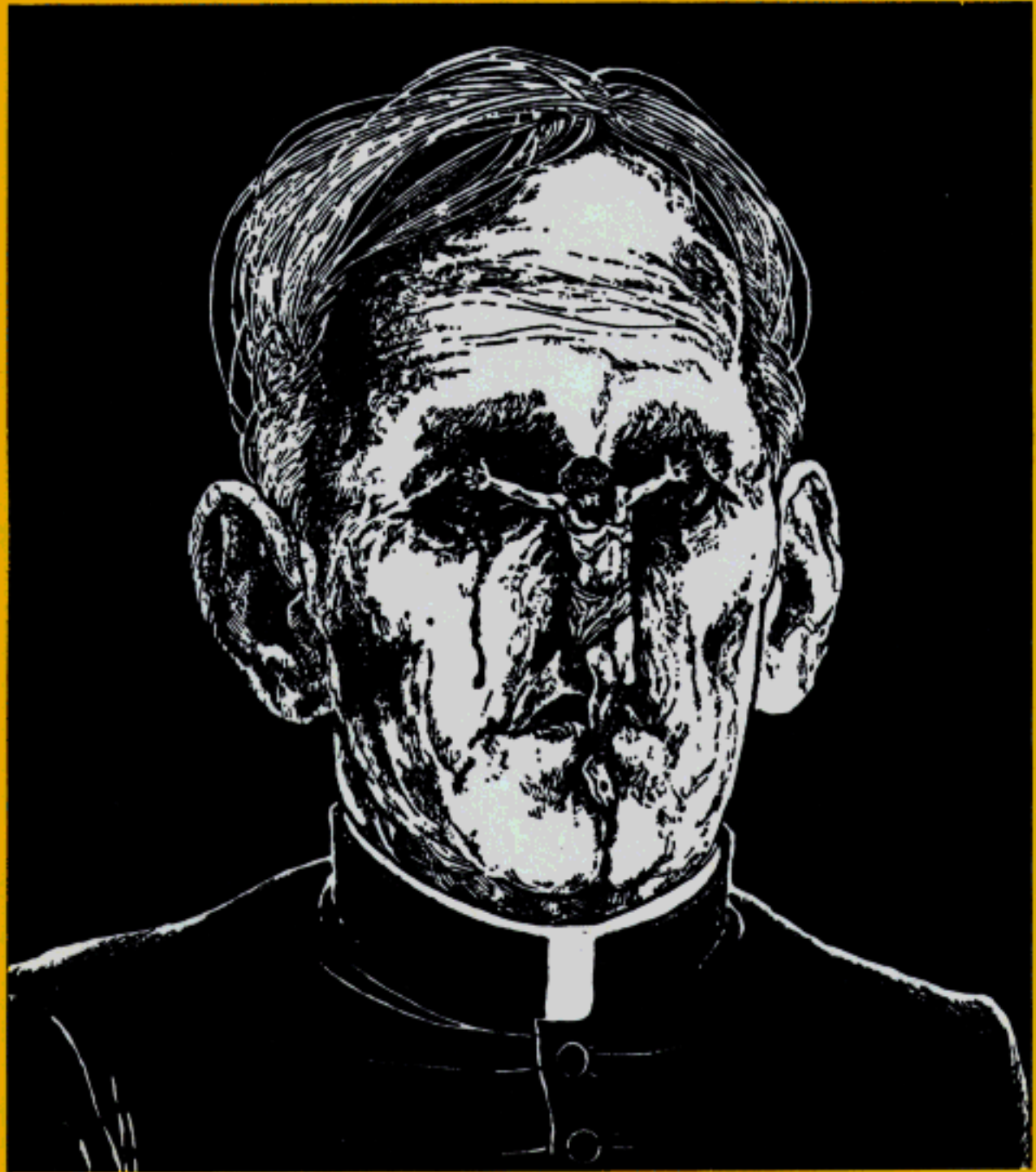


# PRO



# VERITATE



**NOVEMBER 1973**

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# PRO VERITATE

CHRISTIAN MONTHLY  
EDITOR: ROELF MEYER V.D.M.

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### COVER PHOTOGRAPH

WHAT DOES THE PICTURE ON THE FRONT COVER SAY TO US IN SOUTH AFRICA? (IT WAS DRAWN BY R. COBB, COPYRIGHT 1969, AND APPEARED IN "VOORLOPIG" IN HOLLAND.)

### VOORBLADFOTO

WAT SÊ DIE SKETS OP DIE VOORBLAD VIR ONS IN SUID-AFRIKA? (DIT IS DEUR R. COBB GEDOEN, KOPIEREG 1969, EN HET IN „VOORLOPIG“, HOLLAND VERSKYN).

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# A CHRISTIAN BREAKTHROUGH WITHIN THE N.G.K. IN AFRICA

Quite recently about a hundred Black ministers (and their wives) of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Africa came to a decision which means in effect that the whole system of apartheid with all that it entails in every field of society has been rejected as being unchristian.

Not only is this the first time that such a thing has happened in the history of the N.G. Kerk family, *but it is the first time that the Black ministers have taken the initiative in bearing Christian witness against the apartheid system.* This shows that these Black leaders do not support the *status quo* in South Africa but that they believe in and will work for Christian fellowship, reconciliation and unity in all fields of life. This is not only a breakthrough for Christian human relations, but we believe it is a breakthrough for the Kingdom of God in South Africa.

The witness and action planned as a follow-up, confirms the fact that the unity which God created among all men and which was restored through the Gospel of Christ, is far greater and more powerful than all the differences and contrasts enforced by apartheid. The view which pertains in the N.G. Kerk, a naturalist and heathen view, observes mankind in terms of race and birth—has been penetrated and scope has been created for bringing about true fellowship among men. Apartheid believes in different races *per se* as the greatest good for all men, and thereby tribal gods have been created e.g. in the glorifying of Afrikaner nationalism. Christianity, however, brings men, as such, together under one God, be they Jew, Greek or barbarian—the unity of mankind is subsumed in the God-man, Jesus Christ. Apartheid makes nationality the highest, the absolute value to which all life in South Africa is subject. This constitutes idolatry since race consciousness has been substituted for God.

Very properly these black Christians have not at this stage entered into discussion on apartheid with the White man, but have witnessed against it, since racism (apartheid) places Eros above Ethos; Eros, the emotion of self-love, cannot be reduced to terms of logical argument. Eros, the natural love of self, is regarded by apartheid as the highest law, displacing the Ethos, the ethic, the Christian principle of neighbourly love and service.

### Why not 'Church Channels'?

Why have the ministers not tried to witness against apartheid by way of the 'officially recognized church channels', according to the White church, the 'circuits' (ringe) or synods? Through the Ring and the Synod,

the White man, enthroned on the seat of power, still tries to give a lead; the Black man has found by experience that the White attitude is paternalistic and autocratic. The Ring and the Synod, the 'official church channels', are actually seen to be the 'subject', the most important factor, while the person, the individual, the Christian in his official capacity as believer, who actually forms the essence of the Church, is seen as the 'object'. The White minister can still maintain his authority and his ideology by means of his official position of power in Ring and Synod. And so through the 'church channels' the Black man is robbed of his essential Christian human value. There (in Ring and Synod) decisions are taken *about him and for him—all ostensibly in his own interests*; even if he is present, since it would be irrelevant for the Black man to make an issue of it. The present decision of the Black Christians has broken through this power structure which the White man knows so well how to use.

What will be the reaction of the White leaders of the N.G. Kerk who advocate apartheid? Diligently the effort will be pursued to recapture the initiative, power and control. When the White members of the N.G. Kerk once discover the real feelings which the Black N.G. ministers and members have nurtured through the years, there will be an explosion of indignation because the White ministers have not made them aware of it in good time. They will discover that the Black people, like themselves, are self-respecting, worthy of their human status, made in the image of God; subject to the divine will they also wish to attain their full responsibility, together with the White man, in both church and political fields.

In the past the domination of the White man over the Black man in South Africa has created a unity of ideas, a single conviction, a common support of, or at least an acceptance of the *status quo*, i.e. of apartheid. Now the Black man wants to witness to and work for a new society. The spiritual freedom Christ has created in them, and through their witness, must emerge in creative action. Others, including the White man, must be liberated from the slavery of apartheid. This is a theology of Christian hope.

This hope stands in opposition to the ideology of apartheid, of racism, which is absolutely deterministic and fatalistic. If you are born Black or Brown, there is no hope, no future for you; you must be kept apart and separate. The dice are loaded against you—that's all there is to it. ("Die dice het vir jou verkeerd geval, daai's

maar al"—Adam Small.) But by overcoming sin through his crucifixion, by bringing reconciliation and unity through Pentecost, Christ has rejected fatalism and determinism.

### Arbitrary Action in the Church

A difficult path lies ahead for those who profess Christ and have set themselves against apartheid and the rending apart and separation which necessarily accompany it, since the watchword of the average White man is 'Law and Order' even in relation to racist laws and carnal order. He is now not concerned with justice and truth; he is concerned with his position of power which must be maintained at all costs. Hence the White man—even within *Government* ranks—makes use ever more frequently of arbitrary control measures to maintain his will and his power, even resorting to violence in doing so, and in the *N.G. Kerk* he uses the officialdom of the Church (its office bearers and meetings) to impose authoritative and binding decisions, and to apply an arbitrary discipline.

Without power, absolute power, apartheid cannot succeed—neither in the State nor in the Church, because apartheid implies a domination enforcing its 'godly' will. Thus a difficult path lies ahead for those who witness against apartheid. Desperate efforts will be made to deter them at whatever cost.

One such method of prevention will be to remind those opposed to apartheid that 'in our Church we do not discuss party politics'. According to a daily newspaper (*The Star* 5.11.73), and as the quotation indicates, this has already been said by a White minister of the *N.G. Kerk*. This pietistic standpoint presents the view that the one true God, the Creator of the world (necessarily including politics) and its Redeemer, is divisible and that man can serve Him in part—'there is no God in politics'. The idea will be spread that the 'spiritual work' ('sielewerk') of the Church could be injurious as though Christ had not become man for the purpose also of redeeming the body. This point of view will now be used by Afrikaners, but it must be remembered that the Afrikaners themselves maintained a different point of view at a time when it suited them to fight for their rights.

Another possible line of attack against the Black ministers could well be a less 'spiritual' attack—one in which a pistol is held to their heads threatening the 'Black Church' with a reduction in or withdrawal of the funds of the 'White church'. (The white church supplies most of the money of the black church.) This attack also would lack Christian inspiration in that corruption in the handling of money is symptomatic of a Judas-spirit which the ideology of apartheid is determined to maintain even at the cost of Christian unity. Here again the history of the White Afrikaner underscores the example for the *N.G. Kerk*: Better poor and free before God .....

The *Christian Institute* could possibly be deemed culpable in that their witness and work have influenced the Black ministers throughout the years to adopt this decision and action. Maybe the time has come to say boldly and more clearly than ever before that the *C.I.* is of course interested in the welfare also of the black *D.R.* Church. It must, however, also be strongly emphasised

that it is not the *Christian Institute* as such that is at stake but it is Christian truth that is the crux of the matter.

### The effect of the decision

What will be the outcome of this decision and what its application? In brief the following possible results may be mentioned:

The *White N.G. Kerk* will inevitably be confronted with the necessity of reconsidering its own decision to maintain and support the ideology of apartheid. Should it return to its old policy of maintaining unity with the Black man as opposed to apartheid (cf. the *N.G. Kerk* pronouncement and practice of e.g. 1829) this would also represent a breakthrough in the apartheid way of life as enforced by a political ideology.

If on the other hand the Church refuses to change in line with the Gospel, its passive, tacit approbation of apartheid, this could mean a final break between the *Black N.G. Kerke* and the *White N.G. Kerk*. In its turn this would possibly lead to the complete isolation of the *White N.G. Kerk* which would then draw upon itself the opprobrium of the Christian churches throughout the world.

Another inevitable result would be that the *Black N.G. Kerk* would now move closer to most of the other churches in South Africa which also reject apartheid. A natural step would be to join the *S.A. Council of Churches* and to work with them.

Another important result would be that this decision would bring the other *N.G. Kerke*, the *N.G. Sendingkerk* and the '*Indian Reformed Church*' to the point of putting apartheid to the test in the light of the Gospel and bearing witness to it in word and deed. Some individuals in powerful Christian witness have already unmasked apartheid as an unchristian system.

The *Gereformeerde Kerk* should also move away from its ambiguous neutral position of acquiescence in the *status quo* and on grounds of the Gospel it must make a choice. The *Hervormde Kerk* has made its frightening (final?) choice, viz. that there can be no fellowship between Black and White.

### New life comes ...

Although a difficult path lies ahead of the Black Christians in their struggle for evangelical freedom from apartheid, yet there is hope. This courageous Christian deed can bring back a completely new life to the Church and make Christ King both in the Church and in society. It could herald the dawn of a new era, an era of liberation from isolation, oppression, discrimination and estrangement on the one side, and liberation for the White man from domination, fear, self-glorification and fanatical nationalism.

Much planning and hard work lies ahead, but courage must be engendered because these Black Christians have heard the clarion cry of the God of the Exodus, which will lead them out of the slavery of Egypt to their freedom. May the era of freedom for South Africa dawn quickly since the Gospel of liberation establishes that Jesus has come to preach the good news to the poor; to heal the broken hearted; to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind; to set at liberty those who are oppressed ...." (Luke 4:18).



## 'N CHRISTELIKE DEURBRAAK BY N.G.K. IN AFRIKA

So pas het ongeveer 'n honderd swart predikante en hulle eggenotes van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrika 'n besluit geneem wat daarop neerkom dat die hele apartheidsisteem, met alles wat dit inhou op elke gebied van die samelewing, as onchristelik verwerp word.

Nie alleen is dit die eerste keer dat so-iets gebeur in die geskiedenis van die N.G. Kerkfamilie nie, maar dis die eerste keer dat *die swart leraars die inisiatief neem om 'n Christelike getuienis oor die apartheidsisteem te lewer*. Dit toon dat dié swart leiers nie die status quo in Suid-Afrika steun nie, maar glo en wil werk vir Christelike gemeenskap, versoening, geregtigheid en eenheid op al die terreine van die lewe. Dit is nie alleen 'n deurbraak vir Christelike menseverhoudinge nie, maar ons glo vir die Koninkryk van God in Suid-Afrika.

Dié getuienis en aksie, wat beplan word om daarop te volg, is 'n bevestiging van die feit dat die eenheid wat God tussen alle mense geskep het en wat deur die evangelie van Christus herstel is, veel groter en kragtiger is as al die verskille en teenstellinge wat deur apartheid afgeforseer word. Daarmee word die naturalistiese, heidense kyk op die mens in terme van sy ras en geboorte in die N.G. Kerk deurbraak en ruimte geskep om ware gemeenskap tussen mense te bewerkstellig. Apartheid glo in verskillende rasse op sigself as die hoogste goed vir die mens en skep sodoende *stamgode* deur bv. die Afrikanernasionalisme te verheerlik. Die Christendom bring egter die mensdom as sodanig, of dit Jood, Griek of barbaar is, saam onder één God—die eenheid van die mensheid lê in die God-mens, Jesus Christus. Apartheid maak die nasionaliteit die hoogste en absolute waarde waaraan alle lewe in Suid-Afrika onderworpe gestel word. Dit is afgodery want rasbewustheid het God vervang.

Tereg het die swart Christene nie oor apartheid met die witman geredeneer nie, maar daarteen getuig, want rassisme (apartheid) plaas eros bo ethos, en met eros, die *gevoel* van selfbehaging kan nie logies geredeneer word nie. Eros, die natuur-

like selfliefde, word deur apartheid die hoogste wet wat die ethos, die etiek, die Christelike beginsel van diens aan die naaste vervang.

### Waarom nie „kerklike kanale”?

Waarom het die leraars nie deur middel van die „offisiële erkende kerklike kanale”, volgens die *blanke* kerk, die ringe of sinodes, dié getuienis teen apartheid probeer lewer nie? Dit blyk dat die swart predikante die ring en sinode, waarby die witman nog die leiding met sy algemene magposisie probeer gee, as paternalisties en outokraties ervaar. Die ring en sinode as die „offisiële kerklike weg” word as die eintlike subjek, die belangrike gesien, terwyl die mens, die Christen in sy amp as gelowige, wat eintlik die wese van die kerk vorm, as die objek verstaan word. Die wit predikant kan dan nog sy wil en ideologie deur middel van die offisiële magposisie in ring en sinode handhaaf. So in die „kerklike kanale” word die swartman van sy innerlike Christelike menswaardigheid beroof—daar word *oor hom, vir hom en vir sy sogenaamde beswil* besluit, selfs ook met hom teenwoordig, want dit is vir die swartman irrelevant om daarvan 'n strydpunt te maak. Dié besluit van die swart Christene het dié magstruktuur wat die witman so goed kan gebruik, deurbreek.

Wat gaan die reaksie nou op die wit leiers van die N.G. Kerk, wat apartheid voorstaan, wees? Naarstiglik sal probeer word om die inisiatief, die mag en kontrole in hulle hande terug te kry. Wanneer die lidmate van die wit N.G. Kerk eendag ontdek wat die werklike gevoelens is wat die swart N.G. predikante en -lidmate al die jare gehuldig het, gaan daar 'n ontploffing van verontwaardiging wees omdat die wit predikante hulle nie betyds daarvoor ingelig het nie. Hulle sal ontdek dat die swartmense, nes hulleself, selfrespekterende, menswaardige beelddraers van God is, wat ook hulle *volle verantwoordelikheid* saam met die witman op kerklike en politieke terreine onder die hand van God wil nakom.

In die verlede het die oorheersing van die witman teenoor die swartman in Suid-Afrika 'n eenheid van

idees, 'n eenvormige oortuiging, 'n gesamentlike ondersteuning of ten minste van aanvaarding van die status quo, van apartheid geskep. Nou wil die swartmanne getuig en werk vir 'n nuwe samelewing. Dié geestelike vryheid wat Christus in hulle en deur hulle getuienis geskep het, moet uitbod in kreatiewe aksie. Ander, asook die witman, moet van die slawerny van apartheid bevry word. Dis 'n teologie van Christelike hoop.

Dié hoop staan teenoor die ideologie van apartheid, rassisme wat absoluut deterministies en fatalisties is. As jy swart of bruin gebore is, is daar geen hoop of toekoms vir jou nie, jy moet apart wees; die dice het vir jou verkeerd geval, daai's maar al (Adam Small). Christus verwerp egter fatalisme en determinisme deur sy sonde-oorwinnende kruisdood en bring versoening en eenheid deur sy Pinkstergees.

### **Arbitrêre aksie in kerk**

Vir die Christusbelyers teen skeurende en skeidende apartheid lê egter 'n swaar pad voor want die slagspreuk vir die deursnee witman is „wet en orde”, al is dit dan rassistiese wette en vleeslike orde. Dit gaan by hom nou nie oor geregtigheid en waarheid nie, maar oor sy magposisie wat ten alle koste behou moet word. Daarom gebruik die witman, ook in *die regering*, al meer arbitrêre dwangmaatreëls om sy wil en mag met geweld te handhaaf, en in *die N.G. Kerk* sy offisiële en amptelike kerklike ampsdraers en vergaderinge om finale bindende gesagsbesluite op te lê en arbitrêre tug toe te pas.

Sonder mag, absolute mag, kan apartheid nie slaag nie—nie in die staat nie en ook nie in die kerk nie, omdat apartheid 'n oorheersing is wat sy „goddelike” wil en wette afdwing. Daarom wag daar 'n moeilike pad voor vir dié getuies teen apartheid. Daar gaan desperate pogings aangewend word om hulle ten alle koste te stuit:

Een poging sal wees om dié teenstanders van apartheid daaraan te herinner dat „ons nie party-politieke sake in ons kerke bespreek nie”. Dit is reeds, volgens 'n dagblad soos die aanhaling aandui, deur 'n wit predikant van die N.G. Kerk gesê („The Star”, 5.11.73). Dié piëtistiese standpunt gee voor dat 'n mens die één ware God, wat Skepper van die wêreld (wat die politiek insluit) en Verlosser daarvan is, kan verdeel en slegs 'n halwe God dien—geen God in die politiek nie. Dié gees sal 'n geroep laat opgaan dat die „sielewerk” in die kerk nou skade sal lei asof Christus nie 'n mens geword het om ook die liggaam te verlos nie. Dié standpunt sal nou wel goed deur die Afrikaners gebruik word, maar daar moet onthou word dat die Afrikaners self 'n ander standpunt gehandhaaf het toe dit hulle gepas het om vir hulle regte op te kom.

'n Ander moontlike aanval teen die swart predikante sal 'n minder „geestelike” aanval wees deur 'n dreigende pistool teen die kop van moontlike vermindering of onttrekking van die fondse van die „witkerk” aan die „swartkerk”. (Die witkerk dra verreweg die grootste deel van die swartkerk se fondse by.) Ook dié aanval sal Christus se inspirasie mis omdat omkoping met geld 'n Judasgees verraai wat die apartheidsideologie ten koste van Christelike eenheid wil handhaaf. Hier spel die wit Afrikaner se geskiedenis self nou vir die swart N.G. Kerk die voorbeeld uit: Liewer arm en vry voor God ...

Die Christelike Instituut sal moontlik ook daarvan beskuldig word dat hulle getuienis en arbeid die swart leraars deur die jare beïnvloed het om so 'n besluit en aksie te neem. Miskien het die tyd aangebreek dat nog meer duidelik as ooit tevore onomwonde gesê word dat die Christelike Instituut natuurlik belangstel in die heil ook van die swart N.G. Kerk. Daarby moet egter ten sterkste beklemtoon word dat dit egter hoegenaamd nie om die Christelike Instituut as sodanig gaan nie, maar om Christelike waarhede wat op die spel is.

### **Die trefkrag van dié besluit**

Wat gaan die gevolge en toepassing van dié besluit wees? Kortliks kan die volgende moontlike gevolge aangestip word:

Die wit N.G. Kerk sal noodwendig gekonfronteer word om sy eie handhawing en ondersteuning van die apartheidsideologie in heroorweging te neem. Indien hy na sy eie ou paaie terugkeer deur die eenheid met die swartman teen apartheid te handhaaf, (vgl. die N.G. Kerk-uitspraak en -praktyk van bv. 1829), sal dit ook 'n Christelike deurbraak in die apartheidsideologie, wat deur die politieke ideologie afgeforseer word, kan beteken.

Indien hy egter weier om sy passiewe, stilswygende, goedkeurende houding oor apartheid volgens die evangelie te verander, kan dit 'n finale breuk tussen die swart N.G. Kerke en die wit N.G. Kerk veroorsaak. Op sy beurt sal dit moontlik die volslae isolasie van die wit N.G. Kerk beteken en die smaad van die Christelike kerke oor die wêreld op hom haal.

'n Ander noodwendige gevolg sal wees dat die swart N.G. Kerk nou nader aan die meeste ander kerke in Suid-Afrika wat ook apartheid verwerp, sal beweeg. 'n Natuurlike stap sal wees om by die Suid-Afrikaanse Raad van Kerke aan te sluit en daar saam te werk.

**vervolg op bl.25**

# CHURCH & STATE IN SOUTH AFRICA

## TO OBEY OR DISOBEY ?

PART ONE OF AN ARTICLE BY BRIAN JOHANSON

The combination of words in our title, 'Church and State in S.A.', suggests different things to different people. To the average loyal member of the Dutch Reformed Churches the words would suggest harmonious cooperation and almost complete identity of values and goals. To a radical member of some English-speaking church, they would imply a head-on collision and total estrangement. To an apolitical member of a pietistic community the words would be irrelevant because the church after all, has its clear task, and the state has its task. Even within these various church groups a similar variety of opinions may be encountered.

The apparent clarity of the phrase, 'Church and State in South Africa', turns out to be completely misleading, being a collection of perfectly clear words which conceals a bewildering confusion of ideas, convictions and opinions. The primary aim of this discussion will be to achieve some clarification of the issues at stake, and only then to offer some thoughts concerning the future relationship between church and state.

### 1. THE STATE

The definition of 'South Africa' presents no problems. It refers to the whole geographical area effectively under the control of the South African government, and therefore, includes the 'homelands' and South West Africa.

The 'State' is also a fairly clear concept, although there is in certain quarters a tendency to confuse the concerns of the state with those of the governing political party. The state is that organised system of government and control which attends to the administration of the affairs of a people within a given geographical area. The state is responsible for the preservation of law and order, of the security of the people from attack, for the provision of educational facilities, health facilities, and maintenance for those members of the community who are either too young, too incapacitated, or too old to provide for themselves. In the pursuit of these responsibilities it is essential that no differences should be made in the nature of the services provided on the grounds of irrelevant considerations such as race, colour, language or religion. The only valid consideration is the *need* of the persons concerned, and how this need can be met, in terms that are just and equitable. (In passing we might observe that

the fundamental principle of an equitable system of taxation is that it should effect a more even distribution of the wealth of the country, so that those who cannot afford education, health, pensions etc., on account of their low earnings, should nevertheless be able to enjoy them. It is a fundamentally false concept of taxation that those who pay the taxes should be the ones to derive the greatest benefit from them. It is an even grosser abuse of taxation when the taxes of the poor are used to feather the nests of those who already have everything they need)

The state then is a fact, and its existence is not conditional upon its being well run or badly run. Whether it is good or evil relates not to its existence but to its responsibility and accountability both to the people of the state, and to God. Moreover, therefore, the state is a fully *legitimate* fact. The principle of anarchy (i.e. a non-structured society, without any authorities or controls) is unanimously rejected.

In the Christian tradition there is no ambiguity on this point. The form of government in the Biblical history changed considerably over the centuries, and has continued to change throughout the history of the church. There have been autocratic monarchies, ruthless empires, benign and savage dictatorships, democracies of various kinds, but the legitimacy of government has been consistently maintained throughout. But what the Christian tradition and the Jewish tradition before it have always recognised is that all human government and authority stands under God and is relative to him, and is, therefore, open to judgment by him. Both the prophets and apostles were unambiguous about this.

### 2. THE CHURCH

The 'Church' is an apparently clear concept but its simplicity is beguiling and the possibilities of confusion are numerous. We cannot linger over all the definitions that have been formulated, and mention simply that Barth speaks of the church as 'the earthly historical form of the presence of Jesus Christ'. It is thus visible, tangible, real. It is the 'community of faith and obedience, living from the Word of God', so that, like the state, it too stands under the Word of God. But the question is, where is it visible?

All Christians would agree that there is but one Christ, and that there is, therefore, but one body of Christ. In this sense there is only one church; one

universal, catholic church, comprising all Christians of all times and places.

Then, at the other extreme, there would be unanimity on the fact that the church is also a local community of Christians, who gather visibly, from time to time, and place to place, in the Name of Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, there is a rather more dubious use of the word church, in relation to denominations. Thus, we speak of the Anglican Church, or the Methodist Church. (Some might find it preferable to speak of 'churches' in these contexts.)

The idea of the church does not imply perfection, or completeness in any ultimate sense. The true church knows itself to be the community of those who have been called by God to be followers of Jesus Christ, and who follow with many a stumble and frequent uncertainty, often mistaking their own concerns and convictions for those of their Master. The church knows that its whole existence is determined totally by the presence of Jesus Christ, and that her sole task is to witness to his sovereignty in word and act—with all that this implies.

Because of the division of the church into different denominations on the basis of differences in theological interpretations, and national groupings, the problem of really identifying and recognising the church with any finality becomes acute. Who speaks for the church? Can it be assumed that if certain church leaders make a certain utterance, that therefore, the church has spoken? Perhaps one of the greatest problems in the church is that it is so very anxious to have a voice, an opinion, a stand on issues, that is peculiarly its own, and is not willing to be quite simply the witness to what, in faith and humility, it believes God to be saying. It is always faced with the temptation to desire to be autonomous and important.

### 3. THE CHURCH AND STATE IN HISTORY

The ideal state, from the perspective of the church, would be the state that is governed in obedience to God. And it is remarkable how, in the providence of God, human governments do have a considerable knowledge of what is right. This knowledge can be sharpened and clarified through the proclamation of the church. This would in no sense place the church over the state, but would emphasize the fact that both the church and the state are under the authority of God.

Historically, the relationship between the church and the state has taken a variety of forms:

#### in the Roman Empire

Leaving aside the New Testament situation for a moment, the early history of the church found it in frequent confrontation with the state. In principle the confrontation should have been consistent and total

because the Christian faith was unquestionably completely incompatible with the Roman religion, which insisted that regardless of any other religious beliefs, an allegiance to the Emperor should be religiously declared. In fact, the collision was sporadic and brief because of differing policies of various emperors, as well as the reluctance of many officials to pursue persecution to the limits. The position was however unequivocal: the state dominated the church, although the church frequently defied the state, denying that it had *ultimate* power, and suffered the consequences.

#### under Communism

A comparable, but slightly modified relationship appears to obtain in contemporary Communist countries, where religion is permitted under strictly controlled conditions. Deviation from conditions laid down by the government are liable to meet with severe treatment. Religious training of children and any kind of proselytising or missionary activity is forbidden. It would seem that the Christians do frequently disobey in secret the restrictions that are placed upon them. The principle however is clear: the state claims and exercises the right of control over the church.

A further comparable relationship, but drastically modified is in the existence of established churches—churches which are under the nominal control of the head of state. These would include the Church of England, Church of Sweden, etc.

#### the Roman Catholic and Reformed Churches

The converse situation has also obtained. The Roman Catholic doctrine of the "two swords" was used to support the claim that the supreme Pontiff had both spiritual and temporal authority vested in his control. He could, and did, delegate temporal authority to chosen princes—but he could, and did, withdraw that authority and exercise it himself. These claims were expressed in various ways but reached their climax in the papal bull of 1302, the *Unam Sanctam*. In terms of actual power over the secular world this was the high-water mark, and thereafter Rome's territorial powers declined.

The Reformers had some difficulty with this problem. Luther wished to see a separation of powers, and developed his concept of the three "orders" or "mandates" of creation under which men stand: the church and its ministry, the marriage relationship and the family, and the civil authority. He also emphasized the principle of separation with his concept of the "two Kingdoms". Yet it was his problem with the Anabaptists that drove Luther to call for closer co-operation between the church and the secular authorities. This developed into the policy of *cuius regio eius religio* (which, Bonhoeffer points out, was relevant primarily to the specific situation in which the princes agreed to receive each other's exiles).





Calvin similarly aimed at a separation of powers and had several sharp confrontations with the civil authority in Geneva. The ultimate effect of his reforms, however, was that he personally became a powerful civil figure and influenced civic life to even the details of the daily lives of Geneva's citizens. He also appealed to the civil authorities in the regrettable Miguel Servetus affair.

While the Reformers thus aimed at a separation of church and state, the tendency was for the civil authorities to take their lead from their religious affiliation, whether Roman Catholic, Lutheran or Calvinist. The result was a tendency to perpetuate the idea of a Christian State. Ideal as this may seem on the surface of things, it inevitably results in confusion regarding the nature of the Kingdom of God. When church and state merge there is the danger of religious and political absolutism. It took the ferment and individualism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to finally produce freedom of religious belief.

#### 4. THE CHURCH AND STATE IN THEOLOGY

In attempting to offer a positive view of a theological understanding of the State, I cannot do better than to refer to the main points made by **Bonhoeffer** in his **Ethics** (pp. 300—303). "... The basing of the state on sin or on the nature of man leads to a conception of the state as a self-contained entity, a conception which fails to take account of the relation of the state to Jesus Christ. ... It is through Jesus Christ and for Jesus Christ that all things are created, and in particular 'thrones, dominions, principalities and powers'. It is only in Jesus Christ that all these things 'consist'. ... The true basis of government is therefore Jesus Christ Himself. The relation of Jesus Christ to government can be expressed under seven headings:

1. As the Mediator of Creation, 'through whom' government, too, is created, Jesus Christ is the sole and necessary medium between government and the Creator.

2. Government, like all created things, 'consists only in Jesus Christ'.
3. Government, like all created things, is designed and directed 'towards Jesus Christ'. Its goal is Jesus Christ Himself. Its purpose is to serve Him.
4. Jesus Christ possesses all power in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18), and He is, therefore, also the Lord of government.
5. Through the atonement on the cross Jesus Christ has restored the relation between government and God (Col. 1:20).
6. ... there is also a special relation in which government stands with respect to Jesus Christ.
  - (a) Jesus Christ was crucified with the permission of government.
  - (b) By acknowledging and openly declaring the innocence of Jesus, government gave evidence of its proper character.
  - (c) When government did not dare to exercise its governmental power in maintaining its own knowledge and judgement, it abandoned its office under pressure from the people. This does not constitute a condemnation of the office, but only of the faulty discharge of this office.
  - (d) Jesus submitted to government ...
  - (e) With this Jesus showed that government can only serve Him, precisely because it is a power which comes down from above, no matter whether it discharges its office well or badly. ... It was precisely through the cross that Jesus won back His dominion over government (Col. 2:15) ...
7. So long as the earth continues, Jesus will always be at the same time Lord of all government and Head of the Church, without government and Church ever becoming one and the same. It is only by the Biblical derivation of government from Jesus Christ that a solid basis can be laid. It is grounded in the sovereign and universal Lordship of Jesus Christ. Only in this way can the limits of obedience to the state also be defined.

It is from this perspective that the critical passages from the **New Testament** must be interpreted:

Jesus answered: "You have authority over me only because it was *given to you by God*." (Jn. 19:11). Everyone must obey the state authorities,

because no authority exists without God's permission, and the existing authorities have been *put there by God* ... (Rom. 13:1 f.).

I will therefore that prayers and thanksgivings be offered *to God* for all ... in authority ... (1 Tim. 2:2)

Submit yourselves, *for the Lord's sake*, to every human authority: to the Emperor, who is the supreme authority (1 Peter 2:11).

We are not concerned for the moment as to the reason for this submission, but with the fact that government authority is given by God. This defines and limits the authority. *Contrary to the popular misconception, that if God has given authority it is therefore unlimited and absolute, it is precisely the opposite. Authority given by God is limited and confined to what is in harmony with the divine will.* This is made abundantly clear from many Biblical facts:

The *Old Testament prophets*, from Elijah to Jeremiah were frequently at odds with the kings of Israel. They did indeed have a special role in relation to the kings, but without usurping the kingly office or prerogatives, they pronounced most severely on deviations from God's will, and suffered the consequences. On two occasions in the early days of the New Testament church *the apostles* gave expression to what is now universally recognised as a valid principle: "You yourselves judge which is right in the sight of God, to obey you or to obey God. For we cannot stop speaking of what we ourselves have seen and heard." (Acts 4:20) Peter and the other apostles answered back, "We must obey God, not men" (Acts 5:29).

But the limits of human authority are implicit or explicit in several of the references cited earlier. There are two basic functions of government: to punish wrong doers and to reward with praise those who do good, all with a view to securing a peaceful and happy society. Even the crucial passage in Romans 13 is decidedly qualified in this way. It is unthinkable that Paul was demanding a completely unqualified obedience to the authorities, as though Christians should "bow the knee to Baal" simply because "the king" demands it, or "fall before Nebuchadnezzar's statue" for similar reasons. Paul means: The Christian obeys the law because it is in harmony with the good will of God, and the state offers appropriate rewards for this kind of citizenship.

This is what is meant when Paul in Romans 13:5 urges obedience "for conscience sake", and Peter similarly says, "for the Lord's sake". Thus, obedience is assumed until such time as 'conscience before God' makes it impossible. But as Bonhoeffer points out, this can never be a general disobedience to the government. "Disobedience can never be anything but a concrete decision in a single particular case" (op. cit. p. 307).

(Cont. next issue)

# WHEN MAY CHRISTIANS DISOBEY THE GOVERNMENT?

**JAMES MOULDER**

(Mr. James Moulder is a lecturer in Philosophy at Rhodes University in Grahamstown.)

Is there a limit to the co-operation and obedience which a government can expect from someone who is trying to be faithful to the teaching and example of Jesus? Five members of the Christian Institute—Brian Brown, Theo Kotzé, Roelf Meyer, Beyers Naudé and Jane Phakathi—have invited us to ask ourselves this question. And in *Divine or Civil Obedience?* they have argued that there are limits to the co-operation and obedience which a government can expect from a Christian. At the same time they have asked whether any South African government has passed a law which goes beyond these limits; that is, a law which Christians can obey only if they are prepared to ignore or to reject some of the words and example of Jesus.

The discussion to which they have invited us is not a merely academic and theoretical one. They are some of those who have decided that Government Notice Number 1238 of 14th July, 1972, goes beyond the limits of obedience and co-operation which a government can expect from a Christian. This is the Government Notice which established and regulates the Commission of Inquiry into Certain Organisations, under the chairmanship of Mr. A.L. Schlebusch, M.P. for Kroonstad. I, therefore, want to describe the way in which the Schlebusch Commission was established; one of the regulations which governs its operation; and some of the consequences of its work. And I want to present some of the general principles which, they have argued, could force a Christian to refuse to co-operate with some government or other. Finally, I want to present some of the questions a careful reading of *Divine or Civil Obedience?* forces upon us.

## **The Schlebusch Commission**

On February 4, 1972, the Prime Minister asked Parliament to establish a commission to investigate the Christian Institute, NUSAS, the South African Insti-

tute of Race Relations and the University Christian Movement. Although the Parliamentary opposition protested that politicians are not equipped to conduct such an investigation and some of them asked for a judicial commission to be appointed instead, the United Party decided to co-operate with the Government in the establishment of the Commission of Inquiry into Certain Organisations.

The Commission was established in July, 1972. The Government Notice which controls the work of the Commission requires it to do its work in secret. Both the Commissioners and anyone who gives evidence before them have to take an oath or affirmation that they will not divulge any of the Commission's proceedings. More specifically, anyone who gives evidence before the Commission has to take an oath or affirmation that he will not divulge the questions which he was asked or the answers which he gave to those questions.

The work of the Commission has not been without serious consequences. Eight people have been banned on the strength of its reports; other people have had their integrity and the quality of their Christian discipleship called into question. One family has been served with a deportation order. None of these people has appeared in court; none of them has been found guilty of breaking the law. Those people who gave evidence before the Commission cannot report on or question the way in which the Commissioners used their evidence without breaking both their oath or affirmation and the law which governs the work of the Commission.

## **The Commission and Natural Justice**

A government which respects the principles of natural justice does not entrust the legislative, the executive and the judicial powers and functions of the state to the same people. In particular, it does not entrust the powers and functions of the judiciary to the party politicians who happen to be in power, but to a different and independent group of people.

A government which respects the principles of natural justice also accepts that if the state has a case against anyone, then it must inform the person concerned of the charges against him and the substance of the information on which its charges are based. On the other hand, it accepts that the state, acting through the courts, must give anyone against whom it has laid a charge a fair opportunity to defend himself and, where he can do so, to controvert the information on which the charges against him have been based.

Any law, therefore, which is based on these elementary principles of natural justice is a law which a government can expect a Christian to obey. Is Government Notice 1238 which controls the work of the Schlebusch Commission a law which is based on these elementary principles of natural justice? There are at least four reasons why this question must be asked:

*Firstly*, although all the members of the Commission are politicians, they have been given some of the functions and powers which belong to magistrates and judges.

*Secondly*, although the Commissioners have been given some of the functions and powers of magistrates and judges, they are not allowed to follow the procedures which have been designed to prevent a magistrate and a judge from abusing the power entrusted to him. In particular, they are not allowed to conduct their investigation in public. It is impossible, therefore, for anyone who is not on the Commission to decide whether or not justice has been done to the individuals and organisations which are under investigation.

*Thirdly*, it is impossible to discover who has accused any of the individuals or organisations which are under investigation. And it is impossible to discover what accusations, if any, have been brought against any individual or organisation. In these circumstances, therefore, it is impossible for someone to confront his accusers; to challenge them; or to subject them to the kind of cross examination which is an essential part of the process which a magistrate and a judge employs to arrive at a fair judgment.

*Fourthly*, everyone who gives evidence before the Commission is sworn to secrecy. He, therefore, surrenders his freedom to report on what he has said to the Commission. Consequently, he surrenders his right to dispute and to discuss the way in which the Commissioners have either used or failed to use his evidence in their reports.

Christians, as well as those who are not Christians, ought, therefore, to ask themselves some questions about the Commission's relationship to natural justice.

- \* Is it either wise or fair to allow politicians to have the powers which belong to judges and magistrates?
- \* Is it fair to prevent the Commissioners from employing the kind of public enquiry and cross examination which magistrates and judges regard as an essential process by which to arrive at a fair judgment?
- \* Is it fair to swear someone to secrecy first and then either use or fail to use his evidence in reports on which the Government has based such drastic actions as the banning and deportation of people?
- \* Is it fair to appear before the Commission without having been told what accusations, if any, have been brought against you or against the organisations to which you belong?
- \* Is it fair to force the Commissioners to deprive someone who gives evidence before them both of the protection and the opportunity to defend himself which a court of law provides?

These are some of the questions which come to mind as one reads *Divine or Civil Obedience?* The authors do not answer these questions. Instead, they pose two others: If a Christian is convinced that these questions and others like them have to be answered in the negative, then what must he do? And more precisely: If a Christian is convinced that the Government Notice which established and regulates the work of the Schlebusch Commission conflicts with some of the most elementary principles of natural justice, ought he to co-operate with the Commission and to obey the law which regulates its activities?

### **The Commission and the Gospel**

Although the authors of *Divine or Civil Obedience?* have drawn our attention to some tensions which exist between the Schlebusch Commission and some of the most elementary principles of natural justice, their main concern is about the tensions which exist between the Commission and the Gospel. Amongst other things, they are asking us to evaluate the Commission's secrecy and the consequences its work has had in the light of the teaching and example of Jesus. And they are asking us to reflect on the connections between our responsibility to a government and our responsibility to the Gospel of Jesus. I, therefore, want to list four of their central concerns about the relationship between the Commission and the Gospel.

*Firstly*, the fact that the Commission is obliged by law to conduct its investigation in secret conflicts with John 3: 20:21:

Bad men all hate the light and avoid it, for fear their practices should be shown up. The honest man comes to the light so that it may be clearly seen that God is in all he does.

Karl Barth has drawn the appropriate conclusion from these words; namely that

the Church is the sworn enemy of all secret policies and secret diplomacy. It is just as true of the political sphere as of any other that only evil can want to be kept secret.

*Secondly*, the fact that the Commission is obliged by law to do its work in secret makes it impossible for an individual or an organisation who is being investigated by the Commission to know whether or not someone has either deliberately or unintentionally broken the Ninth Commandment. This Commandment declares that

You shall not give false witness against your neighbour.

According to the Catechism of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, this means

that I do not judge, or join in condemning, any man rashly or unheard ... and that, as far as I am able, I defend and promote the honour and reputation of my neighbour. (Answer 112)

*Thirdly*, since the Commission's reports began to appear, eight people have been banned; one family has been served with a deportation order; and other people have had their integrity and the quality of their Christian discipleship called into question. These consequences of the Commission's work ought to be evaluated in the light of Calvin's words:

...none of our brothers may be hurt, despised, rejected, misused or offended in any manner by us, without at the same time hurting, despising and misusing Christ through the wrong things that we do ... we should care for the bodies of our brothers as for our own. (Institutes, IV, 8)

*Fourthly*, the Government Notice which established and regulates the work of the Commission suggests that Christians will have to remind the Government that, although they will always try to obey South Africa's laws, they must first try to obey Christ's commandments. And they must first try to obey Christ's commandments because they cannot conceive of a set of circumstances in which they have anything worthwhile to gain from either ignoring or rejecting the words and example of Jesus.

Christians ought, therefore, to ask themselves some questions about the Commission's relationship to the Gospel.

- \* Is the Commission's secrecy compatible with John 3.20-21?
- \* Does the Commission's secrecy make it possible for those who are being investigated to discover whether or not someone who has given evidence before the Commission has broken the Ninth Commandment?
- \* Are the consequences which have followed the Commission's reports compatible with Christ's teaching and example about fairness to and concern for others?
- \* Can a Christian co-operate with the Commission and obey the Government Notice which regulates its activities without at the same time ignoring or rejecting some of the words and example of Jesus?

### The Christian's Hope

The authors of *Divine or Civil Obedience?* are members of the 'one, catholic and apostolic Church'. Although they are convinced that some parts of the Government Notice which established and regulates the activities of the Schlebusch Commission conflict with the teaching of the Gospel, they know that they have no monopoly on what the Gospel is all about. They have, therefore, invited all the members of the Church to ask themselves some of the questions which they have had to ask. And they have invited the members of the Church to tell them if they have misunderstood the connection between the Commission and the Gospel. Consequently, the most important question which they raise is this: What are the Church's answers to the questions we have had to ask ourselves?

In the end, therefore, the authors of *Divine or Civil Obedience?* have invited both those who govern us and those of us who are governed by them but, primarily, by Jesus Christ, to remember Paul's words to Timothy:

Keep before you an outline of the sound teaching which you heard from me, living by the faith and love which are ours in Christ Jesus. Guard the treasure put into our charge, with the help of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us.

(2 Timothy 1:13-14)



# DISSENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

## country of the banned

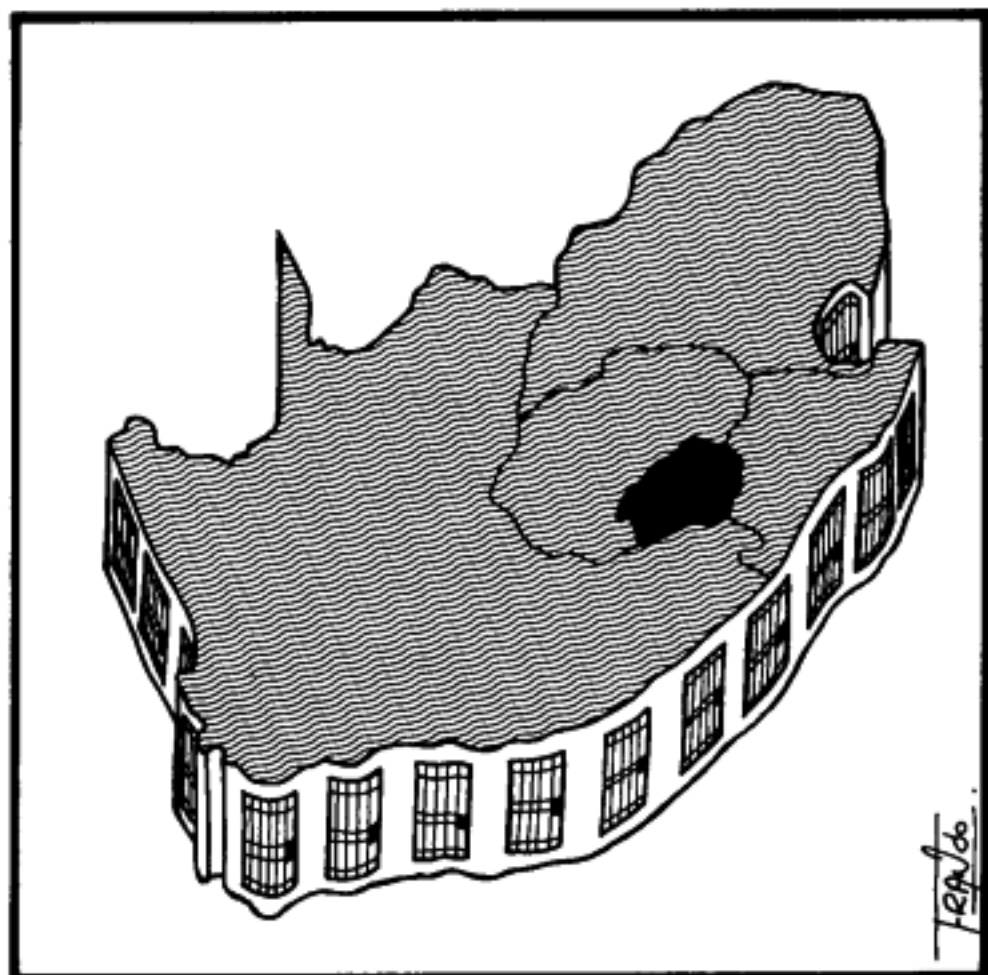
RONALD CHRISTENSON

The South African government some twenty years ago shrewdly provided itself with the ideal law for snuffing out its critics: the Suppression of Communism Act, which permits the Minister of Justice to define all critics as Communists and then, through a ban, transform them into Orwellian non-persons.

It defines Communism as "any doctrine or scheme which aims at bringing about any political, industrial, social, or economic change within the Republic by the promotion of disturbance or disorder ..." which could include any public demonstration right down to a meat boycott. It allows that "whenever the Minister is satisfied that any person is in any area advocating, advising, defending or encouraging the achievement of any of the objects of Communism ..." the Minister of Justice may order the person banned. Objective proof is not required, only the Minister's satisfaction that the Act has been violated. Nor can his decision be tested in the courts.

### 300-400 BANNED SOUTH AFRICANS

At the end of February 1973 the Minister of Justice, Petrus Pelsler, added eight white persons associated with the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS), the white English-language university student organization which has been active since 1924, to the list of between 300 and 400 banned South Africans. Three days later he evened things off by adding eight black leaders of the South African Students Organization (SASO), an organization of black students founded in 1969, to the banned; a ban on the new SASO president, Henry Isaacs, followed in July.



The banned are prohibited for five years from attending any social, educational, or political gathering, namely two or more persons including the banned. A banned person might share a meal with his immediate family, but inviting a grown brother or sister would be forbidden. One banned person was refused permission to attend his child's birthday party.

The banned are also prohibited from the premises of any university, publishing office, or factory; they are prevented from contributing in any way to the preparation of a publication or to the instruction of any person other than their own child.

Finally, they may not be quoted in public which means, by a 1948ish logic, that every publication written by the banned and all publications which even quote them are *ipso facto* banned also. It is a chilling experience to enter a bookstore the day following a banning to see shelves which only the day before held, for instance, Richard Turner's *The Eye of the Needle*, now holding other books, as if the banned work did not exist.

The February banning of six NUSAS student leaders, an administrative secretary, Sheila Lapinsky, and a faculty advisor, Richard Turner, fits the typical South African pattern, with the exception of certain telling details. The Parliamentary Schlebusch Commission investigated NUSAS and wrote two interim reports; Prime Minister Vorster himself announced the bannings from the floor of Parliament, while the newspapers and the state radio covered the story fully. To be so publicly heralded into anonymity is quite unusual in South Africa.

## McCARTHY-LIKE HUNTS

The Schlebusch reports characterized the NUSAS leaders as "intensely active on the political terrain," a description laudatory in an open society but in South Africa filled with suspicion. As the Commission members envision it, the English-language students who might demonstrate and precipitate racial polarization which could, in turn, bring change in South Africa, are the outermost of three concentric circles of sinister influence.

The second circle is the NUSAS leadership. Here the imaginations of the Commission members seem to have run away with their ability to weigh the evidence. When subversive ideas or scandalous activities were not found, they were imagined or inferred. One banned leader about whom little was learned is characterized as moving "in the shadow border of student politics ... a message carrier and general contact man. His role has not been crystallized clearly, but is apparently a sinister one." Since several of the leaders live in close proximity in Cape Town, they were unjustly labelled "the commune group." Like Joseph McCarthy, the Commission made the final link between the leaders' speeches and the ultimate evil: "Without wishing to state that a direct connection exists, your commission has to mention that according to the published writing of the South African Communist Party, that party supports a similar policy of polarization."

The Mephistophelian role, in the Commission's mind, is played by Turner, a popular university teacher. Although born and raised in South Africa, Turner obtained a doctorate (1966) at the University of Paris, the presumed source of his "political view, which is nothing other than radical revolutionary theory." Turner's activities, which the Commission found "incredible" since he had a full teaching load, include advising NUSAS officials "on all kinds of matters," writing and speaking. They point out that he was a regular speaker at NUSAS seminars "where young students are brought together in isolation for a few days at a time, to introduce them to students politics," which fits the Commission's image at Turner's ensnaring the innocents in his web of theory.

The Commission produced quotations not only from Turner's public lectures, but also from first drafts of articles and personal letters which had been stolen from his office. One of the items is a letter to his former wife in which he told of advising students against an illegal mass march and suggested a door-to-door canvass by small groups. This purloined evidence was used to show his "political activity among students," rather than his moderating influence.

The bans fell upon the subjects by surprise. Barely two hours before Vorster announced the bans in Parliament, Turner was observing that the Suppression of Communism Act supplied a psychological threat simply by being on the books. He was in a

trade union office doing research on the January Durban strikes when someone asked, "Rick, did you hear the news from Cape Town?"

## A TRUE DEMOCRACY?

White Afrikaners for the most part believe they live in, as one Nationalist Senator expressed it, a "true democracy." Many English-speaking whites, at least those for whom the leadership of the United Party speaks, would agree, except that they view themselves as the loyal opposition.

Whites, both Afrikaner and English-speaking, can live an affluent life, with black servants and gardeners providing cheap labour, a comfortable life, that is, as long as it is a purely private, non-political life or one in which they give assent to the regime. As soon as they become involved in public affairs by daring to speak out in dissent, risking banning, they live in an authoritarian state.

The 80 per cent of the population classified as "non-European" cannot vote for the Parliament which legislates for them, and find all aspects of their lives, public and private, under domination. To Africans this means migratory labour laws, which separate families; resettlement laws, which move families arbitrarily; laws forbidding meetings of more than ten Africans even in the "homeland" Bantustans; and the infamous pass laws, requiring elaborate passes of all Africans in urban areas. This approaches total control of the total lives of the total African population and must be called what it is, totalitarian.

No wonder, then, when I asked a black pastor about the bannings, he said he regarded them as a white problem which whites must fight because his people have too many problems to worry about the bannings. "Look at me," he remarked, "I'm banned every day for life."

*(Prof. Ronald Christenson, is a member of the political science department at Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minnesota, recently returned from a stay in South Africa. This article appeared in the American magazine—Commonweal, 5.10.'73).*



Cosmas Desmond, the former Franciscan priest and Christian Institute staff member, appeared in the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court on 17 October 1973, on a charge of contravening the banning order served on him under the Suppression of Communism Act by the South African Minister of Justice in 1971.

The charge was that Mr Desmond engaged in social intercourse by drinking beer with three friends in a restaurant on Johannesburg station in January this year. When asked to plead, the accused refused, saying that he admitted the actions ascribed to him (which were described in great detail by the only State witness, Warrant Officer van der Spuy of the Security Police, including the sizes of the glasses involved in the alleged offence) but that he could not consider them either criminal or subversive.

After the State closed its case, Mr Desmond made the following statement from the dock:

## **THE STATE VS. COSMAS DESMOND**

The restrictions which I am charged with violating were imposed on me arbitrarily, and therefore unjustly, by decree of the Minister who acted on secret sources of information. Such action is completely contrary not only to the generally accepted norms of the rule of law but also to some of the basic tenets of Christianity. I was not charged with performing any illegal actions nor was I given any opportunity of refuting the information on which the Minister acted. Thus one of the fundamental principles of Western justice, that of 'audi alteram partem', was completely ignored. At the current session of the United Nations, when a group of countries sought to prevent the South African Foreign Minister from speaking, Mr Muller complained that in doing so they were interfering with his right to freedom of speech and said 'had it succeeded, it would have put the clock back 2 000 years because already the Romans had instituted the tradition to hear the other side' (RDM 6.10.73). Mr Muller was thus protesting at receiving the same treatment as his own government metes out as a matter of course to certain of its political opponents.

If one looks at these orders one sees the enormous inroads made into a person's freedom of speech, association, movement and activities. I, for example, am confined to my house for over 2/3 of my time—out of the 168 hours in a week I have to be in for 113 and can go out for 55. While I am in the house I am not allowed to receive any visitors. During the little time that I am allowed out of the house I am not allowed to associate with others for political, educational or even

social purposes. I am not allowed to leave the magisterial district of Johannesburg and even within that area there are many places, for example, any African, Indian or Coloured area, educational institutions, factories, printing and publishing establishments, etc. which I may not enter. I am completely denied my right to the freedom of speech; I may not publish anything or even prepare matter for publication, nothing I say may be quoted; I cannot discuss anything of a political nature even in a private conversation with one other person. I have to report to the police every week.

I enumerate these examples not in an attempt to elicit sympathy but simply to show the grossness of the injustice and immorality of these arbitrarily imposed restrictions. I am a Christian and was for over 20 years a member of the Franciscan Order.

I regard this type of action on the part of the authorities as being completely in conflict with the Christian ethic. This can be illustrated by the provision of the banning orders under which I am now charged—that which prohibits me from attending any gatherings. Association with others is essential both on a purely human and on a specifically Christian level. The eminent Dutch theologian Professor Schillebeeckx says 'to be a human being is essentially to be a fellow human being ... it is only in the community that man develops into a personality' and 'if a man becomes himself in and through community then authentic human life implies, purely anthropologically, contact with the material and verbal revelations of one's fellow man'. Christ adds a further dimension when he says 'where two or three are gathered together there am I in the midst of them'. These words contain an implicit injunction of Christ that people should gather together. This is not an isolated example of this injunction. Christ's teaching as a whole demands communication with others: how can we love one another? how can we serve one another? how can we feed the hungry? harbour the homeless etc? how can we preach the gospel to all nations? if we do not have communication with one another? The essence of Christianity is communication with people. Therefore a banning order, which restricts and almost totally prohibits communication with others, is in direct opposition to the teaching of Christ. Christ tells us we must gather together, the Minister of Justice tells us we must not. Christ tells me that if someone is homeless I must take him in, Mr Pelsler tells me that I must not receive anybody into my house.



Therefore as a Christian who is under a house arrest and restriction order I am continually faced with the question: whom must I obey, Christ or the Minister of Justice?

The fact that I do normally observe these restrictions does not imply that I accept that this type of restriction can ever be justifiable. I am simply and perforce submitting to the power, not the authority of the State.

There was one instance in which I was not prepared to do even this.

I wrote to the present Minister nearly two years ago pointing out that these orders interfered with my freedom of religion. I dwelt then on only one aspect—that of being free to go to Church, when and where I wished, without asking his permission since it was a contradiction in terms to need permission to be free. I chose this issue since I thought it was one which he and others would understand. He did not reply. So I attended church on Sundays when and where I pleased. I did this publicly for three months. The facts were published in the press; for some weeks members of the security police sat outside my house on Sundays and watched me come and go. But I was not prosecuted. Instead, the Minister, of his own volition, amended the house arrest order to leave me free to go to Church. But freedom of religion is not concerned simply with the freedom to worship in a church. It also means the freedom to be with others, to communicate with others, to be involved with others.

It is true that a person's freedom is not absolute. It is limited primarily by the rights of others and can be curtailed by the State if its exercise is contrary to the common good. But neither is the right of the State to curtail a person's freedom an absolute one to be exercised arbitrarily.

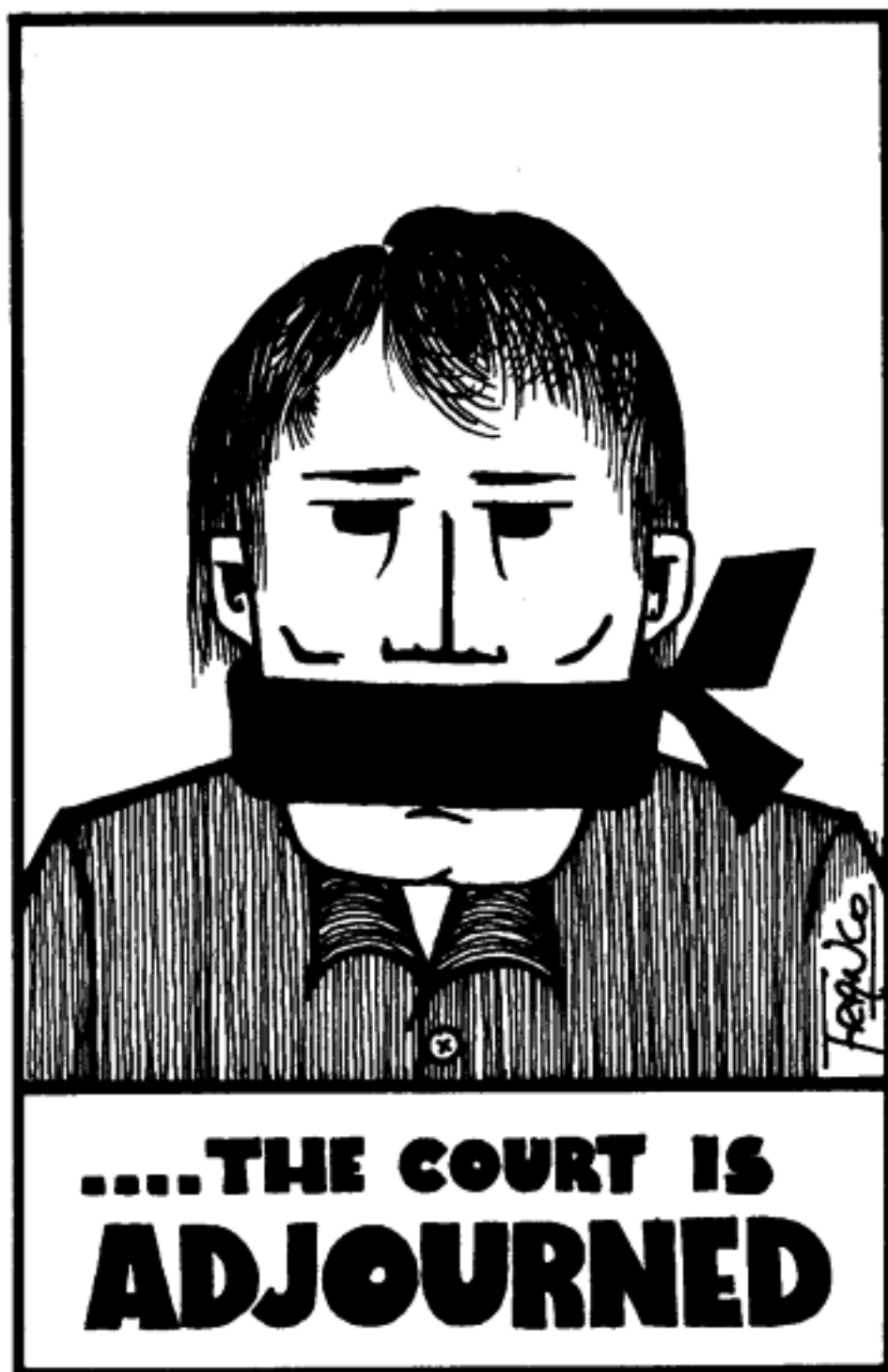
I do not claim that in the present instance I was consciously aware of all these arguments and thus felt justified in not observing the restrictions which had been unjustly imposed upon me. As a matter of fact, for the first time in 18 months I momentarily forgot that I had been Ministerially declared to be a social leper and sat down to have a drink with my friends and to discuss, with much laughter, their equestrian exploits in Lesotho. It was a very human and natural thing to do and, I would say, therefore a Christian action as well.

Millions of people throughout the country sit down in groups every day for a social drink and there is no question of their having committed a crime. Since I have not been charged with being, let alone proved to be, a criminal, subversive or in

any way an undesirable character, there can be no legal reason recognised by a court which makes it a crime for me. The only differentiating factor is an extra-judicial decree by the minister. There has been no suggestion even in the State's case that I was in this instance engaged in anything subversive. The Court is being asked to pronounce that the simple, innocent action of having a drink is a crime simply because the minister, without any further explanation, says so.

Finally, I would like to say I feel very sorry for a State which considers that its security might be threatened by my having a drink with three friends on a railway station. The mind boggles at the attempt to see my listening with others to a rather hilarious description of the efforts of a girl from London to ride a Basutho mountain pony, as being a subversive or criminal act.

In finding Mr Desmond guilty, the Magistrate said it was not the Court's function to question the justice or injustice of the Minister's powers to impose banning orders. He agreed with defence counsel, Mr Kuny, that the offence was a relatively trivial one and postponed passing sentence until 31 December, 1974. ★



## RASSEVOORORDEEL EN 'GEMENGDE' HUWELIKE

3

### JESUS SMEE ALLE MENSE AAN MEKAAR

Wat die *institusionele vorm* van die huwelik betref, lewe ons in 'n tyd van oorgang. Voordat die industriële rewolusie sy uitwerking by ons laat voel het, was die patriargale grootfamilie die heersende struktuur onder die meeste volkere in Suid-Afrika.

In so 'n huwelikspatroon is die begeerte van die twee wat in die huwelik saamgevoeg word, nie noodwendig uitgesluit by die keuse van 'n huweliksmaat nie, maar in die algemeen ondergeskik aan die belange van die groter familie. Die hoofsaak is nie dat die man en vrou as individuele persoonlikhede by mekaar pas nie, maar dat die huwelikskandidaat voldoen aan die eise wat die voortbestaan van die familie stel.

Tot onlangs toe was die wit Afrikaanse familiestruktuur op hierdie basiese patroon geknip. In die reël het die band van die familie (onder die gesag van die familie-hoof), meer as twee geslagte omvat, en nie slegs die getroude kinders nie, maar ook die onge- troude lede van die familie ingesluit. Die huwelik was slegs 'n deelmoment in die groot geheel van die familie.

Ons kan selfs verder gaan en sê dat die wit Afrikaanssprekendes tot onlangs toe hulself as 'n uitgebreide familie gesien het (die aanspreekvorme van "oom" en "tannie" vir selfs onbekende mede-Afrikaners dink bv. hierdie gevoel uit). Die patriargale familie was nie net 'n sosiale gemeenskap nie, maar ook 'n ekonomiese produksiegemeenskap. So was ook die volk 'n ekonomiese en politieke eenheid met 'n gemeenskaplike materiële belang. Die weerstand teen gemengde huwelike het ook hierdie agtergrond: die vrees dat die materiële en geestelike belange en die voortbestaan van die verseëde wit Afrikanervolk daaronder sou lei.

Ook by die Bantoe-volkere van Suid-Afrika is elke huwelik tradisioneel soos 'n kraal geryg in die snoer van die stamlewe.

Die industriële omwenteling het die tradisionele huwelik in sy rat gevang. In 'n samelewing wat steeds minder gestruktureer word deur die historiese magte van bloed en tradisie, kleur en taal, word die huwelik al meer 'n selfstandige en vrywillige sosiale bouwerk van twee selfstandige individue. Wat die blanke Afrikaners betref, is die tyd dat die hele lewe van die enkeling,

insluitende sy seksuele lewe, afgespeel het binne die konsentriese sirkels van familie en volk, vir altyd verby. Dit geld nog veel meer van die Engelssprekende blankes, die immigrante-groepe en die bruin Suid-Afrikaners (lg. groep het dit in elk geval nooit geken nie). Die swart huwelik is deur die tegnologiese kultuur in 'n groot krisis gewerp. Die ou Bantoe-vorme en—norme verval, vinniger in die stedelike gebiede, maar ongetwyfeld ook in die landelike gebiede, en die nuwe het nog nie gestalte gevind nie.

Die ontwikkeling van die nuwe huwelikspatroon skep probleme. Na mate die regulerende bande van die groep verslap, word die innerlike samehorigheid van elke huwelik swaarder getoets. Terselfdertyd skep dit 'n ruimte waarin 'n man en 'n vrou in groter verantwoordelikheid en vryheid 'n lewensgemeenskap kan opbou. Een ding is seker: die geskiedenis het nie 'n trurat nie.

Wat sê die teologie van hierdie ontwikkeling in die huwelikstruktuur? Om mee te begin: elk vorm van ordeningsteologie, met sy romantiserende verering van die vóór-industriële samelewingspatrone, is 'n vesting wat agter ons lê. Die verheerliking van hierdie patrone as "vanself-gegroeid" en "spontaan", en dus as godgegewe, en die afskrywing van die beweegliker en ligter konstellaties van die stadskultuur as "geforceerd", "on-natuurlik" of "mens-gemaak", rank op teen 'n verouderde sosiologie. Dit is 'n vergeefse ontvlugtingspoging na die verlede—al is die heimwee na die sekerheid en die vastigheid van die verlede nie onbegryplik nie. Dit maak 'n valse skeiding tussen "godgegewe" en "mens-gemaak", en verwar dit bowendien met die onderskeiding tussen "oud" en "nuut". Dit sien nie in dat in situasies en strukture wat nuut in die dinamiek van die geskiedenis ontstaan, ook Góds hand gesien kan word nie—al is in hierdie strukture die aandeel van die mens ook sigbaar. Werk God en mens dan nie saam in die proses van die geskiedenis nie? Dit sien ook nie in dat aan situasies en strukture wat uit die verre verlede stam, ook maar mense getimmer het nie—en dat dit per slot van rekening vandag deur mense met alte menslike middele hier en daar gerestoureer word! Dit ken aan die volk 'n betekenis toe wat dit nie in die Bybel het nie.

Die Bybel het in 'n voor-industriële omgewing ontstaan, en die huwelikstruktuur wat daarin gereflekteer word, is in hoofsaak patriargaal. Maar ons

moet onderskei tussen die verkondigingskern van die Bybel, en die oud-Oosterse of Hellenistiese sosiale matrys waarin dit gegiet is. Die kern van die Christelike geloof omvat die oortuiging dat God Homself in die mens Jesus getoon het as die Een wat die mense liefhet. Daarin word die hoogste norm van alle etiek duidelik. Rondom die feit dat Jesus ' mens was, word *alle mense* van watter ras of volk, taal of kleur ookal—as *sy* medemense ook aan *mekaar* gesmee. Sy mensheid veronderstel en bevestig 'n wesentlike gemenskaplikheid tussen alle mense. Dit bevestig dat die *indiwiduele* mens belangrik is; dat hy die sosiale konteks waarin hy leef, bv. sy volks-, ras- en klasgenootskap, transendeer; en dat hy bepaalde regte het tot in die sfeer van sy seksuele lewe toe, wat gegrond is in die waardigheid wat uit genade aan hom geskenk is as mede-mens van Hóm. Toe Hy op aarde geleef het, het Jesus alle institute aan Homself onderwerp, en dit sluit onder andere in dat Hy hulle diensbaar gemaak het aan die heil van die *mense* (vgl. bv. Matt. 12:1 e.v. en die parallelle in Mk. 2:23 e.v. en Luk. 6:1 e.v.).

Dit lê in die lyn van hierdie oorwegings om die vermoë van elke volwasse, normale mens om sy eie lewensmaat onder al sy medemense te kies, te eerbiedig en om hom en haar die ruimte daartoe te gun.

Op die weg van diegene wat 'n "gemengde huwelik" wil aangaan, lê daar in ons samelewing sekerlik probleme, dit is waar. Maar hierdie mense moet begelei word om sêlf te besluit of hulle die toekoms saam wil aandurf. Ons moet onthou dat 'n harde nee, wat dikwels gemotiveer word deur die bewering dat dit die paar wil *beskerm* teen die narighede van moontlike rasse-vooroordeel van die gemeenskap, juis sodanige rasse-vooroordeel in die kaart speel. Dit versterk die valse beeld dat rasse-wrywing tussen groepe en selfs in die huwelik tussen ras-verskillende eggenote nou eenmaal só onvermydelik is dat daar net een uitweg is: vlug.

Daarby kom nog dat die werklike probleme *nie* in die *rasse*-verskil opgesluit lê nie, maar in *sosio-ekonomiese* en *kulturele* verskille (bv. graad van ontwikkeling) tussen mense, wat *veranderlik* is, en wat bowendien ook dikwels aanwesig is in die verhouding tussen mense wat aan *dieselfde* volk of ras behoort. Dit is willekeurig om tussen die talle faktore wat 'n toekomstige huwelik *moontlik* kan belemmer, op die *ras*-verskeidenheid toe te sak, soos tans in ons wetgewing die geval is.

'n Nasionalisme wat eis dat die volk soos 'n hok sy indiwiduele lede insluit en sy groep afsluit van die buitegroep, is opgeblaas. Ons verbod op gemengde huwelike is 'n gevaarlike simptome. Dit tas die reg, die vryheid en die verantwoordelikheid van die enkeling aan. Dit plaas die hele volk geestelik agter tralies.

Waarskynlik sal die rigting waarin hierdie opstel beweeg, deur sommige bestempel word as 'n liberalistiese oorwaardering van die indiwidu. Dit is nie so nie. Die weerhouding van groepsdwang ten opsigte van die keuse van 'n huweliksmaat is in belang van *albei*, die

indiwidu én die groep. En dit eerbiedig die grootsheid van die *huwelik* wat méér is as twee indiwidue en méér is as 'n selletjie van enige volk. Dit is 'n lewensgemeenskap in eie reg, die kosbaarste wat God aan die mense gegee het.

#### 4

### KERK EN STAAT MAG NIE GEMENGDE HUWELIKE VERBIED

Ons vervat nou effens en neem *die funksie van die wetgewende staat* in oënskou.

Vir ons doel is dit nodig om minstens die volgende drie duidelike kenmerke van ons huidige wetgewing ten opsigte van *gemengde huwelike* raak te sien:

Eerstens beweeg die staat hier baie ver op die private terrein van mense se intieme lewe.

Tweedens in ons wetgewing tot in die wetboek gehelp deur die ideologiese aanspraak dat dit Gods gebod is dat rasse, rasseverskille en 'n bestaande rassebalans intak gehou moet word, en vervolgens dat die *staat* met dwang moet sorg dat dit gebeur. (Daar is ook—bv. in die aanbevelings van die Algemene Sinode van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in 1966—die suggestie wat met die bg. verstrengel is, dat nie net rasse nie, maar selfs *volkere* so intak moet bly deur selektiewe huwelikssluiting. Die onuitgesproke implikasie daarvan is dat daar verbooie moet wees op huwelike tussen Tswanas en Zoeloes, Afrikaners en Engelse, Maleiers en Indiërs, ens. Maar dié konsekwensie trek waarskynlik niemand nie, en daarom kan dit verbygegaan word. Hierdie aanbevelings verteenwoordig ongetwyfeld nog nie die finale standpunt van die Ned. Geref. Kerk nie. Die denke in die Ned. Geref. Kerk is nog volop in beweging en ontwikkeling.)

Derdens: ons wetgewing is die dop van die rassegevoel van die blanke.

Al drie hierdie kenmerke spel, soos die skrif aan die muur, dat hierdie wetgewing wat ons uit die verlede geërf het, te lig op die skaal lê.

Ons gaan in ons beoordeling uit van die waarheidskern wat verskuil lê (al is dit in 'n verwronge vorm) in die derde eienskap. Ons aanvaar dat die ideaal waaraan ons staat ten diepste *wil* beantwoord, die *demokratiese ideaal* is. Met "demokrasie" word hier dus nie bedoel 'n vreemde dogma waarmee ons van bo af geknuppel word nie, maar iets wat altyd 'n hartsaak van die Afrikaanse politieke lewensbeskouing was. Wat moet nou gesê word as ons die staatsoptrede teen *gemengde huwelike* meet aan die ideaal van 'n ware demokrasie?

(a) Die *ware* demokratiese regering weet dat hy 'n dienaar van Gó is, en dat die stem van die volk nie sommer as die stem van God aangehoor moet word nie. Hierdie besef lei tot 'n grootskaalse ontmitologisering van die religieuse motief in die wet: die denkbeeld dat rasse onaantasbare instellinge is, is 'n

projeksie van die hoogmoed en die vrees van die blanke, en nie die gebod van God nie. Die regering het geen roeping om van hierdie dogma die dienaar te wees nie.

Positief gestel: as dienaar van God het die regering die roeping om in die volkslewe nie bloot 'n *registrerende* nie, maar 'n *opvoedende* en leidinggewende funksie te vervul. Die regering moet, waar dit nodig is, in gehoorsaamheid aan 'n hoër reg, maatreëls neem wat miskien indruis teen die populêre sentimente van die kieserskorps. Hy moet leiding neem om in sy wetgewing soms ongesonde groepsnorme om te buig of te deurbreek. Waar die blote volksgevoel nie getransendeer word nie, is die gevaar van 'n positivistiese regsopvatting groot (reg is wat nou eenmaal toevallig deur die maghebber, d.i. hier die volk deur middel van die regering as sy orgaan, as reg geponeer word). Dit is ook nie so verskriklik ver verwyder van sinisme en nihilisme nie.

(b) 'n *Ware* demokratiese regering bestaan vir ál sy burgers. Die wet teen gemengde huwelike raak in die praktyk waarskynlik die huweliksluiting van slegs 'n mense, maar dit is begryplik dat die meerderheid van diegene oor wie dit uitgevaardig is, nl. die gekleurde inwoners van Suid-Afrika, dit as beledigend ervaar.

Dit trek 'n grensdraad styf tussen mens en mens wat willekeurig gespan is en in elk geval al meer as onnodig en steurend ervaar word. Dit begin met rasse-vooroordeel en eindig (teen sy bedoeling) met meer rasse-vooroordeel. Dit maak 'n skande en 'n oortreding van iets wat in sigself absoluut geen skande of oortreding is nie. Dit spreek van verregaande ondankbaarheid: ons het nl. nie net die bloed in ons are en die erfenis in ons kultuur van die onvolprese Hugenoot, Geus, Duitse oud-soldaat, Britse Setlaar en die vele ander koloniste en fortuinsoekers, sendelinge en idealiste nie, maar ook die bloed en die kultuurbydrae van veral die kunsinnige bruinman. Om jou eie te verloën, is barbarisme.

Laat ons byvoeg: na mate die sosio-ekonomiese gaping en die gaping in onderwys-geleenthede tussen wit en gekleurde krimp (*daar lê die grootste taak!*) en na mate almal deelgenote word van dieselfde geïndustrialiseerde samelewing, sal die onhoudbaarheid van die motivering vir *ras*-gedifferensieerde huweliksluiting al duideliker word.

(c) 'n *Ware* demokratiese regering stimuleer die vryheid van sy burgers om te dink en te kies. Die vraag is: het die regering die roeping om hierdie allerpersoonlikste keuse van die mens uit sy hand te neem? Let wel: die veronderstelling is dat dit hier gaan om *volwassenes* (nie kinders nie); *geestelik normale mense* (nie bv. swaksinniges nie); mense by wie daar nie sprake is van *eugenetiese komplikasies* nie; en mense wat albei *gewillig, ja begerig* is om met mekaar te trou (geen dwang nie). Ten opsigte van al die gevalle wat hierbo tussen hakies genoem is, het die staat 'n breë genoeg terrein om bedrywig te wees. Maar die huwelikskeuse van normale, gewillige volwassenes lê

buite sy bevoegdheid. Diegene wat deur hierdie wet getref word, word wreed getref in die sagste plek van hul lewe.

Die uitspraak van die Gereformeerde Ekumeniese Sinode in Lunteren (1968) en Sydney (1972) moet onderskryf word: "Die aangaan van 'n huwelik is primêr 'n persoonlike en gesinszaak. Kerk en staat moet hul daarvan weerhou om gemengde huwelike te verbied, omdat hulle nie die reg het om die vrye keuse van 'n huweliksmaat op grond van ras of kleur te beperk nie." Die wet is 'n ongeregverdigde ingreep in die private lewens van die burgers van die staat en in die heiligheid van die huwelik.

Na my mening het ons huidige regering 'n geleentheid om 'n voorwaartse stap in ons volkere-verhoudinge te neem deur die wetgewing ten opsigte van gemengde huwelike wat hy uit die verlede geërf het, van die wetboek te verwyder. So nie, kan ons nie anders nie as om op beginselgronde die ruimte vir klandestiene huwelike oop te laat.

Ook Art. 16 van die *Ontugwet* eis 'n onregmatige inmenging in die private lewens van mense. Dit is ondoeltreffend as afskrikmiddel ten opsigte van diegene wat los en promiskue ververbintenisse wil aangaan, en onnodig ten opsigte van diegene wat dit nie wil aangaan nie. Maar ook lg. word daardeur getref, omdat hierdie wet ongetwyfeld daartoe bydra om enige ordentlike, normale, medemenslike kontak tussen manlike en vroulike persone weerskante van die kleurgrens onder verdenking te plaas. Dit berus sonder enige twyfel op 'n dubbele moraal en bevorder dit (waarom word ontug tussen wit en wit bv. nie bestraf nie?). In seksuele promiskuit, net soos in verhouding van seksuele lojaliteit en liefde, is kleur en ras *irrelevant*. As daar gevrees word dat 'n opheffing van die wet geïnterpreteer sal word as 'n aanmoediging tot seksuele *libertinisme*, is die aangewese weg waarskynlik om Art. 16 toe te laat om 'n dooie letter te word.

Die gevaar van *seksuele eksploitasie* van die gekleurde vrou deur die witman en andersom (probleme soos prostitusie, verkragting, ens.) kan bekamp word sonder hierdie artikel, en word trouens reeds gedek deur die artikels in die *Ontugwet* wat op hierdie misdrywe betrekking het.



# WEIGHED AND ...?



## PRESS STATEMENT RE PASSPORT WITHDRAWAL

On October 30, 1973, I received a letter on the instructions of the Minister of the Interior in which I was requested to hand in my passport immediately.

Because I believe that the withdrawal of my passport is contrary to the Gospel, I refused to hand it over. Jesus said: "Go forth to every part of the world, and proclaim the Good News to the whole creation" (Mark 16:15). The government wants to deprive me, a believer in the service of Christ, a member of the N.G. Church and an Afrikaans citizen of the country of my birth, of this God-given freedom without giving any reasons. To this I cannot give my permission and co-operation because I believe that God must be obeyed more than man.

In reply to the letter from the government I wrote an open letter to the Minister of the Interior in which I tried to explain my actions completely.

This type of withdrawal of passports from, i.a. Christians, without even giving sound reasons, by the government is an outrage against the body of Christ.

*Roelf Meyer, V.D.M.  
30.10.73*

## A translation of an open letter

The Minister Connie Mulder,  
Department of the Interior,  
Pretoria.

Dear Sir,

## re: WITHDRAWAL OF PASSPORT

Your letter in connection with the withdrawal of my passport was handed to me to-day, 30th October, 1973. I would like to reply to it by way of an 'open letter' to you.

In terms of the Gospel of Jesus Christ a true follower who proclaims the Gospel is entitled to the basic freedom—the freedom of movement. "And He (Jesus Christ) said to them: "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation" (Mark, 16:15).

Summarily to deprive a believer of this freedom, is a denial of the Gospel of Christ. You wish to deprive me of this freedom, and therefore, from the depths of my being which I believe, belongs to Christ, in all earnestness I implore you to turn again to Him in this matter.

This arbitrary action, which has also been applied to others, and which includes such things as banning without trial, deportation without explanation of the underlying reasons, etc. is essentially in conflict with the principles of the Gospel. Jesus established the principle that if the authorities had a case against someone, this should be proved in public; otherwise punishment of and proceedings against such person were not right. "Jesus answered him: 'If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness to the wrong; but if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike Me?'" (John 18:23).

In the light of the Gospel I am therefore not in any respect prepared to surrender this freedom which Christ has given to me. Since you, as a member of the Government, are also a 'servant of God' (Rom. 13), you should do His will. And if you deviate from the will of God, as, according to the Gospel, I believe you are doing in this case, then it is to God—and not to you—that I must offer my obedience (Acts 4:19, 20). Hence, I am not prepared to concur in such an action as the withdrawal of my passport.

# GEWEEG EN ...?

Should you decide to institute proceedings against me, you should first of all set forth the case before God and before South Africa, seeing that you are, as far as I am aware, a confessing Christian and the Government professes to be a Christian government. The action you contemplate would be action against a fellow Christian and therefore against a part of the Church of Christ. "If one member suffers, all the members suffer together" (1 Cor. 12:26). According to the Gospel persecution of Christians as such implies persecution of Jesus Himself. When Saul persecuted the Christians, the Lord said to him: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?" (Acts 9:5). In the present instance it might be that God is confronting you with the question: "Why do you persecute Me?"

You may perhaps find it a little strange that I should address you through an 'open letter'. The reason is this—that since this matter relates to myself (and I include my wife and three small daughters), as a believer in the service of Christ, as a member of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (congregation of Randburg-South), and as an Afrikaans citizen of the land of my birth, it affects the whole church and the whole of South Africa, and I wish it to be made known. The Gospel requires public exposure. "For everyone who does evil hates the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does what is true, comes to the light that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God." (John 3:20, 21)

If the action taken against me ties up with the 'Schlebusch Commission', then I would like to refer you to the evidence which I submitted to that Commission on the occasion when I refused it my co-operation on the grounds of the Gospel. The principles are contained in the brochure, "Obedience to God or to the Government?", and I take this opportunity of sending you a copy of it.

In this distressing matter I would assure you that I remember you in my prayers asking that the Holy Ghost may prompt you to do the will of God before all else.

May the grace of Jesus Christ and His wisdom be with you that you may also follow His way in the sphere of your work.

Sincerely yours in the service of Christ,  
(signed)

Roelf Meyer, V.D.M.



### BEYERS NAUDÉ

Die intrekking van dr. C.F. Beyers Naudé, direkteur van die Christelike Instituut, se paspoort sal ongetwyfeld wye en vyandige kritiek uitlok.

As dr. Naudé deur 'n sekere deel van die Suid-Afrikaanse en wêreldpers aan 'n martelaarskruis gespyker word, kan dit ons beeld skade doen. Dit is 'n wesenlike bedenking en ons moet aanvaar dat die owerheid dit baie deeglik in berekening gebring het toe hy oor sy paspoort besluit het.

Onder die omstandighede sal daar seker bedenkinge geopper kan word oor die besluit van die owerheid.

—Die Vaderland, 26.9.'73

### PASSPORT SHOCK FOR DR BEYERS NAUDE

Dr. C.F. Beyers Naudé, director of the Christian Institute, was told at Jan Smuts Airport last night his passport had been withdrawn.

Dr. Naudé, who was due to leave for Holland, said he was handed a letter shortly after his arrival at the airport.

"I was checking my passport and found I had mistaken the expiry date. I had believed it expired in March, 1974. I was shocked when I saw it had expired in March this year", Dr. Naudé said.

He went to an official, explained he would be unable to take the flight and asked how he could retrieve his luggage.

"I was led to another official who handed me an undated letter from the Secretary of the Interior notifying me that my passport had been withdrawn and requesting me to surrender it", Dr. Naudé said.

No explanations were given for the withdrawal.

"I asked the official why the letter had not been delivered to me at my home or office.

"He said it had been sent from Pretoria to the airport only that afternoon", Dr. Naudé said.

—Rand Daily Mail 26.9.73.



### NAUDÉ'S PASSPORT TROUBLE 'A SCANDAL'

DURBAN.—The withdrawal of the Rev. C.F. Beyers Naudé's passport at Jan Smuts Airport last night was today condemned by the Natal Council of Churches as "a scandalous attempt to silence critics".

The most Reverend Dennis Hurley, Archbishop of Durban, said the step was profoundly disappointing "but not unexpected".

"It will add weight to the arguments of overseas critics who say that there is only one way to deal with South Africa and that is through isolation and boycott. Dr. Naudé is one of our greatest living South Africans and a truly courageous Christian", he said.

—The Star 26.9.73



### PUNISHMENT BY PASSPORT

Think about this today: if the Government can cancel the passport of a man like Beyers Naudé, then who among us is safe from such dictatorial action?

We know he is an outspoken critic of our present rulers, but the public also knows him as a man of the utmost integrity and responsibility. He is more actively concerned than most in working for a peaceful solution to our problems: in fact much of his last trip abroad, in 1972, was devoted to persuading churches in Europe that violence provides no answer.

After this latest example of punishment by passport, we trust we will not hear the well-worn official tale about such actions being necessary "in the national interest". This was purely in the National Party's interest, so let's be spared the hypocrisy.

—The Star, 26.9.'73

## POLICE SEIZE FINANCE BOOKS FROM CI

Two security police officers, on orders from the Schlebusch Commission, yesterday seized the financial books of the Christian Institute for the last three years—three days after one of the “Schlebusch defiers” refused to hand them over.

Dr. Beyers Naudé, director of the C.I., said yesterday that “a Captain Van Niekerk and Captain Richard Bean” of the Security Police had called on him in his office and had shown him a letter from the Schlebusch Commission, addressed to “the Security Branch of the South African Police” in Johannesburg.

It asked that “certain financial documents” of the C.I. be obtained for the commission, which amounted to the financial records for 1971, 1972 and 1973 to date.

Dr. Naudé and the Rev. Brian Brown, Administrative Director of the C.I., decided to give the two officers no co-operation, but not to prevent them taking any of the books”, said Dr. Naudé.

Mr. Brown was the “defier” who on Monday, with six other people, refused to testify to the commission on the C.I. He also refused to hand over the financial books.

Speaking about the seizure of the C.I. books, Dr. Naudé said: “This seems to confirm the impression that this is a political inquiry which is also linked with the security of the State. This is how I interpret it.”

—*Rand Daily Mail*, 27.9.'73



## INTERNATIONAL OUTCRY OVER NAUDÉ CURB

The withdrawal of passports this week from Dr. C.F. Beyers Naudé and the Rev. Brian Brown has caused an outcry among churchmen and politicians in South Africa and overseas.

Those who have voiced their protest include the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Michael Ramsey; the Archbishop of Cape Town, the Most. Rev. Robert Selby Taylor; the president of the British Methodist Church, Mr. Harry Morton; Professor J. Verkuyl, general secretary of the Missionary Council of Churches, and Mrs. Helen Suzman, Progressive Party MP for Houghton.

Professor Verkuyl and a group of Dutch theologians are planning to make representations to the Dutch Government to lodge an official protest with the South African Government.

Professor Verkuyl told me in a telephone interview from Amsterdam this week: “We are much disturbed by the taking of these passports and the human rights involved. Dr. Naudé has always tried to effect non-violent change, and should be allowed to speak.”

Dutch newspapers were carrying the story in banner headlines, and a tremendous amount of sympathy was being generated for Dr. Naudé and the Christian Institute.

—*Caroline Clark*  
—*Sunday Times*, 30.9.'73

## NAUDÉ-PASPOORT

Ons wil aanneem dat die vreemde prosedure om 'n brief by die lughawe af te lewer pleks van die saak betyds en op waardige wyse met dr. Naudé te bespreek, gebore is uit die nood van 'n gebrek aan tyd. Dié geval onderstreep weer eens hoe noodsaaklik dit is dat die Departement van Binnelandse Sake 'n motivering saam met só 'n intrekking aanbied, sodat onnodige bespiegeling uitgeskakel word. Soms is motivering nie moontlik nie, maar waar dit oor 'n blote prosedurekwessie gaan, is dit seer seker gewens.

—*Die Transvaler*, 27.9.'73



## DR NAUDÉ

Min dinge leen hulle beter daartoe om kwade gevoelens teen Suid-Afrika aan te stook as die weiering van visums en paspoorte.

'n Mens wil hoop dat ... gevolge wel deeglik opgeweeg word teen die noodsaaklikheid van optrede wanneer 'n man soos dr. Beyers Naudé se paspoort weggeneem word.

Maar weer sit ons met die probleem dat dit vir die publiek onmoontlik is om so 'n waardering te maak, omdat amptelik geen redes vir die optrede verstrek word nie.

Dis 'n geweldige klomp om van enige mens te vra—onvoorwaardelike steun vir verreikende stappe waarvoor jy self grootliks in die duister verkeer.

Dit skep veral vir ondersteuners van die Regering 'n verleentheid. Dit stel hulle bloot aan verwyte wat hulle nie kan beantwoord nie omdat hulle nie oor die feite beskik nie.

Ons wil weer op die betrokke Minister en sy departement 'n beroep doen om redes vir hul optredes so gou moontlik te verstrek.

—*Rapport*, 30.9.'73



## DIÉ DRAMA BLY NOG DUISTER

Die geheim van dr. Beyers Naudé se paspoort word al hoe verwarrender. Daar word gesê, én ontken, dat dit deel is van 'n algemene optrede teen ampsdraers van die Christelike Instituut wat geweier het om getuieis voor die Schlebusch-kommissie af te lê.

Baie mense in baie lande sien Beyers Naudé as 'n groot leier en kerkman. Hulle sien sy Christelike Instituut as 'n belangrike kerklike instelling. Ons wat sterk besware teen sy optredes het, kan dié feit nie ontken nie. En ná dese het hy net hoër status, word daar met meer ontsag geluister na sy aanvalle op die bestaande bestel in ons land.

Staan Suid-Afrika dan so sterk in die wêreld dat ons sommer so 'n ekstra wapen aan ons vyande kan gee? As jy kyk na die nuus van die laaste maande, na al die boikotte, lyk dit bepaald nie so nie.

Hierdie praktiese oorweging is ook nie al wat in die spel kom nie; daar is bv. die hele beginsel van sulke administratiewe optrede teen politiek lastige mense.

In sy geheel is hierdie episode 'n ongelukkige voorbeeld van hoe ons sake liefs nie bestuur moet word nie.

—*Rapport*, 30.9.73

## ROUGH TREATMENT

The withdrawal of Dr. Beyers Naudé's passport is an act of plain administrative tyranny. It has very little to do with the security of the State or the processes of law.

Dr. Naudé's views on race relations are well known and there is nothing that he would have said abroad that he has not said ten times in South Africa. He thinks that apartheid is contrary to Christianity, but what of that? So do a lot of other people. Are we to assume that those who think as he does are not worthy, decent citizens?

The Government must not complain if the withdrawal of Dr. Naudé's passport is seen as an act of spite and intimidation. The ostensible reason for the Government's action is that Dr. Naudé is a "defying the law". But it is well known that the person who genuinely defied the law was Mr. Vorster when he banned eight Nusas leaders for no good reason at all. Dr. Naudé's Christian conscience has led him to protest against that arbitrary act.

There is an ominous note of panic in this action against Dr. Naudé and other members of the Christian Institute, and a frightened Government is a dangerous one. This punishment not only inflames public opinion abroad, but is confirmation of Sir De Villiers Graaff's contention that the real danger to the security of South Africa is the Nationalist Government itself.

★ —*Sunday Times*, 30.9.'73

## SUSPICIOUS SILENCE

Current Affairs says Dr. Naudé forfeited the "privilege" of a passport because he defied the State in refusing to give evidence. And, in plain language, the State was getting its own back. Perhaps because it does not believe Current Affairs or perhaps because it recognises the pettiness of such reprisal action, the Nationalist newspaper Rapport calls on the Government to explain itself. Until it does, the suspicion is there that Dr. Naudé is simply being victimised.

★ —*The Daily News*, 1.10.'73

## NAUDÉ PASSPORT MOVE 'A REPRISAL'

The state's withdrawal of the passport of Dr. C.F. Beyers Naudé, director of the Christian Institute, was "a clear form of punishment" meted out for his refusal to testify before the Schibusch Commission, Prof. John Dugard said last night.

It was an extra-judicial action taken by the Department of the Interior and could not be viewed as normal—as suggested by the Afrikaans newspaper Die Vaderland on Monday.

Under banner headlines, "Why Naudé's Passport was Withdrawn", and "Criminal Charge Pending Against Him", the newspaper says it is general in South Africa that where a person has a charge pending against them, they may not cross the borders.

Last night Prof. Dugard said: "Beyers Naudé hasn't been charged yet."

Prof. Dugard said: "There is no evidence that Beyers Naudé would want to leave the country to escape prosecution."

★ —*Rand Daily Mail*, 3.10.'73

## Letter to the Editor:

### PEACE-MAKERS NOT JUST PEACE-LOVERS

*From the Rev. W. Illsley, Past President, Methodist Church of South Africa.*

I congratulate you on your protest against the withdrawal of passports from Dr. Beyers Naudé and the Revs Theo Kotzé and Brian Brown, leaders of the Christian Institute.

As one closely identified with this movement I pay tribute to these men and to this movement, which seeks to promote peace and goodwill among all races.

Dr. William Barclay, Scottish theologian, points out that the seventh beatitude reads: "Blessed are the peace makers, not just the peace lovers." He continues his comment:

A man may know that there is something wrong in some situation, but do and say nothing "for peace's sake". Such a man is certainly not a peace maker; he is rather in the end a trouble maker. The man who is blessed is the man who is prepared to face difficulty, unpleasantness, unpopularity, trouble in order to *make* peace. The peace of which this beatitude speaks is not the spurious peace which comes from evading the issue; it is the peace which comes from facing the issue, and from being prepared to give everything in toil and sacrifice which the situation demands.

I honour these men for their willingness to toil and sacrifice in order to make and maintain peace between the racial and religious groups of our land. ★

### From the Rev. Canon E.J. Rowland.

Those with any perception of recent history can see in many events in this country the same developing pattern which inevitably follows from the breaking of fundamental principles of justice: a gradual falling further and further away from norms of freedom and a seemingly inevitable approach to the precipice of which our political leaders so often warn us.

History witnesses to the fact that at times such as these there are always the few, perhaps because of greater prophetic insight, certainly because of their courage, who witness by their sufferings on behalf of the majority. The few in this country—"the few, the happy few, the band of brothers"—are no longer so few.

Among these few is the Rev. Theo Kotzé, who has recently had his passport withdrawn. I would like to pay this small tribute to one whose friendship I enjoy, whose witness I admire, and whose membership of the Christian Institute I share.

I am reminded of a passage (the exact words escape me) in "The First Circle", the autobiographical novel of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who is described in Burg and Feifer's recent biography of him as the greatest of living Russians and who has suffered so greatly by imprisonment, exile and restriction: "They our captors are the prisoners; we the captives are the free men."

★ —*Cape Times*, 20.10.'73



## BEYERS NAUDÉ PERSECUTED

*From Miss E.H. Pringle, 22 Oxford Street, Observatory:*

I write with reference to the removal of Dr. Beyers Naude's passport.

As someone who knows him personally and who has been helped through one of the darkest periods of my life by his wisdom and compassion, may I say that his only crime, for which he must now be punished, is a belief in goodness and all the highest values man knows—and the courage to live this belief out.

Beyers Naudé, I salute you. As Christ, your Master, said: "Happy are those who are persecuted in the cause of right: theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

For the withdrawers of his passport, I weep. That they could act against a man of his stature shows how great is their fear of truth—and what untold damage must such fear do to their eternal souls?

—*Sunday Times, 3.10.'73*



## HEAVEN AND HELL

Hell is seeing alone what you did as a mob;  
Hell is the fall that comes after your pride;  
Hell is letting you parents down;  
Hell is envying someone else's lot;  
Hell is seeing time slipping away;  
Hell is the hurt look in someone's eye;  
Hell is war, in its waste and futility;  
Hell is seeing yourself through someone else's eyes.

Heaven comes as a gift, to be accepted, not pursued;  
Hell is your own choice, or, sometimes, your neighbour's.

Heaven is real friendship;  
Heaven is being lost in a book;  
Heaven is arduous training;  
Heaven is a happy marriage;  
Heaven is music which says it for you;  
Heaven is someone else's success;  
Heaven is a letter from home;  
Heaven is work well done.

Heaven comes as a gift, to be accepted, not pursued;  
if you chase it, you lose it.  
Hell is your own choice, or, sometimes, your neighbour's.

*Laurence Ellis.*

*(From "The Sword", September '73)*



## CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE NEWS FROM THE CAPE

Prominently displayed in the Cape Office is a verse of Isaac Watt's great hymn:

Should all the hosts of death  
And powers of hell unknown,  
Put their most dreadful forms  
Of rage and malice on,  
We shall be safe  
For Christ displays  
Superior power and guardian grace.

This is our faith and our witness in the tensions of our present existence. It describes how we feel and how we are determined to live.

*The Agape* continues to be central to our life and witness and this takes place every Thursday at 12.30 p.m. and 5.45 p.m. An average of 40 people attend weekly and it is estimated that at least 100 Cape Town people are regularly involved apart from many visitors both local and overseas.

### Groups

There are eight groups who gather monthly for fruitful discussions. A new feature has been the "Be Reconciled" courses conducted by Miss Erica Murray and Mr. Tony Saddington. These are designed to enable groups to look at Reconciliation in the light of God's love for Man and how Man has responded through the Bible.

### Housing

The Regional Director, Rev. Theo Kotzé, initiated an in-depth examination of the whole question of the appalling back-log of housing for "Coloured" people. (It is estimated that 20 000 families are in immediate need) Several meetings have taken place at the C.I. with very hopeful results. Those who have attended have done so in their personal capacities and have included Town planners, Architects, Quantity Surveyors, Builders, Sociologists, Anthropologists and people from the Grass roots of the needy society.

The Regional Director has made several visits to the Eastern Cape, where there has been an enthusiastic response.

Several new groups have been formed at Alice, East London and Rhodes University.

### Eastern Cape organising secretary

Mrs. Rosemary Elliott of Addo has voluntarily undertaken this important post and her dedicated Christian witness has already made a great impact on all with whom she has come in contact.

### "Be Reconciled"

Two weekends are being planned for Eastern Cape members to participate in the course designed by Miss Erica Murray.

8th—10th February at Forest Sanctuary, Stutterheim  
15th—17th February at Waverley Hills, near Port Elizabeth.

Those interested are asked to contact Mrs. Rosemary Elliott, Hermiston, P.O. Addo, Eastern Cape.

# THE DOUBTER

GERMAN TITLE: 'DER ZWEIFLER'

FRIEDRICH SCHWANECKE

A man who found it hard to believe was moved to question the one he doubted: "Dear Lord," he said, "men have taught me to call you Father ... Son ... Holy Ghost. These names mean nothing to me. The father I know—my father—was constantly drunk. I feared him but did not respect him. The son I know—my son—can't stand me. We argue... we quarrel. You may be some kind of ghost, but then—ghosts—nowadays? Who believes in such things? Tell me: Who *are* you? What *is* your name *really*?"

The man received the following answer: "The Bible says: 'I am what I am.' That is my name."—

"That Lord, is a riddle," said the man. "How can I believe in a riddle?"

"Man, don't be foolish," continued the voice, "without faith you would not have asked me. But do you mean to define me? Define *me* who made heaven and earth, a world where you are merely a speck of dust? Define *me* who yet knows you like *you* know the palm of your hand?"—

"Dear Lord, now you frighten me; more so than my father in his worst drunken stupor. Perhaps I should not have asked you. It was presumptuous of me."

But the Lord, at once near and distant, went on unperturbed: "Did I not become one like you—and one like your son? Did I not cry like any of you when the many of you crucified me?"

"Yes, Lord, I have read much about it," answered the doubter, "and the nails that pierced you are still burning my wrists. Who are you who felt obliged to let us humiliate you?"

Answered the Lord—God, at once near and distant: "I am he who never doubts but always believeth in you."

The doubter was silent. There was nothing more to be said.



Christian Institute of Southern Africa

—Sunnyside Group

## SCHOOL ASSISTANCE SCHEME IN PRETORIA

When you love you should not say, 'God is in my heart', but rather 'I am in the heart of God'.

And think not you can direct the course of love, for love, if it find you worthy, directs your course. (Kahlil Gibran quoted by Rex Chapman in 'A Glimpse of God' S.L.M. Press 1973, p 62).

In our report of 30th June last year we outlined the steps we took leading to the establishment of the Mamelodi School Fund—an expression of the Christian caring of our neighbours. In 1971 we helped three high school scholars, viz Elias Mashumi, Andrew Zambane and David Thenjewayo with their clothing and school fees.

In 1972 Elias successfully completed one year as a Law student at the University of Zululand, while Andrew and David went on to Forms IV and V respectively. Unfortunately we lost touch with Andrew and David after September and hence do not know how they fared with their examinations. All attempts to get in touch with them have been fruitless.

This year Elias is working in Pretoria while continuing his studies part-time.

Since our last report Chrysler (S.A.) sent us R500 for 2 graduate students who had applied to them for assistance. Both are at the University of the North (near Pietersburg). One, Mr. S.W. Mokone, expects to complete his 5 year course, majoring in Political Science and Industrial Psychology, this year. The other, Mr. M.J. Thema, is studying for his U.E.D. after completing a B.A.

Through Mrs. Jane Phakathi, we have given R139 to an African committee who are helping 9 scholars this year.

A further R64 has assisted Moses Sibase and Frank Mächéke, during the current year.

Our budget for 1974 is R600 to help at least 15 scholars next year.

*In appealing for assistance we not only need money but we would like more people to take personal interest in some of these scholars.* Some of us have been able to keep "open house" to our scholars who have also done garden work to help pay their way. Frank has asked for work over the holidays to cover some of his expenses.

Anyone wishing to assist please write to—

Mamelodi School Fund,  
107 Zulweni,  
589 Church Street,  
Pretoria.

October 1973.



'n Belangrike gevolg sal ook wees dat dié besluit die ander N.G. Kerke, die N.G. Sendingkerk en die „Indian Reformed Church” daartoe sal bring om ook apartheid in die lig van die evangelie te toets en daaroor 'n getuienis in woord en daad te lewer. Sommige individue het reeds in kragtige Christelike getuienisse apartheid as 'n onchristelike sisteem ontmasker.

Ook die Gereformeerde Kerk sal van sy dubbelslagtige neutrale posisie, van rus in die status quo, moet wegkom en op grond van die evangelie 'n keuse moet maak. Die Hervormde Kerk het sy verskriklike (finale?) keuse gemaak, nl. dat daar geen gemeenskap tussen swart en wit mag wees nie.

### Nuwe lewe kom ...

Die scribe van die algemene sinode van die N.G.Kerk in Afrika, ds. S.P.E. Buti het van dié besluit van die 100 predikante gesê dat „dit vrymoediglik na vore gekom het dat ons nie langer teen die ideologie van die skeiding van rasse op grond van kleur kon stilbly nie”.

Alhoewel 'n swaar pad vir die swart Christene in hulle stryd vir evangeliese bevryding van apartheid voorlê, is daar hoop. Hierdie moedige Christelike daad kan volslae nuwe lewe in die kerk terugbring om Christus koning in kerk en samelewing te maak. Dit kan vir Suid-Afrika 'n nuwe era inlui, 'n era van bevryding van isolasie, onderdrukking, diskriminasie en vervreemding aan die een kant en bevryding vir die witman van dominasie, vrees, selfverheffing en fanatieke nasionalisme aan die ander kant.

Veel beplanning en harde werk lê voor, maar daar moet moed geskep word want dié swart Christene het die marsopdrag van die Exodus-God gehoor om hom uit die slawerny van Egipte na sy bevryding te volg. Mag die era van bevryding vir Suid-Afrika spoedig aanbreek, want die evangelie bevestig dat Jesus gekom het „om die evangelie aan die armes te bring. ...om dié wat verbryself van hart is, te genees; om aan gevangenes vrylating te verkondig en aan blindes herstel van gesig; om dié wat gebroke is, in vryheid weg te stuur ...” (Lukas 4:18).



# LAWBREAKERS!

Laws, God's Laws, don't get broken; rather, they break the one who seeks to transgress them.

We are told that a friend is ill because he overworked and “broke the laws of health”. But surely the laws of health abide, even if our friend doesn't.

Chesterton once remarked that if you walk to the edge of the cliffs and keep straight on, you will not break the law of gravity, you will prove it! None of God's Laws can be *broken*. Each can be either opposed or co-operated with.

Christians believe that it is the decree of God that Law should run through the physical, psychological, spiritual and moral parts of the universe. As such, Law is to be venerated by Christians who should be the most Law-abiding of men. They know that behaviour opposed to God's Law cannot result in integration of character and joy in living; they also know that the state which deviates from God's Laws will soon lack harmony in relationships and move towards anarchy.

### CHRIST'S "LAW"

When Paul made reference to being “free of the law” he was hardly suggesting that Law has ceased to be binding upon a believer. He was stating that the believer is one who has embraced the Law of Christ (1 Corinthians 9) and that the hygiene and ceremonial pronouncements of the Old Testament Law are no longer binding. But man, Christian or otherwise, still yearns for a code of rules deduced by casuists rather than the Law of Christ which is an outlook on life leading a man to look beyond petty rules to far reaching ideals and universal principles—supremely, the Principle of Love.

These thoughts have a direct bearing on the Schlebusch Commission. The end result of the investigation to date has been that eight persons have been banned, the courts by-passed in the process, and the Rule of Law violated. But, thank God, because this Law is enshrined in the very Nature of the Just God, the Law has hardly been “broken”. Long after the Schlebusch Commission has been discredited and indeed “broken” on this very issue, the Rule of Law will continue to be proclaimed by every lover of the Law of Christ.

Furthermore, one might ask whether those who declined to testify before the Schlebusch Commission are law-breakers or law-lovers? Paul was well aware that he might be understood to be a “lawless” person, one without principles or respect for law. So he corrects himself thus, “not being without law toward God, but under the Law of Christ.” In this final, and authentic sense it is difficult to feel the guilt usually associated with being a law-breaker. On the contrary. ★

# a rainy day in the township

It rained the whole long  
dark long day long  
rain on rain  
in this miserable township  
of damp little boxes  
all looking the same  
like little tin soldiers  
with whitewashed brickwalls  
and mossy asbestos roofs  
rain on the grime  
rain in the gutters  
rain on the narrow pavements  
littered with fish and chips papers  
and stompies and orange peels  
rain on the drab township where I live  
on the Cape Flats  
rain on my gleaming black skin

Some stood at busstops  
waiting in vain  
stood there in the rain  
with carriers with groceries  
rooibosch tea, mealie meal,  
paraffin, brown bread and  
brown sugar

Some had black umbrellas  
black, gleaming, dripping  
under the township lamps  
dimly showing the way  
to cold council flats  
where cold stoves wait for fire  
to warm black hands  
to warm sad hearts

Some waited for husbands  
stumbling home with pay  
in backpockets  
through the rain  
through the dark  
won't the skollies catch them  
Some cursed those with white skins  
who took their homes  
who sit in front of blazing hearths  
in their homes, in their homes  
and pushed them here  
in the rain, in the rain.

howard eybers

# THE PRESS....



# IT STICKS IN THE THROAT.