nasies en volkeren. Weliswaar sal Christus in die volk op 'n ander wyse 'n gestalte kry as in die lewe van die enkele Christen, maar dat Hy nie slegs in die hart van die gelowige nie maar ook in die volkslewe wil troon, moet vanuit die evangelie sonder teenspraak beaam word.

Wat dan betref ons aanspraak om 'n Christenvolk te wees, moet op grond van die waarheid van die regverdiging deur die geloof alleen, die stelling gehandhaaf word dat die realiteit van ons Christen-wees reeds in die aanspraak self geleë is. D.w.s. die aanspraak op Christelikheid kan alleen geskied vanuit die feitlikheid daarvan. Die mens of die volk wat die Christen-naam vir hom toeëien, is in die mees reële sin, predestinatief, om dit so te stel, Christen. Die waarheidsgrond van hierdie aanspraak lê nie in die mens self soos hy in hierdie wêreld verskyn nie, maar buite homself, in Christus. Die Christen soos hy in hierdie wêreld verskyn, is 'n teenstrydige figuur. Na alle kante is hy altyd weer in teenspraak met homself. Kragtens die aanspraak wat God in Christus op hom gemaak het, en op grond waarvan hy die Christen-naam vir hom toeëien, is hy, soos Paulus dit uitdruk, 'n nuwe skepsel. Hy is geen sondaar meer nie — in weerwil van elke teendeel waarvan sy sondige verskyning mag getuig. Op die vaste grond van in Christus geen sondaar meer te wees nie, staan die Christen in 'n realiteit wat deur geen weerspreking of deur homself of deur 'n ander ongedaan gemaak kan word nie.

Wie dit egter fatalisties verstaan, en veral ook so verkondig, vergryp hom aan die hart van hierdie evangelie. Dit stry teen die wese van die Bybelse leer van die regverdiging deur die geloof alleen om bv. die bekende uitspraak van Augustinus: „Glo in Christus en doen wat jy wil” as omskrywing van die Christelike lewe te interpreteer in die sin van die

houding wat Paulus in Rom. 6:1-2 so sterk afwys: Ons sal in die sonde bly sodat die genade meer kan word. Die waarheid dat die offer van Christus alleen die grond van ons saligheid is, kan stellig nie aangetas word sonder gevaar om die evangelie self daarmee te verwoes nie. Hierdie waarheid moet vasgehou word tot in die erkenning dat reële Christendom die grond en voorwaarde is vir pseudo-Christendom, skyn-Christendom, geperverteerde Christendom. Maar hoe vas dit ook al staan, dit is 'n gruwel waarmee die evangelie self losgelaat word as hierdie evangelie fatalisties verkondig, verstaan en beleef word. Op die vaste grond van Gods genade in Christus staan ons tot ons oordeel of tot ons behoud. Die laaste woord oor ons Christen-wees in die wêreld, val in die kader van die leer van die Heilige Gees.

Die evangelie dat ons in Christus „nuwe skepsele“ is, wil immers aan ons toegeëien en toegepas word. En dit is die werk van die Heilige Gees. Wat buite ons, in Christus geskied het, wil die Heilige Gees in ons lewe uitdruk. Daarom is gehoorsaamheid die wesenlike en noodsaaklike komponent van geloof. Wat Christus buite ons en heeltemal sonder ons gedoen het, wil die Heilige Gees aan ons en heeltemal saam met ons doen.

Die Skrif staan met ons en met alle mense op die vaste grond van ons ontwyfelbare saligheid as dit die vermaning tot ons rig: Jaag die heiligmaking na waarsonder niemand die Here sal sien nie (Hebr. 12:14) — waarby ons „sien“ van die Here geensins afhanklik gestel word van die graad van heiligheid wat ons in ons lewe kan bereik nie, maar wel van ons gehoorsaamheid as sodanig, al is dit ook nog so 'n „klein beginsel“. Die waarskuwing van Jesus: „Nie elkeen wat vir My sê: Here, Here!

sal ingaan in die koninkryk van die hemele nie, maar hy wat die wil doen van my Vader wat in die hemele is“ (Mat. 7:21) het op Christene betrekking wat, ook tot in die veroordeling en verwerping deur Hom, niks anders as Christene sal bly nie. En in die derde bede van die Onse Vader: „Laat U wil geskied“, word ons geen stomme berusting geleer in 'n salige of onsalige lot wat 'n onverbiddelike God buite ons om oor ons beskik het nie, maar die gebed om geloofsgehoorsaamheid: „Gee dat ons, en alle mense, ons eie wil mag versaaak en u wil, wat alleen goed is, sonder enige teespraak gehoorsam mag wees; sodat iedereen sy amp en beroep net so gewillig en getrou mag beoefen soos die engele in die hemel“, so verklaar die Heidelbergse Kategismus dit.

Met ons aanspraak om 'n Christenvolk te wees, staan ons inderdaad onwankelbaar sterk. Wie dit betwyfel of ontken, betwyfel en ontken daarmee iets waarvoor God self beslis het. Maar adeldom verplig. Die wese van ons Christenskap, ook as volk, lê in die beoefening van die gehoorsaamheid aan sy Woord; ons lewe in die geloof, ook as volk, is 'n lewe in aktiewe heiligmaking. Die Bybels-Reformatoriese karakter van ons volkslewe waarop ons roem, kan slegs daarin blyk geen ydele roem te wees nie as ons die wil van God, soos Hy dit in sy Woord aan ons geopenbáár het, gewillig en getrou volbring. Hierdie aanspraak kan vir ons slegs dan heil inhou as ons dit ten volle verstaan en daarmee erns maak dat die weg van gehoorsaamheid aan Gods Woord ons as 'n Christenvolk na 'n toekoms van lig heen lei, terwyl die weg van ongehoorsaamheid aan sy Woord ons — as 'n Christenvolk! — na die afgrond voer.

THE SACRIFICE OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO COMMUNIST MATERIALISM

DAVID PERK

When man defies nature by stepping out of the orderly march of the organic, evolutionary process and seeks to hurry it in support of a destiny he has conceived for himself, he ends where he begins. He finds, sooner or later, that he is the same man, using the same living techniques against which he had rebelled.

The Bolshevik revolution was a protest against an autocracy that took little heed of the individual, his poverty and voicelessness. When it succeeded in overthrowing the autocracy and the privileged class that centred on it, it established another autocracy, with the same disregard for the individual.

MATERIALISTIC IDEALISM

It should not however be thought that the motivation behind the revolution was an entirely negative one,

of protest and rebellion. It had an idealistic "Weltanschauung", namely, to secure everybody, not only in Russia, from want, and universally to equalize society. If we are to learn from the experience which befell the Russian people in mounting a revolution and then finding itself as unfree as before, we certainly cannot do it by expunging this chapter from human history, together with the people and ideas involved in it. It serves no purpose to call the Communists evil and for that reason to shut our minds to

their experience with reforms designed to change the social and economic structure of Russia, for the planned benefit of its proletariat population.

The current propaganda that is being directed against Communism is to no little extent a waste of effort. The converted do not require conversion and the rest are unheeding of it, because the fulfilment promised by Communism appears more attractive to them than the conditions under which they presently live and the goals to which they are conditioned to aspire. It is more than possible that the hostility to Communism displayed in some of the propaganda may boomerang and sow the suspicion that its motivation is selfish rather than benevolent.

Communism was born of the combination of desperation and idealism, and because of this background, once the leaders aroused the populace to revolt, everything gave way to violence, not excluding the originating ideals. The Russian Orthodox Church, which had exercised a profound influence on the largely peasant population of Russia, was overthrown with the Establishment with which it was closely linked, and leaders and populace had then little to guide them in shaping their new world other than their hatred of the past, a compulsive need to replace it all by new values, however untested and unproved, and a suspicion of every ideal, people or organization that had any association with the past they had overthrown, however remote.

The material goals that inspired and provoked the Bolshevik Revolution could only result in the reign of a rampant materialism. To the ferocity unleashed by the revolutionary fervour fear for the security of the Revolution and of Russia added a harshness, violence and inhumanity, of which Russia has not yet freed itself and which has continuously reinforced the materialism of her Communistic regime. Though it started with idealistic motives, what it initially rebelled against was not the materialism of the day, but that it did not benefit all alike. What they sought therefore was better materialism.

The social idealism which inspired their programme of a better and healthier economic, political and social life and which gave it its first impetus was spurious from the outset, because it was in fact part of a materialistic concept. The postulate which underlies Communism, that all men and their wants are equal, is an application of the materialistic view which makes cogs of men. Communism discards the individual characteristics and the different natures of men. It requires them all to serve the same purpose, the safety and progress of the state, and in the light of this they all have the same value. This philosophy and its application to the operations of the state and its control of the life of the country and the individual takes little or no account of the differences between men, their wants, ambitions and abilities. The laudable aim of giving every man an equal chance in life proliferated into the unrealistic view that they can all be treated

alike, dressed alike and manipulated according to the needs of the state.

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE STATE

The royal road to materialism is subservience to the state. When the individual is no more than a tool in the hands of the state the state has no guidepost other than the overriding needs of the state. It is then a tyrant that looks upon the individuals comprising it as material sources of energy and talents that are there to be exploited for a postulated, ultimate end of the equality and security from want of all. It considers this aim of the state to be more than equal compensation to the individual for his sacrifice to the state. It is a Moloch to which all individuals must be happy to immolate themselves. If sacrifice is the state's foremost demand on the individual it is also the last. The individual is never there again to reverse the process, that is, to make the state his tool, for the establishment of the facilities and freedom to operate and express himself as suits his temperament and talents best and to fix his goals as he sees fit. He has been lost to the machine of the state and is now an inseparable, scarcely distinguishable part of it.

The esteem of the individual is part of a nation's psychological make-up. The nation that cherishes the individuality of its members automatically makes it the cornerstone of its democracy, which in turn reflects this dedication. The state's needs and demands, pleasures and displeasures are the individual's own. The state is of his making and it is there to serve his purpose. There is then no fear of it and the individual lives by the motivation of personal needs and social responsibility.

When the state sacrifices the individual for its goals and good it can only follow a materialistic course, the essential principles of which are that the state cannot do wrong and that the ends it adopts justify the means it pursues for their achievement. The extension of this concept of the state's view of the individual to other states will manifest the same policy of brash materialism.

When a state is moved by the sole criterion of the good of the state and as a consequence shows little or no regard for the feelings and requirements of the individual it bludgeons

him into silence, subservience and uniformity before he realises what has been happening. This is the pattern of the establishment and functioning of the authoritarian state. At the moment that the individual loses meaning the state becomes a machine without feeling or principle. A state is only subject to the moral judgment of right and wrong when it is answerable to the individual. When the individual is not supreme the state is subject not to individual values and moral principles but to the needs of functional efficiency and utility. It is then truly an unfeeling machine.

VIOLENCE

The Bolsheviks overthrew the Tsarist government and subjugated the social classes and individuals composing Russia by violence. Employing the technique of violence, they have only been able to envisage a world ruled by violence. They have been perpetually on guard against expected violent assaults by other countries and have met the anticipated danger more than half way by subjecting neighbouring countries to vassalage, both to eliminate such a danger and to provide Communist Russia with a defensive barrier against more distant foes. They raised the flag of an ideal society to win over the support of the masses in the neighbouring states, only to make them subservient to Russian interests.

The violence fermenting in Communist Russia underlies its pathological suspiciousness. Everybody, inside and outside the country, is suspected of potential, if not actual, disloyalty, subversion and violence.

When the individuality of the human being and human values are sacrificed to the graven image of the state and the goals set for it by its idolatrous worshippers, the technique of persuasion and universal justice which characterizes a moral, democratic society is replaced by violence, tyranny, faithlessness and treachery.

DESTRUCTION OF THE SOUL

The humiliation Russia suffered in World War I and the disenchantment of the masses with their leaders, when their organizational and military incapacity and their disregard for the lives of the common people stood revealed, prepared

the ground for the propaganda that aroused the populace to defy and overthrow the Tsarist regime. But if Russia was rescued by the Revolution from its cultural and industrial backwardness it lost its soul through it. It may have been a soul steeped in stupefying and enslaving superstition, but it was a soul fed by a feeling for the Spirit, despite that the Church that inspired and sustained this feeling was not free from decadence and, in one infamous instance, degeneracy.

The state that does not recognize the existence of a soul in the individual has no soul, and its ideology of the equality of all in the state is no more than a Machiavellian stratagem to enslave everybody in the

service of the state. Only when the individual is the primary concern of the state does it reflect the souls of the individuals constituting it, and only in this sense is there universal equality. Equality imposed for socio-political considerations sooner or later degenerates into a sociological manoeuvre for the exploitation of the masses for the benefit of the state.

There is one equality, of all before the Spirit. On this rests man's right to individuality. From the spirit man derives his soul. The state that reveres the Spirit and respects the soul of man is host to the individual, and both man and state evolve to ever higher forms. Conversely, when there is no regard for the Spirit and

for the soul of man there may be technological and material progress, but in place of inspiration there is efficiency, in place of humanity and compassion there is realism, in place of human beings machines.

Communism's lessons is two-fold, that sooner or later history knocks at the door of the man deprived of opportunity, expression and progress and bids him risk chaos and destruction for a new order and that the new as the old order has no survival value unless the fundamental needs of the individual are fulfilled. These needs stem directly from the essential nature of man — the spirit that remembers the past, looks out to the universe and designs for an eternal future.

IDEOLOGIE

(Toespraak gehou voor die studentevereniging SAAK, Stellenbosch, 20 September 1967)

PROF. DR. A. S. GEYSER

Ideologie is 'n woord, 'n begrip wat dikwels in beskouinge en inleidingsartikels van koerante gebesig word. In die laasgenoemde geval dui dit byna altyd minagend die politieke of ekonomiese filosofie van die teenparty aan.

Prawda verwys smalend na die perverse **ideologie** van die kapitalisme, en die sprekers van Antikominslag, hier en elders, waarsku met afsku teen die verderflike ideologieë van kommunisme en liberalisme.

Tot so 'n mate teken teenstanders mekaar se -ismes as ideologie, dat die gewone burger naderhand vas glo dat elke woord wat op -isme eindig, ideologie is, en dat alles in en aan so 'n ideologie onverdunde satanisme is.

Nou, dit is nie so dat alle „isme“-begrippe ideologies en satanies is nie. Daar is byvoorbeeld patriotisme, 'n allesins lofwaardige oortuiging. En op my eie teologiese vakgebied praat ons bv. van transendentalisme en universalisme, wat geen van beide ideologieë voorstel nie, en allermins as verderflik kan kwalifiseer.

Maar dis veral in die kader van politieke, ekonomiese en maatskaplike teorie waar die begrip sy ongure betekenis verwerf het. En dit sal veral in hierdie kader wees dat ek met u die betekenis, aard en aanwending van **ideologie** wil bespreek.

Voordat ons daaraan begin, nog één klein regstellinkie: danksy die oor-en-weer veroordeling van teen-

strydige ideologieë, kry die gewone man lig die indruk dat geen ideologie, veral sy teenstander s'n, ooit enigiets goeds voortbring het of kan voortbring nie. En dis nie korrek nie. Ideologieë, nes mense, is nie òf spierwit òf pikswart, soos 'n predikant se toga en bef nie. Tussen sy talle booshede — en ek sal hulle seer seker nie spaar nie — en sy enkele verdienstelikhede — en ek sal hulle hier-en-daar noem — lê daar 'n wye skakering van gryse.

Een van die foute van ideologie is juis dat hy propagandisties veralgemeen — homself as net **wit** en sy teenstander as **net swart** sien. En soos alle veralgemenings is dit weer syds 'n onware voorstelling.

ENERGIE

Meeste ideologieë genereer 'n geweldige menslike energie — ener syds vernietigend en oorweldigend, andersyds tog konstruktief. Die denke agter die Franse Rewolusie, waarop insidenteel vir die eerste maal in die geskiedenis die naam ideologie toegepas is, en dit deur niemand minder as Napoleon nie, het ou Europa geterroriseer, die be-

staande ordes onherstelbaar verstoort, honderdduisende gedood, maar het tog die metrieke stelsel, die Code Napoléon en 'n dooie feodalisme nagelaat.

Die Nazi-ideologie, het ná Wêreldoorlog I energie ontketen om enersyds miljoene te vermoor, maar aan die ander kant die land ekonomies orent te bring.

Russiese Kommunisme met al sy wreedheid en suiwerige en sy internasionale intrigeerdery, het darem 'n verslaapte Rusland binne 'n kwart-eeu tot die tweede grootste mag van die wêreld bevorder.

Dis goed om te besef dat „ideologie“ ook 'n winspossie kan toon, want dan is 'n mens dubbel op jou hoede daarteen. Dis gewoonlik met sy winspossie dat hy sy skadelike las verbloem en verkoop.

* * *

DIE WOORD „IDEOLOGIE“

Wat is ideologie en waar kom die woord vandaan? By die Griekse en Hellenistiese filosowe kom die woord nie voor nie. Natuurlik is dit 'n samestelling uit die Griekse hé idea (uiterlike voorkoms/verskynsel) uit Plato se dae en die adjektief logios -a -on wat „geleerd“ beteken. Daarom: „idee-geleerdheid“ of „idee-kundigheid“.

En glo my, as daar één ding is waaraan ideologie nie 'n tekort het nie, dan is dit idees, veral oor homself.

Of daardie ideë logies houdbaar, suiwer en prakties verwerklikbaar is, is 'n ander saak.

In sy huidige betekenis is die woord vir die eerste maal in die geskiedenis deur Napoleon gebruik, juis om die onhoudbaarheid en onverwerklikbaarheid van 'n bepaalde ideë-kompleks te diskrediteer. J. Adams skryf in 1813 (Works): „Napoleon has lately invented a word, **ideology** — a species of theory which could prevail with none, save hot-brained boys and crazed enthusiasts”. En Seeley skryf in 1881 oor Bonaparte: „He put aside the whole system of false and confused thinking which had reigned since 1792, and which he called 'idéologie'.”

En soos Napoleon dit 150 jaar gelede beteken het, so openbaar ideologie hom in al sy variasies en sonder uitsondering tot vandag toe.

HEDE EN TOEKOMS

Waar dit wortel skiet, floreer dit met verbysterende energie, ontwikkel dit 'n soort „flower power” van verwarde denke maar toewyding, hersenskim maar oorgawe, skynwaarheid maar offerbereidheid. Dit verteenwoordik die werklikhede van die hede en probeer dit inpers in sy onverwerklikbare toekoms patroon.

Ek wil hierdie stelling oor die vertekening van die hede en onverwerklikbare toekoms patroon eie aan die ideologie, aan 'n paar ideologieë illustreer.

(1) Ons begin by die begin — die Franse Rewolusie met sy meevorende slagkreet, *liberté, égalité, fraternité*, en die belofte van 'n nuwe wêreld, só nuut dat dit 'n nuwe kalender en tydsrekening instel.

Die vertekende hede en verwarde denke lê in die slagkreet self: vryheid vir almal en gelykheid van almal, maar hoe ideologies mooi en idealisties idillies ook al, in die menslike bestel vernietig algehele vryheid algehele gelykheid en somer ook broederskap. Want sy algehele vryheid gebruik die sterker broeder al gou om die swakker broeder onder te sit.

(2) Terend op die drogdenke van Nietzsche wou Hitler se Derde Ryk 'n semiet-vrye Herrenvolk van Uebermensen in 'n teutoniese hemel-op-aarde skep. Tien jaar Nazi-terreur en die feit dat Hitler se

oorgrootmoeder 'n Jodin was, het die valse denke en onverwerklikbaarheid van hierdie ideologie bewys.

Sal ons nog praat oor die waandenkbeelde wat Marx en Engels om die wêreldproletariaat gewef het? Kommunistiese Rusland is vandag net so kapitalisties en meer as menige gesosialiseerde staat van die kapitalistiese Weste.

MESSIANISME

Die grondliggende fout van elke ideologie is dat dit 'n idee, nie 'n feitlikheid nie, 'n enkele deë wat uit die smeltoond van een of ander krisis gekristalliseer het, verhef tot 'n panacea, 'n „pynkeller” wat alle leed en alle ellende, alle bedreiging en alle angs vir die bepaalde volksgroep of maatskaplike laag sal beëindig. In mindere of meerdere mate is elke ideologie 'n messianisme — 'n mensgemaakte messianisme. Dit bou die idee om tot laaste norm en toetssteen, skop 'n eie etiek, 'n eie simboliek, 'n eie- of liever 'n selfkultus met eie relikwieë en eie heiliges.

En dis die eerste fundamentele beswaar wat die Christenmens teen enige ideologie moet hê: „Jy sal die Here jou God alleen dien” en Hom alleen aanbid. Ideologie, selfs die enkele wat tog nog onder 'n Christelike vlag probeer vaar, is in sy wese meer as onbeholpe denke of 'n skewe denksisteem, dis in sy wese 'n religie — 'n selfvergoddelyking van die ras, die nasie, die stand. Dis waar, Kommunisme as 'n messianisme het die Messias van die Christendom vroeg verwerp. Die ander een, Nazisme, het Hom tydelik, vertekend as 'n blonde, Galilese ariër nog aangehou. totdat A. Rosenberg se Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts en die geheime Nazi-beweging, Das Ahnenerbe, die Deutsch Evangelische Kirche sodanig infiltrer het, dat as Deutsche Christentum, dit Hitler se rasse-skeiding in die kerk en die razzias op die Jode kon goedkeur.

Das Deutsche Christentum was nóg Deutsch nóg Christentum. Vir kerk en Christendom in Duitsland was dit nie eers denke nie, maar 'n verwurgende kramp.

Van die vrederyk van voorspoed en volop bly net die beskuldigende asse van Auschwitz, Dachau en Treblinka.

En dis die tweede rede waarom 'n Christenmens hom nooit met

enige ideologie te enige tyd kan versoen nie.

ANTI-CHRISTELIK

Alle ideologie is 'n emosionele en sentimentele inteelt — dit formuleer en propageer vir die onnadenkendes selfliefde (liefde vir die eie), selfregverdiging (eiegeregtigheid), selfverheerliking (eiewaardering) as 'n hoogste sedelike norm. En dit klink so meeslepend mooi. En dis so verdoemend anti-Christelik: daar is nie 'n selfliefde oftewel „liefde vir die eie” wat nie soos 'n weefstuk 'n rafelrige teenkant van haat vir die ander het nie.

Nêrens in die Bergrede of ook maar iewers in die Nuwe Testament of in die ganse Heilige Skrif sal u 'n gebod vind tot selfliefde en selfregverdiging en selfverheerliking nie. Inteendeel, elke profeet tot op Johannes die Doper, en Jesus, en Paulus, het hierdie dinge verbied as treë op die weg na selfvergoddelyking.

CHRISTUS-PLUS

Daar is 'n derde rede waarom 'n Christenmens geen ideologie te enige tyd kan steun nie: Vir ideologie was en is Christus en Christendom nog altyd of oorbodig of onvoldoende. Kommunisme verwerp Christus summier en vervolg sy Christendom bloedig en onbloedig.

Alfred Rosenberg verteenwoordik die „krummasige, plattfussige” Christus van die Evangelies tot 'n rysige, teutoniese heros, en die Nazi-ideologie baar 'n Deutsche Christentum.

Daarom nie 'n „Christus alleen” nie, maar 'n Christus-plus. Nie 'n Christendom enkel en eenvoudig nie, maar 'n Deutsche Christentum, versier met die nasionale tjap.

Daarom staan ideologie, alle ideologie, ook wanneer dit die Christus- of Christennaam byhaal, altyd veroordeeld. Hoe sentimentstrelend en emosioneel meevorend ook al, maar dit vermeng en vertroebel die enigheid van die Christus van God. Dit vra dat 'n mens twee here sal dien.

Dié beswaar geld vir alle Christus-plusse, of dit nou Deutsche Christentum of Christelik-Nasionaal heet.

LEUEN

Daar is 'n vierde rede waarom 'n Christenmens geen ideologie te enige tyd kan aanvaar nie:

Sedert Napoleon hom 'n naam gegee het, beleef ideologie 'n geil

tyd. Hy het alle winde in sy seile — (a) die ontwikkeling van die tegniese middele van massa-kommunikasie, van telegrafie tot radio, van ligbeeld tot silwerdoek en televisie, en die ontwikkeling van handsetsel tot platpers plus komponeermasjien en outomatiese rolpers; (b) massaverstedeliking en massa-onderdig; (c) maar meer, massa-psigologie met al sy middele van massa-angs, massa-hipnose, gesteun deur die al-oue vlag-swaai en slagspreuk, ontwikkel tot dié ding wat Lenin, met 'n kerklike leenwoord, „propaganda” noem. Ideologie is ondenkbaar sonder propaganda. Propaganda word in die Encyclopaedia Britannica omskryf as „the making of deliberately one-sided statements to reach the masses . . .” En verder: „The propagandist does not use current happenings for news and comment, but for sermons . . .” — (Beteeken „current happenings” hier „current affairs”?) Ideologie teer op die halwe waarheid en die onwaarheid.

INTOLERANT

Daar is 'n vyfde rede waarom 'n Christenmens geen ideologie te enige tyd met Christelike geloof kan versoen nie: Alle ideologie is in sy diepste wese bewus van sy wankele denke, logiese onhoudbaarheid en historiese onuitvoerbaarheid. Hy is onseker oor sy saak; kritiek maak hom lendelam. Daarom duld geen ideologie enige kritiek of teenspraak nie. In die sfeer van die ideë word die menslike gees getiranniseer. Die ideologie bestempel betwyfeling oor hom uit die vier spore en met vrome verontwaardiging as ideologie(!), verraad, troueloosheid, kommunisme, liberalisme, westerse imperialisme. Hy verketter die teenspreker, verdoem, belaster hom en lê op hom aan wat die Amerikaners noem „character-assassination”.

Gods Woord en sy gebod sê: Jy mag geen valse getuienis teen jou naaste spreek nie. En daar was min kritici so volhardend en bestendig as die profete van God. Maar die

afgodsdienaars van daardie tyd het die profete vermoor.

IDOLATRIE

En daar is 'n sesde en laaste rede waarom 'n Christenmens te enige tyd elke ideologie moet bestry: In herkoms, inhoud en metode is ideologie nou verwant aan idolatrie. Beide die „ideo” van „ideologie” en die „ido” van „idolatrie” ontstam aan die Griekse werkwoord vir „sien” — **idein**. Die één wil 'n vergesig en hunkering sigbaar maak, die ander wil God sigbaar voorstel. Beide projekteer in die aanbiddingsbeeld, gesnede hout of gedagte-weefsel, homself — sy eieliefde, eiereg en selfregverdiging, en selfverheerliking. Beide beluister in denkbeeld of gedagtebeeld sy eie stem en beide buig voor die maaksel van hul hande en die weefsel van hul wense asof dit Gods-wil is.

En, sê Gods Wet: Jy sal voor My geen ander gode hê nie . . .

Why there must be an Ecumenical Movement

(Address delivered to the General Meeting of the Christian Institute of Southern Africa, 12th September, 1967)

The representative of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople at the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches meeting in Crete in August, 1967 addressed the Committee as follows:

“Ecumenism, my brothers”, he said, “is not a luxury of contemporary Christianity. It is not a new slogan of Christian action. It is not the “New Look”, the new style as young and daring church builders try to convince public opinion.

Ecumenism is the opening of hearts and minds, the widening of activities, the broadening of the theological dialogue, the multiplication of good endeavours and works, the ending of fruitless controversies and the spreading of love, especially love. Just as persistence in the righteousness of faith, is sacred and necessary, so it is also necessary and essential to restore the witness of Christian love and hope to fellow human beings.

Ecumenism serves this witness with love, hope and faith. And as such, it constitutes a high form of listening to the voice of the Lord, of accepting the inspiration of the Holy

Spirit in us, and of obedience to the commandments of God.”

EVANGELISM

In other words ecumenism is primarily concerned with evangelism. One might almost say it is another word for evangelism.

Ecumenism is not simply concerned with an ideal or something which would add lustre and beauty to the life of the Church. It is concerned first and last with obedience to the Lord of the Church: And, it is important to add, not only concerned with the obedience of certain ecumenical enthusiasts but with the obedience of the whole Christian people to their Lord.

Obedience will lead us to place ourselves at His disposal to carry out His purpose for His world. His purpose requires that all the world should freely acknowledge the Lord-

ship of Jesus Christ. The Church is the witness to the divine purpose and a means by which it is performed. It is God's purpose that the world, and not simply the people called the Church, should freely acknowledge and express His righteousness. It is in the whole world, the whole universe indeed, that God's will is to find expression. It is the divine purpose to sum up all things in Christ. (See Colossians 1:15-20).

If we really wanted to be the means by which God reconciles, heals and renews, and, one might say, does His work of creation in His world, we would be dead keen on evangelism. If we really believed in God's redeeming, creating love we'd be busting to get going on evangelism not only as individuals but as congregations and churches.

The 19th and 20th centuries have been the age of the great Missionary Societies. Thank God for them. They performed a great apostolic task. They are also in some respects

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a symptom of a diseased Church. I expect most of us acknowledge that there must be an apostolic ministry, but we would also insist that the whole Christian people is the witness in life and word to the Lordship of Christ. The great Missionary Societies speak of the divorce of evangelism from the normal life of the congregation. Evangelism has become the job of the specialist and not, so to speak, the air that the congregation of Christ breathes, by which it gives new life and by which its own life is renewed.

Unless you have a Christian people who can speak out of a healing, renewing, and reconciling experience of God's love, you will not have evangelism.

FREEDOM AND BONDAGE

By and large the Church has lost its evangelistic momentum. Time was spent in the Central Committee in Crete considering why this is so and on how this condition could be remedied. We had a classical response to this question from a distinguished member of the Reformed Church:

"Point men to the mighty acts of God in Holy Scripture." The reply to this was a "Yes, but . . ." We need also to be able to point to the mighty acts of God now among his believing people. We must be able to speak of the mighty acts of God in Christ because we are already part of that activity. We must be able to speak of God's work of reconciliation and healing, of the breaking down of walls of partition, the dissolving of suspicion, the breaching of barriers of fear by the Holy Spirit now. We must be able to speak of how God's righteousness is doing His work of compassion among men.

We must be able to declare and demonstrate that God's grace is sufficient to do these things. Evangelism will flow from the freedom that He gives us as we are united and reconciled with Him and one another in love and truth. **The Glorious liberty of the Sons of God proclaims Christ.**

We must ask ourselves if we know this freedom. Is the failure of the Church to breathe out the Good News in this way due to its own condition of bondage?

I want to suggest a number of ways in which this bondage is ex-

perienced. The work of Christ is described in the New Testament in terms of setting men free from the principalities and powers. These are many "princes" which claim allegiance from men before their allegiance to God. It is by their allegiance to their true centre that men are united. It is by a common faith in and loyalty to the One Lord, and by his common acceptance of them all in Jesus Christ that men find reconciliation and peace.

These other authorities which the New Testament calls princes or powers are constantly changing their shapes. They take shape in a particular philosophy, a social theory, a social structure or in Nationalisms and tribal loyalty and so on! But they always bind men's spirits. They divide men and make life sterile and full of enmities.

Now social structures have their own dynamic and can become powers when to preserve themselves they claim an allegiance stronger and more binding than our allegiance to the righteous and loving God. We surely know this from experience. A great part of all our Churches have lost their freedom in Christ and are in bondage to such powers.

But the structures of Church division also have their own dynamic. They generate loyalties that deprive men of their freedom to be simply responsive to God. They generate loyalties that divide men. The Churches which are supposed to witness to Christ's victory over all other "powers" has created new powers in her structures of division. (We have to be on our guard lest even the healthiest of Church structures also become centres of loyalty that limit our freedom to respond to the Holy Spirit.)

When all our loyalties are subject to an overriding loyalty to Christ who has triumphed over all principalities and powers, we know the freedom of the sons of God. Out of this freedom, this healing freedom, which is the evidence that God can do what he says, comes the proclamation of the Gospel with power to change lives and institutions.

Our freedom and unity proclaim Jesus Christ as that Present Reality, that Power of God, by which men are made whole by being reconciled to the Father, to one another, and within themselves. Conversion requires all these reconciliations.

ALL THINGS NEW

The theme of the Uppsala World Council Assembly next year is: "Behold I make all things new". This speaks at once of the fact that evangelism does not end with personal conversion. Unless conversion leads to social concern it is defective. The Ecumenical Movement calls the Church to bring the whole gospel to the whole world.

This may be thought of in spatial terms, as the need for missions to cover the globe. It can also be thought of in terms of reaching out into every aspect of human life. This is God's world and he desires to do his work of creation in every part of it.

At present the Church is not in a condition to perform this task. Her people generally live in two hardly related spheres: The Church on the one hand and the world of business, sport, study and research i.e. the "real" world, on the other.

The parish Church is where people sleep. The city is where people work and make important decisions for the future of society.

We need to find new ways of entering various zones of community interest like the academic sphere, trade unions, politics, industry, commerce and so on. But these zones have their own unity within which church divisions are irrelevant. Unity and relevance have an uncanny way of hanging together.

Just how unrelated to the life of society the Church is was brought home to me by reading a survey conducted by the Rhodes University recently. It is a survey being done to find out what are the social, economic and political outlooks of Church people. ("Grahamstown Church People Review Grahamstown's Needs". Conference Report).

It revealed that a high proportion of church people attended worship regularly on Sunday, namely 52%. Of these 79% felt Christianity had made a positive contribution of their general outlook. Of the 393 persons interviewed, representing 11 different Churches and Sects, 38% thought that the Church was a purely spiritual body and as such had no claim to take any initiative in social and economic issues. 10% said that individual churchmen should have no concern whatever with social economic, political and racial questions. A further 38% thought that the Church should con-

cern itself with one or some of these issues, but not with all. 41% however, felt that Christians should be concerned with all those things. While 84% agreed that it is the Christian's duty to take part in community affairs (youth clubs, city councils, welfare agencies) only 24% took any active part in these things and 42% took no part in them at all.

THE CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE'S RÔLE

Now the Christian Institute represents no "line" on sociological issues. But it must bend much of its energy towards teaching Christian people that Jesus Christ is the Lord of all life. We need people to see that social structures have their own power to spoil men's lives or to give them certain dimensions of freedom. If then we must proclaim the gospel of liberty in Christ our dedication to evangelism requires that we have

a deeply responsible concern for the way in which our society is ordered. Being evangelists commits us not only to a spiritual understanding of Luke 4:18-19 where Jesus announced his mission to give freedom and healing to the **whole** man.

The evangelist therefore will be concerned with freedom from hunger and ignorance; freedom from exploitation; freedom from violence and terror because his Lord (in a way wholly consistent with the Old Testament) is concerned about these things.

We need the Ecumenical Movement because we need evangelism in its widest sense. And within the Ecumenical Movement the Christian Institute has played and can play a vital rôle.

(1) It can witness to our freedom in the gospel, by insisting that Christian Churches must be free to hear and respond to the movements of the Holy Spirit. And by insisting that God has something new to say

to us by men of other convictions than ours and also by the historic situation in which we find ourselves.

In this sense the Institute is a kind of Confessing Church which desires to discover what obedience means for the Church by its openness to dialogue with all other Christians under the supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(2) It has a vital rôle to perform in helping to educate Church people in the full significance of evangelism, and also to provide the opportunity for Christians to work out together what the social implications of the gospel are for all the people of our country.

The very existence of the Institute is a witness to the first of these two vocations: namely that Christians must make their witness out of the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

The second of these tasks has only just begun. It is to this, under God, that we need to bend our energies now.

WIE IS DIE VOORBOK ONDER DIE SONDAARS?

Dr. C. J. LABUSCHAGNE

Toe ek na heelwat oorpeinsing op bostaande opskrif vir hierdie artikel besluit het, het ek dit neergeskryf en as skrywer soos gebruiklik my naam daaronder geplaas. Wat daar toe op die papier te staan gekom het, het my geskok, want ek het besef dat wat hierbo staan 'n vraag is met 'n antwoord daarop. Moes ek die opskrif verander het? Wel, ek het nie . . . daar staan dit! Dit lyk vreeslik so op papier.

Ek sien al, by sommige lesers verskyn 'n spottende gryns, miskien 'n hoonlag, want met hierdie opskrif het ek my lelik in my kaart laat kyk, myself lelik blootgegee; „Hy is miskien nie die enigste nie, maar inderdaad een van die voorbokke wat baie sonde en ergernis vir volk en kerk meebring!” Hulle is hartlik welkom om so te dink en wat my betref mag hulle gerus hul hoonlag laat opklink.

God sal daardie hoonlag hoor en Hy sal oordeel of hulle gelyk het en of hulle maatstawe vir wat sonde is korrek is! Van daardie hoonlag trek ek my niks aan nie, want ek het al geleer dat ons beskouinge oor wat sonde is hemelsbreed verskil. Dit kan my ook geen haarbreed skeel hoe ek deur sommige geoordeel word nie, want my gewete is absoluut skoon sover dit hul veroordeling betref. Wat ter sprake is, is

hoe ek deur God geoordeel word wanneer Hy sy maatstawe op my aanlê, wanneer Hy my met sy standdaarde meet.

Ek het besluit om die opskrif hierbo te laat staan soos dit is met my naam daaronder, want soos dit daar staan is dit 'n allerpylikste belydenis van iemand wat in sy lewe, Goddank, oorrumpel is deur die waarheid van die Evangelie. En as dié hoonlag by sommige lesers nou verdwyn het, wil ek hulle vra of hulle dieselfde belydenis in alle opregtheid sal wil uitspreek. Dan kan ons verder gaan. Dan kan ons kom by die eintlike strekking van hierdie artikel, naamlik om saam te besin oor ons plek in die ry van sondaars. Al kan ons mekaar nêrens vind nie, hier behoort ons mekaar te vind, ten minste as ons saam bereid is om te biug onder die gesag van Gods Woord . . .

Dr. C. J. Labuschagne, voorheen senior lektor in die Semitiese Tale aan die Universiteit van Pretoria, vertrek eersdaags met sy gesin na Nederland waar hy 'n lektoraat in die Ou Testamentiese Wetenskap aan die Universiteit van Groningen aanvaar het. Die seënwense van die redaksie en van ons lesers versamel hulle.

DIE OORDEEL VAN DIE WOORD

Moeilik, nie waar nie? Dit gaan om die vraag: Is ons bereid om Gods Woord toe te laat om ons ons plek in die ry van sondaars aan te wys? Kom ons vergeet vir 'n keer alles wat ons gehoor het en steeds hoor oor hoe wonderlik, goed en braaf ons is en laat ons vir 'n oomblik ontslae raak van daardie opgeblase selfverheffing wat die gevolg is van jarelange volgehoue selfverheerlikingspropaganda. En laat ons dan luister wat Gods Woord sê.

Dit is hierdie Woord wat vir my my plek in die ry van sondaars aangewys het; dit is hierdie Woord wat

my geleer het wat dit vir my persoonlik beteken dat Christus as Verlosser in die wêreld gekom het, waardeur die Evangelieboodskap vir my nuwe betekenis gekry het. Kom ons lees 'n paar gedeeltes uit die Woord, eers uit die Ou Testament, Amos 6:1-7, en uit die Nuwe Testament Lukas 15:1-10 en I Timotheüs 1:12-17. Het u dit gelees? En het dit u ook so diep getref wat Paulus teenoor sy goeie vriend Timotheüs bely in vers 15? Kom ons slaan dit weer na, want dit kan wees dat mens daarvoor heen lees, en dit is nou juis oor daardie vers waar dit in hierdie artikel gaan.

„Dit is 'n betroubare woord en werd om ten volle aangeneem te word, dat Christus Jesus in die wêreld gekom het om sondaars te red, van wie ek die vernaamste is”.

Ek ken geen woord ooit deur 'n mens uitgespreek wat so sober en tegelyk so hartstogtelik en smartlik is as hierdie nie. So kan alleen iemand sê wat diep persoonlik aan sy eie lyf ondervind het wat dit beteken dat Christus gekom het om sondaars te red. Wie dit van homself skryf, moes homself seer-persoonlik betrokke gevoel het by daardie werklikheid waar die gelykenis van die verlore skaap en die verlore penning oor spreek. So iemand moes ongetwyfeld ervaar het wat dit beteken om as diep-verlore deur Christus gevind en gered te word. Hierdie hartstogtelike, pynlike ontboeseming is deur Paulus bedoel vir die oë en ore van sy vertroude vriend en medestander Timotheüs. Om van jouself te sê dat jy die vernaamste sondaar is, d.w.s. dat jy die oppersondaar, die voorbok onder die sondaars is, dit doen jy nie in die openbaar nie, dit roep jy nie op straat uit nie . . . dit kan jy alleen in vertroue by jou beste vriend opbieg. Dit is wat Paulus hier gedoen het. Maar God het hierdie in-vertrouegefluisterde woord bestem om juis van die dakke geroep te word, om as onderdeel van sy Woord aan miljoene geproklameer te word, om so doende Paulus aan alle mense voor te hou as 'n voorbeeld van 'n geredde sondaar. In hierdie nou openbaargeworde belydenis van Paulus wil God ons laat sien wat dit beteken dat Hy sy Seun in die wêreld gestuur het om sondaars te behou, om as Goeie Herder te soek en te red wat verlore is, en wat dit beteken dat aan 'n mensekind „barmhartigheid bewys is”, dat 'n sondaar

gered en behoue, 'n misdadiger begenadig word.

Ons betree met hierdie woord die binnekamer van die persoonlike geloofslewe van 'n medemens . . . Alleen diepe eerbied en skroomvolle aarseling is hier op hul plek: hier gaan die hart van een mens oop vir die oog van sy medemens, hier spreek 'n mens oor hoe die Evangelie hom in die diepste van sy lewe geraak het, oor die seer-intieme werk van God in sy persoonlike lewe. Ons huiwer . . . maar ons betree hierdie binnekamer en ons mag dit alleen doen omdat God ons daarin lei. Ons hoor hierdie hartstogtelike, smartlike belydenis: Luister, Timotheüs, nou dat ons praat oor die liefde en ontferming van God, moet ek jou dit sê . . . dit is baie pynlik, maar ek kan nou nie anders nie . . . vir my beteken die Evangelie dit, dat Christus in die wêreld gekom het om sondaars te red onder wie ek, Paulus, die voorbok is, die belhamel onder die skurke.

AKSIOMA

Paulus die voorbok onder die sondaars? Was dit werklik so erg met hom gesteld? Dit kom immers meer voor dat mense sê „ek, arme sondaar” en dit diep in hul hart gladnie meen nie, maar dit net sê om vergoelike teenspraak uit te lok sodat ander moet sê „Toemaar, jy is darem gladnie so sleg nie!” Paulus bedoel dit seker ook nie so ernstig nie, is ons geneig om te dink. Maar pasop! Kom ons kyk weer wat daar presies staan.

Paulus begin sy belydenis met die uitdruklike versekering dat wat hy nou gaan sê is „'n betroubare woord en werd om ten volle aangeneem te word”, asof hy goed geweet het dat mens geneig sou wees om 'n dergelike krasse uitspraak in twyfel te trek. Oor wat hy nou gaan sê, val geensins te redetwis nie; dit is 'n onomstootlike en ontwyfelbare waarheid, 'n aksioma. In sy briewe gebruik Paulus hierdie versekeringsformule vyfmaal (waarvan viermaal in sy briewe aan Timotheüs), telkens as dit gaan om 'n sentrale, onomstootlike waarheid. Hy het dit nodig geag om dié versekering ook hier te gee, omdat dit vir hom gaan om die aksioma van sy lewe, iets waaraan onder geen omstandighede getwyfel mag word nie.

Natuurlik was hy ook bewus daarvan dat daar in die wêreld baie gehuigel word, dat mense dinge sê wat

hulle gladnie meen nie, dat daar baie leuens, halwe waarhede en verdraaiinge van die waarheid in omloop is, dat mense so onwaaragtig is dat jy hulle nie op hul woord kan glo nie. Waar dit dus gaan om 'n kardinale waarheid, sê hy vir alle sekerheid vooraf dat dit „'n betroubare woord is en werd om ten volle aangeneem te word”. Wat nou volg is onweerspreklik waar, diskussie daarvoor is by voorbaat uitgesluit, verskil daarvoor is onmoontlik omdat dit 'n aksioma is.

Ons weet almal dat 'n aksioma 'n waarheid is wat oral en te alle tye onomstootlik vasstaan en wat sonder bewys aan die ervaring ontleen word. Die woord „aksioma” word afgelei van die Griekse woord „axios”, wat „werd” beteken en in ons vers voorkom. 'n Aksioma is dus iets wat „werd is om ten volle aangeneem te word”, iets waar geen verskil van mening oor kán wees nie, iets soos die tafels wat ons op skool geleer het, bv. dat $2 \times 3 = 6$. Dit gaan dus vir Paulus hier om 'n dergelike aksiomatiese waarheid — die waarheid van die Evangelie in sy eie lewe. Dit is tipies dat die apostel die woord „waarheid” nie minder nie as twaalf keer in sy briewe aan Timotheüs gebruik, dit is byna driekeer meer as in enige van die ander briewe (en daar is briewe wat baie langer is!). Teenoor Timotheüs stort hy sy hart uit oor die waarheid, die waarheid gaan hom aan die hart; die waarheid en niks anders as die waarheid nie, daar gaan dit vir hom om.

OU NUUS

Wat is dié waarheid? Niks nuuts nie, niks sensasiewekkers nie, maar slegs die ooroue, oorbekende boodskap dat Christus Jesus in die wêreld gekom het om sondaars te red, en hierdie boodskap betrek Paulus in sy eie lewe. Dit is die Evangelie in 'n neutedop, Gods aksioma vir hierdie wêreld.

Wat sê u, leser? Dat ons dit al lankal weet, dat dit ou nuus is? Dat die dominees ons niks meer kan vertel nie en dat hulle altyd maar weer terugkom op dieselfde, oorbekende, eenvoudige boodskap? Ja? Dit, dink ek, is nou juis waar ons groot moeilikheid lê: Ons dink dat ons dit weet, maar ons weet dit nog steeds nie! Ons het nog steeds nie die volle diepte van die Evangelie gepeil nie en sy volle betekenis en al sy implikasies het ons nog steeds

nie deurgrond nie — anders sou ons anders opgetree het in die wêreld en sou die wêreld daar heeltemal anders uitgesien het! O ja, ons kén die Evangelieboodskap, ons aanvaar dit, ons glo dit, ons het daar geen twyfel oor nie, omdat dit berus op historiese feite en gegrond is in die waarheid dat Christus in die wêreld gekom hét om sondaars te red.

Juis, maar nou kom ons by ons eintlike moeilikheid: Ons het geleer om die Evangelie te aanvaar soos ons 'n aksioma aanvaar, presies soos ons van die juffrou op skool sonder meer aanvaar het dat $2 \times 3 = 6$. Die Evangelie is vir ons 'n algemene waarheid, 'n aksioma! Oor aksiomas bekommer ons ons nie, hulle laat ons verder koud, hulle gryp ons nie meer aan nie, hulle ontroer ons nie, vervul ons nie meer met verwondering nie . . . Of word u soms diep ontroer deur die feit dat $2 \times 3 = 6$? (As dit die geval sou wees, sou mense u aanraai om sielkundige behandeling te gaan soek.) Is dit nie hier waar ons moeilikheid lê nie? Die aksioma van die Evangelie ontroer ons nie meer nie, dit pak ons nie meer nie, dit maak ons nie meer stil van diepe verwondering en ontroering nie — ons gaan ons gang deur die lewe, onverdrote en ongestoord, want ook hierdie aksioma het ons soos alle ander aksiomas laat rus in ons gemoed. Ons is by tye daar 'n bietjie ongerus oor en soms eg bedroef daaroor dat die Evangelie ons nie méér pak en aangryp en ontroer en tot diepe verwondering stem nie . . . Wat het dan tog verkeerd gegaan? Ek dink die kardinale fout lê hierin: Die Evangelieboodskap dat Christus in die wêreld gekom het om sondaars te red, is vir ons 'n algemene waarheid, en nie, of nog nie 'n besondere, persoonlike waarheid nie. Ons bely wel ons geloof in dié Evangelie, maar ons besef nog steeds nie dat ons daar intiem en seer persoonlik by betrokke moet wees nie.

PERSOONLIKE WAARHEID

Dit het Paulus wel besef. Daarom voeg hy by die belydenis van sy geloof in die Evangelie onmiddellik daaraan toe dat hy daar seer-persoonlik by betrokke is: Onder die sondaars vir wie Christus gekom het, staan hy vooraan in die ry; hy is die oppersondaar, die voorbok onder die sondaars. Hy identifiseer hom volkome met die verlore skaap en met die verlore penning; Christus

is vir hom die Herder wat alle ander skape agterlaat en spesiaal uitgaan om hom te soek, en wat hom ook inderdaad gevind het en op sy skouers teruggedra het; hy, Paulus, is die verlore muntstuk wat ver weggerol het en in 'n hoek onder die stof te lande gekom het, vir wie en spesiaal ter wille van wie Christus sy Lig laat skyn om hom te soek tot dat Hy hom vind.

Die algemene waarheid dat Christus in die wêreld gekom het om sondaars te red, is vir Paulus 'n besondere, persoonlike waarheid. Christus het spesiaal vir hom gekom! In die ry van sondaars staan hy wat Paulus is vooraan! Onder die skape wat afgedwaal het, is hy die belhamel wat vooraan loop en onder die drosters het hy die verste weggedwaal!

Die vernaamste te wees van sondaars beteken in heel gewone Afrikaans: Ek is die voorbok onder die rebelle en skurke wat God uittart en beledig . . . Afskuwelik en pynlik om dit van jouself te moet sê. Paulus moes dit sê omdat hierdie skulderkenning vir hom 'n integrale deel van die Evangelie is, 'n essensiële deel van die evangeliese aksioma. Aanvaarding van die Evangelie beteken tegelyk om jouself daar seer persoonlik by betrokke te weet; die aanneming van die aksioma beteken dat mens dit onmiddellik en allereers op jouself moet betrek as iets wat jou spesiaal aangaan: Christus het spesiaal vir my gekom, niemand het Hom nodiger as ek nie, ek die vernaamste sondaar! Dit is alleen op grond van hierdie erkenning dat die Evangelie in my persoonlike lewe veranker kan raak, en dit is alleen op hierdie wyse dat ek my persoonlik intiem betrokke weet by die verlossingswerk van Christus. Die koms van die Verlosser beteken dan nie dat Hy gekom het om sondaars te red onder wie ek êrens agteraan 'n plekkie inneem nie, maar dat ek in die onafsienbare ry van sondaars vooraan staan as die voorbok.

SO ERG?

Weer is ons geneig om te dink „So erg is dit darem nie met Paulus nie, want hy het hom immers bekeer' en ons sien daarin 'n opening om ons saam met hom in die ry van sondaars darem meer agteraan 'n plek toegewys te kry. Let op Paulus sê nie dat hy die vernaamste van sondaars was nie, maar dat hy dit nog steeds is (teenwoordige tyd!) — vir Christus is hy nog steeds die voor-

bok onder die sondaars. Sy bekering het inderdaad 'n totale ommekeer in sy lewe meegebring, 'n radikale verandering in sy houding teenoor God, maar dit beteken nie dat hy sy plek vooraan in die ry van sondaars kwytgeraak het en voortaan êrens agteraan 'n plekkie kry nie! Vir Christus staan hy nog steeds vooraan! Dit is vir Paulus die aksioma — diskussie daaroor is uitgeslote, onmoontlik, steurend, sinneloos, onbeskeie. Ons kan daar alleen stil van word nou dat ons in die binnekamer van sy persoonlike geloofslewe sy sondebef te wete gekom het. Dit is onmoontlik om 'n ander se sondebef te beoordeel, want ons kan nie iemand se sondebef met objektiewe maatstawe meet nie, omdat objektiewe maatstawe vir dit wat 'n mens by homself as sonde besef, nie bestaan nie. God ken alleen dié maatstawe. By Paulus het die openbaring van Gods liefde gepaard gegaan met 'n groeiende afkeer van homself — ek ellendige mens, oppersondaar!

Kan ons Paulus dit nasê? As ons dit nie kan of wil doen nie, sal die Evangelie vir ons niks anders bly nie as 'n onpersoonlike aksioma. Maar kom, leser, laat ons dit maar toegee, ons wil dit nie doen nie; ons dink nog steeds dat dit darem nie so erg met ons gesteld is nie. Ons wil wel die vernaamste wees onder die minder-sondiges, onder die sorgelose vromes, maar onder die sondaars, nee! so erg is dit darem nie. En dit is miskien ons grootste skuld dat ons ons skuld nie besef nie en dus ook nie wil erken nie, dat ons ons plek in die ry van sondaars nie wil ken nie.

Ons is die gerustes in Sion, die sorgeloses op die berg van Samaria waar die profeet Amos dit oor het, „die vernames van die eerste onder die nasies”. Ons het ons laat wysmaak deur middel van pers- en radio- en banale politieke platform-propaganda dat daar geen mens beter en edeler is as die Afrikaner nie. Ons het dit geglo, ons het onself begin verhef en as superieur beskou bo alle ander, inderdaad, die „vernames van die eerste onder die nasies”.

Weet u wat God deur sy profeet oor dergelyke selfverheffende liede sê? Lees dan weer Amos 6:7: „Daarom sal hulle nou op die voorpunt van die ballinge in ballingskap gaan . . .”. Wie hom verbeel dat hy 'n voorbok onder die vernames is,

bevind hom in Gods oë op die voorpunt van die gedoemdes. Wie meen dat hy net dié mán is, maak van die Evangelie 'n bespotting — vir hom wag niks as net Gods oordeel nie.

Waaragtige sondebeseft, daar gaan dit om. En dit betref natuurlik so-

wel individu as volk. Wil ons dat die Evangelie ons weer iets sê, ons weer aangryp, ons weer ontroer, ons in verwondering laat kniel? Dan moet ons leer beseft: ek, ek is die verlore skaap; ek, ek is die vernaamste sondaar, Heer, niemand het U

meer nodig as ek nie. Hierdie onmisbare sondebeseft is nie iets wat ons van die dakke hoef te roep nie, want 'ek, arme sondaar' kan 'n hui-gelagtige gemeenplaas word . . .

Wie is die voorbok onder die sondaars?

WE WILL REMEMBER

EVELYN CRESSWELL

On the 27th June, 1962 the General Law Amendment Act became law. As the Minister of Justice outlined at the Bill's second reading, it had an essentially preventative function — to maintain the condition of peace already existent in the country by rendering harmless possible sources of trouble — communists, subversive elements and saboteurs. Its terms were however so wide that it immediately evoked opposition from all quarters.

We have become so quiescent that it is salutary to remind ourselves of that period of opposition and protest and who participated in it. The following points made by the official Parliamentary Opposition Party help to put opposition to such a Bill into perspective:

- (a) it deprived citizens of the protection of the courts and put them at the mercy of arbitrary ministerial decisions in such a way as to threaten the freedom of law-abiding people;
- (b) it created the new crime of sabotage and defined it so widely that the lives and liberties of people who were innocent of any intention to subvert the State could be endangered;
- (c) it granted further extensive powers to the Government and ignored the fact that laws already existed which were adequate to deal with any crisis that might arise; and
- (d) it would damage the Republic by creating the false impression that a permanent state of emergency existed.

The sole representative of the Progressive Party added that the only reason for introducing the Bill was to intimidate opponents of the Government.

The General Bar Council objected to certain clauses. The International Commission of Jurists in a press statement maintained that the Bill reduced the liberty of the citizen to a degree not surpassed by the most extreme dictatorship of the Left or the Right.

The Black Sash held vigils; the general public attended crowded

protest meetings and rallies; a 'conservatively estimated' crowd of 6,000 marched in silence through Johannesburg; students signed petitions, and churches combined in special prayer meetings and services.

The Christian Council of South Africa stated amongst other things: "We are concerned that its terms can too easily be used to stifle all criticism of the Government in power or any public protest, and it excludes individuals from the normal safeguards of the rule of law and access to the courts. We reiterate that greater safeguards are necessary to protect the individual against arbitrary action on the part of the State."

We have already entered the sixth year of our experience of the implementation of this law. Such expressions as: Banning, Exit Permit, House Arrest, Deportation Order, Passport Confiscation, have become part of our normal jargon. Reasons for protesting against this Law have dimmed in our minds as the numbers of those 'punished' under its tenets increase. The average person now 'accepts' that the punished person has been 'justly' punished. The party in power is the guardian of justice! Even Christians can live their lives in daily unquestioning acceptance of this!

Has our Government arrogated to itself the powers of a divine Caesar, that its actions should be accepted as being beyond question? — and this by Christians who in matters of conscience acknowledge only the Lordship of Christ? Just as incongruously, these same people admire

the faith and courage of those Christians who for close on three centuries refused to burn incense in acknowledgement of the lordship of their Caesar.

Apart from the recent cases of Dr. Hoffenberg and John Sprack, we have in the last few days been shocked into renewed awareness of the severity and inhumanity of the orders served on Mrs. Joseph for a further period of five years' House Arrest. She was the first to be so sentenced as indeed many have been since then.

Mrs. Joseph is a communicant Christian; she is not a listed Communist; she was acquitted in the Treason Trial of 1956—1961; she has been associated with the Federation of South African Women, the Garment Workers Union, and the now banned Congress of Democrats; she has visited areas to which people have been banished to find out about their welfare. We would like to know what she has done further to merit such drastic punishment.

In our reaction to this news of her further five years of confinement and social isolation, do we:

- (a) accept unreservedly that the danger potential of this 62-year-old woman must be correspondingly great?
- (b) have little confidence in our police force such that we don't believe them capable of keeping a **normal** check on trouble?
- (c) feel deeply and disturbedly about the news so long as headline publicity keeps it in the public mind, but then forget about it?
- (d) seek after some form of personal commitment so that the standards we have espoused as Christians don't slip from our minds and actions?

When Ross reports to Macduff (a fugitive in England) on the state of Scotland under Macbeth's tyranny, he says:

"Alas! poor country;
Almost afraid to know itself. It
cannot
Be called our mother, but our
grave; where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once
seen to smile;
Where sighs and groans and
shrieks that rent the air
Are made not marked . . ."
Have we grown afraid, habituated
and careless?
We belong to a nation about
whose total well being we deeply

care. A farmer living in the 8th century B.C. cared enough to allow himself to be called by God to undertake a mission to Israel where again and again he reminded the people of God's requirements of Justice and Mercy — as a plumbline in their midst.

"And, behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumbline, with a plumbline in his hand. And the Lord said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A plumbline. Then said the Lord, behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel."

"Lest we forget."

I PLEDGE MYSELF:

1. To stay at home (except for work), and to entertain no visitors on the First of every month.
2. To witness unfailingly to the reason for my social withdrawal on that day or evening. (That justice can no longer be seen to be done and so I am involved in and partly responsible for every act of possible injustice that may be committed in the country to which I belong.)
3. To share this my concern and action as widely as it is in my power to do.

DIE KERK BUITE SUID-AFRIKA

PROF. B. B. KEET

Skuldbelydenis van 'n Sinode

Dat 'n sinode 'n verkeerde besluit van baie verreikende gevolge kan neem, word andermaal bewys deur die geskiedenis van die Gereformeerde Kerk in Nederland, wat te Assen (1944) in die saak dr. Geelkerken tugmaatreëls uitgeoefen het, wat aanleiding tot 'n skeuring gegee het, wat tot vandag toe voortduur.

Net om die geheue te verfris stip ons aan dat dr. Geelkerken, predikant van Amsterdam-Suid, saam met die grootste gedeelte van sy kerkraad en ander aanhangers onder tug geplaas en verban is uit die Gereformeerde Kerk omdat hulle die moontlikheid aangeneem het dat die eerste hoofstukke van Génesis nie as letterlike geskiedenis gesien moet word nie, nie sintuiglik waarneembare feit was nie (terme wat in daardie tyd gebruiklik was) maar ook simboliese betekenis kan hê. Die resultaat van die stryd was dat daar 'n ander kerk tot stand gekom het onder die naam van Gereformeerde Kerk in Hersteld Verband. Van die ander splitsinge of vrygemaakte kerke hoef ons nie nog verder melding te maak nie, ook nie van die talle predikante en lidmate wat hulle by die Hervormde Kerk aangesluit het nie. Genoeg as gekonstateer word dat die leerbesluite van Assen waarkragtens die skeuring gekom het, lank reeds as gevolg van die vordering wat daar op ons Skrifkennis gemaak is, geen verdere tugsake ten gevolge gehad het nie. Soos dit later uitgedruk is het Assen se besluite in „onbruik geraak” en

niemand het hom meer daarvoor bekommer nie. Pogings tot nouer aansluiting van die vervreemde kerke het in later tyd gelei tot 'n eis vanweë die vrygemaaktes dat daar verskoning gemaak moes word vir die onreg wat aan hulle geskied het vanweë die besluite te Assen. En dit het nou plaasgevind by die Sinode van Lunteren.

Die vraag is egter of hierdie belydenis bevrediging sal gee. Ons gee die teks van die sinodale besluit soos dit aan die Sinode van die vrygemaakte kerke deurgestuurd is en in die Gereformeerde Weekblad verskyn het.

„Na 'n bewoë diskussie het die Generale Sinode van die Gereformeerde Kerke besluit om hulle tot die vrygemaakte kerke te rig met 'n skuldbelydenis oor die kerklike konflik wat in 1944 gelei het tot 'n skeuring in die Gereformeerde Kerke. Die Sinode het verklaar dat die Gereformeerde Kerke daar ver van verwyderd staan om die skuld van die konflik van 1944 en volgende jare eensydig te soek by hulle oor wie in dié jare in enige vorm die vonnis van skuldig uitgespreek is. Die Gereformeerde

Kerke wil intendeel aan hulle kant ootmoedig bely dat hulle self in die hele skuldige broedertwis waardeur die Gees van gemeenskap bedroef is, nie vry uitgaan nie. In die derde plek het die Sinode verklaar dat die Gereformeerde Kerke die vrygemaakte susterkerke van harte vra om hulle te vergewe alles wat in die konfliksituasie, en by name in hul tugmaatreëls en houding en optrede nie volgens die Gees van Christus was nie en nie aan die katolisiteit van die kerke beantwoord het nie.”

Die Sinode het besluit om hierdie uitspraak tot die kennis van die vrygemaakte kerke in Nederland te bring en hul eie kerke op te wek om in die gees van hierdie uitspraak ook plaaslik versoening te soek en te bly soek met vrygemaakte susterkerke.

Briewe van verskillende kerkrade, van elf studente uit Kampen en 'n aantal predikante en gemeentede uit verskillende oorde het die aanleiding gevorm tot die gesprek oor hierdie saak in die Generale Sinode.

Met betrekking tot die skuldvraag wat in hierdie briewe aan die orde gestel is, het die Sinode tot die gevolgtrekking gekom dat 'n suiwer onderskeidende oordeel hieroor onmoontlik is, omdat verskeie faktore in die kompleks van die skuldige broedertwis mekaar oor en weer beïnvloed het.

Daar was net een teenstem teen die besluit.

Prof. Herman Ridderbos, eindredakteur van Gereformeerde Kerkblad, wat hierdie berig deurgee, teken reeds enige bedenkinge aan.

Hy skryf: Die Sinode het dit goed gevind, na aanleiding van enkele ingekomne briewe, om tot 'n algemene skuldbelydenis ten opsigte van die vrygemaakte kerke te kom, waarvan die teks elders in hierdie nommer gevind kan word. Die uitspraak wil blykbaar sê dat diegene oor wie in 1944 die uitspraak „skuldig” uitgespreek is, nie die enigste skuldiges was nie; spreek van „nie vry uitgaan” van die Gereformeerde Kerke nie; vra vergewing vir wat in die konfliktsituasie en by name in hul tugmaatreëls nie na die Gees van Christus was nie en nie aan die katolesiteit van die kerk beantwoord het nie. **Wat** die laaste was word aan sy eie oordeel en skatting oorgelaat. Die stuk lyk vir my 'n voorbeeld van goeie bedoelinge, maar ongeskik om iemand se regsgevoel te bevredig. Ek vrees dat die vrygemaakte Sinode daarop hoogstens skouerophalend sal antwoord en sal vra: wat bedoel u nou presies? En mense van 'n uit die skeuring oorgelewe klein gemeente, wat met groot inspanning hul kerklike lewe voortgesit het, het my gister toe ek by hulle gepreek het, gevra of hulle nou vir 'n goeie of vir 'n slegte saak gestaan het. Ek het geantwoord: vir 'n goeie. Maar of hierdie antwoord ooreenstem met die skuldbelydenis van die Sinode, weet ek nie. Daarom sal ek my verhaal maar afsluit en met hierdie vraagteken besluit.

Van „vrygemaakte” kant het daar ook groot beswaar gekom. Die „Reformatie” skryf bv. dat die uitspraak van die Sinode staan in die teken van skuldbelydenis, selfs ootmoedige skuldbelydenis, maar skuldbelydenis waaroor? Oor alles wat in die tugmaatreëls en in die houding en optrede nie na die Gees van Christus was nie en nie aan die katolesiteit van die kerk beantwoord het nie. Maar wat is **alles wat**? Daaroor sê die Sinode dat 'n suiwer onderskeidende oordeel hier nie moontlik is nie, omdat verskeie faktore oor en weer op mekaar invloed gehad het. „**Alles wat**” lyk heelwat, maar is dit wel wat? Want dit is nie die leeruitsprake nie. Dié is nie herroep nie. Is dit die tugmaatreëls? Nee, want dit is „alles wat” in die tugmaatreëls nie na die Gees van Christus was en aan die katolesiteit van die kerk be-

antwoord het nie. Niks word gesê van die openbare skending van die kerkreg nie. Hoe sou dit ook: dié skending is agteraf gewettig in 'n nuwe kerkorde. Dié nuwe kerkorde is nie in skuldbelydenis herroep nie.

En so was daar ander stemme wat veral gewys het op die gebrek aan

konkreetheid in die besluit van die Sinode. Miskien vind ons later geleentheid om op ander reaksies te wys, want daar is stellig nog geen finaliteit in hierdie saak bereik nie. 'n Spreekende bewys dat 'n sinode veel gemakliker die eenheid van 'n kerk kan verbreek dan dit te herstel.

Letters

Written and Spoken Word Both Sources of Divine Revelation

Mr. V. G. Davies, 89, Kloof Road, Sea Point, Cape Town.

As a small contribution to the Ecumenical dialogue, I would like to put the following question to your readers: To what extent does the visible Christian unity willed by God depend on the written word, and to what extent on the spoken word?

By 'the written word' I mean, of course, Holy Scripture, and by 'the spoken word' I mean the magisterium of the Church, or the Ecclesia Docens. In trying to find an answer to this question, it is important to remember that, unlike the Church which came into being suddenly on Pentecost Day, the Bible came into being gradually over a considerable period of time. Although all the separate writings of which the Bible consists were in existence about the year 100, the Bible itself as the known and certain 'Word of God' did not come into being until about the end of the fourth century when the magisterium of the Church authoritatively decided its canon. Thus it can be said that the Bible became a known and certain source of divine revelation some four hundred years after Christ Himself had established His other source of divine revelation on earth, namely, His Church. In other words, Christians of the first four centuries had access to only one known and certain source of divine revelation, the spoken word of the Church.

The separated and scattered scriptural writings of the time were, of course, of great value, and of considerable help to the Church in her mission of propagating the faith, but they could not be regarded as a certain and known source of divine

revelation until the Church had collated them and authoritatively declared them to be such a source.

The question now arises: Did the Christians of the first four centuries show forth the visible unity willed by God? If they did, then this surely indicates that unity depends primarily on the spoken word, not the written word. What we do know for certain is that both sources of revelation are divine and therefore both ordained by God, and that accordingly there can be no conflict between them. Those who are in the habit of appealing to the Scriptures as the sole source of divine revelation should realise they are doing something that would have been incomprehensible to the Christians of the early centuries. Let us by all means have a great love for the written word, but let us at the same time have an equal, if not even greater love, for the spoken word, for I think the evidence shows that it is only in this way that we shall succeed in attaining the unity we are all now seeking.

* * *

Support the Christian Institute

Mr. Thomas Moremoholoi, Welkom, O.F.S.

The Christian Institute is calling upon us for support. Let us act together and take a step forward to racial harmony through united worship, free and open discussion, a common Christian vision and shared projects.

In recent times the Vatican Council has asked Christians to bear wit-

ness in all places and in all possible ways to the Church's social responsibility. This I understand to imply that we should make moral judgments in matters regarding public safety and the fundamental rights of a person.

I am convinced that meeting together on different levels is both valuable and necessary. Not only do we benefit spiritually, but this also

positively helps to give men moral courage, an attribute which seems to be rare in the world today. We call ourselves Christian teachers, preachers and ministers which we are; therefore we dare not remain silent and should have the courage to give a lead. It is the countless small acts of human courage and belief that have shaped the history of God's Church.

Let us be united in Christ our Lord.

APARTHEID AND INTEGRATION

The Rev. James Moulder, Oxford, England.

Your editorial of September, 1967, ("Verkrampste" and "Verligte" Heresy) and especially the argument in the footnote posed at least three problems for me.

(1) You claim that "certain *apartheid* regulations . . . are obviously good and necessary." Could you please

- (a) specify the regulations which are such? and
- (b) explain why they are necessary and what good consequences they have and for whom?

(2) You seem to be opposed to enforcing either "segregationist" or "integrationist" policies by means of legislative sanctions. Is this possible? In other words: Is there in fact a realistic political policy mid-way between segregation and integration? between, say, *reserving* jobs, schools, universities, residential areas, restaurants and what have you on the basis of people's pigmentation and *having these open* to any one with the necessary skills and/or means to participate in them? And if it is immoral to reserve such opportunities, facilities and amenities must it not be necessary to have legislation which protects a person's right not to be discriminated against and punishes those who offend against this right?

(3) In what sense is the gospel of Jesus "the only hope and salvation of South Africa"? I ask this question not to cast doubt on the value of attempting to take Jesus' teaching seriously but because you seem to suggest that via such attention to his Gospel it is possible to escape having to make a decisive choice between

segregationist and integrationist political policies. Furthermore, while you make much of "reconciliation" you have not mentioned another concept in the Gospel, namely, "restitution".

I am, of course, aware that it is not possible to provide short, easy answers to these questions. Nevertheless I ask them in the light of your remark that your editorial is not your "final word". Hence this plea for clarification and help in understanding what you are driving at.

* * *

Mr. P. M. Harker, "Kings Lynn", Boyes Drive, Muizenberg.

Would it be possible to illustrate from practical situations the 'unequivocal exposition of our standpoint' given in your September issue? I have tried to relate your statement to situations which affect us in the Peninsula (though any other will do as well), without any success in eliminating the twin heresies of apartheid and integration.

(1) Up to less than 20 years ago, our suburban rail coaches were multi-racial, as most bus services still are. Then apartheid was applied, enforced. A reversion to 1948 and prior would be enforced integration, which you equally deplore. A way out could be to have uni-racial as well as multi-racial coaches. It would require a super-actuary to calculate the balance of demand at peak periods to make the system economic.

(2) Current policy is the removal of the Bantu from the Western Cape. This is *enforced* apartheid, opposed to the enforced integration of the Whites and Coloureds and Asiatics who remain in occupation. By providing non-White townships spread-

ing across the Cape Flats we are trying to achieve enforced night-time apartheid while retaining day-time integration — enforced by both the pressure of economics, and the need of each other's labour to keep essential services functioning.

(3) The Cape Town City Council is still multi-racial, voluntarily, from the point of view of those who have no objections, enforced from that of those who would prefer it otherwise. We can't very well have 3 City Councils, like the 3 classes of railway coaches!

How do you get around both enforced integration and enforced apartheid? Must those who object to the status quo (whichever it is) move elsewhere?

Your assessment can only be valid if you are able to project the theory into any existing situation. (This is where apartheid falls down). Can you interpret just how both apartheid and integration can be eliminated, and what steps we should be taking now towards such implementation? As was said recently, you can't solve this problem of race relations by attempting to have no relations at all!

* * *

Mrs. A. Brusse, Dunbez Court, 102 Dunbar Street, Bellevue, Johannesburg.

I read your footnote to your Editorial (*Pro Veritate*, 15th September, 1967) with alarm, as it seems to undo the last sentence of your Editorial.

We will not have a just society without maximum integration and we cannot therefore be revolutionary and compulsory enough.

Less woollymindedness and more clear thinking, please.

* * *

REPLY

We would like briefly to explain our point of view as follows a propos of the problems raised by our correspondents.

The Rev. J. E. Moulder

(1) Our statement containing the words: "Certain apartheid regulations which are obviously good and necessary" must be read as a whole as well as within its context. Our premise is

the thought that neither a principle of *absolute, consistent* apartheid nor a principle of *absolute, consistent* integration can be the foundation of a healthy political order in our country. We must find the basis for the arrangement of our society in the gospel of Jesus Christ (or also: in the Bible).

If this is the case, we argued, numerous apartheid regulations will lapse necessarily and by themselves. That is why we added: This would not mean, however, that certain apartheid regulations which are obviously good and necessary would have to be jettisoned.

(a) What would go by the board, would be all the monstrous emanations of an apartheid which insists on asserting itself as an abstract, absolute ideology in a stark and inflexible manner. The whole complex of so-called "petty apartheid" falls under this category. The monstrosities of petty apartheid must, however, be seen as inevitable corollaries of the ideology as such, as it is put into practice. In reality, therefore, it would mean the end of *apartheid as ideology*. For nowhere do we detect more clearly *what* exactly the ideology of apartheid as an absolutized vision of salvation entails than in petty apartheid itself.

The end of the ideology of apartheid — which is surely ineludable — need not, however, be catastrophic. This will, to our mind, most likely be the case if the alternative seized upon is a violent, revolutionary enforcement of integration. In this we see no salvation, but only disaster.

He who stands opposed to apartheid must give account to himself as to what he really wants and how he wishes to achieve it. Does he envisage a social ideal in which "equalisation" in an abstract, absolute sense must be put into force at all costs? Then he must seriously ask himself whether, in view of the existing situation in this country, he can expect anything else than chaos and misery from such a course. Or does he envisage a social ideal in which the chaos caused and increasingly caused by apartheid (political, social and economic injustice; breaches in human relationships) is transformed into ordered community? For this latter possibility we are dependent upon the gospel. For in the gospel we discover a vision upon the pattern of society which could be established in

South Africa as an organic whole centred upon Christ's sacrifice of atonement.

The Body of Christ, we stated, could serve as an example for it. Within the organism of this Body everyone is not equal, similar, the same in an abstract, absolute sense. There is a variety of members in the one Body. Would this, when applied to national life, have reference only to individuals or also to the groups composing the people? It seems reasonable to us to suppose that it can also be understood in a group context — without its being understood in an abstract, absolute sense!

Certain apartheid regulations which are obviously good and necessary, but which will have to be concrete and relative in their application, ought to be taken into account in such an ordering of society. They dare not apply as inflexible laws and forcible measures based upon the myth of race and colour. They should rather be regarded as provisional measures instituted perhaps only for the time being, in the interests of the group but at the same time also in the interests of the whole. What such measures will entail dare not be unilaterally determined. They could moreover give rise to considerable difference of opinion. As far as we are concerned, we would be able to regard matters such as separate schools (particularly as regards primary and secondary education), separate residential areas in urban complexes and perhaps even "homelands" as such provisional measures.

(b) From the above it ought to be clear why we hold the view that certain apartheid measures will remain good and necessary. Love demands it. Observance of the variety in one society as a whole renders it necessary. We repeat, however, that it can only be determined through mutual consultation and approval whether such measures are indeed good and necessary, and that this cannot be unilaterally determined. It will have to be in the interest of the ordered society as a whole and not a concession to the selfish interests of one group.

(2) We do not visualise the alternative to the ideology of apartheid as a compromise between this ideology, on the one hand, and an ideology of integration on the other. In any case, we regard it as an undesirable situation when things have gone so far that there should have to be legisla-

tion which either determines that people of a particular skin colour may/may not possess certain rights and privileges or which specifically states that there dare not be any discrimination on the basis of race and colour. The latter may perhaps be a temporary necessity in a chaotic situation of race obsessedness, as long as, to repeat, it is not enacted in a spirit of loveless, revolutionary compulsion towards absolute integration.

The basis for the arrangement and ordering of society according to the precepts of love and justice is to be found neither in an ideology of apartheid nor in an ideology of integration, but in the Bible alone. It is not a "golden mean" between two political extremes, but something of a completely different order. It amounts to the arrangement and ordering of life around the axis of reconciliation, around the Cross of Golgotha, on the basis of the commandments and promises of God as revealed to us in the Scriptures.

(3) That is why we say that the gospel of Jesus Christ is the only hope and salvation for South Africa.

What is especially necessary in South Africa in order to be liberated from the stranglehold of the demonic ideology of apartheid is that we should experience this little part of the world as God's world. Therein lies our salvation. It does not lie in our having to devise for ourselves a way of salvation along which South Africa must be preserved for "Europeanism" (which is all too easily and automatically equated with Christianity!) It is through sheer unbelief that we have arrived at the ideology of apartheid as our gospel — a gospel which is no gospel at all.

South Africa is not exclusively the white man's country in which "Europeanism" may hold sway as eternal ideal of salvation. It has been liberated into being a part of God's world in which His kingdom is coming, and in which, through sanctification, His will must be done. We, here also, are living in God's world on the strength of Christ's atoning sacrifice, and are placed in a new life which is arranged, ordered and lived on the basis of his promises and commandments. He destroyed our enmity against Him (as symptom of which apartheid has gained such a strong hold upon us) on the Cross (Eph. 2; Col. 1). This is our salvation — his gift of grace! — that we can also

arrange and live our life, individually, communally, socially, politically, in the knowledge of his intentions, under his laws, in justice and in love.

What is at issue, therefore, is more than merely an effort "to take Jesus' teaching seriously." What is at stake is his work of atonement by which we have become partakers of the salvation and have his Word, his commandment (and this does not include the law of apartheid) as the lamp to our feet and the light to our path. We have formerly already laid stress on the fact that this demands conversion on our part, whereby the old comes to dying and the new man to resurrection (which is the deepest meaning of "restitution").

In our reference to apartheid as an anti-gospel we made the statement: a comprehensive conversion of the people is the alternative for apartheid in South Africa. As a people we need to die with Christ and to be resurrected with Him. What all of this will entail for the political, social and economic arrangement of our life in practice is indeterminable at this stage. But dare we therefore say that it is impractical, that it will not work out in practice? As if Christians ever have a practical guarantee of the success of their Christian endeavour in the world! The ideology of apartheid, on the other hand, will obviously never work out.

It is worth our while, in any case, to give consideration to the thought that in the history and life of nations God has proved ever so often that what men regarded as impossible (the way of God seems to us to be the way of unthinkable, unacceptable folly) was possible with Him. He can also enter into death with a people in order to resurrect it in a new obedience.

Mr. P. M. Harker

(1) We refer our correspondent to what we have said under item 2 of our reply to the Rev. James Moulder. To this we add that our rejection of a consistent, absolute policy of integration in South Africa does not imply that we thereby also reject the imperativeness of abrogating and undoing through legislation certain monstrosities attendant upon the policy of apartheid. This is completely obvious. It will have to take place, however, not on the basis of an absolute ideology of integration which purports that a consistent, if needs

be, violently enacted policy of integration would guarantee our salvation. It will have to take place on the basis of the realisation that the inhumanities of apartheid are completely at variance with an ordering of life on the foundation of the salvation in Christ. In the "magnetic field" of the Cross it will form part of Christian obedience and sanctification as striven after by true Christians in their daily lives as members of society.

(2) The removal of Africans from the Western Cape is indeed an item on the programme of enforced apartheid. The question is, however: was their presence in the Western Cape (as everywhere else in South Africa) ever yet a form of enforced integration? Or must the presence of Africans everywhere in our country simply be seen as a permanent reality, as a fact that, whether we like it or not, we undeniably have a multi-racial composition of population groups in our country and that it has to be reduced to an orderly society on a Christian basis? Just as little as the presence of Africans in the Western Cape can be regarded as a form of enforced integration, so little can this be the case in view of the fact that Coloureds and Asiatics are resident in this area together with Whites. It is simply the factual situation.

In our multi-racial country a basis of *convivium* (living together) must be found. And apartheid is, on the one hand, an evasion of this responsibility and, on the other, a denial of the truth that such a basis is in fact given us in the Christian gospel, through which we are placed in the reality of the new life on the foundation of the commandments and promises of God. The fact that, on the economical level, the Whites are prepared and anxious to the point of giving credence to the figment of "border industries" to tolerate integration between themselves and the non-Whites, whilst in all other fields it would allegedly constitute a dire threat to their welfare if they were to regard all population groups in South Africa as one, multi-coloured solidarity, reveals the atrociousness as well as the farcicality of the whole ideology of apartheid. The preparedness for a continuous economic integration (which really means: economic dependence upon the non-Whites) *without* the preparedness really to enter into a relationship of fellowship

with the non-Whites starkly reveals the real nature of apartheid.

It is bad enough that the Whites should customarily think of the non-Whites merely in economical terms, i.e. as labour potential. It has long since become outdated even as far as Africans themselves are concerned, to think of them merely as labourers. The Whites will have to be prepared to accept more from the non-Whites than merely their labour. They will have to start accepting them as fellow-men.

Practically nowhere in our country is an enforced integration either possible or necessary. On the economic plane we have always been an integrated labour community, which necessarily entails that we are communally resident in certain areas (in fact: the country as such). The factually multi-racial character of the composition of our population is something which we simply have to acknowledge realistically.

What is indeed necessary *and* possible is to accept the factual situation and to transform our multi-racial population into an orderly society. The ideology of apartheid does not, however, offer any possibility of such an ordering of society. In essence it represents a radical evasion of the issue.

What may indeed be conceded is that separate residential areas for the different population groups may, as a provisional measure, actually be necessary and desirable. The condition upon which this concession is made is obviously, however, that it shall not be enforced in an absolute sense and that justice and love shall be observed in it. The factors of race and colour dare not have the first and last say in it and absolutely determine where someone may stay, but account must also be taken of factors of an economic nature, of intellectual, academic and cultural development, of the level of civilization, of one's circle of friends, of religion, and so forth.

Thus, despite the fact that a meaningful argument may indeed be advanced in favour of separate residential areas, it dare not become demonised to such an extent that so-called residential areas for whole sections of the population are in reality prison camps in which people are pinned down for life, from which they cannot escape and which destroy all Christian and social intercourse.

Day of the Covenant

— The Rev. Dale White

(3) It would seem completely obvious to us that people who live in a particular area should also have a say in the management of that area. The multi-racial character of Cape Town City Council cannot, in our view, be regarded as a form of enforced integration. It is something normal and quite in accordance with the fact that Cape Town has a multi-racial population — which no one forced upon it. Ultimately we shall also have to have a multi-racial parliament in South Africa. This is a development which is preliminarily still being withstood but which is nonetheless unavoidable.

A multi-racial governing body in a multi-racial community does not mean, however, that an ideology of absolute, consistent integration must be put into practice and enforced on everyone. Acknowledgement of the fact that not all of us are Xhosas, Zulus or Mosotho, Afrikaners, Englishmen, Jews or Greeks, but that we are a multi-racial and multi-national population living in one common fatherland; an ordering of society which will take account of this fact in such a way that the very differences between us will be subservient to our mutual connectedness and that our mutual connectedness will not abolish the differences between us and become a threat to our different identities, this we regard possible only if the basis upon which we order our life consists of justice and love as revealed to us in the Bible and as practised around the cross of Golgotha "in a new way of life".

* * *

It must be obvious that the views outlined above are necessarily all too brief and undetailed. Work is in progress already on a far more detailed exposition of our principles and their positive application in practice. For the time being what we have outlined above may serve as a springboard for further discussion and argument concerning this most crucial of issues, which, if we could only bring ourselves round to it, is what every thinking and responsible Christian citizen of this country so undeniably needs and longs for. — Ed.

As in the past few years so this year also the Wilgespruit Fellowship Centre, the Christian Institute of Southern Africa and the Witwatersrand Christian Council are sponsoring a Day of the Covenant Service and other activities at the Wilgespruit Fellowship Centre, near Roodepoort, during the weekend commencing December 15th.

This year the emphasis will be on renewal ("Behold I make all things new"), the theme of the joint Bible Studies sponsored by the Christian Institute and the Christian Council next year, and the theme for the Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Uppsala, Sweden, in July, 1968. Wilgespruit invites you to set aside time before Christmas to explore your commitment to renewal in an ecumenical context.

The programme for the weekend will be as follows:

Friday, December 15

(Bible Study No. 1).
Supper at 7 p.m.
Theme: Young People's Responsibility
Film: Young People's Mission.
Song: Hymns for a New Day.
Project: Young People Now.

Saturday, December 16

(Bible Study No. 2).
Theme: Covenant Community.

10.00 a.m.—12 noon:

Day of the Covenant Service.
Speaker: Dr. R. Nelson (Disciples of Christ).

PICNIC LUNCH

2—4 p.m.:

Community Cross Section, a Panel Discussion on "Christian Responsibility for maintaining Community Contacts"

5—7 p.m.: Folk Songs, etc.

8.00 p.m.: People and Work.

Sunday, December 17

(Bible Study No. 3).

10 a.m.—12 noon:

People and Urban Living.
LUNCH.

2.30—4 p.m.: Inter-Church Aid, Projects, Assistance.

4.30—5.30 p.m.: Evaluation and Adjournalment.

For those who wish to come and live at Wilgespruit for the weekend the cost will be R3 per person (R1.50 for children under 12 years of age). Please send your fees to The Warden, Wilgespruit Fellowship Centre, P.O. Box 81, Roodepoort. Those who come for some of the sessions only should bring their own food baskets.

For a long time we have been trying to discover ways and means of building closer ties among our members. We feel that this weekend spent at Wilgespruit, with or without your family, might provide a way.

