



PRO VERITATE

THE WCC DECISION
- SPECIAL ISSUE

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EDITORIAL

DIE WÊRELDRAADBOM

REDAKSIONEEL

The world is still abuzz about the unanimous decision of the Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches to grant a token sum of money to a number of so-called liberation movements.

Although it was specifically stipulated that this money should not be used for military purposes the implication which practically all observers attach to the grant is that it nevertheless amounts to extremely significant moral support for bodies who are actively involved in the use of violence to achieve what they regard as a just purpose. Thus the World Council has apparently decisively cast in its lot with those who believe that the use of violence is sanctioned for a Christian under certain circumstances and has climactically intervened in an undecided debate which has been waged in the Christian Church for centuries. Seen in this light, therefore, it was a truly historical decision and it is not surprising that it is still causing so much furore. One has reason to believe that, whether the decision be approved or deprecated, the world, especially the world of the Church, will never be quite the same for us after this almost cathartic event. The *status quo* has suffered too severe a shock.

What one is delighted to observe is the fierceness and continuousness of the literally world-wide debate which is at present raging about the action of the World Council. There has been very little moderation thusfar in any of the numerous judgements upon the World Council action. In their initial responses, everyone seems to be either violently for or violently against. The fear we harboured that the whole of Christendom had sunk into an apathetic sleep is progressively proving to have been groundless.

Suddenly every one has woken up. Cares and concerns that had long lain apparently dormant have suddenly come to the surface. Consciences are awakening once again; the moral responsibility of churches and individual Christians has assumed a new and deeper meaning almost overnight.

Suddenly the shocking realisation has dawned again what a hazardous venture it is to be a Christian; what a way of the cross the Church of Christ has been enjoined to follow. Foreseeably, church leaders and laymen will still quarrel for a long time to come about this controversial decision of the World Council. Presumably it will also still cause quite a lot of bad blood. It is a consolation, however, that a fiercely arguing and quarrelling Church is at least a live Church. And perhaps, ultimately, we are still going to have reason for gratitude that the soul-destroying *status quo* in the body of Christ has been so rudely shattered.

Of course, abysmal ignorance still obtains in many circles at present about the real motivations

Die wêreld is nog steeds aan die gons oor die eenparige besluit van die Uitvoerende Komitee van die Wêreldraad van Kerke om 'n simboliese bedrag geld te skenk aan 'n aantal sg. bevrydingsbewegings.

Hoewel dit spesifiek gestipuleer is dat dié geld nie vir militêre doeleindes aangewend mag word nie, is die implikasie wat feitlik alle waarnemers aan die skenking heg, tog dit dat dit neerkom op uiters betekenisvolle morele steun vir instansies wat aktief betrokke is in die aanwending van geweld om wat hulle beskou as 'n regverdige doel te verwesenlik. Daardeur het die Wêreldraad hom skynbaar op 'n beslissende wyse geskaar agter diegene wat glo dat die gebruik van geweld onder sekere omstandighede vir die Christen geoorloof is en het hy klimakties ingegryp in 'n onbesliste debat wat reeds eeue lank in die Christelike Kerk gevoer word. In dié lig gesien was dit dus 'n werklik historiese besluit en is dit geen wonder dat dit nog steeds soveel beroering veroorsaak nie. 'n Mens het rede om te glo dat, of ons nou die besluit goedkeur of afkeur, die wêreld, veral dan die kerklike wêreld, nooit weer vir ons na hierdie bykans katartiese gebeure heeltemal dieselfde sal kan wees nie. Die *status quo* het 'n te ernstige skok opgedoen.

Wat verblydend is om waar te neem is die felheid en onverpoosdheid van die letterlik wêreldwye debat wat daar tans oor die optrede van die Wêreldraad gevoer word. Totdusver was daar nog maar bloedweinig gematigdheid in enige van die talle beoordelinge van die Wêreldraad-aksie. Elkeen skyn of heftig vir of heftig teen te wees in sy aanvanklike reaksie. Die vrees wat ons gekoester het, dat die ganse Christendom in 'n apatiese slaap versink geraak het, blyk alhoemeer ongegrond te gewees het.

Skielik het almal wakker geskrik. Kwellinge en bekommernisse wat lank oënskynlik sluimerend was, het plotseling na die oppervlakte gekom. Gewetens is weer eens aan die ontwaak; die morele verantwoordelikheid van kerke en individuele Christene het meteens 'n nuwe en diepere betekenis verkry.

Skielik word daar weer met skok besef watter riskante onderneming dit is om Christen te wees; watter kruisweg daar aan die Kerk van Christus opgedra is om te bewandel. Voorsienbaar sal daar nog lank deur kerkleiers en leke getwis word oor hierdie omstrede besluit van die Wêreldraad. Vermoedelik sal daar ook nog veel kwade bloed daaruit voortvloei. Ons kan ons egter daaraan troos dat 'n heftig argumenterende en twistende kerk minstens 'n lewende kerk is. En miskien gaan ons uiteindelik nog groot rede tot dankbaarheid hê dat die sielsvermurwende *status quo* in die liggaam van Christus so ru versteur is.

Natuurlik bestaan daar op die oomblik in baie kringe nog 'n afgrondelike onkunde omtrent die

of the World Council decision and about its immediate and ultimate implications and consequences. This is all too clear from many of the initial shock reactions. Too few critics of the World Council action obviously realise in what a terrible dilemma the World Council found itself; that, in a certain sense, it simply could not have acted otherwise than it did. In World Council circles, on the other hand, there appears to be far too vague a realisation of the serious dilemma in which we here in Southern Africa, who are steadfastly striving after greater justice in our society by a non-violent means, have been placed by their action. On both sides there is far too little mutual understanding and practically no sign whatsoever of genuine and effective communication.

With a view to greater clarification and enlightenment of minds we are devoting this issue of *Pro Veritate* to the simultaneous publication, as far as possible *seriatim*, of all the most significant documents and reactions (especially in South Africa) with regard to the historic decision of the World Council. For we believe that by providing such an almost complete review of the whole event - to be followed in due course by a series of analyses in depth of the subject - we shall be rendering our readers a signal service.

We also trust that what we do not publish will not escape the attentiveness of our readers. And in this connection we are thinking especially of the remarkable and significant lack of any meaningful reaction on the part of black South Africa, the "silent majority" of our South African population. Perhaps this telling silence is ultimately going to prove to be far more significant than the flood of voluble reactions which the World Council decision elicited in our country.

JUSTICE SOUTH AFRICAN STYLE

The Minister of Justice has explained the State's motivation for banning the nineteen South Africans recently acquitted of charges under the Terrorism Act. He said the bannings were not intended as punishment for previous deeds but were intended as a deterrent for future subversive acts. For, he said, a person's anticipated future actions could only be determined by his actions in the past.

In America, through the use of computers, people's future actions are starting to be anticipated not by their past actions, but from such sources as their library borrowings. That is, your interests determine your future actions. On this basis a person could be banned to prevent him doing what computers predict he will do. Is this a logical consequence of the Minister's statement?

We do not question the State's right and even obligation under certain circumstances to ban certain people for the greater protection of its other citizens. Nor do we question that some information about people's lives is indispensable for government to function in a reasonably efficient manner. What does

werklike motivering van die Wêreldraadbesluit en aangaande sy onmiddellike en uiteindelijke implikasies en gevolge. Daarvan getuig baie van die eerste skokreaksies maar alte duidelik. Te min teenstanders van die Wêreldraad-aksie besef klaarblyklik in watter ontsettende dilemma die Wêreldraad hom bevind het; dat hy in 'n sekere sin eenvoudig nie anders kon opgetree het as wat hy gedoen het nie. In Wêreldraad-kringe, aan die ander kant, bestaan daar skynbaar ook nog gans te min besef van die ernstige dilemma waarin veral ons hier in Suid-Afrika wat met volharding op nie-gewelddadige wyse strewe na groter geregtigheid in ons samelewing, deur hul optrede geplaas is. Daar is, aan albei kante, ver te min wedersydse begrip en van egte en doeltreffende kommunikasie met mekaar feitlik geen sprake nie.

Met die oog op groter verheldering van die geeste wy ons gevolglik hierdie uitgawe van *Pro Veritate* aan 'n gelyktydige plasing, so ver as moontlik *seriatim*, van al die belangrikste dokumente en reaksies (veral in Suid-Afrika) i.v.m. die historiese besluit van die Wêreldraad. Ons glo naamlik dat ons deur die verskaffing van so 'n byna volledige oorsig van die hele gebeure - mettertyd gevolg te word deur 'n reeks diepte-analises oor die onderwerp - 'n waardevolle diens aan ons lesers sal bewys.

Ons vertrou ook dat dit was one *nie* plaas *nie*, *nie* die opmerkzaamheid van ons lesers sal ontsnap *nie*. En hier dink ons veral aan die merkwaardige en betekenisvolle gebrek aan enige noemenswaardige reaksie van die kant van swart Suid-Afrika, die „swygsame meerderheid" van ons Suid-Afrikaanse bevolking. Miskien gaan hierdie sprekende swye uiteindelik nog veel meer betekenisvol blyk te wees as al die oorfloed woordryke reaksies wat die Wêreldraad-besluit in ons land ontlok het.

worry us is that this information is never revealed and hence the people cannot contest the veracity of the information.

Theologically the Minister's statement implies that the past qualitatively determines the future and that man has no free will to change the course of his actions. It also precludes the possibility of grace working in a person. So fundamental is the theological assumption underlying it, that it can be interpreted as either predestinarian or atheistic.

It accepts a deterministic understanding of life - that life proceeds with clockwork regularity. But the past is past! Any information in a person's dossier is static and records only a very limited area of his history. People are constantly growing, constantly becoming and under God's grace capable of transcending their past and living freely into the future. This it seems to us is the message of the Resurrection - that man can be freed from the chains of his past, that life can overcome death, and love can destroy hate. It is a risk to live like this and to let others live like it. But such is life in Jesus. M.C.

WCC ANNOUNCES DECISION

Frankfurt (EPS) - Acting on a decision of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches taken last August in Canterbury, England, the Executive Committee meeting here agreed to allocate \$200,000 to organizations of oppressed racial groups and organizations supporting victims of racial injustice.

The 19 organizations receiving grants ranging from \$2,500 to \$20,000 each are the first ones to benefit from a Special Fund to Combat Racism, which is made up of contributions from World Council member churches and a part of the World Council's reserves.

Baldwin Sjollema, director of the Council's Programme to Combat Racism, presented the recommendations of his International Advisory Board to the Executive Committee. He stated that the Special Fund is only a part of his total programme. Other activities will be information about and study of the causes and effects of white racism, action-oriented research, projects related to the "conscientization" of all people concerned, and emergency programmes for racially oppressed people.

Regional committees will ensure the diversity of the total programme, while the involvement of churches and the World Council itself will also be analyzed.

In presenting the recommendations for the use of the Special Fund, Sjollema noted that the focus of the grants should be on raising the level of awareness and on strengthening the organizational capability of racially oppressed people. Grants are made without control of the manner in which they are spent.

The Executive Committee accepted the recommendations without a dissenting vote and noted with appreciation that the organizations that have appealed for grants have given assurance that they will not use the funds received for military purposes but for activities in harmony with the purposes of the WCC and its divisions.

Among the organizations receiving grants from the Special Fund are:

Federal Council for Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Straight Islanders (Australia);
 West Indian Standing Conference (U.K.);
 The Africa Bureau (U.K.);
 Anti-apartheid Movement (U.K.);
 International Defence and Aid Fund (U.K.);
 Angola Committee and Dr. Eduardo Mondlane Foundation (Netherlands);
 International Committee to Combat the Immigration Bill (Japan);
 Committee for the Defence of the Indian (Columbia);
 Africa 2000 Project (Zambia);
 Mozambique Institute of Frelimo (Mozambique);
 Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola (Angola);
 Governo Revolucionario de Angola no Exil (Angola);
 Uniao Nacional para a Independencia Total de Angola (Angola);
 Partido Africano de Independencia da Guinee e Cabo Verde (Guinea-Bissao);
 African National Congress (South Africa);
 South West African People's Organization (South West Africa-Namibia);
 Zimbabwe African National Union (Rhodesia);
 Zimbabwe African People's Union (Rhodesia).

The following recommendations by the International Advisory Committee for the Programme to Combat Racism regarding the Special Fund were adopted by the World Council of Churches' Executive Committee without dissenting votes. The Committee noted with appreciation that the organisations which have appealed for grants have given the assurance that they will not use the funds received for military purposes but for activities in harmony with the purposes of the World Council of Churches and its divisions. As becomes clear from the document all the applications are for social, health and educational purposes and for legal aid.

The Central Committee at its Canterbury Meeting decided

"that this Special Fund be distributed to organisations of oppressed racial groups or organisations supporting victims of racial injustice whose purpose are not inconsonant with the general purposes of the World Council, and in respect of funds provided from the reserves of those divisions, with the general purposes of the DICARWS and DWME, to be used in their struggle for economic, social and political justice;

that the Executive Committee be authorised to decide on recommendations from the International Advisory Committee, the organisations to which the Special Fund shall be distributed".

In view of this decision the International Advisory Committee recommends that the Special Fund shall be allocated in accordance with the following criteria:

1. The proceeds of the Fund shall be used to support organisations that combat racism, rather than welfare organisations that alleviate the effects of racism, which would normally be eligible for support of other units of the World Council of Churches.
2. (a) The focus of the grants should be on raising the level of awareness and on

strengthening the organisational capability of racially oppressed people.

- (b) In addition we recognise the need to support organisations that align themselves with the victims of racial injustice and pursue the same objectives.

While these grants are made without control of the manner in which they are spent, they are at the same time a commitment of the Programme to Combat Racism to the struggle of these organisations for economic, social and political justice.

3. (a) The situation in Southern Africa is recognised as a priority due to the overt and intensive nature of white racism and the increasing awareness on the part of the oppressed in their struggle for liberation.
- (b) In the selection of other areas we have taken account of those places where the struggle is most intensive and where a grant might make a substantial contribution to the process of liberation particularly where racial groups are in imminent danger of being physically or culturally exterminated.
- (c) In considering applications from organisations in countries of white and affluent majorities we have taken note only of those cases where political involvement precludes help from other sources.
4. Grants should be made with due regard to where they can have the maximum effect; token grants should not be made unless there is a possibility of their eliciting a substantial response from other organisations.

On the basis of the above criteria and after careful consideration the Committee urgently recommends the immediate distribution of \$200,000 (out of a total of \$278,769 received so far) as follows: (here we list only some organisations affecting South Africa)

UNITED KINGDOM

2. Activities on behalf of Southern Africa in the U.K. (three arms of one activity) (criteria 2b):

(a) *The Africa Bureau*

An independent body with the aim to improve understanding in Britain about current events and problems in Southern Africa

- promoting British policies that will assist social and economic development in Southern Africa;
- opposing racial tyranny in Southern Africa;
- promoting the achievement of non-discriminatory majority rule in Southern Africa.

\$2.500

(b) *Anti-Apartheid Movement*

An organisation which earlier in 1970 was instrumental in organising an effective national campaign of protest against the visit of an all-white rugby team from South Africa to Britain, and subsequently succeeded in getting the cricket tour to Britain cancelled. More recently active in trying to reverse the present government's policy of lifting the arms embargo against South Africa. In close touch with African governments and liberation movements in Southern Africa.

\$5.000

(c) *International Defence and Aid Fund*

The priorities of this organisation are to provide legal defence for the opponents of racial discrimination in Southern Africa, material welfare for families of those executed, imprisoned, banned or banished for their political beliefs, and to assist in the education of political prisoners and their families.

\$3.000

NETHERLANDS

Angola Committee and Dr. Eduardo Mondlane Foundation

The Angola Committee has over the past years increasingly influenced Dutch public opinion regarding racist policies in Southern Africa. The two organisations mentioned are

now planning joint action in cooperation with similar organisations in Western (continental) Europe under a new title "Foundation for the Promotion of Information about Racism and Colonialism". Aims are: research, documentation and information concerning Southern Africa in Dutch and English; audio-visual aids for schools and action groups; assistance to Portuguese deserters, etc. (criteria 2b).

\$5.000

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Liberation Movements which in their struggle for the self-determination and for fundamental human rights of racially oppressed peoples are actually in control of liberated territory. These movements are requesting support from the churches in developing the necessary infrastructure in liberated territory (criteria 1, 2a and 3a).

MOZAMBIQUE

Mozambique Institute of Frelimo (Fronte de Libertacao de Mozambique) Frelimo claims to have control over one fifth of Mozambique. The Institute is the educational and social welfare arm of Frelimo. It is now setting up the first development plan for free Mozambique which foresees among others the organisation of agricultural cooperatives, the export of agricultural products (ground nuts, rye, cashew nuts, tobacco, rubber) and the organisation of social, educational and health services.

\$15.000

SOUTH AFRICA

African National Congress (ANC) Movement created by Luthuli and active as an African political party inside South Africa until it was banned. Requests support for the launching of a "Luthuli Memorial Foundation" designed to inform world public opinion about alternatives to the present apartheid regime in South Africa and to do research (Publications, audio-visual aids, etc.) and to assist victims of apartheid.

\$10.000

The earlier individual responses of most of the church leaders were made before knowing the motivation, terms and conditions of the grants. This breakdown in communications was regrettable as most of the debate that followed upon the WCC announcement was determined more by the direction and assumptions of responses than the content of the decision itself.

We now print some official statements which were made by churches meeting in Synod and church related organisations.

CHURCHES RESPOND

SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The South African Council of Churches at an extraordinary meeting today considered the press statement regarding the support by the World Council of Churches of Southern African liberation and terrorist movements.

The S.A.C.C. is not a member of the WCC but an associated Council. The WCC is made up of member Churches, likewise the S.A.C.C. is comprised of member Churches in South Africa some of which also belong to the World Council. Further, it must be noted that the S.A.C.C. only contributes financially to the WCC Division on World Mission and Evangelism.

The S.A.C.C. makes it clear that the Council rejects the use of violence as a Christian solution to the racial problems of Southern Africa. The S.A.C.C. made this clear in 1969 in a strongly worded statement to the WCC.

If the press statement is accurate, the S.A.C.C. dissociates itself from the standpoint expressed, but this does not necessarily imply withdrawal from the World Body. South Africa remains a member of the UNO in spite of certain acts and statements of that organisation. We await official confirmation of the press statement in order to discuss whether or not official representation should be made to the World Council.

Johannesburg 4th September, 1970

MEMBER CHURCHES OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Representatives of member Churches of the World Council of Churches in South Africa meeting under the auspices of the S.A. Council of Churches in Johannesburg today discussed in detail the WCC Executive decision to grant financial assistance for educational, social and medical purposes to what it styles as "liberation movements".

It was acknowledged that the motivation for this assistance accords with the Christian practice of helping those who suffer or are in any kind of need. However, this action can be regarded as identification by the WCC with organizations whose purpose is to change the social order in Southern Africa by the use of force.

It was acknowledged that Christians throughout the centuries have been divided on whether or not force as a last resort may be used to bring about such change. We acknowledge that it is in response to an unjust racial situation that the WCC has taken this action. Nevertheless, as representatives of member Churches we disassociate from this action of the WCC and its implied support of violence.

It should be noted that the South African member Churches were not represented when this decision was made by the World Council of Churches Executive.

It was also stressed that the General Secretary of the WCC Dr. E.C. Blake's recent visit to South Africa was in no way connected with this action. At no point did he discuss this issue with South African Church leaders.

The task of the Christian Church has always been reconciliation through the preaching of the Good News of Jesus Christ and the service of all men in His Name. It is the conviction of this meeting that this task, which includes working for truth and justice and therefore the overcoming of racism of any form is pertinent to the task of the Church in Southern Africa. It is acknowledged that the Churches in South Africa have largely failed in their task, and it is therefore obligatory upon the Churches to rigorously examine their own role and responsibility to determine how they can more effectively fulfil their task.

It does not seem to most of us that withdrawal either from our situation or from the WCC will serve this purpose of reconciliation. It is important that our convictions should be heard by the world Church in spite of our real disagreement at this point.

This Statement is commended to member Churches for consideration in reaching their own decision on this issue.

Johannesburg 11th September, 1970

VERKLARING VAN DIE CHRISTELIKE INSTITUUT

Rakende die besluit van die Uitvoerende Komitee van die Wêreldraad van Kerke om geldelike steun te verleen aan verskeie anti-rassiste beveginge, insluitende sommige betrokke in guerilla bedrywighede teen Suidelike Afrika, wens die Raad van Beheer van die Christelike Instituut van Suider-Afrika die volgende verklaring te maak:

- (1) Die aangeleentheid is ernstig bemoeilik deur die verskillende interpretasies wat aan die besluit van die Wêreldraad gegee is.
- (2) Om hierdie rede beskou ons dit as dringend dat die saak so spoedig moontlik opgeklar word en doen ons 'n beroep op die Suid-Afrikaanse Raad van Kerke om opheldering van die Wêreld-

raad van Kerke te soek. Ons gee aan die hand dat vir hierdie doel die Wêreldraad uitgenooi word om 'n afvaardiging na Suid-Afrika te stuur ten einde die Wêreldraad se oortuiginge, motiveringe en siening van die Evangelie te bespreek.

- (3) Hierdie besluit het die hele saak van geweld na vore gebring, insluitende die geweld wat noodsaaklik is om die beleid van apartheid te implementeer. Die standpunt van die Christelike Instituut is welbekend en ons wil ons verwerping van geweld in beginsel herbevestig. Nietemin wil ons daarop aandring dat daar in dialoog getree sal word met diegene, sowel in as buite Suid-Afrika, wat ander sienswyses huldig.

Durban 11 September 1970

UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT

According to Press reports the white (and one black) church leaders in South Africa have come out with unanimous voice against the decision of the World Council of Churches to make a grant of R143,000 to liberation movements in Southern Africa. From their public statements it appears that the major ground of their objection is that the money will be used by organisations committed to using violence to overthrow white rule in Southern Africa, even though the WCC money itself will not be used to buy arms.

The UCM wishes to make no comment on the WCC action. We do wish to comment on the rash of public statements by our church leaders. If the issue really is an objection to the use of violence or, as one leader put it, 'the use of violence to overthrow law and order', then their silence on the use of violence by the white regimes in Southern Africa places a huge question mark over their motives.

It is universally accepted that no money from South Africa is included in the WCC grants to these liberation movements. But these same church leaders and members of their churches pay taxes to the white South African government, so contributing directly to the Defence Budget of R271,600,000 (1969/70 figures). A great deal of this money is used to buy arms and provide military training for our white youth - again many of them are members of our churches. Which church leaders have voiced such strong and open objection to this escalating expenditure on the art of violence? Further, at present the sale of British arms to South Africa is a live issue. Where have our anti-violence church leaders made press statements supporting a British arms embargo? And tax-payers' money (Christian tax-payers included) goes to support police forces from South Africa engaged in the violent clash in Rhodesia. It appears that this has evoked no strong reaction. It is acceptable that, in the name of non-violence, we have no objections to supporting one side of the clash financially, but object when money is given to the other side? And which church leaders have condemned the

morality of South Africans raising money to send food and other forms of relief to the Portuguese soldiers in Mozambique and Angola?

One could, of course, go on questioning the response of our outspoken church leaders on other forms of violence in South Africa, and in fact the basic violence done to people in our total structure of unjust land, power, and economic distribution. But this would serve little purpose. Their silence when one side of the shooting line (the side of the white regimes) is given support, and their outcry when the other side (the blacks seeking liberation) is supported seems to indicate only too clearly that the real issue is not violence, but whether support should be given to maintaining the white controlled *status quo* ('law and order') or to those struggling for change and black liberation ('violence'). One can only hope that they have not seen this implication in the combination of their silence and their criticism, and will either revert to silence on both issues, or condemn equally strongly and openly the preparation for violence on the white 'side'.

Have our church leaders made a really careful study of the claims of both sides so that now they are in a position to arbitrate and to condemn the black cause as unjust and unChristian, and the white cause as right and fair? Again it needs to be emphasised that it cannot be just the means which are being condemned, as both sides are in fact using the same means - only the white side has more of them.

Given the history of the churches whose leaders have come out against the WCC grants, their ambiguous attitude to war, and their silence on the issues raised above, would it not have been wiser for them to have said nothing? Or was their intention to make it perfectly clear which side they are on in the escalating struggle in Southern Africa?

Johannesburg 11th September, 1970. This statement by the UCM head office has been slightly shortened.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

The motion that "The Assembly terminates the membership of the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa in the WCC" was rejected by 75 votes to 57.

The following resolutions were then passed.

1. The Assembly views with concern the increased tensions arising from the reported decision of the World Council of Churches to support nationalist movements to the extent of R143,000 in Southern Africa and elsewhere.
2. The Assembly having, as a member body of the World Council of Churches, examined the facts of the disputed decision, dissents from that decision on the grounds that it is generally no part of the Christian task to align the Church with nationalist forces of any race.
3. The Assembly warns its own members against those misunderstandings and omissions of compassion which would identify this Church with white or black nationalisms.
4. The Assembly discontinues its grant of R500 per annum to the WCC and allocates an additional R300 to the A.A.C.C. and an additional R200 to the South African Council of Churches.
5. The Assembly, though it dissents from the violence pursued by guerilla organizations and from the World Council of Churches' grant to

them, sees that it must dissent at least as much from the violence inherent in the racial policies of the South African Government.

6. The Assembly urges that the leaders of the WCC responsible for the grant be invited to South Africa by the South African Council of Churches to meet with Church leaders here to discuss the motives and the theology behind their decision and so that we can express our point of view to them.
7. The Assembly protests against the Prime Minister's threats against the Christian Churches in South Africa which are members of the WCC and his attempt to coerce them by such threats not only to dissent from the WCC in this particular instance but to break entirely with the WCC for political reasons. It protests against his threat to force the Churches to have no further contact or communication with the WCC. The Assembly reminds the Prime Minister that its only Lord and Master is Jesus Christ, that it may not serve other masters, and that its task is not necessarily to support the politics of the Government in power but to be faithful to the Gospel of its Lord and to seek justice for the afflicted and liberty for those who are oppressed.

Cape Town 22nd September, 1970.

UNITED CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

The United Congregational Church of Southern Africa remains a member Church of the World Council of Churches for the following reasons:

- (i) because the WCC expresses the universality and the catholicity of the Church of Christ;
- (ii) because the WCC is the focus and the motivation of the movement towards Christian Unity to which the UCCSA is committed;
- (iii) because it is essential that dialogue should continue between Christians in Southern Africa and the rest of the world.

The Assembly affirms that the Church is called to reconcile all men to God and one another by the Cross. We abhor and therefore reject violence and terror as means to political change and also as methods of maintaining racially separated societies, believing that violence breeds violence and terror produces terror.

The Assembly, whilst viewing with grave concern the implications of the action of the World Council of Churches in granting financial assistance to liberation movements, recognizes:

- (i) that the WCC is responding to a serious racial situation which calls for responsible Christian action.

- (ii) that the desperate measures adopted by liberation movements are the product of a system in which men and women are denied effective participation in the state which governs their lives;
- (iii) that the action of the WCC is a judgment on the Church's ineffectiveness in seeking justice, freedom and human dignity for all men;
- (iv) that desperate people, even when they resort to terrorism, are the concern of the Christian Church.

The UCCSA, therefore, pledges itself to work, by all means consistent with the Gospel, for justice, freedom and racial reconciliation in Southern Africa, and refers this resolution to the Executive Committee for appropriate and immediate action, wherever possible in co-operation with other Churches.

The Assembly affirms the Lordship of Jesus Christ as the only King and Head of the Church. The UCCSA is both inter-racial and international, and operates in four separate countries. As such, it witnesses to an allegiance and enjoys a fellowship which transcends race and political boundaries and in which loyalty to Jesus Christ is acknowledged as supreme.

Paarl 5th October, 1970

'HE OWES S.A. AN EXPLANATION'

Each ideological era ends in personality clashes. The Parliamentary session just completed was marked by such personality attacks and defences - hardly elevating for the House of Parliament.

Two men to suffer in these attacks were both men in the church - Robert Mercer and Beyers Naudé, the one is not being given the opportunity to defend himself, the other had already done so previous to the attack. Doubtless when problems like the labour crisis seem insoluble, the Church is the weakest whipping-boy against which to assert strength and to reinforce oneself.

The attack came in the Prime Minister's debate on the WCC decision. Speaking in the Assembly on the 15th September he first warned the churches by saying: "If they do not decide to abandon their membership, I will be failing in my duty if I do not take action against them". (By the time he entered the last major debate of the session on 1st October, he had changed his mind. He decided not to confront the churches because he had too much respect for his own church and other churches. We find this a far more constructive approach - not because we think in this case that religion should be kept out of politics, but because such belligerent attitudes are seldom productive).

However in this strong speech on the 15th September and again in his more conciliatory speech on the 1st October he referred to Beyers Naudé's presence at discussions at a meeting in Ulvenhout, the Netherlands on 28th and 29th October last year. He said Rev. Naudé owed South Africa an explanation about the discussions and on his role in them.

It is not our intention to offer Rev. Naudé our columns for that purpose - to do this would be tantamount to admitting that words no longer have any meaning. For explanations have been given repeatedly already. We cite only the Afrikaners media. First the whole matter was discussed at some length in an exchange of corres-

pondence between Dr. J.D. Vorster, the Prime Minister's brother and the Rev. Beyers Naudé. This correspondence appeared in *Die Burger* Nationalist newspaper in Cape Town in late April and early May this year.

Then on the evening of 30th April Professor J. Verkuyl debated with Dr. J.S. Gericke, Dr. J. Vorster, Prof. W.J. Snyman and Mr. M. van Tonder on the Afrikaans programme of S.A.B.C. At the end of the one and a half hour debate, Dr. Vorster raised the matter again. Prof. Verkuyl's verbatim reply to one question was: "Neither Beyers Naudé, and this I state categorically, nor myself have spoken in the direction of 'violent methods' and I was glad when Dr. Gericke said 'I know this!'"

Finally at the beginning of July this year *Die Transvaler*, Nationalist newspaper in Johannesburg conducted a general smear campaign against the Rev. Naudé. The Ulvenhout discussion was inevitably resurrected - and again the general insinuations were refuted.

To repeat these would imply, as we have already suggested, that words have no meaning - which we refuse to believe - or that the Prime Minister does not read his party newspapers or listen to the radio or speak to his brother - which we also do not believe.

Rather we will confirm the 'explanation' already given by supplementing it by Baron von

Tuyll, secretary of the Netherlands Bible Society who convened the meeting.

Baron von Tuyll wrote a letter to Dr. J.D. Vorster and asked Dr. P.G. Kunst, chairman of the Dutch Reformed Church in Holland who is presently visiting S.A. to give it to him. Dr. Vorster had this letter before the 1st October. Furthermore Dr. Kunst also spoke about the letter to Dr. Connie Mulder, Minister of Information, before the 1st October speech. But it would appear that the Prime Minister was not informed. Clearly there are communication problems, both between the Prime Minister and his brother and between the Minister of Information and the Prime Minister.

Space permits us only to give pertinent extracts from the letter, a copy of which Baron von Tuyll sent to Rev. Naudé. Baron von Tuyll has given permission for the letter to be used for clarification's sake.

"Within the ecumenical movement we wanted to try to bring the standpoints closer to each other, even in "the debate within the Christian fellowship itself about the different responses proper for Christians to make in the South African situation".

I also do not wish to leave it unmentioned that even in this gathering of friends the discussion entered a critical stage on this point, when the Rev. B. Naudé objected to personal participation on this issue. As I remember it, he said: "However much I try to attain an improvement in my country in the matter of race relations, I myself am and remain a son of my country and can also not cooperate in establishing contacts with groups who seek a solution to race relations in violence". As soon as he received it, the Rev. Naudé then also immediately 'phoned to object to the formulation of the Rev. Booth, because it *neither* explains that what was being discussed was the existing intensification of thinking within a section of the ecumenical movement, *nor* does it contain the objections to the use of violence which he himself raised"

"HIS TIME IS OVER"

In the wake of the heated debate over the WCC decision Fr. R. Mercer, Anglican priest at Stellenbosch, wrote on the matter in his weekly parish bulletin on Sunday 13th September. We print here in full the pertinent section covering the WCC grant.

Two days later i.e. on the 15th September, the Prime Minister in his speech on the decision referred to the contents of the pamphlet. After attacking Fr. Mercer, he announced - "his time has expired". On the 26th September their time had expired - both Fr. Mercer and his fellow Stellenbosch priest, Fr. Chamberlain.

Why Fr. Mercer? Read in toto his remarks raise questions rather than give support to the decision - in fact he questions the wisdom of the grants.

And further: why Fr. Chamberlain? He had nothing to do with the pamphlet. His deportation order which we print below gives no reasons. Yet his expulsion must be for reasons other than the pamphlet episode. Some secular reports claim a personal issue between Dr. Gericke and Fr. Chamberlain. Surely personal differences do not warrant deportation. We cannot have sunk that far. We hope that Dr. Gericke or Fr. Chamberlain will clarify the matter and so allay our fears.

To: The Rev. David Chamberlain

1. I have to inform you that the Honourable the Minister of the Interior has, by warrant under his hand, ordered your removal from the Republic of South Africa in terms of section 22(3) of the Persons to the Union Regulation Act No. 22 of 1913, as amended, which reads as follows:

"Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act or Aliens Act; 1937 (Act No. 1 of 1937) or any other law, the Minister may, if he considers it to be in the public interest, by warrant under his hand order the removal from the Union of any person who is not a South African citizen, and thereupon such person may, pending his removal be detained in such custody as may be prescribed by regulation".

2. As you are no longer welcome in the Republic of South Africa you are afforded the opportunity to leave the country on your own accord before the 30th October, 1970, failing which the removal order, which has been forwarded to the South African Police, will be enforced by them.

Secretary for the Interior

"MONEY FOR TERRORISTS"

It's easy enough to display righteous indignation towards the WCC. But what's surely needed is a little calm and clear thought? In assessing the morality of any action three factors need to be considered: (i) the motive (ii) the deed itself (iii) the consequences.

As far as the motive is concerned, we are ignorant. Might it have been something like this: "Evolution is obviously better than revolution. But where there is no hope of progress, desperate situations demand desperate remedies. Violence is evil, yes. But the S.A. way of life is an even greater evil. Faced with the choice of these two evils, we must choose the lesser. A minority of christians are out and out pacifists, yes. But the major part of christendom is not and never has been. In the last world war christians worked for bombs and bullets and bayonets for Germany. They may not be exactly parallel, but is S.A. all that different from Nazi Germany? Both believe in super races and inferior races, though the South Africans are clever enough to talk about "separate freedoms". If their motive was indeed something like this, then we can't quarrel with it. The WCC may have done the wrong thing, but it has done it for the right reason. Their sin (if it is a sin) is therefore less blameworthy.

Then as to the action: if you are a genuine pacifist, holding that all violence is always wrong, then obviously you cannot approve the WCC. But if you prefer to distinguish between violence and violence you are in a more difficult position: there is the French Revolution and there is the American Civil War: Robespierre may not have gone down to history as a good man but Abraham Lincoln has. Are the guerillas terrorists or patriots of a resistance movement? To hear them described as the former by somebody like, say, Bp. Zulu would be convincing, but for us to do so rings hollow: we do have a vested interest in the status quo.

The consequences: a naive and foolish action may produce futile results. This affair may give moral support to african nationalists but it is not likely to be of much practical use. (R142,000 among so many groups). Revolution doesn't automatically produce beneficial effects and the Russians, say, are not necessarily any more "free" now than they were under their czars. Violence of this sort is likely to prevent that very multi racial harmony it is meant to encourage. And it is certainly going to draw the S.A. laager closer. Our demented racialism may have driven the WCC to this action. But their action can only increase our dementia.

We are left with the impression that the WCC consists largely of well intentioned but naive clergymen desperately trying to justify their existence by doing something useful. But to denounce them as wicked or as communists is to over simplify and may leave us feeling more self righteous than we deserve to be."

DIE WêRELDRAAD HOU WOORD

Ds. R.J. van der Veen

Ds. R.J. van der Veen, algemene sekretaris van die Nederlandse Sendingsraad in Amsterdam en tot 'n paar jare gelede Gereformeerde studentepredikant te Delft, gee in hierdie artikel die agtergrond van die besluit van die Wêreldraad van Kerke om \$200,000 te gee aan organisasies wat rassisme beveg.

Ds. van der Veen, is 'n lid van die Adviesraad van die Wêreldraad se program vir die bestryding van rassisme.

Vanaf 1954 tot 1969 het die Wêreldraad van Kerke 'n sekretariaat gehad vir rasse- en etniese verhoudings. Die opdrag was ondersoek, informasie en konsultasie. Deur die jare is die effek van besoekreise, van oorreding, van oorleg en van getuienis op die proef gestel. Reeds met hierdie metode het die Wêreldraad die groot Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk van Suid-Afrika as lid verloor. Na bekendwording van die baie versigtig geformuleerde resultate van die Cottesloe-konsultasie van 1960, verlaat genoemde kerk die ekumeniese gemeenskap. Kennelik kos elke inset teen rassisme vriende. Maar vir 'n verbetering van die steeds meer onhoudbare situasie van hulle wat op grond van hulle ras onderdruk word, het die bogenoemde poging 'n onvoldoende resultaat opgelewer. Die

wanhoop van die mense teen wie gediskrimineer word, neem toe. Maar ook hulle roep om daadwerklike aksie van die kant van diegene wat die mag en die middele het om vernuwingsprosesse aan die gang te sit.

Tydens die groot konferensie „Kerk en Samelewing”, Genève 1966, is die geroep om rassegeregtigheid duideliker as ooit tevore in 'n ekumeniese byeenkoms gehoor. Die noodsaaklikheid van méér as net ooredende verklarings word erken. Die metode oordrag van middele aan die georganiseerde groepe van onderdrukte sodat ook hulle sou kon deelneem aan die politieke en ekonomiese lewe, word bepleit. En van die kerke - in vele opsigte die medepligtiges van die verlede - word nou indringend gevra om die morele leierskap op

hulle te neem. Dit in ooreenstemming met die groot *Woord* wat die kerk dra. Maar ook in ooreenstemming met die veelbelowende verklarings in die tydperk van die konsultasies.

En toe kom Uppsala. Na jare van steeds hewiger rassiespanninge en uitbarstings kom die kerke self, in hulle gekose verteenwoordigers, in 1968 te Uppsala byeen vir die algemene vergadering.

AFGROND

Tydens die sitting skok die beroemde Amerikaanse negerskrywer, James Baldwin, die afgevaardigdes deur hulle onontwykbaar mee te neem na die afgrond van ellende wat mense as gevolg van rassisme ly. En niemand durf Baldwin teë te gaan toe hy uitroep: „Daar is gebiede in die wêreld waar die Christelike gemeenskappe die mag het om die strukture te wysig, as hulle maar wil”.

'n Ander swart leier sê: „Vandag is die slagoffers van rassisme wel verbitterd, maar nog bereid tot gesprek. Ek vrees dat ons môre stille, verbete mense sal sien wat besluit het om hulle weg deur die moeilikhede vegtend te baan”.

Op daardie oomblik het die kerke besef dat daar meer moes gebeur as die gewetensbeïnvloeding

van diegene wat die rassisme in stand hou. Saam het die kerke besluit om oor te gaan tot getuienis én aksie. En dan wel sodanige aksie dat die verdruktes verlos sou word van hul gevoel van verlatenheid en uit hulle ewige gewag op die moontlikheid dat die verdrukters hulle eendag sou mag bekeer.

Die organe van die Wêreldraad kry opdrag en volmag om 'n dringende program op te stel en uit te voer. Oordrag van middele om die verdruktes beter in staat te stel om self deel te neem aan die stryd om geregtigheid moes daarby inbegrepe word.

PROGRAMME

Die aksie van die Wêreldraad nou, September 1970, twee jaar na Uppsala, deur geld te stem aan 19 organisasies wat rassisme daadwerklik bestry, is 'n onderdeel van genoemde dringende program. Op die oomblik gaan dit nog maar om 200.000 van die beoogde 500.000 dollar. Dié bedrag het die wêreldraad uit eie powere reserwes bygebring. Van die 300.000 dollar wat van die kerke gevra is, is daar nog maar 'n derde bygedra. Miskien moet ons daarvoor - ná Uppsala - so ietwat verwonderd bly, totdat, na verwag word, die res nou spoedig inkom. Maar daar is geen verwondering nodig oor die pas gepubliseerde begin van die nuwe program nie. Die kerke het die afgrond gepeil en om hierdie program gevra. En die Wêreldraad hou woord.

By sommige bestaan die vraag: het die Wêreldraad, as orgaan van die kerke, hier wel op kerklike wyse gehandel? Is die grens van die kerklike inset om geregtigheid hier metodies miskien oorskry? Of meer nog: word hier inderdaad kerkgeld beskikbaar gestel vir die aankoop van wapens of vir geweld in die vorm van oorlog, guerilla-oorlog of terrorisme?

VERDRAAIING

Hierdie vrae kan ontstaan omdat die hele besluit van die Wêreldraad, met die agtergrond daarvan, nie in alle gevalle volledig in die berigging van koerante of in radio-nuusuitsendings opgeneem is nie.

Daarby kom nog die verdraaiing wat deur apartheidsvoorstanders

direk uit Suid-Afrika versprei is. Dáár word alweer gepraat oor pro-kommunistiese neigings, soos wat ons dit vroeër oor Martin Luther King moes aanhoor en verduur.

Dit is die beste dat ons sulke uitlatings asook die intimidasiepoging van die Suid-Afrikaanse regering teen lidkerke van die Wêreldraad sien as tekenend van innerlike onsekerheid oor die deurvoering van 'n politieke beleid teen alle redelikheid, en teen die wêreldgewete en teen die evangelie in.

NIE MILITÊR

Inmiddels mag iedereen weet dat die Wêreldraad van meet af aan besluit het dat geld alleen oorge- dra mag word aan organisasies wanneer dit duidelik is dat daarmee doeleindes nagestreef sal word wat nie strydig sal wees met die doelstellinge van die Wêreldraad self nie.

Hierdie beperking is streng in aanmerking geneem. Alle sogenaamde bevrydingsbewegings moes die versekering gee, en dit op 'n aanneemlike wyse doen, dat die gelde nie vir militêre doeleindes bestee sou word nie. Die onnoemlike ellende wat die stryd in byvoorbeeld Suidelike Afrika meebring (Angola, Mosambiek), beteken onder meer dat hulp vir gesinslede van gevange of gessneuwelde vryheidsstryders nodig is, vir welke hulp daar om steun gevra is.

In die bevryde gedeeltes van Angola en Mosambiek woon daar vele wat eindelijk as volwaardige mense op eie Afrikaanse bodem mag lewe, maar vir wie daar geen onderwysbegroting bestaan nie, tensy deur hulp van buite af. Spesiale stigtinge is vir hierdie en verwante doeleindes deur die bevrydingsbewegings opgerig. Vir die werk van dié stigtinge is die morele steun ontvang van 'n nie-toereikende bedrag van die Wêreldraad.

Ons beywer ons veral vir 'n snelle verhoging van die bedrae d.m.v. die geld wat die kerke nog na vore moet en kan bring. Tereg het die kerke in Nederland 'n gedeelte van die kollekte „Vryheid ook vir die ander" aangevra en verkry vir dié doel.

ONSUIWER

Ten oorfloede nog aandag vir die argument dat op hierdie wyse tog indirek steun aan die gebruik van geweld verleen word. Volgens hierdie denkwysie is medisyne vir Noord-Viëtnam verwerplik, moet tente vir Palestynse vlugtelingkampe uitgelê word as steun aan die vliegtuigkapers en is die spaar van Rooikruis-hospitale tydens 'n oorlogsbombardement kollaborasie met die teenstander. Die Wêreldraad het hom deur sulke onsuivere redeneringe nie laat intimideer nie en probeer, nou dat hy nog kan, om brûe te slaan na die verlatenes, wat tot die ellendiges van die aarde behoort as gevolg van die rassisme.

DRINGENDHEID

Dat die nuwe program van die Wêreldraad breër is as die spesiale fonds vir geldoordrag is belangrik genoeg om te vermeld. Onder leiding van die Nederlandse direkteur en twee ander staflede sal die kerke met materiaal en advies bygestaan word om ook self, in hul eie situasie, hulle te beywer vir geregtigheid en versoening tussen die rasse. Selfondersoek, ook by die Wêreldraad, sal daarby behoort. Ons is nog nie so ver nie.

Die rumoer oor die spesiale fonds is miskien maar alte nodig om opnuut die aandag te vestig op die verskriklike dringendheid van hierdie saak, ook en juis vir die kerk van Jesus Christus. Die liefde en die krag van die werk van Jesus Christus, bedien deur 'n lewende en moedige kerk as instrument van die geregtigheid van die koninkryk, mag nie gemis word nie. Ook as ons miskien nog ietwat moet aangroei in die vorme van kerklike inset wat pas by hierdie vraagstuk.

In elk geval het die Wêreldraad met die spesiale fonds sy eie woorde gestand gedoen. As sommige verontregtes dit met 'n mate van vreugde bemerk het, skyn dit goed om die vreugde nie te verstoor nie, maar dit te deel en so te verdubbel. Per slot van sake is 'n bietjie vreugde vir die ellendiges van die aarde iets baie waardevol.

(Vertaal uit *Hervormd Nederland van 19 September, 1970*).

Dear Dr. Blake,

I write as one who was closely associated with the WCC in years gone by, as one who fondly remembers many wonderful Christian men and women I met and worked with in different areas of the work of the WCC, men and women of deep Christian conviction, my association with whom I shall always cherish.

Though barred from active contact since 1960 I have followed your work with great interest and not without hope that this great organization may yet be an instrument in the hands of God to revitalize the life of the churches and further the great cause of the unity of the church which is God's will.

It was with profound shock therefore that I read the announcement that you have been led to decide on financial support of "Liberation" and "Terrorist" movements in different parts of Africa. I still cannot believe what I read and have not given up hope that the reports that reached us do not reflect the true picture.

This decision is so totally out of character that I wish to dissociate myself from it completely. You seem to have played straight into the hands of groups in this country and elsewhere who claim that the WCC is moving towards Communism or is deeply infiltrated or who tend to identify Christian social concern with Communism. Communist tendencies were not part of the WCC I cooperated with up to 1960 and I am very reluctant to believe that it is true or could be true today. But the so-called "liberation movements" though they basically spring from nationalist aspirations, have a history of heavy Communist material support and is believed by most to be deeply infiltrated. I am aware of the legitimate fear in many responsible Christian circles that if the Christian Church does not prove its solidarity with groups who experience oppression or discrimination especially on grounds of race, the false impression may be created that only the Communists have any concern for social justice and freedom.

I agree that the church has a duty in this field, that the church should be ready and willing to support unpopular causes. Many of us in South Africa have in the past risked our reputations and everything we had in the church or the state to further the cause of justice as we see it - and we are willing to do so again if our consciences dictate. But by giving your support to movements dedicated to revolution and violence and bloodshed if necessary, you have, as I see it, betrayed the Christian way in social and political reform and become in the terms of many "a subsidizer of violence". I deeply regret to say that I regard this decision as irresponsible. Let the WCC fight for social justice, stress the full implications of the Gospel in all its vertical and horizontal aspects, but in God's name do not give grounds for the accusation that the Church of Christ has become a supporter of violence or "terrorism".

If you had seen some acts of violence perpetrated on innocent people by some of these groups under the name of "freedom" you would not have taken this decision. Responsible white as well as black Christian leaders could not and would not support such a step. In the long run it could not benefit the Kingdom of God in Africa. I hope it is not too late to rescind this fatal decision.

Yours in Christ,
Ben Marais.

P.S. I hand this letter to the press.

REPLY

Dear Prof. Marais,

I have just seen your letter to Dr. Blake who is in the U.S. at the moment and therefore will have to answer you later. Allow me to take the liberty of writing you first a short reaction from this end. You may remember me as the young chap who visited you 10 years ago when I was leading an ecumenical workcamp in Wilgespruit, an experience of inter-racial fellowship I shall never forget.

I also write to you because I have always admired your clear judgement in relation to the racial question and your unambiguous stand both in your church and in the South African society. I know that you have been a longstanding friend of the World Council of Churches and I can understand your reaction to the decision of the Executive Committee which granted a symbolic financial contribution to anti-apartheid organisations, some of them committed to the liberation of their black brethren, if necessary by force of arms.

TWO

1. As I said above "I can understand your reaction", but I must add "not quite". What I miss most in the reactions from South Africa, and yours included, is *nuance*. Liberation movements are immediately called "terrorists" as if all they were doing was to terrorize, to kill, to murder and to mutilate. But we all know better than that! Don't they also build schools and hospitals in what they call "liberated areas"? Don't they give legal aid to people who are without proper defence? Don't they help families who are left behind after the arrests of husbands and fathers? During the Second World War many of us European Christians resisted violently an oppressive regime. In that process there was violence, like the bombing of civilian cities to sap the morale of the enemy. So, were we just terrorists? No, we felt ourselves to be freedom fighters and we engaged in violent action with fear and trembling. No two situations are alike and I am not making rash comparisons, but we must be extremely careful not to attack others so vehemently for what we have ourselves been doing. The other nuance I miss is appreciation of the complexity of the violence problem. In Southern Africa, like in other regions of the world, we witness violent reactions to violent regimes. Should we not

try to apply our minds to the *whole* problem, both to "violence that oppresses" and "violence that liberates", to use the now famous French distinction, rather than create the impression that we criticise the violence of the oppressed more than the violence of the oppressor? I know where you stand, but your letter now circulates all over Europe, creating the impression that you are condemning the poor for what you condone in the rich. A bit more nuance and a bit more understanding for the complexity of the situation would help us all.

VIEWS

2. The WCC has always shown great respect and deep affection for people like you who stood for Christian principles in a very difficult situation. We know that you are committed to a transformation of the South African society but that you have chosen a strategy for a slow and long process of non-violent change. We respect this, yes even more, we prefer it. Nobody in the WCC likes violence or preaches a violent gospel. But that is not the question. We are faced with a situation in which our black African brethren require the help of the Christian Church, not for yours but for their struggle. In your country black opposition groups are banned. Their leaders, if not in jail, and if still alive, are to be found in other African countries or in Europe or in the U.S.A. Now what does the WCC do when these men, whose bitterness as you well know has often driven them to despair, ask for help in their non-military programmes? Do we, who have aided Palestinian refugees, Russian refugees, African refugees, we who have given massive humanitarian support to Nigerians and Biafrans, we who have helped North and South Vietnam with medical aid, do we now say: we will not give you any help at all? How could we do that? Or to put it differently, do we say to

them: our hopes lie only, repeat only, in our best courageous white brethren in South Africa? You know what their answer is to that - they have given it to us many times: white liberals in South Africa are good people; we respect them; we love them. But they are not very effective. Our misery remains the same or increases.

And so we have given them support. Moral support they have had from the churches for a long time. Even if we have questioned their violence, we have questioned the violence of your Government with even greater sharpness. And could we have given better moral support than the repeated statements of a quasi-unanimous Christian conscience that racism is contrary to the Gospel, incompatible with the Christian doctrine of man and with the nature of the Christian Church (Evanston 1954) as well as a blatant denial of the Christian faith (Uppsala 1968)? Now we have gone a step further in giving them support for their legal aid programmes and their social, medical and educational programmes. Do we have to call this "aid to terrorism"? Has it not occurred to anybody in South Africa that this might give such organisations just that bit more hope which would make them reconsider their violent actions? Is not violence always an expression of despair? Might not hope then lead to alternative strategies?

3. It seems that all of you in South Africa read our action as proof that we have given up hope for a non-violent solution in Southern Africa. The WCC shares the despair of the guerillas, one of your better newspapers wrote. *The Times* has an editorial to the same effect. But why such a facile conclusion? When we gave aid to Nigeria and Biafra did we not work at least as hard for the establishment of negotiations? Has our aid to Vietnam silenced our plea for negotiations? Has help for Palestinian refugees led us away from our hope for peace in the Middle East? On the contrary, our humanitarian aid has given us just a little more chance to be heard. With regard to racism we have been forced into

a multiple strategy in which our plea for real solutions is coupled with the immediate help for humanitarian purposes. Do you doubt for one minute that we would refuse to help white victims of a black uprising in South Africa? The day when you are defenceless or oppressed or in need of medical aid, the churches would as a matter of course come to your aid, member churches and non-member churches, Christians and pagans alike.

So, with all the power of argument I can muster let me assure you: the WCC keeps working for peace, keeps pleading for non-violence, and what is more it keeps on praying that God may lead us away from our foolish in-human relationships towards an authentic community. These hopes, these pleas and these prayers of course regard all violence, i.e. the violence now carried out by your Government and the one of the liberation movements which you seem to fear more than anything else.

4. Permit me to ask a question which genuinely puzzles me: why is it that the tone and content of South African reactions to this rather cautious and rather small action of the WCC are so endlessly more violent, bitter and uncontrolled than the protest against violence of your own regime? Why is it? Is it because we never quite manage to see the perspective of the other party? Is it because we all have the virus of that disease called racism in our bodies, is it plain fear, is it sin?

My letter has already become too long. I hope I have at least re-established contact with you through these remarks. I am sure you won't break our ecumenical fellowship but rather recognise that we need you more than ever in the ecumenical movement. We may have made mistakes; you may have reacted too quickly. Let us remember the unity we have and, as good ecumenical servants, attack our differences from there.

Yours sincerely,
A. H. van den Heuvel.

WCC RESPONSES

Dr. B. Sjollema

Dr. Baldwin Sjollema, a sociologist is a member of the Gereformeerde Kerk van Holland. He is the Director of the WCC Programme to combat Racism.

Recently, before the WCC decision, Dr. Sjollema was refused a visa to visit South Africa.

Thank you for your reaction to the decision by the World Council of Churches Executive Committee regarding funds to organizations combatting racism. We are receiving many comments, both positive and negative, as well as requests for further information. In view of this it seems useful to recall some of the most important World Council of Churches statements and decisions on race over the past years. The present decision by the Executive Committee has a long history as becomes clear from the following.

The Second Assembly of the World Council in Evanston 1954 declared: "Its conviction that any form of segregation based on race, colour or ethnic origin is contrary to the Gospel, and is incompatible with the Christian doctrine of man and with the nature of the Church of Christ. The Assembly urges the churches within its membership to renounce all forms of segregation or discrimination and to work for their abolition within their own life and within society".(1)

1964 - MINDOLO

In 1964, the Mindolo Consultation, which was not a World Council Conference but one of a group of Christians in our member churches in Southern Africa, acknowledged that violence might become unavoidable in the Southern African situation: "The urgency of the situation in South Africa is further increased by the conviction of leading Africans that, as all peaceful measures tried by African political organizations over a period of many years to bring about an ordered change have proved abortive, only one avenue remains open - that of violence ... For many Christians involved in the struggle for a just solution, the question of possible violence as the only remaining alternative has become an urgent and ever pressing one. Reports indicate that many are convinced that war has already begun ... Many African leaders maintain that violence has never been desired or sought if any other mode of effective negotiation could be established or remained open". (2)

1965 - ENUGU

In 1965, the World Council's Central Committee (Enugu, Nigeria) supported an appeal for funds for the legal defence of the victims of unjust accusations and discriminatory laws in South Africa and Rhodesia and aid for them and their dependants.

The main difference between the 1965 action and the present decision of the Executive Committee is that in 1965 the funds for legal aid went to white liberal organizations while this time they have in addition been made available to the organizations of the victims themselves.

1966 - CHURCH & SOCIETY

In 1966, the World Conference on Church and Society stated: "It is not enough for churches and groups to condemn the sin of racial arrogance and oppression. The struggle for radical change in structures will inevitably bring suffering and will demand costly and bitter engagement. For Christians to stand aloof from this is to be disobedient to the call of God in history". (3).

1968 - UPPSALA

The 1968 Uppsala Assembly told the World Council of Churches to establish a crash programme to combat racism and to concentrate on white racism for the following reasons: "Racism is a blatant denial of the Christian faith.

- (1) It denies the effectiveness of the reconciling work of Jesus Christ, through whose love all human diversities lose their divisive significance;
- (2) It denies our common humanity in creation and our belief that all men are made in God's image;
- (3) It falsely asserts that we find our significance in terms of racial identity rather than in Jesus Christ.
 - (a) Racism is linked with economic and political exploitation. The churches must be actively concerned for the economic and poli-

cal well-being of exploited groups so that their statements and actions may be relevant. In order that victims of racism may regain a sense of their own worth and be enabled to determine their own future, the churches must make economic and educational resources available to underprivileged groups for their development to full participation in the social and economic life of their communities. They should also withdraw investments from institutions that perpetuate racism. They must also urge that similar assistance be given from both the public and private sectors. Such economic help is an essential compensatory measure to counteract and overcome the present systematic exclusion of victims of racism from the mainstream of economic life. The churches must also work for the change of those political processes which prevent the victims of racism from participating fully in the civic and governmental structures of their countries.

- (b) Racism employs fallacious generalizations and distortions to sustain its existence, and these result in personal denigration, segregation and other forms of isolation. The churches must eradicate all forms of racism from their own life. That many have not done so, particularly where institutional racism assumes subtle forms, is a scandal. The churches must also fight to secure legislation to eliminate racism. This will involve new approaches in education and the mass media, so that false value-judgements can be eliminated and the true grounds of human dignity made evident to all mankind..."(4)

1969 - NOTTING HILL

In 1969, the Notting Hill Consultation was held to formulate concrete proposals to the Central Committee. At this Consultation several new emphases became clear which are of the greatest importance in the present discussion. The following must be mentioned:

- (a) It is *white* racism in its many organized ways which is by far the most dangerous form of present racial conflict;
- (b) It is no longer sufficient to deal with the race problem at the level of person to person relationships. It is institutional racism as reflected in the economic and political power structures which must be challenged;
- (c) Combatting racism must entail a redistribution of social economic, political and cultural power from the powerful to the powerless;
- (d) No single strategy to combat racism is universally appropriate. There is need for *multiple* strategies. In some situations it is possible and necessary to work through the legal and political systems to achieve the necessary change. In other situations all peaceful solutions tried by the racially oppressed over a period of many years to bring about substantial change have failed and, according to many of them, there remains no alternative other than violence. Some advocated that the short-term use of violent tactics to counter a long-term violent status quo may be the lesser of two evils;
- (e) But above all, Notting Hill made clear in a devastating way the Church's complicity in benefitting from and furthering white racism oppression. The need to analyse and correct this situation was an absolute priority if the churches wanted to make any contribution to the solution of the problem in society.

It is important to note that the Consultation did not speak *for* the WCC but *to* the WCC. It made specific recommendations for action to the Central Committee

meeting at Canterbury, which took place only a few months later. This Committee decided to set up a Programme to Combat Racism which includes action-oriented research, information, church mobilization and support to racially oppressed groups. As part of the Programme to Combat Racism a Special Fund was created to which the World Council contributed \$200,000 out of its reserves, while the member churches were requested to contribute another \$300,000. It was decided: "that this special fund be distributed to organizations of oppressed racial groups or organizations supporting victims of racial injustice, whose purposes are not inconsonant with the general purposes of the World Council of Churches, to be used in their struggle for economic, social and political justice; that the Executive Committee be authorized to decide, on recommendations from the International Advisory Committee, the organizations to which the Special Fund be distributed" (5)

1970 - FRANKFURT

In conformity with the mandate given by the Central Committee, the International Advisory Committee for the Programme to Combat Racism made specific recommendations to the World Council's Executive Committee. This Committee decided, without dissenting votes, to allocate \$200,000 to 19 organizations combatting racism in various parts of the world. This is the amount which the WCC made available from its own reserves. The document which was approved by the Executive Committee is enclosed for your information. It describes the criteria which were used to consider each application and lists each of the organizations to which funds have been allocated, indicating the purposes for which the money will be spent.

In view of the historical process outlined above, a number of observations should be made which directly relate to the questions raised.

1. The decision by the Executive Committee to support organizations combatting racism does not represent a dramatic departure from earlier World Council policy; it is rather the consequence of a twenty year old conviction. The Canterbury Central Committee in 1969 showed its determination to put this conviction into practice: "there can be no justice in our world without a transfer of economic resources to undergird the redistribution of political power and to make cultural self-determination meaningful. In this transfer of resources a corporate act by the ecumenical fellowship of churches can provide a significant moral lead." (6) The underlying concept of the Special Fund to Combat Racism is therefore one of a transfer of power by the powerful to the powerless.

NO UNQUALIFIED SUPPORT

2. Grants from the Special Fund to Combat Racism do not constitute an unqualified endorsement of specific tactics employed by the recipient organizations. They do represent general support from the WCC for the long-term goals towards which the organizations are working. They also imply that anti-racist organizations which believe they have no other option but to resort to violence, are no longer to be automatically excluded from the possibility of moral and practical support from the WCC.

The WCC has not opted for violence, in spite of the fact that during World War II European Christians resisted foreign domination with violence and in spite of the fact that most newly independent countries liberated themselves from oppression by violence and not without moral support from the churches. It will continue to work for reconciliation, for an end to the violence of the

oppressed.

3. \$120,000 (out of \$200,000) goes to liberation movements in Southern Africa. They have given the assurance that the funds allocated to them will be used for their social welfare, health, educational and legal aid programmes and not for military purposes. Some will use it for development programmes inside liberated territory, others for programmes to counter the propaganda of white apartheid regimes and to inform international public opinion about the plight of the racially oppressed. There is every reason to trust the assurances given by those movements. Of course, there are risks involved in the decision. The churches have taken risks in similar situations before. Would funds for Arab refugees in the Middle East be used by Palestinian freedom fighters? Would support to the Red Cross for medical work in North Vietnam be used by the liberation front to attack villages in South Vietnam?

SUPPORT FOR SUPPRESSED

4. In the past, church support has been mainly to white liberal groups. The newly created Ecumenical Programme to Combat Racism must give priority to solidarity with the racially oppressed. The WCC cannot any longer ignore the growing number of voices among the racially oppressed asking the churches to make their stand unmistakably clear. It is encouraging, therefore, to know that more and more churches are deciding openly to support the non-violent parts of liberation movements and other groups combatting racism.

5. From the preceding points it is clear that the decision does not represent anything basically new for the WCC. The same could be said of the member churches individually. Many churches committed themselves

to programmes of massive humanitarian aid for the victims of the civil war in Nigeria. This was a clear form of support to a liberation movement (Biafra) which was using violent methods. At that time the question of support to a liberation movement did not present any problem. Human suffering was the issue. Are these churches now using different criteria? Could it be that a war between black and black is valued in a different way from a war between black and white? If that is the case, black Christians have every right to ask for further explanations.

6. At the assemblies of two recent world confessional bodies the issue of race was prominent in the discussions. The Fifth Assembly of the *Lutheran World Federation* in Evian (France) last July resolved that in the Lutheran Church members of all races should be willing at all times to receive communion together and that the Lutheran Churches should oppose the principles and practices of racial discrimination and segregation. It was further decided that "in order to encourage the quest for equal justice, the two principles shall serve as criteria in providing assistance to churches". The resolution also asked the Executive Committee of the LWF that it send a delegation "to churches where the above principles constitute a special problem to urge them to bring their racial practices into conformity with the principles of Christian fellowship as rapidly as possible".

NAIROBI AND D.R. CHURCH

The Assembly of the *World Alliance of Reformed Churches* held in Nairobi condemned "the practice of racial segregation by the Dutch Reformed Churches in South Africa in their own church life and the impression

it gives that they support the government in its policy of racial segregation and white supremacy and the lukewarmness of other churches in South Africa in opposing oppression and injustice". It decided that a consultation on the race issue should be held in South Africa, in which representatives of the seven South African member churches would have "the opportunity to face together the implications of the Gospel for the racial problem and to seek together means by which these implications can be put into practice". In so called "area meetings" during the Assembly, North American representatives called for immediate support for the humanitarian programmes of those engaged in the struggle for justice and freedom for the people of Southern Africa, including medical services to liberation movements and support for families of political prisoners.

NAIROBI AND R.C. CHURCH

The Assembly equally condemned "the silence of the Roman Catholic Church in the Portuguese territories in face of the suffering of the population, compromising its witness because of the concordat which binds it to the Portuguese Government". Finally, the Assembly expressed "the need for the churches to recognize the working of God through secular movements for justice, reconciliation and peace and the necessity for the churches to support those movements".

7. Many secular organizations with a long history of combating racism (e.g., the International Defence and Aid Fund) are led and supported by Christians. Some of the leaders of the liberation movements (e.g., Eduardo Mondlane) were or are well known Christians who participated in ecumenical meetings. Again, this is nothing new.

8. Many people in the West are asking whether this decision will not damage relationships within the ecumenical fellowship in general and with the white member churches in Southern Africa in particular. It is, of course, possible that some churches may leave the WCC over the issue of race as has happened in the past (two Dutch Reformed Churches in South Africa left the Council in 1960). It is painful but perhaps inevitable that this action will cause trouble and perhaps even physical suffering for some among the WCC's constituency with whom it has had a long and close relationship. It is significant to note that voices of protest against the decision are coming almost exclusively from one side: the white West. But the WCC cannot listen to its white constituency only. It cannot turn a deaf ear to its constituency in Africa, Asia and Latin America and indeed to the plight of all the oppressed.

9. Finally, the debate about this decision has only started and it will, no doubt, continue for some time. We are not asking for unconditional support, but we are asking that any discussion within the ecumenical fellowship takes place on the basis of the longstanding commitment by the WCC to struggle for racial justice. That struggle has now entered a new phase. It is therefore more urgent than ever before that the Church be clear in its stand.

- (1) *The Race Race* by John Vincent, SCM Press London, 1970, p. x (Preface)
- (2) cf. p. x (Preface)
- (3) *The Race Race*, p. xi (Preface)
- (4) *The Uppsala Report 1968*, World Council of Churches, Geneva 1968, p. 65-66
- (5) *Minutes and Reports of the Twenty-Third Meeting*, Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, 1969, p. 277
- (6) *Minutes and Reports*, WCC Central Committee, 1969, p. 273

In order to give those of our readers who would like to understand more the recent thinking in the World Council of Churches, we give below a short bibliography of WCC publications over the last few years.

They may be ordered from:

The Director of Publications,
S.A. Council of Churches,
P.O. Box 31190,
Braamfontein,
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and Society - 10/6

Official Report of WCC
Conference in July '66

Fetters of Injustice

The Montreux consultation

Questions and Answers

FURTHER RESPONSES

Question: Why does the WCC support Liberation Movements in Southern Africa?

Answer: That is a leading question! The Central Committee of the WCC has set up a Programme to Combat Racism. Part of this programme is a Special Fund to support organisations which are doing the same. This fund, the CC decided, would be made up of contributions of the member churches and a part of the reserves of the WCC. Grants from it can be given to any organisation which struggles for racial justice, provided they do not use the grants for military purposes. The Fund has now allocated \$200,000 to 20 organisations - most of which are not Liberation Movements, - situated in Japan, Columbia, Great Britain, Holland, Australia as well as in Southern Africa. The question should be: why should the WCC make an exception for anti-racist Liberation Movements in Southern Africa, which are engaged in important programmes of social work, education, legal aid, etc.

The WCC combats racism, because of the quasi unanimous conviction in the ecumenical movement that racism, under all its forms, is contrary to the Christian faith, the Christian doctrine of man, the nature of the Church and therefore a blatant denial of the good news in Christ. That has been Christian consensus since 1948, if not longer. The Assembly in Uppsala decided that within the general concern to eradicate racism, white racism would have a priority.

Question: Would you also give money to Liberation Movements in other areas of the world if they asked for it?

Answer: The money is earmarked to combat racism, not to support Liberation Movements.

* SUPPORT OF NON-CHRISTIANS?

Question: Were you aware that some of the organizations to which you granted funds are not Christian?

Answer: The WCC has always worked, with full blessing of its member churches, on the assumption that all people in need should be helped by the Christian Church, whatever their creed, race or conviction. We handle some \$12,000,000 worth of projects every year this way, Refugees from communist countries, conscientious objectors in the U.S.A., those who need legal aid, Arab refugees, Jewish refugees, persons engaged in civil war, as well as those suffering from natural disasters are treated equally in this respect.

To give humanitarian aid, like schools, medical units, legal assistance and the like to Liberation Movements is therefore nothing new for the WCC.

We must also keep in mind that communism tends to spread in places where injustice is practised to such an extent that people believe the marxist analysis of society to be right. A racist regime is conducive to communism.

Furthermore, in Southern Africa a number of Liberation Movements have openly declared that their communist support does not follow so much from their own political leanings as it is a result of lack of support from other countries.

And lastly, in Southern Africa fear for communism is such that every opposition to the regime now in power is labeled communist. New laws make it possible to act against people who give help to "communism", the label is therefore often convenient to arrest or harrass all opponents of an existing regime. The

communism threat is for that reason very exaggerated in certain areas. Don't forget that in Western Europe Christians co-operated with the communists during their own struggle for liberation, without compromising their own different political conviction.

* SUPPORT OF VIOLENCE?

Question: Is it new for the WCC to support movements which use violent means to achieve their ends?

Answer: There are several elements to the answer of this question.

Firstly, we all support violence in an indirect way. The South African Liberal who opposes the violence of the liberation movement pays his taxes which support the violence of his government. The University Christian Movement has pointed this out in South Africa itself.

Secondly, we must differentiate within the problem of violence. There is "oppressive violence" and "liberating violence"; there is the violence which is used to protect the great majority of a people and the violence which is used to keep a majority subjected to a rule that majority does not want.

Thirdly, the Christian Church does not have one agreed position on violence. The WCC has member churches which are historic peace churches, opposing all violence. We have pacifists among our staff members in Geneva who do not tire to point out that the use of violence tends to create a vicious circle of action and reaction. We also have churches however, which have supported violence in the past e.g. during the Second World War or during the liberation struggles in the two thirds world. In the ecumenical movement we have come to the point where we have condemned war as a stupid way to settle disputes between people. But we have between our churches and within them, disagreement when and how much violence may be permissible. Calvinists have traditionally held that murdering a tyrant can be a Christian duty. Even the concept of a just war has not been quite eradicated from theology yet. There are many Christians, not only in South Africa, who would go to war to oppose communism. There are others who are willing to go to war to abolish an unjust and oppressive regime in South America or South Africa.

Fourthly, the WCC has a record of opposing violence everywhere. Support for humanitarian programmes of movements which use violence is no indication that we have given up that position. We have accepted them as partners in the struggle for racial justice; but that means for them that they will have to live with friends who will involve them in the full debate on violence. Among our constituents they will find friends but also opponents. Our-rather small-grants do not mean much more than that we invite them to be part of our search for justice with open ears for such intelligent critique and such qualified support as real fellowship always entails.

* BREAKDOWN IN COMMUNICATION ?

Question: There has been criticism that you did not sufficiently consult your member churches. Is that justified?

Answer: Formally this is not true. The Programme to Combat Racism was established by the Central Committee and all churches were involved in those discussions. Many churches may not have such channels of communication by which CC decisions really reach their membership. The WCC is not a church and must leave this problem to its constituent bodies. Now, after the first round of discussion, many of us feel that it might have been wise to *double-check* with some of our churches. But how can you ever know beforehand whether churches have really digested the full impact of their commitment?

Consultation with our South African member churches is a special case. They have objected since the beginning of this Programme to its militant nature. The other 230 odd member churches knew about their opposition, respected it but were convinced that we could no longer just listen to one group of churches. There were more partners to be heard. It may be good to add that almost all the requests for more consultation came from churches who had not put money into the Special Fund.

Question: Are you surprised by the negative reactions?

Answer: The reaction is mixed, not negative. We have very positive reactions from about everywhere and we have negative reactions from about everywhere. Only in Southern Africa are the negative reactions in the absolute majority, but that is to be expected in view of the fact that the majority of Christians in that country is silenced rather effectively.

Question: Are you surprised by the reaction of the governments in Southern Africa?

Answer: No. We are a bit surprised about the government pressure put on the churches to leave the WCC. One would expect from politicians who are by and large members of Christian churches that they knew better who the Lord of the Church is. We are used to pressure on the Church in communist countries, but a bit amazed that so-called Christian governments use similar methods. Our member churches in South Africa, however they may disagree with our decisions on the race-issue, are dealing very firmly with their governments in this respect.

Question: Are you not afraid that this decision may effect support for the WCC?

Answer: Any organisation which has a very tight budget for a very varied programme regrets loss of support, but a financial argument would never keep the WCC from doing what its member churches have decided the right thing at a certain moment to be. We would rather be poor than wrong. There are signs however that this action may also bring in new support for the WCC.

* AFFECT THE LIBERAL CAUSE?

Question: It has been said that this decision may not hurt the WCC in Geneva but it most certainly will hurt its liberal friends in Southern Africa. Do you think this a fair criticism?

Answer: Let me assure you that this action in no way means diminished support for people in Southern Africa who have opposed apartheid in other ways. We have no disagreement with South African churches about the evil nature of racism; the disagreement is only about methods to combat evil. Our CC has decided that the time has come for a *multiple strategy* in the struggle against racism. Many people in our member churches favour the way in which white liberals on the spot oppose apartheid. But increasingly we are pushed by others, both black and white, to take the Liberation Movements more seriously. You should not underestimate the percentage of Christians involved in such movements. We know that many people in Southern Africa see this too.

Question: There have been voices who stated that this action really means that the WCC has given up hope for a non-violent solution to the race struggle. Is that a correct observation?

Answer: No. The ecumenical movement is built on the hope that what is impossible for man is still possible for God. We feel, with many victims of racism, that there are few if any signs that the non-violent opposition to racism has been effective as yet. We also agree with them that racist positions seem to harden; but we do not agree with them that therefore violence is the only solution left. We will keep on calling all people engaged in violence to remember that violence is an extremely doubtful means to achieve true justice and peace. That is in keeping with our history and all our actions in the past. Our humanitarian, social and legal aid to combatants has never compromised our strategy "to call men away from the battle field to the conference-table".

* AFFECT MEMBERSHIP OF WCC?

Question: There have been reports that some member churches might leave the WCC. Do you think this is a possibility?

Answer: Of course it is a possibility, although the reports from S.A. seem to point out that most churches agree with us that disagreement does not break the ecumenical fellowship, but on the contrary increases the need for it. You must remember that we are not a political organisation in which disagreement on political or social matters touch the centre of our fellowship. We did not *choose* to come together, we were *called* together. Essentially we are a fellowship in the Spirit. Churches which would leave for political reasons would indicate that they have not understood what membership meant in the first place.

The good news of the ecumenical movement is that our unity, which we receive as a gift of God, is stronger than our doctrinal or theological differences. It would be a great tragedy if we had to admit that our differences in the methods to combat racism are stronger than the unity in the Spirit which we have in Jesus Christ.

Question: What do you think will happen now?

Answer: First, we must use this moment in our history for more intensive education of ourselves and each other. We know very little about racism yet. This is the time to learn more about our own feelings, emotions, convictions and hopes and about those of others.

Secondly, we must study the new questions which have come up. The question of violence will have to be considered in all its aspects. International law and the absence of acceptable legal standards for all people must get new attention. The relation between racism and nationalism needs further study. These are only a few of the topics we are now faced with. All of them have been considered before but now they have acquired a new urgency.

Thirdly, we must discuss between those who agree on the evil of racism but who disagree on the methods. Here not only the WCC but also the Confessional World Organisations and the churches themselves can and do help. In our next CC in Addis Ababa we certainly will have to consider the consequences of the decisions in the last CC in Canterbury. There has also been a proposal to have a direct consultation with our South African member churches.

Fourthly, we must bring the churches to combat racism more intensely than they have done, with different methods but with the same aim.

* AFFECT ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT?

Question: Do you think the debate of the last weeks has been detrimental to the ecumenical movement?

Answer: On the contrary. The ecumenical movement is a learning process, not a cheap way out of the divided state of Christendom. Debates are the nerve system of the movement. What we have to do is overcome our over-simplifications and our unchecked emotions. Our supporters could put themselves up as having all the answers, our critics as judges. We ourselves are in the danger of thinking that the mere fact of being criticised shows us that we were right. We may well have been wrong in parts; we most certainly made mistakes. In the issue of race, there is so much injustice, so much fear, so much bitterness, that nobody can just march in and do the only right thing. If there is so much suffering, the only ones who can help are those who are willing to enter the suffering themselves, personally and corporately.

AN OPEN LETTER TO A FRIEND

Dr.A.van den Heuvel

Dear John,

Thanks for your letter. It is a long time since we saw each other. You did not come to Europe and your Government does not want me to come to South Africa, so no wonder we have grown apart a little. But this letter of yours about WCC grants to organisations which combat racism amazes me. Why suddenly this bitter tone and such general judgements? You write as if our Executive Committee is made up of fools and revolutionaries and as if people who are combatting racism in Africa are bloodthirsty animals, criminals and outlaws. Don't think, by the

way, that you are the only one who has written me in such a way, but let me select you as the one to answer. I am making this letter public in order to react to a number of my other positive or negative friends at the same time. I chose to write to you because you have a name for fighting racism in your own country, and as a matter of fact you have taught me and others more about the evils of racial injustice than many books and articles ever could.

WHO REPRESENTS THE AFRICANS?

Five years ago in your home you gave me a picture of South Africa which I have never forgotten and which I have often repeated to other people. You said then that you were living in a racist state and that we, more or less regular visitors, could not begin to understand the demonic nature of such a country with its foundation of fear and its walls of uncertainty and arbitrariness. The apartheid doctrine, which might theoretically be defended as a strategy to pre-

serve the identity of different people, had in fact become a racist practice in which a tiny minority ruled a vast black, coloured and African majority. This can be seen, you told me, in the way in which Africans are treated. In inter-racial relationships, you said, there is not even a veneer of equality. Discrimination can be documented by the unequal opportunity for jobs, in the total inequality of wages, in the way the land is distributed to the different peoples, in the pass-laws, in the inequality of justice, in every new law which mocks the Bill of Human Rights. It was not me who said this - although I had seen it with my own eyes - but you, a white South African. And you went further. You said: nobody in the white community can represent the Africans. We have churches and organisations who oppose apartheid and who work for a real understanding between the races, but they don't represent the Africans. And, you said, the real representatives of the Africans are the African National Congress and the Pan

Dr. Albert van den Heuvel, a minister of the Hervormde Kerk van Holland is Director of the Department of Communications at the World Council of Churches, Geneva, Switzerland.

Recently, before the WCC decision, Dr. van den Heuvel was refused a visa to visit South Africa.

African Congress, but their leaders are in jail or in exile or dead. You were the one that day who was down and I had to comfort you. I preached hope against your despair.

WHITE PESSIMISM

You must remember our conversations on violence, in which you and many others opposed to apartheid were the ones who predicted that only violence would change the situation. It was we who pleaded with you all to set a Ghandian example somewhere, to try the models Martin Luther King had worked out, to show ways which are more excellent, more imaginative and more efficient than violence, which is always like a virus, spreading disease. We pleaded with you to give the Africans a sign that their costly non-violent protest would be backed by their white brethren, but you didn't believe us. You said it was too late. You said the relation between the races was so damaged that all you could do was to try to engage in personal reconciliation and hope for miracles. I wrote in my diary something which one of you said that evening when we came back from Pretoria: we have become so defensive that we have no hope left. I protested that evening, but you remained gloomy.

BLACK OPTIMISM IN SILENCE

The Africans I met were more hopeful than you and your liberal friends, although only a few still talked to us. From my friends and colleagues I have since heard the same story: the Africans in South Africa do not want to talk. There are too many spies, too many traitors, too many whites who have been careless. The ones we see, however, all agree: the situation is not just bad, it is getting worse.

Did you see your Government's report on prisons, dealing with 1968-69? 88,000 people in prison on an average day, 500,000 people sentenced to be imprisoned, which is one in forty of the population; 187 babies born in prison (in which country does that still happen?); 25,933 strokes of corporal punish-

ment; 84 people hanged (putting you on the top of the world's execution table); 340 deaths in prison. With such staggering figures in mind there are still Africans who hope that they can avoid using violence, an option you don't have any longer. But most talk to us as if that dream - the dream of a non-violent change - has been dismantled by the absence of any sign that a change is even contemplated. The ones who have left the country talk differently. They are no longer caught under the spell of the daily drone of discrimination which robs them of their personhood. They are no longer caught between the endless threats against protest on the one hand and the sermons against violence on the other. They have read how the other coloured peoples of Africa and Asia have liberated themselves from a colonial power or an oppressive white minority and they have become aware that there is hardly a case in which such liberations took place without sacrifice. They find out that the South African Government is more violent than they could ever hope to become and that all the talk of law and order they hear is little else but a defence for the whites and a threat to the Africans. And remember, these men are the ones which you called the real representatives of the Africans in your country.

DOING THINGS FOR PEOPLE

I know that you dislike the usual story about what South African whites have done for "their Africans". They have preached the Gospel to them, built houses, hospitals, schools. We know that and I have been told the story hundreds of times. I know that Africans from surrounding countries have tried - even illegally - to come and work in the gloomy mines of Johannesburg, but I also remember that you mentioned the price they had to pay for their benefits: the loss of their identity, the feeling of belonging to an inferior race, the promise to remain second-rate citizens for ever, total insecurity and very, very little support.

You and I walked together through the compounds of Johannesburg where these miners live without their families; we drove through these endless townships with their beautiful names and then we said to each other: they look like clean, well-built hospital wards - all the same, bare and impersonal.

A MINORITY WITHIN A MINORITY INEFFECTIVE

I am not picking on you, John, I am simply stating that all my English-speaking and all my African friends in South Africa over the last years have described their own land to me as a racist state and often as a police state. And this was not only done in private. Your church leaders have not been silent either. We outsiders, who were not allowed in any more and could no longer see for ourselves, could hardly get the feeling that the situation was improving. Every time we got a smuggled letter, every time we met Bantus in Europe, or white liberals, or even staunch apartheid defenders they all told us it got worse. In spite of all the courageous words and all the personal good will, nothing changed. Gradually it became clear to us that the one strategy we always had: to back the white liberal, is not enough. It is an important part of any attempt to contribute to change in South Africa - if it were only because people like me are nothing else but white liberals - but it is not enough. We have listened to you - and still do - with great attention and deep respect, but there are other voices. You know from the Assembly V of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches that increasingly black Africans are speaking a different language from yours. They have become impatient because in their eyes the white liberals don't deliver the goods. They respect you and love you but they are not impressed by the results of your strategy. And moreover, they feel that not just you alone, but also the black Africans should be heard. A (liberal) minority within a (white) minority should not speak for a silenced majority.

(Here Dr. van den Heuvel expanded on the Cottesloe Conference of 1960, the Mindolo Consultation of 1964, the Church and Society Conference of 1966 and the Notting Hill Consultation of 1969. As most of this ground is already covered in articles in this issue of Pro Veritate, space demands that they be excluded from the letter)

POLITICAL DISTORTION

Your politicians have, of course, immediately seized the opportunity to distort the action of the Executive Committee. The first thing they have done is to make sure that nobody would speak about liberation movements or resistance movements but of *terrorists*. They speak of murder and mutilation of innocent people; they paint a picture of the liberation movements which looks exactly like the picture those movements paint of the regimes now in power in Southern Africa, which disrupt families, keep people under arrest without trial, have put to death hundreds of black Africans, tortured and murdered them. But about these allegations no word! The violence is all on the other side. On our white side it is called law and order, on their side it is called terrorism. The nomenclature is not unimportant; it plays on the white people's fear and it discredits all who still have hope that Southern Africans can be liberated without violence. I do not think that the politicians have much success with this line of attack. When Mr. D. Fawcett Phillips, a member of the Rhodesian Government, says that the World Council should be renamed "Murder Incorporated", when the Minister of Foreign Affairs of South Africa speaks about a blessing to those whose actions consist of crimes of violence such as murder, arson and armed robbery; when a Prime Minister of South Africa puts pressure on the churches to withdraw from the ecumenical fellowship, then it is clear that their fear is such that they can only take refuge in gross distortions of the truth. This kind of language says less about the WCC

than about the regimes in Southern Africa, it seems to me.

WCC NOT COMMUNIST INSPIRED

The second distortion they use is to call the WCC a communist inspired organisation. Dr. Vorster, the brother of the Prime Minister, has used that accusation for years. Of course he knows well that this accusation is nonsensical. The WCC is under constant attack from the communist themselves and is repeatedly called an instrument of imperialism by Marxist ideologists. But it is also true that the accusation of communism does work with people who live in perpetual fear and who need to have an oversimplified identification of their enemy. One of my South African friends once said: communism in South Africa is a simple word for opposition; it has neither content nor substance. In a radio conversation in which the Canadian Broadcasting Company arranged a discussion between Dr. J.S. Gericke and myself, Dr. Gericke repeated again and again that the WCC is not consistent: we help terrorists (his words) in South Africa but we don't help people to fight communism. I replied that we were debating racism and not communism, and added that the two are not comparable. Communism grows anywhere while other forms of the organisation of society fail. In Europe Communism rose to power because the workers recognised Marx's analysis of society as being largely true. The churches by allying themselves with the bourgeoisie and its exploitation of the proletariat aided the growth of communism substantially. And if in South Africa communism spreads, who is to blame? It is not those who in the name of an attack on Marxism create the circumstances and continue the exploitation from which communism promises liberation? How ironical! Those who see a communist enemy behind every door, open the door widely to let it in.

In the same interview Gericke stated that Dr. Blake during his last visit to South Africa admitted that the WCC acted under pressure. The interviewer asked: pressure

by whom? Gericke answered: I don't know (but he meant: from communism) I then butted in: Dr. Gericke is right! The WCC acts under pressure from the great majority of African Christians, from people who are combatting racism in six continents, from the whole history of the ecumenical movement, and, we have to add finally, from the Gospel itself.

(Here Dr. van den Heuvel wrote about why the WCC accepted the integrity of the recipients of the grants and argued that they should be trusted to use the money for the purposes for which it was given. He then referred to reactions from outside South Africa).

WCC A FORUM FOR DISCUSSION

I hope that this long letter will help you to at least understand my amazement about your reaction. Contrary to what you say I am convinced that the WCC has reacted with great moderation in a very explosive situation. Don't think for a moment that I am making triumphalist noises. I know well that this action can be questioned! I am also sure that we need you more in the ecumenical movement now than ever before. The WCC is a place where we meet to discuss what makes us disagree. The fact that we represent the quasi unanimity of Christianity while you are in a tiny minority position does not change this at all. If all member churches which disagree with a part of the WCC's programme would leave us we would have few churches left. Part of the ecumenical adventure is to live together with those with whom we disagree.

When I met Albert Luthuli for the last time he said: "This country will go through a very difficult time. I pray to God that the churches will play their role". What more is there to say? Part of that role undoubtedly is not to let ourselves be cut off from each other. So, write me again. As for you, we think about you with great affection.

Yours ever,

A.H. van den Heuvel.

DIE SKEIDING VAN DIE WEË

Beyers Naude

Wie het nou ooit kon dink dat een enkele besluit van die Wêreldraad van Kerke, geneem in Arnoldshain, die ekumeniese sentrum gelee in die pragtige, vreedsame woudegebied van die Taunusberge naby Frankfurt in Duitsland, groter en verreikender gevolge sou hê vir alle kerke en christene in Suid-Afrika as enige ander kerklike besluit wat in Suid-Afrika die afgelope tien of vyftien jaar geneem is?

En tog is dit wat gebeur het deur die besluit van die Uitvoerende Komitee van die Wêreldraad om fondse ter ondersteuning van nie-militêre doeleindes ter waarde van R143,000 beskikbaar te stel o.a. aan "bevrydingsbeweginge" in Suider-Afrika. Die enigste ander kerklike gebeure wat die naaste daaraan gekom het was die Cottesloe-beraad van Desember 1960 - interessant genoeg ook 'n ekumeniese byeenkoms waarin die Wêreldraad ook betrokke was. Ek wil waag om te sê dat die besluit in Arnoldshain nie net vir die kerke van die wêreld maar ook van Suid-Afrika 'n katalisator, 'n skeiding van die weë gaan blyk te wees, 'n beslissing waarvan die gevolge tans nog nie oorsien kan word nie.

En tog; ten spyte van al die heftige emosionele reaksies wat die besluit hier te lande veroorsaak het, kan ons reeds 'n paar belangrike en beslissende uitwerkinge aandui waaruit nou al die afleiding gemaak kan word van hoe diep ingrypend die besluit die lewe en denke van kerk en Christendom in Suid-Afrika raak. Miskien is die uitwerking die beste saam te vat in drie woorde: Verwydering-Toetsing-Beslissing. Laat my daarop uitbrei deur te probeer aandui wat ek bedoel.

Eerstens: Die Verwydering tussen Suid-Afrika en die Buitewêreld al hoe groter.

Dit was nie soseer die besluit van die Wêreldraad wat hierdie bestaande verwydering vergroot het nie, as die oorhaastige en ondeurdagte optrede van die Eerste Minister en die heftige veroordeling van die besluit deur die meerderheid van die blanke gemeenskap sonder 'n daarmee gepaardgaande erkenning van ons aandadigheid en skuld. Ek wonder of ons witmense in Suid-Afrika enigsins 'n begrip het van hoe noulettend die wêreldgemeenskap elke woord en

uitspraak vanuit Suid-Afrika opgevang en ontleed het - en tot die gevolgtrekking gekom het dat hier 'n gemeenskap van blankes is wat die stem van ernstige vermaning en dringende waarskuwing óf nie wil aanhoor nie óf nie wil verstaan nie. Daarmee wil ek glad nie te kenne gee dat die meerderheid van Christene en kerke buite Suid-Afrika die besluit van die Wêreldraad sonder meer goedkeur of ondersteun nie. Ek verkeer onder die indruk dat daar beslis nie eenstemmigheid is oor hierdie besluit nie en dat die verskil in sommige kerke baie dieper gaan as wat op die oomblik wil voorkom. Maar die algemene reaksie van ons blankes in Suid-Afrika om met "heilige" verontwaardiging die hande ten hemel te hef asof ons geen skuld het om te bely, geen onreg het om reg te stel, geen aandadigheid het aan die toestande wat tot die besluit gelei het nie - hierdie reaksie het die kloof tussen ons en die wêreldgemeenskap oneindig vergroot en baie daartoe gebring om te sê: "Sien julle; ek het lankal gesê: aan hierdie mense is geen salf te smeer nie. Horende wil hulle nie hoor nie en siende wil hulle nie sien nie. Dis vrugteloos om te verwag dat die bevryding van die swartman vanuit die blanke geledere sal kom".

Tweedens: Die Verwydering tussen Wit en Swart al hoe groter.

Te midde van al die storms wat rondom die besluit gewoed het, was daar 'n groot stilte (en gevaarlik juis omdat dit so groot was): die stilte van meer as 18 miljoen stemme van die swart bevolking van Suid-Afrika - Bantoe, Kleurling en Indiër. Die enkele swartman wat iets gesê het, het die stilte nog onheilspellender gemaak. Waarom sou dit wees? Dié van ons wat die geleentheid en die voorreg het om in noue aanraking met sommige nie-blanke leiers te wees, het geweet en verstaan: hulle durf nie uitspreek wat hulle werklik voel nie. Maar ons het ook geweet dat daar in die gedagtes van duisende (veral van die jonger geslag) die blye versugting was: eindelijk begin die kerk meer daadwerklik erns maak met sy roeping om hom te vereenselwig met die lot van die veronregte en onderdrukte. Vir miljoene van ons nie-blanke bevolking het al die luide proteste en veroordelinge van die besluit van die Wêreldraad hol en leeg geklink omdat hulle so min verneem het van die noodsaaklike selfveroordeling, van 'n protes teen 'n rasse-sisteem en 'n beleid met al sy onreg wat die blankes hardnekkig bly handhaaf. Hoe heftiger die reaksie van die kant van die blanke hoe oortuigder het die nie-blanke geword dat sy verlossing en heil uit die slawerny van apartheid nie van die wit Faraos sal kom nie maar dat hy dit alleen kan verwag van 'n Moses uit sy eie geledere wat een of ander tyd ("God alleen weet wanneer", soos een dit gestel het) die verlossende woord sou spreek en die verlossende daad sou voltrek. Daarmee wil ek nie te kenne gee dat ons swart gemeenskap ten gunste van geweld is nie; maar dit is seker ook waar dat baie van hulle glo dat dit moeilik te voorsien is hoe geweld vermy kan word as ons blankes voortgaan op die weg wat ons ingeslaan het.

Maar wat ook al die toekoms inhou, een ding is seker: die kloof tussen wit en swart het groter geword - en ons hele swart bevolking het baie gevoeliger geword oor alle vorme van onreg waaraan hulle elke dag onderwerp word. Iets het hom in die gemoeidere van ons swart gemeenskap voltrek wat die ou gees van neerslagtigheid, skyn-onverskilligheid en apatie vervang het met 'n nuwe gerigtheid en beslistheid om self sy eie heil te wil bewerk.

Derdens: Die Toetsing vir die Blanke se Opregtheid nou onontwykbaar.

Dit skyn asof die besluit van die Wêreldraad en die reaksies daarop ineens die hele proses van die toepassing van die beleid van selfstandige ontwikkeling versnel en verhaas het. Dit moet tog vir elkeen duidelik wees dat die besluit o.a. impliseer dat die kerklike leiding van Die Wêreldraad ernstig twyfel daaraan of die blanke gemeenskap in Suid-Afrika bereid is om vrywillig afstand te doen van sy oorheersing van die swartman en om hom 'n volwaardige plek te gee in die politieke, ekonomiese, sosiale en kulturele lewe van die land. Daarom die steun aan "Bevrydingsbeweginge". Die blanke in Suid-Afrika wat die regeringsbeleid van apartheid ondersteun, voel nou meer as ooit dat die voorgegewe opregtheid van sy strewende om 'n regverdige skeiding te weeg te bring nou vir eens en altyd bewys moet word. Daarom die stroomversnelling wat plaasvind, waar die geroep opgaan teenoor die Regering: wys ons minder van die *afsonderlike* en meer van die *ontwikkeling*; wys ons minder van die *aparte* en meer van die *vryhede*; verwyder die 'klein' *negatiewe* maatreëls wat so irriteer en vervang dit met die 'groot' *positiewe* visie van 'n regverdige skeiding.

Of die meerderheid van die blankes dit nou wil weet of nie, één ding is duidelik: die besluit dwing die blanke om in 'n laaste 'grootse' poging die moraliteit en praktiese uitvoerbaarheid van apartheid te bewys. Die besluit van die Wêreldraad plaas die integriteit van die voorstanders van apartheid op die spel. Die opregtheid van hulle aansprake moet vir eens en vir altyd bewys of verwerp word. Dis die uitdaging wat opgesluit lê in die besluit van die in die besluit van die Wêreldraad. Dis 'n geval van nou of nooit. Wie die feite ken, weet dat dit 'n wanhoopspoging gaan word, dat dit 'n mislukte poging gaan wees - maar niks skyn die blanke te oortuig

dat hy van die weg moet afsien nie. Die blanke moet in 'n laaste groot poging homself en sy aansprake bewys; dat die beleid vryheid, geregtigheid en gelykwaardigheid aan alle volksgroepe gaan gee. Om dit te kan doen sal die blanke die immoraliteit en onverdedigbaarheid van sulke gebeure soos die inperking van die neëntien vrygespreektes, die weiering van die blanke mynwerkers om nie-blankes as geskooldes vir die tuislande te laat oplei, die ondervoeding en verhogering van duisende Bantoes moet verhoed of verwerp. Die swartman wag - en weet wat hy kan verwag.

Vierdens: Beslissing wag op die Afrikaanse Kerke.

Die besluit van die Wêreldraad het die spanning tussen Kerk en Staat in Suid-Afrika ernstig verhoog. Omdat die drie Afrikaanse Kerke hulleself ten volle agter die regeringsbeleid van apartheid geplaas het, sal veral die N.G. Kerk met sy groot getal lidmate onder Kleurlinge en Bantoe nou duideliker na vore moet kom om sy ondersteuning van die beleid te regverdig. Die ou onderworpenheid en gedweë stilsweye by die nie-blanke leraars en lidmate van die dogterkerke is besig om langamerhand plek te maak vir 'n nuwe ongeduld oor soveel onreg wat die nie-blanke daagliks onder apartheid moet verduur. Hier en daar klink reeds stemme op van hulle wat nie bereid is om veel langer te wag nie. 'n Nuwe gees van onafhankelike, kritiese denke begin na vore tree, waarin tot uitdrukking kom die geregverdigde verwagting dat die N.G. Moederkerk nou ondubbelsinnig sy stem teen soveel onreg en onderdrukking moet verhef - of vir altyd die reg verbeur om mee te werk aan die toekoms van 'n nuwe Suid-Afrika. Soos 'n jong kleuring dit uitgedruk het: "Die N.G. Kerk was die felste in sy veroordeling van die Wêreldraad se besluit om steun aan terroriste-beweginge te verleen. Nou wag ons op die N.G. Kerk om te sien of die kerk net so fel sal protesteer teen die voortdurende onreg wat tot terrorisme aanleiding gee. Maar ons kan nie lank wag nie - die kerk sal gou moet wys waar hy staan en wat hy bereid is om te doen. Praat is nie meer genoeg nie. Die tyd vir vroom woorde is verby".

Daarmee kan ons in een sin die oorheersende indruk saamvat wat die besluit van die Wêreldraad gewek het: *die tyd vir vroom woorde is verby.*

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