

IN SEARCH OF TRUE HUMANITY: A VOICE OF PROTEST

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my late Mother, Nomfanekiso and to my late brothers, Dyongosi, Fezekile and Zukile and to those in the black community who died violently without having enjoyed the taste of freedom for which we are still struggling. Above all, to my only Saviour Jesus of Nazareth, the Victim of hatred and principalities of this world. To Him alone I give undivided allegiance.

A THOUGHT!

"When the judgment seat of history sits upon the throne of justice will the Afrikaner irreversible record of cruelty be defensible?...A sheer disaster unimaginable in the pages of history."

Leon Gordenker.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

B.P.C.	=	Black Peoples' Convention
C.I.S.A.	=	Christian Institute of South Africa
C.P.S.A.	=	Church of the Province of South Africa
D.R.C.	=	Dutch Reformed Church
P.C.S.A.	=	Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa
R.S.V.	=	Revised Standard Version
S.A.C.C.	=	South African Council of Churches
S.A.I.R.R.	=	South African Institute of Race Relations
S.A.S.M.	=	South African Student Movement
S.A.S.O.	=	South African Student Organization
S.A.S.R.C.	=	South African Students' Representative Council

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PREFACE

During my early childhood, I had often been puzzled by the riddles of life to the detriment of losing my own identity. I have been deeply conscious all these years, that there was something wrong surrounding me. But I did not know what it really was. Coupled with this, was a desire to know something I could not name. My journey through life has been spent in the agony of searching for the meaning of existence, in a world that is highly demonic and in a society that is morally in utter ruin. Sometimes I would sit down gazing on the blue sky, imagining at times, whether there is somebody behind it who would somehow miraculously answer the questions that were constantly occupying my mind - but to no avail. Sometimes, I contemplated on the existence of God (who is up-yonder), and about what He might do to assist an inquiring mind of one created in His own image. But there were also times when I contemplated on the eternal fires of hell, which the preacher (in our mud-home in the district of Perseverance¹) used to stress a great deal in his Sunday sermons, which usually presented to the listener an opportunity to contemplate and to ponder as well as to imagine about the nature and the meaning of the Blessed Trinity. This problem of contemplating on the imaginable and inexplicable doctrines were the marks (as I later came to understand) of the Church of the Poor and the Downtrodden. I mean the marginalized black people of the South African ghettos, the hidden "concentration camps" brought about by the white bourgeoisie of a South Africa that knows no dignity befitting a black man. In this South African Jericho Road, one constantly meets fellow travellers, who walk as though they are on their way to announce to Sparta that many have already fallen behind (and buried in unmarked graves) for their fatherland. It is characteristic in such a long and hazardous journey that people sometimes sit down and indulge in prophecies about this and that. I, too, have been a recipient of such prophecies. Some suggested what I was looking for and what I ought to be. They were all wrong! In fact what I was looking for was nothing other than myself and my God-given freedom.

This, indeed, is what I have been looking for. But the search for authentic being, the search for true humanity still goes on, and while I have not yet said "Amen" to the struggle of survival, I will continue to travel in this

1. Perseverance is a railway station between Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage where I spent my early childhood. It is here that I started to contemplate (without success at the time) about the meaning of existence. This seed (has now) germinated to yearning for freedom, dignity, justice and racial harmony.

dark valley of the shadow of death with those who believe with St. Paul that 'we have here no continuing city'. I shall continue the pilgrimage in simplicity but with majesty, hoping and trusting that the future happiness and freedom I will conquer.

"In Search of True Humanity: A Voice of Protest" is set against the tragedies of apartheid. It arises from a perennial experience, that is, that part of education which is not learned but lived. Writing this thesis has given me more anguish than pleasure because of the volatile nature of the situation caused partly by contemporary political opinion formers and partly by the failure of the Church to be "subversive". Indeed, it has been a very difficult and painful experience as it has meant not only opening my own thoughts, experience, and observation to the reader, but revealing a private and personal part of the family life of black South Africans. Perhaps, by revealing too much of the truth of oppression, I may inherit the wrath or even lose the positive critical faculty of the reader and perhaps this is not wise for someone who is still dependent on the State for his freedom. The writing of this thesis is, among other things, meant to be a deliberate and calculated indictment on the white society and the Church of this country and, I therefore have no hesitation in accepting future consequences that may arise as a result of my shared experience.

As a university student researcher, I reserve the right to declare in public the results of the truth I feel duty-bound to reveal. I take comfort in the erudite scholarship of John Suggit² who eminently reminds us of the sayings of the Babylonian Talmud that "He that knows anything worth communicating and does not communicate it, let him be hanged by neck."³ In the same vein Aristotle would academically vote for research and the discovery of truth as an end in itself.⁴ But I would, in my context, opt for Plato who rightly thought that there is limited value in finding the truth if it is not to be communicated to others.⁵ This is even so when one takes into consideration that a university is the temple of the open-minded, a laboratory of primitive ideas and, a communicator of accepted opinions for further investigation, application and thought. Perhaps this was the idea Cardinal

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2. John Suggit is Professor and Head of the Department of New Testament Studies at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa.
 3. See John Suggit's Inaugural Lecture 'Poetry's Next-Door Neighbour' in Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, No. 25, December 1978, p.3.
 4. Ibid.
 5. Ibid.

Newman had in mind in the founding of the University of Dublin when he said, "A university" is "the high protecting power of all knowledge and science, of fact and principle, of inquiry and discovery, of experiment and speculation; it maps out the territory of the intellect, and sees that...there is neither encroachment nor surrender on any side."⁶ "A University training", continued Newman, "aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national taste, at supplying true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspirations, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political powers, and refining the intercourse of private life."⁷ He would also argue that a university prepares a man "to fill any post with credit, and to master any subject with facility."⁸ A university has a prophetic office to play. "With its ability to coordinate facts, to study causes and effects, to see human nature against the background of history. The University is uniquely fitted to prophesy to the nation, to put its finger upon social disorders and to make plain to all the consequences of their actions and the inevitable result of public trends."⁹

"If our universities are to rise to the height of the times" says Moberly, "the first, and quite inescapable, requirement is that they shall concentrate far more attention on the deep and difficult issues of the day. There must be no more tacit conspiracy of silence. Convictions must be explored and tested to their roots."¹⁰ "The university should be spiritually...a city set on a hill, and it should constantly impinge on the consciousness of all and sundry."¹¹

The search for true humanity, therefore, has made it necessary to devote a great deal of my time to the combination of the perennial experience and the role of the university graduate in the community. This is even so because "The philosophy of oppression" as Miranda came to recognize it, is "perfected and refined through civilization as a true culture of injustice, does not achieve its greatest triumph when its propagandists knowingly inculcate it;

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6. Quoted from Kerr, C. The Uses of the University, being the Godkin Lectures at Harvard University in 1963, published by Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1964, p.2.
 7. Ibid. p.3.
 8. Ibid.
 9. Seeley, R.S.K. The Function of the University, Oxford University Press, Canada, 1948, p.78. Seeley was the Provost of Trinity College, Toronto, Canada.
 10. Moberly, W. Sir, The Crisis in the University, S.C.M. Press, Ltd., London, 1949, p.146.
 11. Ibid. p.247.

rather the triumph is achieved when this philosophy has become so deeply rooted in the spirits of the oppressors themselves and their idealogues that they are not even aware of their guilt."¹² It would appear to me, therefore, that the disease which resulted to the writing of this thesis is larger than we imagine. And, it will only be fair to say that the actual disease is not the white man in South Africa but apartheid itself but the problem is that it is practised by whites. Does this peculiar position not actually challenge us as Christians to be "subversive"? Here I am tempted to agree with Arthur Gish that:

To be a Christian is to be subversive, or at least that is how he will be viewed by society. Since his loyalty is to one who is beyond history, he cannot give his ultimate allegiance to any government, business, class, or any other institution. His views cannot be expected to coincide with the majority view around him. He can be expected to be in continual conflict with the structures of the society, for to be at peace with God means to be in conflict with the world. When a Christian is faithful to Christ and refuses compromise with the demands of society, it is almost inevitable that he will be looked upon by the power structures of that society as being disloyal and subversive, and so he is. He is a person who dares to call the whole society into question. He is a revolutionary.¹³

Above all, as an author of this thesis I am in pain. I am suffering from love. I am thirsty for justice and righteousness. While I deeply mourn and lament the state of the situation in our country, I cannot hide my inner love for my lost white brethren. They are my brethren and I am Joseph their brother. My main concern is that whatever our position and attitude to each other in South Africa, society has laid out before us a common agenda, and in the final analysis we will not be asked how we defined our position but what we did about the problems confronting us.¹⁴ As for myself, like many South Africans of all shades, "I wish to have freedom to do the things I wish to and - no less important to leave undone those things for which I have no mind. I vaguely want to be at the heart of things."¹⁵ Nil Nisi Optimum!

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12. Miranda, J.P. Marx and the Bible: A Critique of the Philosophy of Oppression, S.C.M. Press, Ltd., London, 1977, p.XI.
 13. Arthur Gish 'writing out of the Anabaptist tradition of Christian sectarianism' See Brown Religion and Violence.
 14. See Epp, F.H. A Strategy for Peace: Reflections of a Christian Pacifist, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1973, p.128.
 15. See the words of Sir Brian Mackenna, Judge of the Queen's Bench Division. A paper read at University College, Dublin, on February 21, 1975. See The Irish Jurist, Vols 9-10, Part 1, Summer 1974/75.

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To Messrs Ernest Oppenheimer Memorial Trust who paid a vast sum of money towards my research at the Irish School of Ecumenics, the Dublin Research Centre; Standard Bank of South Africa Limited; the South African Council of Churches, Rhodes University and to Mr Hugh G. White of Cape Town. All these have contributed enormously towards my research. To them I am obliged.

To my grandmother, Emily Nomvula Dobe and to her daughter Agnes Titana, for their motherly care during all these years of struggle for better education, I am more than thankful. Above all, to my late Mother (to whom this thesis is dedicated), the Queen of my life and struggle who gave me the only lasting legacy, namely, prayer, the fear and the love of God and compassion and responsibility towards humanity - her spiritual and physical pains, frustrations and advice I shall never forget. To Messrs Selwyn

Kahanovitz, Louie Grimsell, B.Comm., Richard Andrews, B.A., fellow Rhodians and brother citizens - their cordial friendship and contribution I acknowledge and highly appreciate.

A special word of thanks to my promoter, the Rev Dr Professor J.A.B. Holland for his guidance, erudite scholarship and insight I am more than thankful. Without his assistance and guidance the task of writing this thesis would have been impossible. To members of staff and students in the Faculty of Divinity of Rhodes University, I give thanks. To the library staff and especially to Ms Sue Arnott, I give special thanks and gratitude for her willingness to assist me in finding books and material from various universities here and abroad.

Lastly, to Mrs Y. White, for her kindness and patience in typing the final copy of this thesis, I am more than thankful. To those who would be reading this work, I wish to say: Let it not be said by future generations of man that we never cared about the burning issues of our time. Rather, let it be said: We have been conceived, we have been born, we laboured and, above all, we grappled with the volatile agenda of racial conflict in South Africa and that the verdict of our struggle lies now and in the future in the final testimony of history.

In conclusion, I take full responsibility for the thoughts, arguments and propositions advanced in the entire thesis.

INTRODUCTION

In the course of the last seven years during which I studied theology here and abroad, I have often been perturbed by a recurring phenomenon, namely, the discrepancy between theory and praxis. This is no more true than in our own continent where biblical language erupts now and then in the parliament of the Republic of South Africa and where resolutions are taken in annual synods and conferences of the Churches of our land. These, to say the least, are seldom put into practice.

Whether I have succeeded in arousing the conscience of the reader in what I have written down in the thesis is another matter. What matters most, I think, is the authenticity in the presentation of some of those areas in our daily existence that cripple any possibility of enjoying the goodness of life as the Creator God has intended it in His Divine Plan of Creation.

My duty and aim in the writing of the thesis was neither based on scholarship nor on the fluttering of the dove coates of theological orthodoxy, but on the interpretation of the austere nature of the life of black people under the Nationalist Party rule of Apartheid. My duty, therefore, is that of an interpreter of the situation. There is nothing academic about apartheid. What is there is the monstrous evil perpetuated through the genius of the Afrikaner-Broederbond and the Afrikaans Churches and to a lesser extent by the liberal white community within the confines of South Africa. In my analysis of this evil I have proceeded as follows:

Chapter 1: deals with "The Memory of Suffering". It has happened in the history of the status quo in South Africa to entrench by law that which it has won by bullets and guns. And, this alone explains the massive and repressive measures (otherwise referred to as law) in the statute books of the government in South Africa. I have decided to by-pass the enumeration of the laws of apartheid as this would have meant devoting the entire thesis to the description, analysis, and interpretation of these laws, a duty which I regard as falling within the jurisdiction of the judicial executive of the Supreme Court of South Africa. I have therefore confined myself in the narration of the pain and anguish of black people. To a limited degree I have sought to follow the argument advanced by Professor Johannes Metz (a fundamentalist theologian) of Munster University in the

West German Republic. His model follows the Memoria passionis Jesu Christi. I am also greatly indebted to Robert Gillies'* tentative examination of Johannes Metz' theology of suffering.

From the above analysis I have decided to have a brief look at the theological understanding of suffering. This has, however, convinced me that the oppression and suffering of the "discarded people" in South Africa is sanctioned by a deliberate act of western civilization and culture said to be superior than the culture and civilization of the aborigines of the soil. Two things are apparent in this argument, namely, (i) it gave rise to mob rule whose motives in holding the reigns of power is not only destructive and oppressive but defeats the very ends of justice and the defiance of the international customary law and the very code of civilization and culture said to be protected by totalitarian rule of the Afrikaner clan; and (ii) this has led to the obliteration of the inner moral and the inner conscience of the Afrikaner clan. The death of this inner moral and conscience has diverted the Afrikaner's realization (the English-speaker included) that he is sitting on a time bomb that can explode in any minute of the day. Therefore, to black people (especially with regard to their liberation) both the Afrikaner and the English-speaker are negative identities.

In the light of the above, chapter one could be said to be not only the exposition of the anguish of being black in a pro-white society, but also a passionate "cry of dereliction" for redemption from the pain of apartheid.

Chapter 2: examines "The Violation of Human Liberty", entrenched and perpetuated by apartheid legislation. The reader must note here that the chapter takes as its subject of inquiry what the author considers the most DRACONIAN of State security measures, namely, 'The Internal Security Act No.79 of 1976 (an Amendment of the Suppression of Communism Act No.44 of 1950). More important in the chapter is that the Act embodies within itself the notorious Section 6 of Terrorism Act No.83 of 1967 which allows for the detention of a citizen in solitary confinement for an indefinite period of time. Evidence has shown that during this period of confinement, a detainee is subjected to severe interrogation and brutal torture. The Act, therefore, is in defiance of Articles 5, 9, 11, 12, and 19 of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" of the United Nations

* Robert Gillies was a contemporary of the author at New College, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, Great Britain. He is a priest of the Episcopal Church in Scotland.

Organization (Adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 217 A(III) of 10 December 1948; Articles 7, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, and 23 of the "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" (Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 2200 A(XXI) of 16 December 1966. The Act (in its broader aspect) would seem also to violate the "International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights" (Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 2200 A(III) of 16 December 1966; and "The Helsinki Agreement" Principle VII (guiding relations between Participating States) Respect for Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Including the Freedom of Thought, Conscience, Religion, or Belief.¹ The chapter seeks to suggest some vengeance inherent in Internal Security legislation in South Africa (See the conclusion of the chapter). The purpose of the chapter "is to stir up public awareness of this evil which takes place in the darkest recesses of political power, where the citizen stands naked and unprotected against the limitless power of the State."²

Chapter 3: examines the 'matrimony' between the Broederbond and the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) of the Afrikaner clan in South Africa. The main thrust of the chapter is to assess, however briefly, the influence of the Bond in the vocation of the DRC. This influence, suggests the author, has not only affected the vocation and the ministry of the DRC but also the policies of apartheid. The literature at our disposal shows that both the Broederbond and the DRC are two sides of the same coin. No one can do justice to the analysis of apartheid without making an intense investigation of the Broederbond. To fail to investigate the Bond and the DRC, however tentatively, is to fail to do justice to the understanding of both the mechanism and the rudiments of the evil of the apartheid doctrine. The chapter touches upon the way in which both the Bond and the DRC have misused the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity in their sanctioning of apartheid. In this regard we should remember that the very Afrikaner Civil Religion has undermined the Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testament. The chapter touches upon salient features only.

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1. For these Covenants see Miller, A.O. (ed.), A Christian Declaration on Human Rights; Theological Studies of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1977.
 2. Sean MacBride cited from Van Niekerk, B. in his article, 'Torture - Our Last Hurdle to Civilization: Reflections on a Recent Conference', in South African Law Journal, Vol. 91, 1974, Juta & Co., Ltd., Cape Town, South Africa.

Chapter 4: The reading of the previous chapter immediately suggests to the reader the near identity of the crisis and domination facing black people and the English-speaking community. The difference would seem to lie in the fact that the latter once tested the reigns of power and only knew of the fundamental rights of the black people when it lost that political power and privilege (to rule) to the Afrikaner. Although it is true that the voice of the English man was never totally silent on matters of social justice, but again, what could be said with justice is that this voice only became audible (though ineffective) from 1948. This ineffectiveness is obviously caused by the stake and privilege that the English-speaking community enjoys since it also helps considerably in voting the Nationalist Party into power. But, nevertheless the voice of the English community (on matters of human rights) could BEST be heard or traced from various resolutions and pronouncements of Synods and Conferences of the English-speaking Churches. This is the theme of the Fourth chapter. However ineffective this voice must have been in the course of the struggle for the liberation of black people, (a struggle that still continues), one must not undermine the contribution of the English-speaking Churches towards the liberation of South Africa.

Chapter 5: This chapter seeks to show the gist of the Black Consciousness movement, that is, its contribution towards the rediscovery of the dignity of black people in South Africa. This chapter also shows that for the first time in the history of blacks, young people are re-kindling the struggle silenced since the Rivonia Trial of the Nelson Mandelas, the Robert Sobukwes, the Luthulis, and many other black leaders, the majority of whom are serving long sentences (including life imprisonment on Robben Island). In short, the message of the chapter could best be summed up in the words of Martin Luther King Jr.: "Man dies when he refuses to stand up for that which is right. A man dies when he refuses to take a stand for that which is true. So we are going to stand up here...letting the world know we are determined to be free". In short, the chapter is a cry for recognition of the aspirations of black youth for the freedom of their fatherland. This can no longer be suppressed or ignored by both Churchmen and politicians.

Chapter 6: This sixth chapter on "South African Black Theology" is a response of the Black Church to an agenda put before it by the youth of today. In the chapter the author has tried to show that the response is

actually drawn up partly from the experience of black people in South Africa under the harshness of apartheid and partly from three sources, namely, (i) the North American way of doing theology; (ii) the South American theologians; and (iii) from the radical writings and aspirations of the Black Consciousness movement. By accepting the call the Black Church is able to answer the Christological question, "Who is Jesus of Nazareth for the black man in South Africa today." By answering this question, the Black Church enables itself to be tested and be judged by the Logos. If the Black Church is to retain its place in the heart and soul of the black youth it will have to show its relevance to the struggle for liberation of black people which is also the liberation of white people from fear. Towards the end of the chapter, the author grapples with the problem of liberation versus reconciliation and concludes that liberation in the struggle for racial equality and harmony will have to precede reconciliation. This is not only natural but biblical enough and therefore needs no further introduction.

Chapter 7: Here we are concerned with "The Church as a Sacrament of Healing". But first we take as our starting point the fact that since the Second World War the world has changed rapidly. Coupled with this change is the development of technology which is presenting mankind of this generation with an acute problem, for example, the imperatives of survival. All these questions necessarily force the Church to take part in political debates and deliberations. This cannot be otherwise since the Church was born into a political world. The author takes into consideration the fact that the Church is strewn with divisions within itself as to its participation in politics. Therefore the Church is caught up in a dilemma. But apart from this dilemma, the chapter touches on another area of equal importance, namely, throughout the ages the Church as been, among other things, a Sacrament of healing. In this regard the author focusses attention on the healing ministry of the Black Zionist Churches. These Churches are helping a considerable number of people from various diseases and handicaps. Some of these diseases have not been cured by western medicine e.g. AMAFUFUNYANA (see description in the chapter). This healing is done through the invocation of the Holy Spirit and by the laying on of hands by the prophet-healer. It is interesting to note here the restoration of the work of the Holy Spirit to the Church Universal. This is the contribution of the Zionist Churches. This is very important in the rediscovery of the wholeness of the Trinity within the Church.

Chapter 8: This short chapter tries to envisage the role of the Church in resolving human conflicts and to restore confidence in the Church. But it is true to say that at this time in our history in South Africa no one can pass judgment on the Church as an institution i.e. to the Church as we know it and as we see it today. Because of the intricacies of the situation facing the Church one only hopes for a miracle that one day we in South Africa shall witness the vision of St John the Divine (Revelation 7:9-12 RSV). We pray for this. We work for this and we hope that God in His everlasting mercy through the Grace of the Holy Spirit will (in spite of our sinfulness and weakness) give us courage to carry forward the Evangel for the furtherance of His Kingdom in South Africa and to distant lands.

Chapter 9: spells out the aspirations of the author that however divided we may be in our temporal issues, WE as a Church, the Body of Christ, shall be measured by our mission towards the fulfilment of the prayer of our Lord that we all may be one. The UNITY Christ prayed for is not only the Unity of ecclesial communities (divided by race, language, geography and nationalities) but also the unity of mankind. The augmentation of this chapter has rather been intentional on the part of the author. Intentional, simply because the disunity of the Church weighs rather heavily on the soul of the author. Secondly, it is to show those who would judge this work as revolutionary that while not losing the importance of the volatile nature in which we have been plunged by the principalities and powers in South Africa, the author is writing the thesis as a Christian who firmly believes that the wisdom of solving our problems will necessarily come from our firm belief in Christ. Christ still rules the Church, the Holy Spirit still directs it and above all, God the Father is still its Creator without whom the Church would never have come into existence. So the question of ecumenism which is the subject of the chapter is vital for the Church in South Africa if the Church is to prepare its future ministers and priests for the present crisis and the task that still lies ahead.

CONCLUSION

In the conclusion I have sought to devise some alternatives to apartheid. But one thing I could not run away from and that is the fact that:

South Africa is known throughout the world as a country where the most fierce forms of colour discrimination are practiced, and where peaceful struggles of the African people for freedom are violently suppressed. It is a country torn from top by fierce racial strife and conflict and where blood of African patriots frequently flows...

Almost every African household in South Africa knows about the massacre of our people...in the...district where detachments of the army and police, armed with artillery, machine-guns, and rifles, opened fire on unarmed Africans.³

This and only this, I wish to impress on the mind of the reader that I have constantly kept in mind in the entire anguish and pain of writing this thesis.

3. Rand Daily Mail, December 9, 1920, p.8. See also V.G. Mqingwana, Op.cit., p.89.

CHAPTER ONE

THE MEMORY OF SUFFERING

In examining our subject it is important to note from the beginning that we are here dealing with an explosive South African situation, a situation that is both theological and political. It is theological because it deals with the Word of God as addressed to man. It is political because man in his being constitute social, economic, educational, and political dimensions. In short, we are dealing with political theology whose task is to criticise institutions as well as societies which seek to dominate the processes of history and swallow man's identity in their particular social, political or mechanistic interpretations (Metz). We should note, however, that this is not the defiant atheism which declares that there is no God. People who combine political theology with such a de facto atheism would presumably accept the so-called 'Death of God' position which is that at some time God is assumed to have been alive, and that it is only now that it appears He has ceased to be.¹ This point will be explored more fully later, but it is important because of its implications.² A second astonishing thing (especially to western academic theologians) is the radical way in which views and arguments in political theology have departed (quite) so far from the normal continuity of western thought.³

The sources of political or liberation theology (see Chapter Five) are by no means new on the theological market but revolutionary aspects of traditional theology derived from God, Jesus Christ, and the Church. They seek to demonstrate that:

What people think about God, Jesus Christ, and the Church cannot be separated from their own social and political status in a given society.⁴

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1. I am indebted here to the thoughts expressed by R.H.R. Liddell (a former Professor and head of the Department of Systematic Theology at Fort Hare University, Alice, South Africa) in his public lecture on the 'Death of God' controversy, delivered at the University. See the Fort Hare Paper for 1972.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Cone, J.H. God of the Oppressed, S.P.C.K., London, 1977, p.45.

It is against this background that black people in South Africa need today more than at any other period in the history of the Christian Church, a theology that will take into consideration not only the salvation of their soul in the world to come but to a large extent their experience of exploitation and suffering "here and now", a theology devoid of servitude but conscious of their present predicament. A theology for and about black suffering. A theology not entirely imprisoned within the confines of academic scholarship. Up to now:

Theology is often regarded as the work of scholars, when actually it is the work of anyone who lives with the openness toward God and seeks to understand what God is about in the events of the day. It is the work of anyone who is so concerned about the doings of God (theos) that he applies his reason (logia) to those doings, in the hope that he will then be able to move with the purpose and determination on this pilgrimage between the cradle and the grave.⁵

This is not to deny the fact that black experience must also come under the test of the Gospel and thereby involving itself in theology. It is true that the more terrifying the human experience is, the more it turns to Almighty God for deliverance. Since black experience is more agonizing and terrifying it also calls upon God not only for deliverance from oppression but also for guidance and strength.⁶ It is a fact that until the beginning of the last decade black experience and aspirations were regarded as insignificant. There are still theologians in South Africa who engage in theology as though oppression and cheap labour does not exist on the South African labour market. There are theologians and laymen even among black people who attend annual conferences on whose agendas exploitation and denial of fundamental human rights to black people does not occupy a single line. The time has now arrived to view the black experience of suffering theologically. The question of our black colour must be examined and rediscovered in the light of Scripture. There is, indeed, a tendency to view skin pigmentation in South Africa in the light of dualism which in itself can easily lead to some kind of dualistic theology serving inhabitants of two distinct worlds of light and darkness, right and wrong, black and white.⁷ Jones would like us

5. Jones, M.J. 'Towards a Theology of Black Experience', in Christian Century, Chicago, 16 September 1970, p.1088.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

to be on our guard because "when dualism is expressed in terms of colour value factors are introduced: light is tantamount to truth, dark to error; white symbolizes unity, black its undesirable counterpart. Emotion soon begins to operate; "white" receives favorable responses, "black" unfavorable ones. "Black" is deemed bad because it is the opposite of "white". No question is raised concerning the integrity of "Black." Those who point to some worth or value in "black" are judged traitors to "white".⁸ Little do white people realize that they are in fact also not free. Little do they realize the gravity of the suffering and the experience of black people. Little do they realize that they, too, will be freed through the suffering and the experience of the people they keep in bondage. The greatest tragedy of all is the failure of the white man to realize the greatest miracle of the Twentieth Century, namely, the undivided love of black people for white people of this country. As has been said of the U.S.A.:

The suffering of blacks...will bring about the redemption of all; it will free whites from the demon of pride and liberate blacks by making them victorious victims. The rub is, whites do not see themselves as in need of anything that blacks possess - love, for example. Few whites...understand⁹ their own need for love, especially love from blacks.

The tragedy of denying the love from black people has nearly led to the greatest tragedy of all, namely, that of viewing or attaching a colour to God: the attempt of seeing God as a black God and Jesus as a black Messiah who is liberator of the oppressed. This is tantamount to idolatry. The temptation of the oppressor was and to some extent still is to teach and give an impression of a white God - thus the colour became not only the criterion between the haves and the have nots but also the dividing line. Black experience fully shows beyond any measure of doubt that:

Color is merely a vehicle; experience is the concern. It is because of color that we have had the experience. It is not because God is black that we are uniquely in touch with the Eternal; rather it is because of the black experience that we are able to discern uniquely God's way with his world.¹⁰

8. Ibid. p.1089.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid. p.1090.

Today, it is, however, obvious that the course of this dark history is changing. The oppressed of the land are speaking a different language - a language of their own which indicates that they realize that there is freedom to struggle for. They see the situation of oppression that dominates them. Their consciousness is no longer dominated. Gone are the days of the "survival of the fittest and the elimination of the unfit". The oppressed of South Africa are determined more than ever before to liberate themselves from the yoke of domination of the white people. The doors toward green pastures have finally opened.¹¹ In the past the future of the "wretched" of South Africa was closed. "The new language announces that a new man is born into history."¹² Experience of hardship and exploitation of black labour left the oppressed people of this country with no option but to reject the very roots of white society either by a radical rejection or by adopting a new mode of life that would negate white society and its institutions of violence. This is the beginning of a new consciousness and a new hope of better things to come through the struggle and determination of the oppressed black people in South Africa. "This process" remarks Reuben Alves, "can be described as the emergence of freedom. Man ceases to be one dimensional being, whose consciousness is submerged into facts exterior to it. It gains distance. It looks at the facts as something against which it is opposed. Man no longer is a reflexive repetition of his contacts with the world. He is born to freedom as he becomes critical."¹³

Were the Church in South Africa (as we shall later see) not sleeping on, some of the miseries of apartheid such as inferior wages, poor housing, malnutrition, inferior education, inequality in all spheres of life, would have been averted. Were it not for the fact that for more than three centuries faith in God has been highly privatized and highly spiritualized into water-tight compartments, we would not have got into the state of chaos in which we find ourselves today. The Church seems to have lost the eschatological vision of the coming of the Kingdom of God which becomes operative when it comes into contact with the social realities of today's world. The Church has a Gospel and a Saviour sufficient for the times and therefore ought to have known that man's capacity for self-determination, the emancipation and autonomy of the political sphere which

11. Cf. Alves, R.A. A Theology of Human Hope, Abbey Press, Indiana, 1974, p.11.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

reached maturity with the Enlightenment had determined that since then (so Metz suggests) the political structures are no longer given, previous to man's freedom, but are realities, taken on and modified by man. The Enlightenment and later Karl Marx criticised religion because it appeared to be an ideology emanating from particular situations, historical and social. Theology reacted by placing the social dimension of faith on a secondary and privatized level. This kind of theology sought to solve the problem born of the Enlightenment by contracting out of it. The life of faith becomes an abstraction, a retreat from the active social life.¹⁴

Metz sees the need to interpret the work and the person of Christ in its implications (and some would say 'imperative') for a technological, pluralistic and in some spheres oppressive and repressive world. We agree with Metz that political and social aspects of Christ's mission have been too long obscured by theologies which have emphasized private ascent of the individual to God. This 'reduction' of the faith has brought the Christian message to the level of personal decision apart from the world and man's fellow-men. Hans Schmidt writes in connection with this after examining the historical background of politics and Christology:

Thus none of these Christian outlooks (...he cites Augustinian and Franciscan piety, the dogmatic concept of Christ, political Christology....) has provided Western Christianity with satisfactory opening to the question of Christian responsibility for public life and world history.¹⁵

In accepting this conclusion, theology must work to overcome the division between social freedom and the private spiritual life.¹⁶ Metz' political hermeneutic which demands dialogue with those movements which work to breakdown hierarchical structures which deprive men of self-determination. It is the task of political theology to overcome a passive response on the part of the Christian to society. This requires not notional, nor even

14. See Gustavo Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, S.C.M. Press, London, 1974, p.243. Cf. also James H. Cone, Op.Git., p.46.

15. See Hans Schmidt, 'Politics and Christology - The Historical Background' in Concilium, Vol.6, No.4, June 1968.

16. The method Metz uses to demonstrate this is a 'narrative structured theology'. Regrettably it is not within the scope of this chapter to examine this further.

academic assent but in a real way a living of that life which is preached and professed in the liturgy in the socio-political world. Political theology must be action orientated - in this way it is political theology rather than theology of politics. It raises the whole question about the understanding of faith and society directed practice. Assmann would echo the same note seeing the task of political theology as aiming at:

- (a) being a critical corrective to any relegation of faith to the private sphere...;
- (b) emphasizing the political dimension of faith, by introducing its basic tenets (grace, redemption, salvation, sin, and so on) into the fullness of the historical process;
- (c) reflecting in new terms on the relationship between theory and practice;
- (d) regarding the Church as an institution of social criticism, an institution of the critical freedom of faith;
- (e) redeeming the dangerous memory, the subversive contents, the cries of frustrated hope (Metz) in the history of Christianity and in the Christian message.¹⁷

It is therefore the function of political theology to bridge the gap between theory and practice. This will undoubtedly lead to the realization of the life and work and person of Jesus Christ which form the initiation into socially concerned action. For political theology to realize this connection between Christ and present day political involvement, the eschatological message of Christ must be developed into the foreground of theological thinking. In this regard it is necessary to hold as one aspect of faith God's futurity and His eschatological Lordship. Christianity has to do justice to the witness given us in the person and work of Jesus Christ in its fullest socio-political directiveness. No society or world as it exists can be a true referent to the Kingdom of God. What is required is change; change towards a better, more just, equal society. A theology which thus takes seriously the eschatological nature of God is of necessity committed to establishing signs of the New Testament message of salvation, forgiveness and reconciliation in its social praxis (Metz). The concepts of freedom, peace, justice, and reconciliation

17. Assmann, H. Practical Theology of Liberation, Search Press, London, 1975, pp.30-31.

(see Chapter Six) can never be made merely private affairs and that when political theology brings out the public nature of the Christian message it should never relapse into a direct challenge to the socio-political world by adopting a particular political platform. In political theology there must be a critical liberating overriding of political systems and existing conditions by the historical communication of the biblical message of salvation. This will help in the transformation and the improvement of the quality of life and race relations in South Africa. Christian faith because of this is displayed in the form of freedom to be critical of society.

This criticism is a positive force through and out of which is given a contour to the form of Christian hope as to the promised fulfilment of the Kingdom of God. Theology should attempt and always work to develop a critique of society, and from this develop a critique of its own critique to avoid its standing on a particular political platform and developing from political theology to biased theological politics. The aim of this is to put the Church in a dialectical position in which she affects and is affected by society as she makes real particular human rights within her sphere of operation. Without this mutual influence, in which the Church herself in fulfilling her task in and for the contemporary world, her credibility suffers. The Church must be critical of herself and of her own past and of her inadequacies in which she has been the perpetrator of much cruelty and suffering.

This view will be expounded later in the subsequent chapters. But it suffices to say (at this juncture) that the Church's history and the whole of history is the experience of reality in conflict and contradiction, whereas salvation is theologically speaking their reconciliation by the act of God in Jesus Christ. An integral part of history especially in our South African context is marked in black and red by the suffering experience of faceless masses through violence and oppression, injustice and guilt, finiteness and death. Each person in these masses has lost his/her identity as a person and the work of political theology or theology of salvation - indeed, the very social praxis of the Church - will be, towards eliminating the causes of this non-identity. Ultimately non-identity must be eliminated altogether. The accumulated history of suffering must drive theology on to looking for a mediation between salvation and history which takes seriously both the history of suffering and the forces of non-identity as well as the content of salvation in history.

For the Christian with the insight the future of our freedom is grounded in the memory of Jesus' suffering on the Cross. The Christian memory of Christ's suffering as suffering on behalf of others is in the foremost part of the history of suffering.¹⁸ The memory of remembered suffering is a dangerous memory for totalitarian and mechanistic regimes which seek to alienate man from his right to criticize (see Chapter Two). There must be renewed respect in society for man's memory of suffering. If respect for the history of suffering is denied the humanity of those who suffer is destroyed in favour of an ideology or an autonomy. Where respect for man's suffering is held high it is a dangerous critical faculty in society which attempts to safeguard the future by means of its past memory. The memory of suffering ("ex memoria passionis") offers an inspiration for us in that it makes us to fix our eyes of faith on to the Cross and the suffering of Jesus in order to understand fully our predicament. This gives us the ability and capability to overcome the forces of nature and history that led to our suffering. Rebellion in our everyday life is caused by remembered suffering and for any ideology to dominate man it must seek to destroy his memory. By doing this any political enterprise which seeks to make its ideology its goal paralyses its subjects in an economic - technical structuralism.¹⁹

In societies where this repression is needed for the political ideology to maintain its control its success is never fully complete. Men can never be totally and completely dominated, for men will continue to ask the question, "Whose future is this, and whose progress is it?"²⁰ The goal of this history is not certain, but for man it is directional; it gives a command - the command to release captive Israel. Because Jesus distinguished his own work from any directly political involvement it retains a supreme social effectiveness of its own. Consequently for the Christian, political theology arises from the memory of Christ's

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18. Here it becomes essential to emphasize that Christ's suffering was not like ours. He was obedient to His Father and therefore committed no sin. The suffering that is so rampant in the world today (including our own) is the result of man's disobedience which in itself is a grave sin.
19. Cf. Metz' essay and the replies to it in Ewert H. Cousins (ed.), 'Hope and the Future of Man.'
20. Metz helps us here in his insistence that even at this point where one seems to be favouring revolution - that political theology must resist both totalitarian and identification and isolation with a theology of revolution.

suffering. Christ's politics were those of a sufferer, not one who caused suffering. The Christian Church and the (individual) must actually feel the threat to its/his own existence before the critical faculty can effectively initiate the changes necessitated through the memory of suffering. The memory of suffering, the memory of Christ's suffering, becomes lived as a life of present suffering, for it is in this that both the situation is real and the need for deliverance is real. The memory of suffering feeds the yearning for freedom in the future.

The vision of the one who suffers is the vision of one who yearns for an end to all suffering and in the Christian sense this is close to an eschatological hope for the future to be realized here and now.²¹ In the eschatological message of Jesus, man's suffering and death is given a meaning in which its bonds can be overcome. Sacred history gives a meaning to the world's suppressed hopes and sufferings in which the forgotten or crushed hopes of humanity are allowed a meaning, a meaning which cannot be cancelled by the future course of history.²²

It must be remembered that it presents a position which avoids becoming a purely conceptual analysis of the human position in society it must be introduced into effective political life. But in doing this it is difficult at times either to maintain or visualise how this position can again avoid identification with reactionary or universalistic standpoints. Further, we would obviously have difficulty in avoiding either totalitarian or utopian interpretations for it is intimately associated with a belief that it is eschatological in nature. At this juncture one may pause and ask a question with Metz, whether there can be a socially identifiable bearer of the meaning and subject of universal history. Marx would identify such as the 'proletariat', Hegel would identify it as 'World Spirit' or 'Universal Humanity'. However, each of these are anonymous or abstract so he rejects them. It is therefore the God of Jesus' suffering who is the subject. The One who cannot be tied down politically. It is the One in his eschatological freedom who is the subject and meaning of history as a whole.

21. A theology of salvation which neither conditions nor suspends the history of salvation nor ignores the non-identity of suffering is both memorative and narrative theology.

22. Concilium, Vol. 6, No. 8, June 1972, p.22.

The Christian memoria recalls the God of the passion of Jesus as the bearer of the universal history of suffering and in the same movement refuses any attempt to give political shape to this subject and establish it in power.²³

and further:

(In doing this) the Christian memory of suffering can become alongside many other often subversive innovative factors in our society, the ferment for that new political life we are seeking on behalf of our future.²⁴

Therefore if the Church proclaims the memoria passionis Jesu Christi in the midst of mankind in which the history of human passion is made unforgettable then it will remain the bearer of something on which much more depends than the will to self-assertion of a religious institution. This is the future of our humanity. But in cash terms how is such a view to avoid particular political interpretation if it is to be effective and not be purely conceptual?

But, however, the most vital thing the Church can still proclaim the memoria passionis in the midst of society and openly stand against the ideology which attempts to suppress humanity. But then one can still ask another question: By what means can the Church realize its critical faculty and yet still maintain the objectivity required in assessing political situations without becoming so totally involved in them that the critical faculty ceases to be objective? Secondly, how do we as a Church in South Africa react in our explosive situation? Could we avoid being identified and associated and even involved in left-wing (and possibly subversive) politics? The question of political involvement is raised by Latin American theologians who admit theology is on one hand a critical understanding of history and historical practice but who then go on and try to answer a further question, namely, 'what is to be done and how can we do it'. Enrique Dussell²⁵ criticises the general European

23. Ibid.

24. Cf. Joseph Sittler's reaction (Cousins, Op.Cit., p.131ff. Cf. also Lewis Ford, Op.Cit. p.134ff. how resurrection follows crucifixion in providing the hope for mankind. (We shall see this later in this Chapter when we deal with suffering and the Cross of Christ as related to love and neighbour.)

25. See Enrique Dussell's article 'Domination - Liberation: A New Approach' in Concilium, Vol.6, No.10, June 1974. Enrique Dussell is Professor of History and Philosophy at the Latin American Pastoral Institute which is the branch of CELAM at Quito (Ecuador). He is also Professor of Ethics at the University of Cuyo.

approach to political theology because it restricts the voice of criticism. From the European perspective international, imperialist injustice passes unnoticed, whereas eschatological (undiscriminating) protest must reach out to cover the whole of human kind without discrimination. He rightly claims that some theologians (e.g. Metz and Bloch) are limited by the theology of hope which has failed to overcome dialectic and ontology (presumably at the expense of political action) and so the future is still seen as a development of the self. Theology of hope becomes a professional ethic instead of the subversive movement opposing the closed system which knows it has to initiate an historical liberation as the sign of the coming Kingdom. In the same issue of Concilium, Claude Geffre suggests that:

Latin American Theology deliberately sets out to be a committed theology, both militant and even partisan. It cannot remain neutral in regard to left or right positions.²⁶

European theologians who thus remain neutral on the basis of political relativity and the absoluteness of Christianity offer an ideological justification for the West's capitalist system.

Although Geffre admits German political theology does insist on the historical responsibility of the Church as a court of judgment for society as a whole, it:

...nevertheless remains an abstract and reformist theology which refuses to pronounce on the alternatives of socialism or capitalism on the pretext that the eschatological absolute relativizes any practical theological option.²⁷

So in the light of the Church in South Africa and also political theologies, one has to ask whether our theological effort is radical enough to affect the evil of apartheid. At the moment our theology is theoretical. The dangers of theoretical approaches to the world's problems are an invitation to the avoidance of action to solve them by working at the theoretical level alone. Also the danger which Metz sees in the privatizing of the faith whilst being applicable to Europe nevertheless

26. See Claude Geffre's editorial opinion, 'A Prophetic Theology', Concilium, Ibid. Claude Geffre is Professor of Fundamental Theology at the Institut Catholique in Paris.

27. Concilium, Op.Cit.

lays itself open to criticism from South America, where the faith in certain situations is anything but privatised, but which plays an important role in supporting the established order. Political theology must avoid the pitfalls of being applicable to (relatively comfortable) situations alone.

At this juncture we must take a bird's eye view on the way in which the Church has in the memory of suffering neglected the role of the Cross of Christ and made it insignificant. The Cross of Christ in the struggle of black people for new humanity has become the sign of victory in the struggle and also the hope of the birth of a new nation. The joy of it all is the loneliness of Christ at the peak of His drama: He had no man either in Gethsemane or on the Cross. In Gethsemane His disciples all fell asleep. On Calvary all had abandoned Him. So in the struggle especially in our loneliness we are with Him and He with us. He will never fall asleep and likewise He will never forsake us. So the Psalmist is right when he sings:

He will not let your foot be moved,
 he who keeps you will not slumber.
 Behold, he who keeps Israel
 will neither slumber nor sleep.

(Psalm 121:3-4 RSV)

He will continue to give black people the victory and joy in carrying the Cross. This joy is the foretaste of our resurrection. Like Jesus black theology has to announce to its hearers the significance of the power and the ability to carry the Cross for continual renewal in the quest for new humanity. St Maximus the Confessor is reported to have said, "all the realities which we perceive with the senses demand the cross". The Cross has special significance in the suffering of a nation. It creates obligation, relationships, and responsibilities. The Cross tells and reminds us about,

Our responsibility towards those who are near to us from the weight of a particularly heavy and painful cross on account of the fragility of their life which is exposed to a multitude of ills, a multitude of difficulties which arise from the conditions of this world in its present state. Parents suffer intensely and very frequently because of the ills and difficulties of their children; they fear for their life, for their failure, for their sufferings. Therefore the life of parents becomes a life of continual concern,

and the cross of the children is their cross. Our cross becomes heavier with the weight of the cross of those with whom we come in contact, for we share responsibility for the life of our children, our relatives, our friends, and even of all men with whom, in one way and another, we are in touch. We bear responsibility for all that can threaten the life of those for whom we have care, and we have the obligation, so far as we can, of smoothing their difficulties and helping their lives. Thus we can reveal and strengthen our love for them and their love for us; thus we can develop the seeds of a future life in strengthening our and their spiritual existence. In this responsibility towards our neighbour we live more intensely our responsibility towards God. Christ has shown this meaning of his cross, he who had pity on those who were suffering, and wept for those who were dead.²⁸

It is significant to note that in the struggle for human survival all our efforts in trying to do good work are almost always accompanied by suffering and, also by virtue of the Cross we are carrying and that to avoid the suffering involved would mean in general to renounce the struggle and the effort to do what is good. This would mean that in the absence of the Cross the struggle would not be sanctified. Secondly, without it the effort will neither grow nor strengthen our spiritual life and "To avoid the weight of the cross is to avoid our responsibility towards our brethren and our neighbour before God." (Staniloae).

Only by the Cross can we remain in submission to God and in true love towards our neighbours...by seeking to avoid the Cross...consequently, we do not discover either the depth of the greatness of the potential forces and powers of the world as a gift of God if we try to live without the Cross. The way of the Cross is the only way which carries creation towards the true heights for which it was made. This is the signification which we understand of the Cross of Christ.²⁹

The problem with us Christians in South Africa seems to be this: we do not seem to find ourselves in the situation of Christ, namely, a situation of total purity; the ability through constant prayer of having the unique capacity and the determination of carrying the Cross of Christ without

28. Staniloae, D. The Victory of the Cross, S.L.G. Press, Oxford, 1976, pp.6-7. Father Dumitru Staniloae is Professor of Dogmatic Theology in the Theological Institute of Bucharest. He is also the editor of the Romanian version of the Philokalia.

29. Ibid., p.8.

having an emblem of cardinal sin. Our daily lives are mingled with a stain of impurity whereas the Cross comes to us in great part because of our fault. This impedes the responsibility with which we fight for the oppressed. As individual Christians in South Africa we have not fully lived our daily lives in full dialogue with the Blessed Trinity, thus refusing the role of a responsible partner in the dialogue of relationship with the Creator, and by so doing we no longer acknowledge the Creator as the one who addresses us to stewardship.³⁰

Stewardship requires truth and decision viewed from the Christian faith. Christian faith is the decision in which the laos, the people of God have freedom to be publicly responsible for their undiluted trust to their God. They have to learn to humble themselves before the Revealed Word of God (Barth). Their knowledge must be the knowledge of truth; truth is the ingredient of the language of the Church (Barth). Therefore, it is obviously the time for all suppressed black people to address each other in and with the truth about who and what brought them to the condition of deprivation against which they struggle today. We are indeed, living at a time in history where in human relations the sacred truth of God is very hard to come by, because most of us are deceived (Staniloae).

Therefore on the basis of the experience of suffering and the duty of the Cross it is time for us in South Africa to speak the truth that the racist faith must at all cost find its life through the use of political, military, economic, and cultural institutions. It is white people who control the political, military, economic and cultural institutions. Black people do not (Kelsey). The nation ought to realize that:

We have entered on a period in which the feeling for law is hopelessly bereft of force of soul, and of sense of moral obligation. It is a period of lawlessness. Parliaments produce with easy readiness statutes which contradict the idea of law. States deal arbitrarily with their subjects without regard to the maintenance of any feeling for law...No respect is shown for their natural right to a fatherland, or freedom, or dwelling-place, or property, or industry, or food, or anything else. Belief in law is to-day an utter ruin.³¹

30. Ibid.

31. Schweitzer, A. Civilization and Ethics, Adam & Charles Black, London, 1949, p.XXI.

Black South Africans are neither mute nor reflexive. They will no longer allow either their political destiny or their theological self-definition to come from alien sources. With the rise of black consciousness, the days were gone forever (for theologians) when they erect theologies of interracial relations and issue pious calls for integration. They witnessed in their midst the appearance of a vigorous, confident movement of black South Africans fully capable of speaking for themselves, but still eager to send a helping hand to their white brothers. Many of the high-purposed people who now felt excluded from the black struggle turned anxiously to the external proletariat of the Third World. For the first time since 1652 black people gathered together to forge a genuinely black theology, a theology of the soil, a theology of conflict, struggle and hope. It is the theological equivalent of the guerilla using captured weapons of the imperialist against him (Alves). It has not been overlooked that there are dangers involved in making any use of the weapons of the oppressor. Sometimes they explode. Sometimes they turn out to be the wrong gauge for your ammunition, but even on those occasions when the weapon fails, it is a valuable experience in the memory of suffering.

Surely, the experience and the memory of suffering has taught that ideas sometimes misfire in our own hands, but this only serves as the sign of the inadequacy of the ideas which we have of the situation or the necessary experience and technique of handling it.

Any person baptized in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, sees his Creator as an energy that is in command in order to reach a new open future. This becomes more evident when one realizes that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is ever present in the struggle of the oppressed opening up a new future. To accomplish this we need a theology of social change i.e. an ultra radical theology that will quicken its political and human consequences not to apply a theology of rhetoric. Theology must undergo a new birth, death, and resurrection. Its trauma must come not just in thought but in praxis, in politics and in the struggle of the oppressed to become authors of their history rather than its footnotes.

From the above statement, it follows that up to now black people in South Africa have been victims of Afrikaner and English dictatorship whose motto is to capitalize on soft-mindedness.* No wonder Adolf Hitler could

* Here I am tempted to conclude that 'homelands' in South Africa have come about as a result of this softmindedness.

employ this softmindedness and say, "By means of shrewd lies unremittingly repeated, it is possible to make people believe that heaven is hell - and hell heaven...The greater the lie, the more readily will it be believed."³² We will have to be on our guard here lest we are also engulfed in a sophisticated nazism - black people have to make sure that their minds are tough enough and should therefore be aiming at being worthy citizens of a city that is built beyond the border of false propaganda.

Martin Luther King recognized that "The shape of the world today does not permit us the luxury of softmindedness. A nation or a civilization that continues to produce softminded men and women purchases its own spiritual death on an instalment plan...we cannot win the respect of white people... if we are willing to trade the future of our children for our personal safety and comfort. Moreover we must learn that passively to accept an unjust system is to co-operate with that system, and thereby to become a participant in its evil...unborn children will be the recipients of a long and desolate night of bitterness, and our chief legacy to them will be a never ending reign of chaos...the wreckage of nations that failed to follow Christ's command."³³ A question may arise here, What must be done? Brunner feels (quite rightly so) that what is to be done is simply to render the old truth of the Bible in a way that will be easily understood by the ordinary man of today. At the same time he warns that wearing a Christian disguise is in antagonism to the thought of Scripture. The fight with modern thinking is the task supremely of theology; and since it is a fight more critical than any other the Church has to wage the responsibilities of theology are now perhaps greater than ever before. What the Word of God does is to expose the contradiction of human existence and the grace to cover it.

Man is placed in the critical position of having to decide, and such a situation, just because it is critical cannot be apprehended by means of any single theoretical idea. Theoretical thought seeks the unity of system; the Theology of Faith insists on the reality of existential decision. Brunner would see the sin of our time as fundamental individualism which makes societal life virtually impossible. It is here that the

32. Quoted by Martin Luther King Jr., in his Strength to Love, Fontana Books, London, 1963. Adolf Hitler was born in Austria in 1889. He became political dictator of Germany in 1933. After many atrocities he committed suicide on April 30, 1945.

33. Ibid. pp.12 and 14.

divine Word of the Christian Church has to come in as a solution to social questions of truth. But the Logos has been lost by the Church: to regain it is the task not only of living theology but also of the prayer of every living Christian.³⁴

One of the maladies of the Church of our time is her disregard of the fact that she has to undergo conversion. This will enable her not only to confess her transgressions and impurity but will also be the beginning of a new life and thus the beginning of a new commitment to face the many problems of our age. This will also lead to the rediscovery of her faith and thus also of her responsibilities before God and nation.

So we conclude that the social, economic, educational, and political injustices that make up the memory of suffering will have to be dealt with and be eradicated once and for all - thus assuring freedom and equality for all. Justice will never prevail in a country with millions of suffering people who are nonetheless pillars of the economy of the country. The South African slaves "...wondering at their own discoveries and their own might...are today troubled and perplexed by the questions about current trends in the world about their place and their role in the universe, about the meaning of individual and collective endeavour, and finally about the destiny of nature and of men."³⁵ Every journey however diabolical or holy has an end. The end may be sweet and/or bitter or both. Black people of South Africa have travelled a long journey of three hundred and twenty-seven years under oppression but are still under and are looking forward for the fulfilment of this prophecy:

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because he has anointed me to preach good
news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the
captives
and recover of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the acceptable year of the
Lord.

(Lk. 4:18-19. Cf. also Is. 61:1-2 RSV).

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34. See Brunner, E. The Word and the World, S.C.M. Press, London, 1931, p.126.
35. See Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, Dominican Publications, Dublin, 1975, p.905.

When a black man has fully understood the meaning and the implication of the above passage, he suddenly decides that he can no longer take any orders or obey any command whose aim is to retard the feeding of the hungry and the liberation of the oppressed. Certain seeds begin to germinate in his mind. He may have in mind something like this, "this has been going on too long," "up to this point yes, but beyond it no," "you are going too far," or, again, "there is a limit beyond which you shall not go."³⁶ This is the affirmation of a border line or, he may be rebelling with a feeling that a certain authority has gone beyond the limit where he begins to infringe on the rights of others."³⁷

The slave thus demonstrates that he has worthwhile attributes and dignity which must not be tampered with. At least up to this point he is still abandoning himself in awareness but with a purpose. Camus put it this way:

As a last resort, he is willing to accept the final defeat, which is death, rather than be deprived of the personal sacrament that he would call, for example freedom. Better to die on one's feet than to live on one's knees...If he prefers to risk death to the negation of the rights that he defends, it is because he considers these rights more important than himself. Therefore he is acting in the name of certain values which are still indeterminate but he feels are common to himself and to all man.³⁸

Brunner rightly points out that the decisive point for the understanding of man is among other things the understanding of the fundamental freedom essential to man. Above all, failure to understand human freedom is sin and a rebellion against the very nature that God has created. Once man eliminates his God-given responsibilities human existence is bound to disappear and its place is taken by oppression of the individual to the collective power of the Church. This can only be viewed as the most terrible thing that can ever happen; and if it does happen, then, the sanctuary itself has been defiled; it has been infected with the demonic.³⁹

36. See 'The Rebel' by Albert Camus in Revolution and Political Change, by Welch & Taintor (Eds.), Duxbury Press, California, 1972, p.212.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. See Brunner, E. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Vol.II, Lutterworth Press, London, 1952, p.121.

In this regard Barth warns that when the Church does not act responsibly in matters that affect her flock, then, there is danger that it joins the "fellowship of the quiet."⁴⁰ The problem as Bonhoeffer saw it is that "Man has learned to cope with all the questions of importance without recourse to God as a working hypothesis."⁴¹ Grave as these warnings are from the lips of people of real authority, they certainly do not mean anything to the establishment in South Africa.

Apartheid has been so 'canonized' by its 'God-fathers and Chief-Architects' that it has reached a point where it could mistakenly be looked upon as an ideology that has outworn many hammers. This is the greatest danger of myopia to the extent that they do not, either intentionally or unintentionally notice the bold writing on the wall:

The Moving Finger writes; and having writ,
 Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
 Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
 Nor all thy tears wash out a word of it.⁴²

One may be tempted perhaps into looking at the above statement and conclude that it is "the fatalism of the pagan heart", but what we must not lose sight of is the fact that any man's time in office ends, and any man's life on this earth ends, but the events of history are irreversible. They remain an everlasting monument to be studied and pondered upon by future generations of man. We may therefore end this section by posing a question as to what the policy of separate development cost a black man in South Africa in terms of suffering? It would seem that "In terms of human suffering it has cost whites virtually nothing, except the support of the world community. It has, and continues to cost blacks a great deal. Whites stand to gain most, even though they will lose some territory presently under their control, but blacks, who are suffering the most for the sake of the policy, stand to gain far less than whites. The history of the implementation of separate development is full of human tragedy and pain. It has required legislation and action which no amount of

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40. Barth, K. Dogmatics in Outline, S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1966, p.31.
41. Bonhoeffer, D. Letters from Prison, English Translation, S.C.M. Press, London, 1953, p.195.
42. The words of Omar Kyayyam quoted from Jamal, H.A. From the Dead Level: Malcolm X and Me, A Warner Communications Co., New York, 1973, p.235.

Christian casuistry can condone."⁴³ At this juncture, it becomes necessary, therefore, that we look into the theological understanding of the problem of suffering.

THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF SUFFERING

The reality of suffering challenges the affirmation that God is liberating the oppressed from human captivity. If God is unlimited both in power and in goodness, as the Christian faith claims, why does he not destroy the powers of evil through the establishment of divine righteousness? If God is the One who liberated Israel from the Egyptian slavery, who appeared in Jesus as the healer of the sick and the helper of the poor, and who is present today as the Holy Spirit of liberation, then why are the black people still living in wretched conditions without the economic and political power to determine their historical destiny? Why does the Holy One of Israel permit white people to oppress helpless black people when the Scripture says God came in Jesus Christ to set the captives free. The persistence of suffering seems to require us to deny either God's perfect goodness or his unlimited power. According to which view is adopted, God is either unwilling or unable to deliver the oppressed from injustice.⁴⁴

In our attempt in answering the above questions, it would appear right and fitting that we appeal to Scripture and ask a further question, "How does Scripture reconcile the suffering of the innocent and weak with its claim that "the Lord is a man of war" (Exod.15:3 RSV) who "delivers (the poor) in the day of trouble" and "protects him and keeps him alive" (Ps. 41:1-2 RSV)?⁴⁵ Here we readily note that an examination of the Old Testament Scriptures relate a story of the faith of Israel that illustrates a God who is faithful enough to liberate the lowly and the despised from the mighty and powerful rulers of the world. If this is true, why then, did he not intervene and liberate the black man from the yoke of oppression? Indeed, "Why did the God of the Oppressed permit the innocent to suffer?"⁴⁶ In carving our answer to the problem of suffering,

43. De Gruchy, J.W. The Church Struggle in South Africa, David Philip, Cape Town, 1979, p.79.

44. Cone, Op.Cit., p.163.

45. Ibid. p.164.

46. Ibid.

we shall have to agree with James Cone that these are not theoretical questions prompted by an intellectual concern about the content of divine justice but rather practical questions arising out of the struggle of faith with negative dimensions of human experience. And, whatever else may be said about biblical faith, it did not affirm divine revelation in lieu of facing the reality of human suffering. Indeed, it was not the mere presence of suffering that troubled Israel's faith. "The problem in Scripture is why it afflicts some and not others. The problem is not the fact of suffering but its distribution. Why do the wicked prosper, while those who try to keep faith with God suffer?"⁴⁷ Cone suggests that one of the simplest and most common responses to this problem was the suggestion that suffering was distributed in exact proportion to the sins committed. This formula, he holds, was applied both to the community in general and to the individual in particular. Suffering therefore was understood as the just punishment of God inflicted on those who had disobeyed his will. This view is directly related to the covenant experience at Sinai wherein Israel agreed to obey Yahweh's law and to live according to his holy ways.⁴⁸ It is true that there were many cases of disobedience of the divine command among the Israelites and Yahweh did not always administer punishment according to transgressions committed. Of course, what could be said is that the fact that Yahweh did not punish accordingly at times could be attributed to His divine justice and grace.⁴⁹ But the grace and the divine justice of Yahweh did not mean the diminishing of obedience, righteousness and the fear of the Lord our God. This is clearly stated by Isaiah and the Book of Proverbs:

Tell the righteous that it shall be well with them,
for they shall eat the fruit of their deeds.
Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with them,
for what his hands have done shall be done to him.

(Is. 3:10-11 RSV)

And the Book of Proverbs put it thus:

The fear of the Lord prolongs life,
but the years of the wicked shall be short.

(Proverbs 10:27 RSV)

47. Ibid. p.165.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

We may now have a look at Second Isaiah especially the notion that suffering can be redemptive. In connection with this we face two questions, namely, (1) Why Israel suffers for others? (2) What makes Israel's suffering redemptive?⁵⁰ The answer to our first question would seem to lie in the meaning of divine election. To be chosen by Yahweh service, and thus responsibility to participate in His will to establish justice in the world. To share in Yahweh's inauguration of divine righteousness involves the willingness to suffer in the struggle for freedom. Election therefore is not a privilege status that is given to favorite people. It is a call to serve, to suffer with God in the divine realization of justice in the world. And Yahweh's justice is not only for Israel but for all who hurt and inflict hurt in the world. For the oppressed, justice is the rescue from hurt; and for the oppressors it is the removal of the power to hurt others - even against their will - so that justice can be realized for all.⁵¹ Secondly, we have to accept the fact that there can be no divine election without the call to suffer for justice.⁵² In carving an answer, therefore, to our second question on the role of Israel in the process of redemption, we again note with Cone that Israel's suffering is redemptive, because she is suffering with and for her Lord who is always identified with the little ones in agony. Therefore, it is God who makes human suffering redemptive! For Yahweh takes upon himself the pain of the widow and orphans and transforms slavery into freedom.⁵³ This is what a later Isaiah meant when he said:

In all their affliction he was afflicted....
 In his love and in his pity he redeemed them;
 he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

(Is. 63:9) RSV)

As Yahweh's Suffering Servant, Israel becomes God's visible presence in the world, enduring suffering for the freedom of humanity. Her suffering is redemptive because Yahweh is present with her, bearing the pain of sin so that liberation will become a reality among all people.⁵⁴

50. Ibid. p.172.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid. pp.172-173.

54. Ibid.

We note at this juncture that yet another theological question arises, namely, What does Jesus' acceptance of the role of the Suffering Servant of the Lord have to do with human suffering?⁵⁵ Cone feels that the answer to this question is the crux of the biblical view of suffering. He goes on: The approach to suffering is not derived from the philosophical definition of the problem of evil (If God is all-empowered and all-loving, why is there evil?), although the philosophical statement of the problem is relevant to the Bible, since philosophy emerges out of the culture to which the Gospel seeks to speak. The weight of the biblical view of suffering is not the origin of evil but on what God in Christ has done about evil. According to the New Testament, God became human in Jesus Christ, and defeated decisively the power of sin, death, and Satan, thereby bestowing upon us the freedom to struggle against suffering that destroys humanity. This is the meaning of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. During Jesus' life, God became the Suffering Servant in Israel's place, and thus took upon the divine-self human pain.⁵⁶

It is rather unfortunate that many exponents of theology in the Western world and indeed their disciples in our land, do not pay sufficient attention to the problem of suffering. Indeed, they said very little that can be used in the black suffering. Perhaps one of the reasons may be that they have for a long time been spectators and many times participants in causing suffering to black people.⁵⁷ In the black community it is necessary to keep in mind the social and political existence from which black thinking has emerged. Black religious thought represents the theological response of an African people to their suffering.⁵⁸ But we must readily admit the sin that sometimes engulfs those black people who through severe suffering have been driven to despair, in that they easily question the being and activeness of God in their suffering.

This is nowhere more evident than in Du Bois' "A Litany in Atlanta". This is how he illustrates the despair in black suffering:

55. Ibid. p.174.

56. Ibid. Cf. also John 1:14 (RSV).

57. Ibid. pp.181-83.

58. Ibid. p.184.

...O Silent God, though Whose voice afar in mist
 and mystery hath left our ears an-hungred in
 these fearful days - Bewildered we are...mad with
 madness of a mobbed and mocked and murdered people;
 straining at the armposts of Thy Throne, we raise
 our shackled hands and charge Thee, God, by the
 bones of our stolen fathers, by the tears of our
 dead mothers, by the blood of Thy crucified
 Christ: What meaneth this? Tell us the Plan;
 give us the Sign!

Sit no longer blind, Lord God, deaf to our
 prayer and dumb to our dumb suffering. Surely
 Thou too art not white, O Lord, a pale,
 bloodless, heartless thing?⁵⁹

This is the prayer of an afflicted soul, afflicted by suffering (in the journey through life) within the borders of this world. Such a prayer is constantly found on the lips of black Christians in our land and arouse (by its very nature and message) memories of suffering. Indeed, the content of such a devastating prayer is the "remembrance of suffering" and in order to understand such an affliction or suffering, apparently one must, in his lifetime, at least for a moment, put himself in their shoes.⁶⁰ John Hick, writing in the context of suffering, expressed the memory of the suffering as follows, "Anguish is a quality of experience whose nature could not be communicated by description to someone who had never undergone it...by suffering we mean that state of mind in which we wish violently or obsessively that our situation were otherwise. Such a state of mind involves memory and anticipation, the capacity to imagine alternatives, and (in man) a moral conscience. For the characteristic elements of human suffering are such, relatively complex and high-level modes of consciousness as regret and remorse; anxiety and despair; guilt, shame, and embarrassment; the loss of someone loved...the sense of rejection, frustrated wishes, and of failure. These all differ from physical pain in that they refer beyond the present moment.

To be miserable is to be aware of a larger context of existence than one's immediate physical sensations, and to be overcome by the anguished wish that this wider situation were other than it is."⁶¹ Such is the pain and anguish of the "memory of suffering".

59. Cited from Cone, *Ibid.* pp.185-86.

60. See Dorothee Soelle, Suffering, translated into English by Everett R. Kalin, Darton, Longman & Todd, London, 1975, p.171.

61. Hick, J. Evil and the God of Love, MacMillan, London, 1966, pp.354 and 356.

In conclusion, we in South Africa can change conditions of suffering under which blacks live. We can gradually beat back and abolish the suffering that still today is produced for the profit of a day. But on all these paths we come up against boundaries that cannot be crossed. Death is not the only such barrier. There are also brutalization and insensitivity, mutilation and injury that no longer can be reversed and, part of this brutalization is the violation of human liberty to which we are going to turn in the next chapter. It suffices to say that the only way these boundaries can be crossed is by sharing the pain of the sufferers with them, not leaving them alone and making their cry of rejection louder.⁶²

62. Op.Cit., p.178. On the problem and the understanding of suffering, compare Dumitru Staniloae, Op.Cit. Compare also Alan Boesak, Farewell to Innocence: A Social-Ethical Study of Black Theology and Black Power, Raven Press, Johannesburg, 1977, p.76.

CHAPTER TWO

THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN LIBERTY

The Internal Security Act No.79 of 1976¹ (previously known as Communism Act No.44 of 1950) is the subject of our inquiry. Of special significance here is the anguish of the "prisoners of conscience" who are held behind chambers of torture, solitary confinement, house arrest, detention or banned. Underlying our inquiry is the examination of torture of detainees, the effects and the implications of the Act both to its victims and their families, friends, and associates. We shall also establish that in our judicial system we have deliberately undermined justice and the Rule of Law in favour of party rhetoric at the expense of fundamental issues that affect our life. We seem to have failed to "...recognise that the proper basis of our security is in good administration rather than in the fear of legal penalties. As it is, we do just the opposite..."² We have also failed to recognise the obvious that "For those who make wise decisions are more formidable to their enemies than those who rush madly into strong action."³ Mathews* and Albino+ rightly see this dictum of Diodotus as having a special relevance and significance in the security legislation of the Republic of South Africa. Needless to say that woven

1. Without giving at this stage the text of the Act, it is important to note that since the enactment of the Act in 1950, a total of 1,358 people have been subjected to banning orders. Of this total, 367 have left the country. We should take into consideration the fact that these statistics exclude 1979 and the current year.
 2. For this quotation see the speech of Diodotus in Thucydides, The Peloponnesian War, (Penguin ed.), p.189.
 3. Ibid. p.190.
- * Mathews, A.S. is Professor of Law at Natal University, Durban, South Africa. He is one of the leading authorities on the South African Legal and Judicial systems.
- + Albino, R.C. is Professor of Psychology at Natal University, Durban, South Africa. For a further reading of the Security Legislation, see Mathews and Albino, 'The Permanence of the Temporary - An Examination of the 90- and 180Day Detention Laws', in the South African Law Journal, Vol. LXXXIII, 1966, p.16ff. Cf. also Mathews, A.S. Law, Order and Liberty in South Africa, Juta & Company, Ltd., Cape Town, 1971; (2) Dugard, J. Human Rights and the South African Legal Order, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1978. John Dugard is the Advocate of the Supreme Court of South Africa and Professor of Law in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

in the whole structure of the apartheid system is the violation of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights"⁴ of the family of the United Nations Organization. This we shall discuss later in the chapter.

1. DEFINITION OF TERMS:

It is stated in the Government Gazette that the definition of the Internal Security Act remains the same in content as promulgated by the Act of Parliament in 1950, unless otherwise changed or amended.⁵ The "authorised officer" for the discharge of the banning or restriction order, according to the Act "means any person designated as such under sub-section (1) of section seven, and includes any person acting under his written authority."⁶

1.1 COMMUNISM

Because of its amoeba-like nature, it is important or even desirable to place before the reader the full text of the Act so that he may have it before him while considering the arguments and propositions here advanced. According to the Act, "communism" means the doctrine of Marxian socialism as expounded by Lenin or Trotsky, the Third Communist International (the Comintern) or the Communist Information Bureau (the Cominform) or any

4. For the reading of the history and content of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" see These Rights and Freedoms, by the United Nations, United Nations Publications, Sales Number: 1950.1.6., First Edition, July 1950. This document describes (among other things) what it believes to be the achievement in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms during the first four years of the formation of the United Nations Organization. But what we must keep in mind is the fact that it is almost thirty-two years since the signing of the "Universal Declaration" and a lot of literature, conferences, and symposiums (on the subject) have already taken place and publication. It is also important to note that there is a loud cry against the universal violation of human rights. Therefore, what is unique about this document is not its achievement in the implementation of the "Declaration" but a full account of man's struggle for the rights to be human. It dates the foundation upon which the U.N. Bill of Rights is based, from the time of Hammurabi to the time of Jesus and down to our own age. The document takes into account that modern concepts of human rights and fundamental freedoms have taken new shape which has brought with it new and urgent demands for democratic societies in the world.
5. For the amendment of the Act see Government Gazette No.5159, 16 June 1976.
6. See the Statutes of the Republic of South Africa - Criminal Law and Procedure, Internal Security Act, No.44 of 1950, Vol. 8, p.73.

related form of that doctrine expounded or advocated in the Republic for the promotion of the fundamental principles of that doctrine and includes, in particular, any doctrine or scheme -

- (a) which aims at the establishment of a despotic system of government based on the dictatorship of the proletariat under which one political organization only is recognized and all other political organizations are suppressed or eliminated; or
- (b) which aims at bringing about any political, industrial, social or economic change within the Republic by the promotion of disturbance or disorder, by unlawful acts or omissions or by the threat of such acts or omissions or by means which include the promotion of disturbance or disorder, or such acts or omissions or threat; or
- (c) which aims at bringing about any political, industrial, social or economic change within the Republic in accordance with the directions or under the guidance of or in co-operation with foreign or international institution whose purpose (professed or otherwise) is to promote the establishment within the Republic of any political, industrial, social or economic system identical with or similar to any system in operation in any country which has adopted a system of government such as is described in paragraph (a); or
- (d) which aims at the encouragement of feelings or hostility between the European and non-European races of the Republic the consequences of which are calculated to further the achievement of any object referred to in paragraph (a) or (b).⁷

The Act further elaborates that the term communist is a person who professes or has at any time before the commencement of the Act professed to be a

7. See Government Gazette, Op.Cit. The Act was amended in order to make provision among other things "for the detention of certain witnesses; to amend the Public Safety Act, 1953, so as to extend the power to make regulations; to amend the Criminal Procedure Act, 1955, in regard to the release of arrested person on bail or otherwise, and the detention of witnesses; to apply the Riotous Assemblies Act, 1956, to the territory of South West Africa; and to amend the Terrorism Act, 1967, so as to delete the provisions as to the release on bail or otherwise of any person detained in custody on a charge of having committed an offence under that Act; and to provide for matters connected therewith" (Ibid).

communist or who, after having been given a reasonable opportunity of making such representations as he may consider necessary, is deemed by the State President or in the case of an inhabitant of the territory of South West Africa to be a communist on the ground that he is advocating, advising, defending or encouraging or has at any time before or after the commencement of this Act, whether within or outside the Republic, advocated, advised, defended or encouraged the establishment of any of the objects of communism or any act or omission which is calculated to further the achievement of any such object, or that he has at any time before or after the commencement of this Act been a member or active supporter of any organization outside the Republic which professed by its ideology or otherwise, to be an organization for propagating the principles or promoting the spread of communism, or whose purpose was to propagate the principles or to promote the spread of communism, or which engaged in activities which were calculated to further the achievement of any of the objects of communism.⁸

1.1.2 DOCUMENT

By "document" is meant in this context "any book, pamphlet, record, list, placard, poster, drawing, photograph or picture."⁹

1.1.3 GATHERING

By "gathering" is meant "any gathering, concourse, or procession in, through or along any place, of any number of persons having except in the case of any gathering contemplated in sub-paragraph (ii) of paragraph (e) of sub-section five or paragraph (b) of sub-section (1) or (3) of section nine, a common purpose, whether such purpose be lawful or unlawful."¹⁰

2. BANNING

Banning people in South Africa has become a rule rather than the exception. Who does the banning and to whom and for what reasons? In answer to

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. For proceedings of the debate on the amendment of the 'Bill' see Hansard, Vol. 62, Cols. 5841, 2R; 6304, 6429, 6504, 6641, C; 6714, 6835, 3R; 6974, Sen.Am., 7841.

these questions we note that it is the Minister of Justice (through an authority from Parliament) who bans people, because being free from the shackles of restrictions they automatically become a danger to the security of the State.¹¹ A sad thing about a banning order is that it cannot be contested or challenged in any court of law in the land. This is so because (1) a banning order, although a process technically according to law, is beyond legal challenge.¹² Secondly, the Minister and those who discharge the order are beyond the court of law or Parliament.¹³ In other words, they are not answerable to anyone. They are law unto themselves.

This, however, is not surprising because in our country to show a highly developed conscience puts you into conflict with the establishment. To resent the maltreatment of your fellowmen either by writing, talking or silent protest is a crime punishable by law. At stake here is a right or an ability to disagree.¹⁴ It would appear that in South Africa the government of the day is eternal and that justice is temporary.¹⁵ What is more about a banning order is that society is the loser. Banning orders tend to intimidate people. We are all diminished by the silencing of a person.¹⁶ What does a banning order look like and who appends his signature of authority on it? A banning order is a document of a

11. See article by Alan Paton 'Peter Brown-Rebanned' in Reality: A Journal of Liberal and Radical Opinion, Vol.1, No.4, September 1969, p.11.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. Quoted from an article by David van Vuuren, 'Banning' in Reality, Vol. 11, No. 5, September 1979.

15. It is obvious that in our case the government in South Africa is an aggressor. Its laws know no justice and dignity befitting a black person. The words of Justice Brandeis of the Supreme Court of the United States have some relevance here: "Government is the potent, the omnipresent teacher. For good or ill, it teaches the whole people by its example...If the government becomes a law-breaker, it breeds contempt for law; it invites every man to become a law unto himself; it invites anarchy. To declare that in the administration of the criminal law the end justifies the means... would bring terrible retribution."

16. See article by Colin Gardiner, 'Some Implications of...Bannings' in Reality, Vol. 7, No. 1, March 1974, p.6.

variable number of pages, stapled in the top left corner. The specifics of name and special conditions and possible exceptions to its various clauses, are typed in. It has an embossed seal of the Minister of Justice in the bottom left corner of each page and his signature and the date on the last.¹⁷ Perhaps it would be of interest to the reader to see a specimen of a banning order:

Whereas I, JAMES THOMAS KRUGER, Minister of Justice, am satisfied that you engage in activities, which endanger, or are calculated to endanger the maintenance of public order, I hereby in terms of section 9(1) of the Internal Security Act, 1950, prohibit you...from attending...any social gathering, that is to say, any gathering at which the persons present also have social intercourse, with one another...I hereby, in terms of Section 10(1)(a) of the Internal Security Act 1950, prohibit you from...absenting yourself from the magisterial district of...being within...any place or area which constitutes the premises of any public or private university, university college, college, school or other education institution...performing any of the following acts...preparing, compiling, printing, publishing, disseminating or transmitting in any manner whatsoever, any document, (which shall include any book, pamphlet, record, list, placards, poster, drawing, photograph) picture...giving educational instruction in any manner or form to any person other than a person of whom you are a parent...communicating in any manner whatsoever with any person whose name appears on any list in the custody of the officer referred to in Section 8 of the Internal Security Act 1950...¹⁸

As the banning order stands it becomes absolutely vital that the public understands the precise nature of the assault on the liberty of society, the individual member of society and the methods by which it is carried out.¹⁹ But before we go any further in our analysis of a banning order, we must note that for the banned person the question is whether to take the order seriously and become his own policeman, and so opting for a state of permanent conflict with his inner conscience which inevitably must lead to a serious distortion of his personality, or live in continuous emotional revolution against the order.²⁰ It is, however, true that for a banned person to keep normality means accepting that you are always

17. See van Vuuren, Op.Cit.

18. For this specimen of a banning order see van Vuuren, Op.Cit. No one has a right to keep his copy of the banning order. The officers who discharge it only give the victim time to read its contents and to append his/her signature on it and then hand it back to them on the spot.

19. See Mathews, Law, Order and Liberty, Op.Cit., p.76.

20. See van Vuuren, Op.Cit.

being watched, a car perhaps casually parked outside your house, someone driving at a not too discreet distance behind you, an unannounced visit at any time of day or night, to look through your house, your papers, your books, to take some away for examination for this or that, "just a routine check", interference with your mail, eavesdropping on the telephone and the like. But these are petty annoyances. There are more serious happenings. You can be taken away and held incommunicado for as long as they please. Some never return except as a corpse.²¹

One can only gain the insight into the implication of the banning order by examining (among other things) the content or provision of the order. Banning has a drastic effect not only on the restricted silenced people but also on their families, friends, and associates. They, too, are being harrassed by the security forces. This is also true of organizations. Because the banning of a person who has been active in an organization necessitates the readjustment of its programmes and in some cases the reshuffling of its staff. At times elections become inevitably necessary. The evidence of this is the South African Congress of Trade Unions, commonly referred to as SACTU, and yet this Union was never banned or declared unlawful. Banning orders affect greatly the articulate black leadership in that when a black leader emerges as a

21. Ibid. Death of "prisoners of conscience" has become a common occurrence in the Justice and Prison Department of the South African Republic. The Church in this land is deeply concerned about this rather unfortunate common practice. In the 1979 Provincial Synod the Church of the Province of South Africa passed the following resolution: "That this synod aware of the deaths of several detained people, and also aware of the profoundly distressing allegations of torture of people detained by the security police, and knowing that some members of our church are employed by the security police either as officers or as informers in the Republic of South Africa, asks such members respectfully if they hold any office in our church, to consider their witness before our Lord, Jesus Christ, and ask church vestries to exercise great care in the election of church officers". (Eastern Province Herald, Saturday February 9, 1980.

spokesman he is suddenly silenced or detained.²² Banning orders are served on a person by members of the security force. These orders vary from individual to individual. Therefore, the specimen above is one among many. Some would forbid recipients from attending political gatherings while some would prohibit an attendance at any kind or type of gathering. Social gathering inclusive i.e. gatherings at which more than one person is present for social intercourse. It would seem that a banned person will in future be unable to meet even one person.²³

22. See 'The Silenced' being a Report compiled by the Research Department of the South African Institute of Race Relations, South Africa in 1978. Cf. also yesterday's banning orders served on some of the members of the Port Elizabeth Black Cultural Organization, Pebco. For further reading on these bannings see the Eastern Province Herald, February 28, 1980; Daily Dispatch, February 28, 1980. In addition to the above, we note that the very amendment of the Internal Security Act met with disapproval from certain personalities: the Roman Catholic Bishop of Port Elizabeth, J.P. Murphy described the measure as "disregarding every semblance of justice". He went on, "Even as I speak something similar is taking place. Men and women are being detained without trial, not even allowed to communicate with their families or enjoy the ordinary norms of justice." (See Eastern Province Herald, June 7, 1976; The Student Representative Council of Rhodes University issued the following statement: the measure "is condemned because it accords arbitrary powers to the Minister of Justice, poses a danger to the opponents of the Government and if passed will destroy any remaining civil liberty." (See Eastern Province Herald, June 5, 1976; The Editorial Opinion of the Daily Dispatch, June 9, 1976 reads as follows: "What it does mean is that we in South Africa have entered more dangerous times, and that the danger comes not only from external and internal threats but from the Government itself - because this new development is evidence of fear by the Government that it cannot maintain control with existing legislation."
23. One deduces this from the case of Sheila Weinberg cited by Ensor and Moroney in their Report 'The Silenced': Sheila was detained in 1964 while a student and served a sentence in 1965 for allegedly participating in the active activities of the banned ANC. She worked as a secretary for Human Rights Committee. In 1976 Sheila was served with a banning order and was placed under 'House Arrest'. In April 1977 she was charged with Jenny Curtis of contravening her banning orders. This arose from her having lunch in a house in which Jenny Curtis lived in which she was allegedly communicating with Jenny. This she denied. The trial was postponed for further evidence to be heard at a later date. During this adjournment she fled the country. Subsequently the court ruled that although it could not establish that the two communicated she had controvined her banning order by communicating with another person in the same house by having lunch with him/her. (Emphasis mine).

It is noteworthy that in terms of the Act all banned persons are prohibited from being office-bearers or staff members or active supporters of any institutions which prepares, publishes, or distributes any publication (except by permission). Some orders go to the extent of prohibiting a person from entering any premises which produce publications. Some are forbidden from entering residential areas, harbours, courts of law except as petitioner, accused or witness. An order may prohibit a person from communicating with a newspaper, give lectures, enter educational institutions. This has led to disruption of careers. In some cases permission is given to a person to continue with his studies at a university.²⁴ It is also worth noting that provisions in the order are made possible by the wide powers conferred upon the Minister of Justice in terms of Section 10 of the Act.²⁵ The Minister of Justice may (when he sees fit) withdraw a banning order.²⁶ Usually banning orders extend from two to five years. Equally important is the fact that it is an offence to quote a banned person or publish anything said or written by a banned person. It is also an offence to contravene provisions of a banning order or an offence for a listed person²⁷ or a banned person to change his place of residence or employment without notifying the officer-in-charge of police station (Section II(d)(bis)).²⁸ The Minister is also empowered by the provisions of the Act in terms of Section 2 of the Act to declare organizations to be unlawful, a power exercised in October 1977, when a total of 19 Organizations were declared unlawful. When this happens the Minister appoints a Liquidator of the assets* in accordance with Section 3 of the Act. At the instigation of the Minister the Liquidator compiles a list of persons who are or have been office-bearers,

24. See Ensor & Moroney, Op.Cit.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

* As an example of this, I have to draw the attention of the reader to the assets of some of the 19 organizations banned in October 19, 1977: the Minister of Justice announced in parliament that assets of just under R2 million have been realised from 11 of the organizations banned in 1977. All the assets of the organizations have been liquidated except those of the Christian Institute believed to have been the wealthiest. The Minister revealed to parliament the following figures: (1) Black Parents' Association had assets of R76056,76; (2) the Black Peoples' Convention R15931,38; (3) the South African Students' Organization R14102,79; and (4) the Zimele Trust Fund R64627,88 (See Eastern Province Herald, Friday February 29, 1980).

officers etc. The name of the person is not included in any list unless he has been given reasonable opportunity to show that his name should not be included. This is the provision of section 7(2). And, if good reason is shown, the Minister may direct that such a name be removed from any list (Provision of Section 8(3)).²⁹ The Act also provides for the detention of witnesses. Here we should note that a total of seventy-three people were detained in 1973 as witnesses and during the 1978 parliamentary session, an amendment of Section 12(b) which provides for the detention of witnesses, extended to the maximum period of detention.³⁰

It is no exaggeration to assert that banning is the most effective and ruthless violation of the rule of law in South Africa. Equally true in this regard is the conspiracy of silence which accompanies the intimidation of a banning order. This is no less true than in the so-called liberal English-language press. The serving of a banning order and the trial of a "prisoner of conscience" no longer constitute any news. It does not make any headlines other than a handful of paragraphs on some inside page. It is, however, true that some newspapers go on to the extent of shunning the whole question of banning orders and trials completely. To them this does not make any news.³¹ So, van Vuuren puts it rather cynically:

One cannot escape the conclusion that despite their avowed dedication to the cause of freedom and justice, the English press here has other priorities, the first being to sell papers, other issues being peripheral to this. Arguments, however compelling, about the right of the individual to disagree in what purports to be a democratic society, are not news, and do not sell papers. That the questions that these arguments raise affect every single person in this country...is conveniently ignored. When the press willingly censors itself, it is obvious that the suggestion that it needs enactments from above to keep it in line is superfluous. It is sad but true that after thirty years of Nationalist Party rule, the very

29. See Ensor & Moroney, Op.Cit.

30. Ibid. Before the Amendment, witnesses could only be detained for six months or until the trial had concluded, whichever was the shorter. The Amendment allows for the detention for as long as it takes to conclude the trial, regardless of its length. This could mean extremely long detentions since investigations by the police into a case can take a long time while trials of this nature sometimes are very lengthy.

31. van Vuuren, Op.Cit.

foundations on which democracy is based have become so affected and enervated that they have all but ceased to function, except in name. We witness an opposition in parliament offering near identical policies as the government but framed in different words, a judiciary overseeing laws that are the antithesis of justice, and a press paying lip-service to its role as custodian of the right to free speech, whilst in fact supporting the status quo, that is, white supremacy for ever. South Africa is acting out a play, written and staged by the Nationalist Party, for the benefit not of South Africa but of the Nationalist Party. So clever is the direction that everyone has a part, however unwilling they might seem to learn their lines.³²

2. DIFFICULTIES FACING A DETAINEE

One of the problems of security legislation in South Africa is detention. Under detention a detainee is faced with difficulties and handicaps in that once a person is detained he is entirely in the hands of the detaining officer and that he (the officer) can do as he pleases, that is, he can keep a detainee as long as he feels that the detainee has not answered all the questions put to him under interrogation. During detention or solitary confinement no one is allowed by law to visit the detainee except the magistrate who does so through a permission from the Minister of Justice. There are a number of problems involved here, namely, (1) the detaining officer has the right to extend a period of detention for a further period as he deems fit. The detention clause is flexible enough to allow this. The reason to extend the detention of a detainee is sometimes based on "...a change in the situation upon which the suspicion of the Officer is based...thus making the renewal of any detention order dependent upon ill-defined criteria which amount to little more than a shift in the mental attitude of the authorised officer."³³ (2) a second problem involves the conditions under which a detainee is held under the Act. Here we note the absolute and arbitrary powers of the Chief Executive Officer to keep the detainee in solitary confinement³⁴ without access to

32. van Vuuren, Op.Cit.

33. Mathews, Op.Cit.

34. In this regard we must take note of the fact that Parliament in enacting Section 17 expressly authorized certain officials to deprive certain people of their personal liberty and to hold such persons in solitary confinement. This goes, as we have seen, with the deprivation of literature and writing material. Secondly, we note with Mathews that the origin of solitary confinement as a means of obtaining information and evidence is in itself an explanation

visitors or members of his family or without the benefit of legal or medical service. And, above all, without access to literature or stationery and "whilst in this vulnerable position he may be subjected to unlimited interrogation by investigating officials."³⁵ There are two distinct but related questions which may be grouped as the third issue of high importance which arose out of detention (Mathews). The first, notes Mathews, relates to the admissibility of confessions or admissions made by the detainee during, or under threat of a further detention; and the second, to the acceptability of testimony given in court by a detainee. At this point we take note of the fact that a position of extreme vulnerability in which he is held may tempt his interrogators to exceed their legal rights in questioning him. Whether the court may order the detainee to be brought before it to give testimony where there is a suspicion of maltreatment is therefore a question of the highest importance. The danger of physical maltreatment is only one of the hazards which the detainee may face.

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34. continued. of the alien taint it has in countries that know something of Western tradition. Leaving aside the use of isolation procedures under the Papal Inquisition, it was apparently first used as a technique of investigation and 'reform' by the Tsarist secret police in Russia; (this explains why the measure whilst still a 'Bill' in Parliament was dubbed the 'SS Bill' see Hansard Vol. 62, Col. 6512), it was more extensively employed for the same purposes by the secret police in the post-revolutionary Russia where it became standard practice. Apart from this there is evidence that the system is widely used by the police in Russian satellite countries and that it was practised upon the accused in the notorious purge trials of the thirties and the late forties. It is also true that the Chinese communist regime took over many of the techniques of the Russian secret police, including solitary confinement, and combined them with other methods for securing information and carrying out indoctrination. Laboratory tests show that the effects of isolation result in mental confusion, disorientation and lack of ability to concentrate, inability to think in a logical and ordered manner. This is often accompanied by strong feelings of anxiety and gloom. During solitary confinement individuals suffer electrical changes in the brain which are evidence of a profound disturbance in the functioning of the central nervous system. The conclusion we reach is that for many people solitary confinement under interrogation is a painful experience. Thus Mathews and Albino conclude: "...the evil of enforced solitary confinement...produces conditions under which a man's inner self may disintegrate. The destruction of the 'inner citadel' of human personality is more terrible to contemplate than physical death. The conclusion to which one is forced is that solitary confinement may constitute a blasphemous assault upon a man's spiritual being." (See Mathews & Albino, Op.Cit.).
35. See Mathews, Law, Order and Liberty, Op.Cit., p.136f.

There is the more terrifying prospect that the condition of his detention and the methods of interrogation could drive him beyond the brink of sanity, and possibly suicide. Notwithstanding the weekly visit of the magistrate, several detainees have committed suicide and some have been briefly committed to mental institutions.³⁶ We must take note of the fact that in terms of the Internal Security Act, the Minister of Justice has complete and arbitrary powers to impose a banning or restriction order on any person whom he considers to be engaged in any activity which in his opinion is calculated to endanger the Security of the State or public unrest - while on the other hand the State President is empowered under the Act to outlaw newspapers and proscribe political organizations in similar circumstances without having to account to Parliament or courts of law. This is only subject to review by a tribunal whose membership is a closely guarded secret and whose recommendation may be ignored by the Minister. We must also note that Section 6 of the Terrorism Act confers far-reaching authority to detain on senior police officers who may arrest and hold a person without any time limit where such a person is suspected of having any information relating to the commission of the crime of 'terrorism' under the Act. Habeas Corpus is expressly excluded and the Minister of Justice is not obliged to provide information relating to the identity or a number of persons held under the Act.³⁷ Having considered the effect of bannings and restrictions in South Africa, we must now move on and examine torture in solitary confinement which is equally abhorrent, to say the least, in any system of government that knows something of Western democracy and civilization.

3. TORTURE

It is commonly held that next to murder, torture is the most egregious violation of human liberty one human being can inflict on another. Virtually the majority of the nations of the world community condemn this straight forward practice and brutality. Yet, it remains widely and brutally used. It is one of the grimmest truths of the second half of the Twentieth Century that rarely before in history has torture been in widespread use. In many States in the world, torture has become a

36. Ibid. p.139f. Cf. also Mathews & Albino, Op.Cit.

37. See an article by John Dugard, 'Human Rights in South Africa - Retrospect and Prospect' delivered at the 'Human Rights: The Cape Town Conference' held in the University of Cape Town on the 22nd-26th January 1979. This was the first international conference on human rights ever held in South African history.

common instrument of State policy practiced against almost anyone, whom ruling powers see as a threat to their power. In many cases this is done with the direct or tacit approval of a government that claims to be civilized or even Christian. In some cases special courses in torture are conducted by army and police forces and new torture techniques are exported from country to country. Secret services are used to assassinate or eliminate dissidents through technical methods of torture and interrogation. From a survey of the contemporary scene it is only too obvious that it is often those in authority who set the bad example. If those vested with authority and power practice injustice, resort to torture and killing, is it not inevitable that those who are victims will react with similar methods? This does not condone savagery or inhuman conduct but it does provide part of the explanation for the increasing violence and brutality in our land.³⁸ It is worth noting that many governments that use torture as an instrument of extracting information generally deny that such practices exist. At the same time, the difficulty of making unhindered investigation in closed societies and Police States virtually guarantee that many abuses remain undiscovered. Hence the use of torture is virtually universal; to gain information about the alleged 'subversives', 'terrorists', 'opposition groups', and to intimidate would-be dissidents. A show of brutality can be a devastatingly effective way of keeping people in line. It is a well known fact that most countries at best somehow sensitive to foreign public opinion apply the brutality of torture effectively because failure to silence dissidents through torture would alert the international community of their government's bad human rights record thus attracting interference with their economic and military aid programmes or foreign investments.³⁹ Perhaps here it would be advantageous to our subject if

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38. See an address by Sean MacBride, 'The Imperatives of Survival' being a lecture delivered on the occasion of his acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway 1975. MacBride is a former Foreign Minister in the Irish Government. Among the many positions he holds internationally, are the following: United Nations Commissioner for Namibia with the rank of Assistant Secretary - General of the UN; President of International Peace Bureau; Consultant to the Pontifical Commission Justice and Peace; Former Secretary International Commission of Jurists; Former Chairman International Non-Governmental Organizations on Human Rights; Vice-Chairman Congress of World Peace Forces (Moscow, October 1973) and continuing Committee etc.
39. See Christian Institute of South Africa's Report, 'South Africa A Police State', September 1976.

we were to recall the International Conference for the Abolition of Torture* held in Paris on 10 and 11 December 1973.⁴⁰ It is interesting to note, at least, one background of the Paris Conference: "No one is unaware or can be unaware of the fact that torture is today practised everywhere and almost, as it were, in the open. The last century, that hypocritical Victorian century, could flatter itself on having seen to its abolition in the same way as it had abolished slavery. Today it is no longer as easy for us to have a clear conscience. Neither can we pretend that torture is practised only by people "across the road" who demonstrate thereby their basic perversity. Of course, the propaganda machine will still make use of torture inflicted by the enemy in order to disparage him. But no one is bluffed. We know very well that our side is not any different. All that is still disputed is the method, and for most of the time we are content to apply an accusation by way of a counter-accusation."⁴¹ It is also important to note the Declaration of the Conference:

We three hundred participants in the International Conference for the Abolition of Torture...note with grave concern the growing use of torture throughout the world, which has now been officially recognized by the General Assembly of the United Nations (Resolution 3059) (XXVIII).

We solemnly declare that:

1. The use of torture is a violation of all principles of human freedom and of the dignity of the human person, and as such must be identified as a crime against humanity.
2. There is never any justification for torture, which creates an escalation of violence in the internal affairs of States, spreads like a contagious disease from country to country, has lasting effects on the mental and physical health of the victim and brutalizes the torturer.

* By torture is meant '...the whole range of practices extending from brute physical force to the most sophisticated psychological techniques'. We are indebted for this definition to Professor Weeramantry, a former puisne judge of the Supreme Court of Ceylon and presently a Professor of Law at Monash University, Australia.

40 For the information of the Paris International Conference on Abolition of Torture see Barend van Niekerk's article, 'Torture - Our Last Hurdle Towards Civilization: Reflections on a Recent Conference' in the South African Law Journal, Vol.91, 1974, pp.515-525. This Conference was held under the auspices of Amnesty International 'an organization that concerns itself with non-violent prisoners of conscience'.

41. Ibid.

3. It is our fundamental duty as human beings to express the conscience of mankind and eradicate this evil.

We call upon all governments to improve and implement their own national and international laws prohibiting torture, and to comply with UN Resolution 3059 (XXVIII); we also call upon those organizations with moral, religious and professional responsibility to give an active lead campaign to abolish torture throughout the world.⁴²

3.1 IDENTIFICATION OF TORTURE

A European Commission entrusted with the task of identifying torture made a recommendation of certain positive steps in order to limit the prevalence of torture and to change the climate and the speed in which it thrives.⁴³ The Report stated in its findings that there seems to be an interdependence between the eliminations of torture and the change of system. The Commission recommended that there should be an expansion of services gathering information about actual causes of torture, and proposed the setting up in every continent a panel of persons of national reputation, who would be willing to take whatever risk or danger is involved, to receive information on torture and pass it on to the relevant international organization. The Commission also stressed the need of creating a vigilant public opinion against torture and recommended that educational facilities be used to foster such public awareness. As the other means of vigilance the Commission made a proposal of a Convention against torture, which Governments should be moved to adopt; and added that there should be some national and international supervision to ensure that instruction against the use of torture is given to the police and to military and prison personnel. Emphasis was also made on the need for the independent investigations when allegations of torture are practiced. Need was also seen as vital for the publication of the names of the torturers. Visitation of detainees by lawyers was also pointed out as essential, as this would ensure that detainees are not tortured. In addition to this, the Commission added that judges who do not act with the necessary vigour in cases where allegations of torture are made during legal proceedings

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid. It is significant to note that Barend van Niekerk was the only South African representative in this world-wide and all important International Conference. His scholarly account of the proceedings makes his Report unique in the sense that it highlights an information of experts and jurists which would otherwise be closed to a South African researcher.

should be seen as approving of torture. It is also significant to note that the Commission stressed the need for universities not to be neutral in the case of torture. Their voices must be heard.⁴⁴

We must also look into the medical and psychological aspects of torture: it is quite obvious that the effects on the victims of physical torture speak largely for themselves, although a reading of certain case studies⁴⁵ cannot fail in a curious way, to impress on the researcher man's ingenuity in devising new - and presumably more effective means of subjecting his fellowmen to pain and suffering in order to achieve some peculiar end. Psychological torture, it is true, leaves its tell-tale signs not in the form of broken bones, deformed limbs or lacerated tissue, but on the spirit and personality of the victim, and some of the most advanced countries have perfected methods of torture which, because of their non-visible effects, have largely escaped the serious scrutiny of lawyers.⁴⁶ It is therefore desired that medical practitioners be involved in matters of torture. This can be done when ethical standards are applied by medical personnel confronted by practices of torture.

Knowledge gained through intensive investigation of the torture of detainees testifies to the fact that in many instances of torture the medical profession is in some way or another involved, and on the belief that a determined refusal by doctors to be involved in torture in any way (apart,

44. See van Niekerk, Op.Cit., p.520.

45. Ibid. Cf. also (1) Detention without Trial in South Africa 1976 - 1977 by the South African Institute of Race Relations; (2) Administration of Security Legislation in South Africa, SAIRR Report 1976; Detention and Detente in Southern Africa being the Christian Institute of South Africa Report of April 30, 1976; South Africa - A Police State being a Report of the Christian Institute issued in September 20, 1976 . (3) Objective Justice, being a Quarterly Magazine Covering United Nations Action Against Apartheid, Racial Discrimination and Colonialism, Vol. 2, No. 3, July 1970.

46. Van Niekerk, Op.Cit., p.523.

of course, treating tortured patients) may contribute towards reducing its frequency.⁴⁷

47. Ibid. It is interesting to note that the Medical Commission under the auspices of the Paris Conference on Torture proposed the following ethical standards as a guiding Code to doctors involved in torture cases:
- A. The Medical Commission adopts as its guiding principle the following rule taken from the International Code of Medical Ethics: "Under no circumstances is a doctor permitted to do anything that could weaken the physical or mental resistance of a human being, except for strictly therapeutic indications imposed in the interest of the patient."
 - B. Medical and associated personnel shall refuse to allow their professional or research skills to be exploited in any way for the purpose of torture, interrogation or punishment nor shall they participate in the training of others for such purposes. This injunction shall be understood to apply to the protection of political dissenters in whatever institution they are confined. Members of the conference are aware of the participation of medical personnel in examinations of alleged criminals who themselves may request such consultation in preparing for their own defence and concede that such practice has legitimate ends.
 - C. Physicians should dilligently avoid abuse of their special power to commit persons to mental hospitals.
 - D. Medical and associated professionals should remain scrupulously vigilant of the possibility that their research be used for purposes contrary to the original intent of the investigation and should avoid involvement in any work which seems likely to be so abused. Research done on behalf of or with material assistance from military or security organizations should be particularly suspect.
 - E. Medical personnel working in prisons or other security camps should insist that they be employed by and responsible to an authority independent from that of the confining institution.
 - F. Medical personnel who have knowledge of instances of torture or plans for such are under the obligation to report such responsible bodies, national, international, or both, as appropriate.
 - G. Medical experimentation in whatever institution, but particularly where the person is held against his will, should be carried out only with the strictest observance of the Declaration of Helsinki which defines the rules of conduct for human experimentation.
 - H. Prisoners and others held against their will shall have the right of free access to physicians of their own choosing.
 - I. Members of the medical professions shall give all possible support to colleagues who are penalized for abiding by this code of ethics.
 - J. National and local medical organizations are also under an obligation to pursue the campaign to eradicate torture. They should incorporate the rules proposed here and encourage their members to abide by them (see van Niekerk, Op.Cit.).

4. TORTURE IN SOUTH AFRICA

It is internationally known that South Africa is one of the countries in the world that uses brutal methods of torture on political prisoners, on an alarming scale. Most of these allegations and revelations come from political prisoners themselves, detained under the massive security laws, especially under the notorious Section 6 of the Internal Security Act. It must be remembered, however, that allegations of extensive torture whilst in solitary confinement are increasingly being made as the security net tightens in South Africa.⁴⁸

The Organization Amnesty International established that police brutality has long been a feature of South Africa. It records that allegations of torture in the Republic have been largely documented since the coming into power of the Nationalist Party in 1948. The Report of Amnesty International, like many news agencies in the Republic, makes a strong reference to Section 6 of the Terrorism Act of 1967. Amnesty see torture as an administrative practice in our land.⁴⁹ This also gave rise to the United Nations Special Committee on Apartheid calling for an international investigation of torture of prisoners.⁵⁰ The Report sums this up: "...clearly physical brutality is still the most important feature of South African torture procedures. Allegations have been made that there is an appliance for administering electric shock torture in almost every police station in South Africa...and...some interrogators seem to travel from one centre to another..."⁵¹

4.1 METHODS OF TORTURE

The following is the diversity of the methods of torture (recorded so far) of political prisoners by the security forces of the Republic of South Africa:

48. See Footnote No. 45 above.

49. See Amnesty International Report on Torture, Duckworth, London, 1973, p.123.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid. p.126. Here Amnesty recalls the 1968 case of Francis who told of his 427 days of ordeal in the hands of security police whilst in detention to which the learned judge of the Supreme Court of South Africa replied that these allegations and experiences were no concern of the Court. Amnesty therefore concludes that the South African judiciary gives the impression of being establishment minded and inclined to favour the police rather than the rights of the individual.

Hung from rafters by a rope around the neck.
 Forced to stand for long periods without sleep.
 Compelled to lift weights above the head for
 extended period, sometimes wearing shoes lined
 with pebbles.
 Holding the head under water in a toilet basin.
 Threats of assaults and death.
 Tied by the hands above the head so that your
 feet barely touch the ground.
 Stand blindfolded for 5 days and nights.
 Solitary confinement for unlimited periods.
 Handcuffed through legs.
 Hold 'the imaginary chair' with hands outstretched.
 Hit with karate blows.
 Stand barefoot on the edge of bricks for long
 periods of time.
 Struck on the genitals.
 Electric shock treatment sometimes applied to
 the genitals.
 Deprived of sleep.
 Kicked.
 Denied an opportunity to go to the toilet.
 Blindfolded, gagged, tied to a tree, given
 electric shock treatment and assaulted.⁵²

The anguish and desperation of the victims of torture and solitary confinement is best illustrated, in our case, by two prominent voices (unknown to each other) a Nicaraguan Priest, poet, mystic and political activist, Ernesto Cardenal and a black South African. This is how they put it:

A. "A Cry in the Night from the Torture Chamber." (Ernesto Cardenal)

From the depths, I cry to you oh Lord!
 I cry in the night from the prison cell
 and from the concentration camp
 From the torture chamber
 in the hour of darkness
 hear my voice...

If you were to keep a record of sins
 Lord, who would be blameless?
 But you do pardon sins
 you are not implacable as they are in their investigation!

I trust in the Lord and not in leaders
 Nor in slogans
 I trust in the Lord and not in their radios!

My soul hopes in the Lord
 more than the sentinels of dawn
 more than the way one counts the hours of night in a prison cell.

52. See the Christian Institute Report, 'South Africa - A Police State', Op.Cit.

While we are imprisoned they are enjoying themselves!
 But the Lord is liberation
 the freedom of Israel.⁵³

Writing on solitary confinement behind chambers of torture, a black South African poet describes the environment as follows:

B. "Solitary Confinement." (Rakau Elias Mphulo)

The room I detest
 Bears a small window
 Reflecting few of the sun's rays...

Being in that room -
 Like an unborn baby
 No-one to talk to
 No-one to share sadness with...

So long a time in solitude
 A mist of thoughts lingering in the mind
 Sailing without reaching their destination...

The unfriendly contorted face appears
 Eyes contracted with hatred
 Wanting information, boasting!
 Casting reflections consistent with my colour...

Content he leaves me,
 My teeth clamped together in pain
 Pains piercing the heart...⁵⁴

Without at this stage attempting to look at the violation of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights", it is imperative that we look at the statistics of the effects of the Internal Security Act in South Africa.

5. STATISTICS

We recall here that it was not until 1951 that banning orders (under the Suppression of Communism Act No. 44 of 1950) were issued. The Minister of Justice said in the House of Assembly on September 18, 1953, that by then 122 people had received such orders. They were for one year, two years or five year periods. Since 1967 consolidated lists of currently banned persons have been published annually. During the 1960's the majority of initial banning orders were for two year periods. Up until 1972 more two year bans were issued than five year bans. Thereafter,

53. Mission Trends No. 3 Third World Theologies, 1976, p.39. Cf. also Ps. 130 (RSV).

54. See Staffrider, Vol. 1, No. 3, July/August 1978, p.40.

the majority of bannings were for five year periods.⁵⁵ According to the records of the South African Institute of Race Relations, the total number of persons to whom prohibition orders have been issued are as follows:

To the end of 1965	517
1966.....	236
1967	93
1968	65
1969	76
1970	71
1971	46
1972	36
1973	83
1974	25
1975	23
1976	40
1977	28
January - October 1978	19
TOTAL	1,358. ⁵⁶

5.1 DEATHS IN DETENTION

It is worth noting that from the period March 1976 - September 1977, 18 people have died while in detention without trial in South Africa. In addition, we also note that two youths detained in connection with the Soweto uprising in 1976, died in police custody. Since the tightening up of security legislation a total of 41 people have died in detention.⁵⁷ Having gone thus far, we must now conclude our chapter by a brief examination of human rights in the light of theology.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS THEOLOGICALLY CONSIDERED

What we have been discussing above shows beyond any shadow of doubt that South Africa has violated the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" of the family of the United Nations Organization. Almost the entire Charter has been eroded by both Constitution and the rule of law. As I write these lines, in many detention centres throughout South Africa, someone is being tortured, or is being detained without any due legal process, or suffers intrusion in his or his family's private life, or is being deprived of his job because of his political convictions, or cannot express his ideas publicly. Human rights continue to be violated with the same

55. See the SAIRR Report 'The Silenced', Op.Cit., p.13.

56. Ibid.

57. See the SAIRR Report, 'Detention without Trial in South Africa', Op.Cit., p.iii.

tenacity and zeal with which diplomats, government representatives and bosses of State-controlled mass media chant their allegiance to the Articles enshrined in the Declaration. But, it would, however, be unfair if we were to single out South Africa alone about the incessant violations of human rights occurring in the world today. Be it by action or omission, human rights are disregarded or violated in almost every country in the world.⁵⁸ At the same time, while we are sounding this caution and, in a sense, objectivity, we should not shy away from the fact that human rights are about people. They are about the essential means of survival. They are not abstract ideals however abstract any discussion or application of them may appear. They focus on people, individuals, communities, societies and nations of whatever colour or creed. Their function is to posit the fundamental conditions necessary for human survival. They are meant to be universal in application. It is, however, unfortunate that the only thing universal about them is their violation.⁵⁹ The Consultation on Human Rights and Christian Responsibility held in St. Polten, Austria, in October 1974, declared as follows:

- (a) There is a basic human right to life - inclusive of the entire question of survival, of the threats and violations resulting from unjust economic, social, and political system, and of the equality of life.
- (b) There is a right to enjoy and to maintain cultural identity - which includes issues such as national self-determination, the rights of minorities, etc.
- (c) There is a right to participate in the decision-making process within the community - which comprises the entire issue of effective democracy.
- (d) There is a right to dissent - which prevents a community or a system from hardening into authoritarian immobility.
- (e) There is a right to personal dignity - which implies, for example, the condemnation of all torture and prolonged confinement without trial.
- (f) There is a right freely to choose a faith and a religion - which public or private, to proclaim one's faith or one's religion by the means of teaching, practice, worship and ritual.⁶⁰

58. Cf. an article by Julio Barreiro, 'In Defence of Human Rights' in The Ecumenical Review, Vol. XXVII, No. 2, April 1975, p. 104f. Barreiro is Professor and graduate of the University of Montevideo in Law and Social Science, and is specialist on human rights.

59. See article by Alan Falconer, 'The Christian and Human Rights', in Doctrine and Life, February, 1978, p. 77ff. Alan Falconer is the Minister of the Church of Scotland and lectures Systematic Theology at the Irish School of Ecumenics, Dublin, Eire.

60. See St. Polten declaration in Miller, A.O. (ed.), A Christian Declaration on Human Rights, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1977,

The fundamental rights are precious in the sight of both Christians and non-Christians alike. It is therefore time that we should think about them, think through them and act upon them in a fundamental way. We have to think through in a fundamental way the theological basis of human rights so that this summons does not remain a declaration to which we are not really bound. It is significant to note that the political and social directions of the Churches gain their universal significance only in their relationship to human rights. With regard to human rights the Church necessarily becomes the "church for others" or the "church for the world" or the "church renewed for mission."⁶¹ We have to agree with Moltmann that the decision of the World Council of Churches in Arnoldshain in September 1970, to give public and financial support to the anti-racism resistance movement arose from the WCC's understanding of the fundamental human rights. The fact that this arouses confusion, resistance and even resentment is precisely because many member Churches or even individual Christians have neglected to study human rights. In opposition to the resolutions we have listed above, they have considered these concerns alien to their task as the Church. They did not recognize, nor did they want to recognize, the Christian character of the declaration of human rights.⁶² We have to ask ourselves as a Church of Christ why should we as Christians be involved in projects of human rights. What theological relevance human rights have to political, social and economic practice of our faith. This is indeed tantamount to asking the question, what relevance does the political and social understanding of the Church have for the realization, spreading and indeed practising of human rights in its God-given mission?⁶³

In answer to these questions, a Scottish theologian (Alan Falconer) suggests the following reasons:

- i. Through involvement in human rights concerns, the Christian comes to a deeper understanding of God as a Saviour and himself as a sinner.
- ii. The Christian Koinonia's belief that God is Love is a continual invitation to love other people.

61. See J. Moltmann's paper, 'The Original Study Paper: The Theological Basis of Human Rights and of the Liberation of Human Beings' in Miller, Ibid. pp.26-27.

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid.

- iii. The Christian Koinonia's belief that Christ is our Peace entails the responsibility of the community to work for human liberation.⁶⁴

In our involvement as Christians with other human beings we come to see the collective sin of men and women. We also see the fact that even as Christians who have known Jesus of Nazareth, we continually sin both as individuals and communities. Involvement with other men and women, we perceive with greater clarity, the glory of the Eternal God in Christ Jesus, and our own continuing need for repentance. Therefore participation in human rights once and for all leads us to a deeper knowledge of ourselves and God. In such a situation we come face to face with our impurity both as individuals and as a Christian community. The application of the fundamental human rights demands our unity of vocation both as Christians and citizens.⁶⁵ The campaign for the observance and application of human rights should not be seen as a trespass across national and international boundaries of political and ecclesiastical establishments but rather as a challenge to both Churches and Governments of the world to join the crusade to extend the scope of human freedom and protection (against banning orders, detention without trial, house arrest, solitary confinement, torture, death in detention etc.), to all members of the human family irrespective of their rank in society, colour, creed, sex or nationality. The Church in our land should participate in organizations, councils, and projects whose programme is the implementation and defence of human rights.⁶⁶

I fully agree with Moltmann when he says that on the grounds of the creation of man and woman in the image of God, on the grounds of the incarnation of God for the reconciliation of the world, and on the grounds of the coming of the kingdom of God as the consummation of history, the concern entrusted to Christian theology is one of the humanity of persons as well as for their ongoing rights and duties. The specific task of Christian theology is one for the humanity of persons as well as for their ongoing rights and duties. The specific task of Christian theology in these matters is grounding fundamental human rights on God's right to - i.e., his claim on human beings, their dignity, their fellowship, their rule over the earth, and their future. It is the duty of the Christian faith beyond

64. See article by Alan Falconer, *Op.Cit.*, p.81.

65. *Ibid.*

66. See Miller, *A Christian Declaration on Human Rights*, *Op.Cit.*, p.13.

human rights and duties to stand for the dignity of human beings in their life with God and for God.⁶⁷

Without over-emphasizing the importance of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights", one cannot but conclude that it is probably the most important document on the Bill of Rights ever produced in the course of human history. It is far more important than Magna Carta Liberatum (England, 1215), the American Declaration of Independence (1776), La Déclaration de L'Homme (France 1789), or than Karl Marx's "Das Kapital" (1867), because it was much more comprehensive and was intended to be universal in its application. It has greater authority because it has been endorsed by the majority of nations. The "Déclaration" provides a basis for the relationship between human beings and States inter se. The political and religious leaders of the world should utilise it as part of an effort to rebuild standards of morality that have crumbled in the decadence of this age.⁶⁸

67. Here see another of Moltmann's papers, 'The definitive Study Paper: A Christian Declaration on Human Rights' in Miller, Op.Cit., p.130. It is noteworthy that the authors of the Constitution of the Government in South Africa (though they declare in the preamble of their Constitution that they are conscious of their responsibility towards God and man), have deliberately avoided the task of enacting a Bill of Rights - hence their refusal to append their signature on the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" in Paris 10 December 1948. The words of Professor Jean Rivero of the Law Faculty of the University of Paris ring through here: "Any system of constitutional guarantees of human rights requires - as any legal system does - the combination of two elements: a rule of law and a sanction established to ensure respect for the rule. One can only speak of the protection of human rights if those rights are proclaimed in a binding written document and if procedures are laid down to ensure their respect. One can only speak of constitutional guarantees when those rights are enshrined and their sanction effectuated in the text placed at the apex of the pyramid of rules, in the Constitution itself" (see Professor Rivero's article, 'The Constitutional Protection of Human Rights in French Law' in the Irish Jurist, Parts 1 and 2, Vol. XII, new series, 1977, p.1). Significantly, too, in this regard is Article 16 of the 1789 French Declaration in which it is stated that: "any society in which the protection of human rights is not ensured...has not got a constitution." Any governmental system injures its citizens directly especially when it rules without the Bill of Rights constitutionally protected. (For this see Jon O. Newman, United States District Judge, District of Connecticut in his article 'Suing the Law-breakers...' in The Yale Law Journal, Vol. 87, No. 3, January 1978, p.447).

68. See Sean MacBride, The Imperatives of Survival, Op.Cit.

The "Universal Declaration" defends the interest of citizens as free individuals, free producers, free proprietors.⁶⁹ The Articles of the "Declaration" are not a "set of static values which ideologically glorify the transmitted status quo nor are they "luxury articles" for the privileged but an effective instrument to be fully human.⁷⁰ Lastly, the establishment of human rights requires action. This is precisely so, because human rights are not achieved by merely proclaiming them but by creating social conditions which make it possible for all citizens to enjoy these rights.⁷¹ Here it is worth to remember that there are various institutional methods for the protection of human rights. These differ in degrees and effectiveness. For our purpose here we are concerned only about those that operate at national level, namely:-

1. A watchful parliament with an effective and courageous opposition.
2. A free press which will not hesitate to expose injustice.
3. A constitution which spells out the rights guaranteed and delimits clearly the powers of the executive, the legislature and the judiciary.
4. An independent judiciary, not subject to direct or indirect pressures by the Executive or by Parliament, charged with the function of upholding the constitution and enforcing its provisions.
5. An "ombudsman" directly responsible to Parliament and/or administrative tribunals with full power of investigation of complaints of maladministration.⁷²

"These are, broadly speaking, the desirable institutions which are necessary to safeguard human rights. They may vary in particular functions, jurisdiction and emphasis in different countries; but in our increasingly

69. See Miller, Op.Cit., p.15.

70. See article by V.N. Chandran, 'The Meaning of Human Rights and the Problems they Pose', in The Ecumenical Review, Vol. XXVII, No. 2, April 1975, p.142.

71. Miller, Op.Cit., p.19.

72. This was added after the writing of the original copy of the thesis as an afterthought. For these methods see address by Sean MacBride, 'The Universal Declaration - Thirty Years After' in Understanding Human Rights: An Interdisciplinary and Interfaith Study, edited by Alan Falconer, Cahills (Printers), Dublin, 1980, p.18.

complex society it is the combination of these institutions that will most effectively safeguard democratic rule and personal liberty."⁷³

We should also remember that a "constitution, in itself, is only one element and may be valueless unless it can be invoked and enforced. Many high-sounding constitutions are valueless because they are ignored, misinterpreted, or because the constitutional safeguards are not judicially enforceable by an independent judiciary. Hence, the importance of a fearless independent judiciary charged with the task of enforcing compliance with the constitutional provisions. Not infrequently, high-sounding constitutional guarantees become illusory unless there is adequate machinery to constrain the executive and even the legislature to conform with the provisions of the constitution."⁷⁴

CONCLUSION

The question that is facing us in our conclusion is this. Is it really possible in South Africa to speak of the rule of law? The posing of this question becomes more important since the government of the Nationalist Party has a total disregard for justice. This is also important because of the injustice perpetuated by the policies of the present regime on the oppressed. There is a total disregard of the rule of law in South Africa. Rather than the law becoming a principle of the limitation of the Government, it has become an instrument for despotic rule which has wrecked any semblance of civilization and democracy. The Parliament in this land is no longer the guardian of law, liberty, justice, the value of the individual and the pursuit of happiness but a perpetrator of much injustice and suffering of the innocent. This is even so because any officer in the police and the armed forces "possesses arbitrary power over the person or interests of the individual."⁷⁵ We are diminishing at a stroke of a pen. In our judicial system the primacy of the interests of the minority takes precedence over the primacy of justice and the rule of law. It is in the interest of the minority and not the law and justice that is a reference. Therefore, the judicial process in South Africa is identifiable

73. Ibid.

74. Ibid.

75. This is hardly surprising since quite a number of the Judges of the Supreme Court in South Africa are appointees of the secret society, the Broederbond. In such a case one hardly expects justice and impartiality.

by the following characteristics, namely, (1) the judicial process and the findings of the bench in political trials, reflect a narrow vehicle of a set of political beliefs and party rhetorics; (2) preservation of "sacred tradition" thus impeding the application of justice - is also characteristic of a South African bench; (3) a total and arbitrary disregard for the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" of the family of the United Nations of which South Africa is a member; (4) a lack of natural feelings for the inner anxiety of man, namely, peace, justice, and happiness. To this, I may hastily add yet another two traits, namely, (5) a total abdication of responsibility by the contemporary government; and (6) a total insensitivity of the white electorate to neighbourliness under the Lordship and the Brotherhood of Christ. I have been able to come to the above six findings after my following of political trials (through the news-media). On the Rule of Law⁷⁶ and detention we conclude thus: "The South African detention laws...are not temporary measures; they have become a regular feature of government... there are virtually no external checks upon their application...In the South African system there are no standards or criteria which govern the application of detention laws, the decision to detain and the conditions of detention; all these are, on the whole, matters within the absolute discretion of the executive or its officers. Administration, without standards or norms is in direct conflict with the Rule of Law."⁷⁷ More and above, the measures taken by the State against detainees abolish any fundamental substantive and procedural rights of the individual. Moreover, less obvious than this is the violation of the general interest in the proper administration of justice especially when citizens are unjustly detained and made to suffer a degrading, and sometimes brutal treatment during protracted periods of detention.⁷⁸ It is no exaggeration to say that South African laws "injure the administration of justice in a deeper and more profound sense by striking at the basis of the adversary system of justice. This system assumes that both sides in any legal dispute will have the fullest opportunity to present their case in its strongest

76. Rule of Law has various meanings to various people and institutions. But in our context, it is taken to mean a system whereby an accused person is tried in an open court, given an opportunity of denying the charges brought against him, an opportunity of defending himself without intimidation or fear of intimidation from security forces, or fear of possible death in a police cell, a system whereby the accused has a full protection of law from possible abuse of interrogation and, above all where he has a choice of his own doctor and lawyer.

77. Mathews, Op.Cit., p.158.

78. Ibid. p.162.

form before an impartial arbiter. When one party is confined in an isolation cell, interrogated without restraint and deprived during this detention of legal assistance, his ability to present a forceful case is greatly diminished. If, in addition, the witness for the other side has been detained and subjected to similar treatment, the whole balance upon which the validity of the system depends is destroyed. This is so even if the subsequent court proceedings are conducted with immaculate regard for standard procedures. Because the necessary foundation for such proceedings has crumbled they may produce unsound results because of the strict adherence to procedures which assume a fair degree of equality between the contestants."⁷⁹ Will it perhaps be too harsh to say that there is a tinge of vengeance in the South African security legislation? This, I think, becomes apparent when one takes into consideration that (1) when a banned person dies his books still remain banned.⁸⁰ Therefore, even his death does not give members of the public access to the insights that led to his banning or restriction - lest they generate an anxiety in some members of the public to further the objectives of the deceased; and (2) the application of the initiation rubric by the Chaplain at the initiation ceremony of an Afrikaner recruit into the recesses of the secret society, the Broederbond, becomes applicable here, namely, that:

He who betrays the Bond will be destroyed by the Bond. The Bond never forgives and never forgets. Its vengeance is swift and sure. Never has a traitor escaped just punishment.⁸¹

The above intonation testifies to the vengeance inherent in the security legislation of this country; and (3) the bizarre demand by the State of the ashes of the late Bram Fischer⁸² after his cremation. This is one of

79. Mathews, Law, Order and Liberty, Op.Cit., pp.162-163.

80. Ibid. p.75.

81. Phillip, N. The Tragedy of Apartheid, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1961, p.143. Norman Phillip is a former journalist of the Toronto Star in Canada.

82. Bram Louis Fischer was a leading member of the Communist Party of South Africa. He was sentenced to 24 years imprisonment under the Suppression of Communism Act and to life imprisonment under the Sabotage Act, in May 1966. All but the last six weeks of which were fought inside prison. Bram Fischer was practising in Johannesburg as an Advocate at the time of his conviction. Shapiro writes of him: "To associate oneself with Bram Fischer's ideals, even after his death, would be to lay oneself open - as he did - to charges of furthering the aims of communism and invite prosecution - as he did - under the Suppression of Communism Act. See an article by Ivor Shapiro, 'The Death of a Leader' in Reality: A Journal of Liberal and Radical Opinion, Vol. 7, No. 3, July 1975, pp.9-10.

three conditions of the release of his corpse, the two of which were (a) that it takes place in Bloemfontein; (b) that it takes place within a week. The withholding of his ashes falls short of the State demanding from the Creator God the reinstatement of Fischer's soul for further scrutiny and interrogation by the security forces because "the Bond never forgives and never forgets". This is an act unprecedented in modern history.

However bad and ruthless the Roman authorities may have been during the conviction, trial, and the death of our Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth, they at least, released His Body for burial by His family, friends and associates, without demanding the dust of His Bones, Flesh and Blood. Therefore an incident of this nature makes one shudder. Certain questions still remain unanswered, namely, (1) was this perhaps in accordance with the tradition of the secret society's measures? (2) was this rather unusual demand of the remains of the dead based on fear that a "resurrection miracle" would happen after his cremation? or (3) was Bram Fischer's corpse thought to be a fake, in which case it would have been very possible for him to have been on the run, the results of which would have been a miraculous emergence of the Communist Party of South Africa (of which Bram Louis Fischer was an undisputed leader) with catastrophic consequences of post interrogation leadership and influence? The mystery surrounding the demand of Fischer's ashes has a deeper impact on the Rule of Law as well as on the absolute powers of the security forces of South Africa. If these assumptions are correct, then academics, lawyers, university communities, moral theologians, ethicists and the journalistic family have a heavy and a demanding assignment (whose bibliography may not be easy to have access to). Security legislation coupled with Bram Louis Fischer's ashes, detention without trial, house arrest, solitary confinement, torture, death in detention, have laid before the Church an agenda which we can no longer ignore or escape in our academic routine.

CHAPTER THREETHE BROEDERBOND AND THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH

A "Christian" faith that does not have Jesus of Nazareth as its solid rock and foundation is bound, in the course of its journey to eternity, to be distorted and even collapse unless it looks critically into itself. And, if it succeeds in self-examination and self-criticism, its glory and its crown will be judged by its ability to merge together things temporal and things eternal. A Christian faith and indeed, a Christian nation can only live and lead a better life when its being and soul is indwelt by the Holy Spirit who directs all things to their appointed end.

It is therefore against this background that we seek to examine the relationship between the Broederbond and the Dutch Reformed Church regarding the problem of apartheid. It may so happen that the vision and the divine vocation said to be from God is perpetually lost in the abyss of the material prosperity of this world coupled with man's desire to dominate and to swallow that which belongs to God.

Without at this stage attempting to look critically at the Dutch Reformed Church as an ecclesial body, it becomes absolutely essential that we should, however briefly, examine the influence of the Broederbond to both the ministry and vocation of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa. Historical records show that for the last sixty-one years or so, the ecclesiastical activities as well as the directives of the Dutch Reformed Church and those of the State have largely been in the hands of these social engineers of doomsday.

1. THE BROEDERBOND

This secret organization of the Afrikaner 'clan', according to Wilkins and Strydom, takes as its premise the conviction that Afrikaners were placed by God on the southern tip of Africa to fulfil a spiritual, religious calling. With missionary zeal it believes that its actions and thoughts are in fact, ordained by God. So solid is this belief in divine calling that the organization perceives in attacks on its credo and its existence sacrilegious assaults on the Kingdom of Heaven and its plans for the arrangement of earthly affairs. It is important to note

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1. I am indebted for this information on the history and activities of the Broederbond to Wilkins, I. & Strydom, H. The Super-Afrikaners, Jonathan Ball Publishers, Johannesburg, 1978, p.290.

that for all characteristics which the Afrikaners have taken as their own, they have found supportive biblical rationale and the example of this can be found no less than in apartheid which is held to be the manifestations of our Creator God's intention for South Africa. It is also a fact that anyone who attempts to shake the foundation upon which this belief is founded is met with an impenetrable wall of dogma.² So Wilkins and Strydom conclude on this point, "The dark soil of ancestral humus has so nourished the tree of the Afrikaner faith in its particular faith in its particular historical course and development that it has become his very core and essence. He wears that conviction like an armour which is impervious to assaults of criticisms and reasoned attack. To allege that this armour is the stuff of expediency is to underrate the quality of its mettle: the belief, however shaky its foundation, is absolutely sincere. And it is all-pervasive; it permeates the strata of Afrikanerdom's hierarchy and the State in a relationship of inseparable intimacy."³ The Broederbond and the Dutch Reformed Church have a long history of intimate and fruitful association which is said to be vital for the survival and prosperity of Afrikanerdom.⁴ This led the Broederbond in their 1972 Bondsraad⁵ to declare that it is well-nigh impossible for anyone to write the history of their organization without at the same time writing the history of the Afrikaner Churches or vice versa. The truth of this statement lies in the fact that when British imperialism intruded on the freedom of the Afrikaners in the "Freedom War", the 'Predikante'*, and the Dutch Reformed Church helped their 'clan' to survive the hazards of the period.⁶ Again, the 1972 Bondsraad argues for the consideration of "...the Church's missionary policy and action on the basis of separate ecclesiastical organizations for various national, language and cultural communities...the meaning that the Church's deliberations about our race relations in the light of scripture had for our political, social, and constitutional arrangement. The fact that Afrikaans Churches clearly declared themselves against integration and blood mixing between white and non-white gave the Afrikaner nation incalculable moral support".⁷ It is a

2. Ibid. pp.290-291.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. 'Bondsraad' is an Afrikaans term meaning 'Executive Council'.

6. Op.Cit.

* 'Predikante' also an Afrikaans term meaning 'ministers'.

7. Cf. Wilkins & Strydom, Op Cit., p.292. Cf. also Huddleston, T. Naught for Your Comfort, Collins & Sons, Fontana Books, Glasgow, 1971, p.49.

fact that the fusion of the Dutch Reformed Church and the Afrikaner nation has in the words of Wilkins and Strydom, inevitably spawned the Dutch Reformed clerics who became national leaders in other spheres, notably politics. Equally inevitably the Dutch Reformed Church and its affairs became the affairs of the Broederbond. Accordingly even the control of the Churches also became the vital ingredient of the Broederbond. From the time of its establishment on the hills of Johannesburg on May 24, 1918, that fact, records Wilkins and Strydom, was blessed by the Dutch Reformed Church.⁸

The danger of the Broederbond would seem among other things, to lie in its radical philosophy, namely, that every Afrikaner-Broederbond must gain control of everything it can lay its hands on in every walk of life in South Africa. Members have a duty to help each other to gain promotion in the civil service or any other field of activity in which they work, with a view to working themselves up into controlling administrative positions.⁹ In the words of Gert Viljoen, Chairman of the Broederbond, (at the time of writing) the primary task of the Broederbond is to activate, motivate and guide members, many of whom already carry high-level responsibility for making and directing the policy.¹⁰ According to the constitution of the Broederbond, the aims and objectives of the Broederbond are as follows:

1. The establishment of a healthy and progressive accord among all Afrikaners who strive for the welfare of the Afrikaner nation;
2. The awakening of a national self-consciousness in the Afrikaner and the inculcation of love for his language, religion, traditions, country and nation;
3. The promotion of all Afrikaner interests.¹¹

In addition to the above three-fold objectives and aims are the following ideals:

1. Removal of everything which is in conflict with full independence of South Africa;
2. The termination of the inferiority of the Afrikaner-Speakers and their language in the organization of the State;

8. Op.Cit.

9. Phillips, Op.Cit., p.142. Cf. Wilkins & Strydom, Op.Cit., p.356.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid. p.357.

3. Segregation of all Coloured races domiciled in South Africa with provision for their independent development under the trusteeship of whites;
4. Stopping the exploitation of the natural resources and the population by uitlanders (foreigners) including more intensive industrial development;
5. Rehabilitation of the farmers and ensuring a civilized living standard through work for all white burgers (citizens);
6. Nationalisation of credit and currency and planned co-ordination of economic politics;
7. Afrikanerising of...public life and education in the Christian national sense with the development of all national groups left free in so far as this is not dangerous to the State.¹²

Strangely enough the Constitution of the Broederbond has now a new clause stating that the language of the Constitution is Afrikaans. And, apart from this, it should be remembered that the Broederbond "is all-male preserve". Women only play a role in that they must be acceptable as suitable wives for members and must defer to the strict code of secrecy the organization demands; this is the one area of their husbands' lives they will know nothing about."¹³

The examination of the 'conclave' of the Broederbond shows beyond reasonable doubt that it has in its heart the use of titles and expressions whose normal reference is specifically Christian. This can be illustrated as follows:

THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF THE BROEDERBOND

1. The Trinity: This is the inmost nucleus of the Afrikaner-Broederbond and consists of the Supreme Chief supported by two assessors who are members of the Uitvoerende Raad (Executive Council).
2. The Uitvoerende Raad consists of twelve members known as the Twelve Apostles.
3. The Algemene Raad (General Council): It consists of the Twelve Apostles and numerous "disciples" drawn from the various divisions or cells.

12. Ibid. pp.357 and 360.

13. Ibid. p.360.

4. Local branches or cells: A cell has five or ten members and a division consists of two or more cells. A division must have a maximum of forty members. Each independent cell or division is responsible to the Uitvoerende Raad.
5. Vigilance committee: Directly responsible to the Uitvoerende Raad. This is the Afrikaner-Broederbond's Gestapo system. Such committees are appointed at the various strategic points to guard over and report on the Afrikaner-Broederbond-sponsored interests, for example, the Afrikaans Medical Faculty at Pretoria, the Engineering Faculty at Stellenbosch, the South African Railways, etc.¹⁴

It is no exaggeration to conclude that its tremendous influence and success must be attributed to nothing but its two fundamental principles, namely, the controlling of the mind of the Afrikaner through its educational institutions and to control by gaining a grip on the purse strings of the country.¹⁵ This influence is clearly shown by the fact that the Broeders are dominating in all areas especially in education and religion.¹⁶ "The teaching profession constitutes the largest group - 20,36 percent (518) of Bond membership. Obviously there are more Broeders in the teaching profession today but in 1968 they included 24 rectors of universities and teachers training colleges, 171 professors, 176 lecturers, 468 headmasters, 121 school inspectors and 647 teachers. Sixteen managers of newspaper groups and 22 editors were members. Of the 419 public servants in 1968, 59 were secretaries or assistant secretaries of departments. In the legal profession there were 16 judges, 13 advocates, 156 attorneys and 67 magistrates who were Broederbond members. In banking 154 were managers, 22 accountants and 22 other executives."¹⁷ Although there is truth in the fact that the Broederbond started with an object of regenerating the poor whites, "Like Hitler's Winter Help, it professes to shelp the poor, whereas it is in actual fact a purely capitalistic and highly lucrative concern for the benefit of a select and powerful few."¹⁸ Equally important in our discussion of the main features of the Broederbond is its induction ceremony. It is rather a darkly dramatic affair that culminates in a sacred oath before the Almighty God to carry the secrets of the organization (if need be) to the grave. Now as the "ordinaand" stands on the threshold of

14. Phillips, Op.Cit., pp.143-144.

15. Ibid. pp.144-145.

16. Wilkins & Strydom, Op.Cit., p.366.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

admission to the ranks of the Super-Afrikaner, his knowledge of them is rather scant or vague.¹⁹

THE INDUCTION CEREMONY

Norman Phillips who investigated the nature and the affairs of the Broederbond noted among other things that the Broederbond organization was quazi-Masonic down to the smallest detail. He tells us about the unusual three degrees, with an elaborate ritual of initiation consisting of secret signs of recognition, grips and passwords for every degree. He noted also that the mystic symbol of the Order is The Light of Majuba, the Boer victory over the British in the year 1881. All members are noted for speaking in confidence under the four colours which is a reference to the old Transvaal flag. He describes the then induction ceremony as rather gruesome.* This is how he puts it:

In complete darkness a corpse-like body lies on a bier, wrapped in a black winding sheet on which is embroidered in letters of blood: Verrad (treachery). A bloody dagger is thrust to the hilt in the body of the "corpse". A torch throws brief flashes of light on the scene while the chaplain intones:

He who betrays the Bond will be destroyed by the Bond. The Bond never forgives and never forgets. Its vengeance is swift and sure. ²⁰
Never has a traitor escaped just punishment.

He also noted that in cases of serious betrayal of the Bond by member(s), the stormtroop section of the Ossewa-Brandwag²¹ is detailed to mete out punishment. The Ossewa-Brandwag is also like many South African institutions, controlled by the Broederbond.²² In the process of induction there is a

19. Ibid.

* For the modification of the 'Induction Ceremony' see J.H.P. Serfontein, Brotherhood of Power: An Expose of the Secret Afrikaner Broederbond, Rex Collings Ltd., London, 1979.

20. Phillips, Op.Cit., p.143.

21. The 'Ossewa-Brandwag' is the Oxwagon sentinel, and is referring to the Boer Great Trek of 1837.

22. Op.Cit.

lot of Bible kissing throughout its ritual. But it is to be noted that "in the eyes of this esoteric fraternity, the Great Architect of the Universe has hitherto designed only one model, the ware Afrikaner (genuine Afrikaner).²³ Precautions of secrecy are the rule rather than the norm of the survival and the life of the Afrikaner-Broederbond. All the notices as well as instructions etc. are never conveyed through the post but are delivered either verbally or personally, and even meetings are always convened under a bogus name.²⁴

But since 1974, the Broederbond has a new Constitution. Wilkins and Strydom describe it as "a chilling affair that could come straight from the pages of fiction."²⁵ But the new Constitution in its initiation rubric no longer contains description of the "macabre ritual". But has also the following seven-fold Afrikaner-Broederbond ideals:

1. faithfully and sincerely to serve the Afrikaner nation through the Afrikaner-Broederbond in all that it stands for;
2. never in your life to reveal to any outsider anything you learn about the Afrikaner Broederbond and its members, particularly the membership of a fellow Broeder, even if your own membership is ended, unless you have received prior permission from the Executive Council of the Afrikaner-Broederbond;
3. never to reveal your own membership of the Afrikaner Broederbond without the permission of the Executive Council of the Afrikaner Broederbond;
4. never to become a member of any secret or semi-secret organization, or to involve yourself by co-operation with such organization, without the permission of the Executive Council of the Broederbond;
5. to subject yourself to the conditions of the constitution and standing orders, to fulfil the duties that the Bond Executive may lay down according to the standing orders, and to subject yourself readily to the brotherly discipline that the Bond Executive may apply accordingly to the standing orders;
6. unconditionally to comply if the Executive Council, after consideration, thinks fit to terminate your membership;

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid. pp.143-144.

25. Wilkins & Strydom, Op.Cit., p.377.

7. to subject yourself to immediate expulsion from the Broeders, if you in any way break this undertaking.²⁶

The induction rubric ends with the Chaplain's words of strength and encouragement which runs as follows:

In the name of the Afrikaner Broederbond, and in the presence of the other Broeders who stand here as witnesses of the irrevocable union you have forged, I accept your promise of faith and declare you a Broeder.

In the words of our motto, I wish you strength.
Be strong in the practice of your nation.
Be strong in the faith if the struggle becomes onerous.
Be strong in your love of your nation.
Be strong in the service of your nation.

With a hearty handshake I, and after that the other Broeders, want to assure you that we accept you from now on as a fellow Broeder.

Hearty congratulations and welcome.²⁷

This, then, is the general picture of the Broederbond and its influence to the ministry and vocation of the Dutch Reformed Church. But, we must closely examine the Dutch Reformed Church especially with regard to human relations in South Africa.

2. THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH AND APARTHEID

In our examination of the response of the Dutch Reformed Church to the problem of apartheid, a special reference will be made to its 1974 Report entitled, "Human Relations and the South African Scene in the Light of Scripture". Our special interest in the Report will be confined to certain Scriptural passages which are the cornerstone of apartheid. These are Gen. 1:28; Gen. 11; Deut. 32:8; Acts 2:2-13; Acts 17:26 etc. But there will also be other cross biblical references especially in the New Testament and especially on the understanding of the Dutch Reformed Church's ecclesiology. Needless to say how important the Dutch Reformed Church is for our study and how unique it is in the South African Scene. This is how John de Gruchy puts it:

26. Ibid. pp.380-381. Cf. also Serfontein, J.H.P. Brotherhood of Power: An Exposé of the Secret Afrikaner Broederbond, Rex Collings, Ltd., London, 1979, p.126ff.

27. Wilkins & Strydom, Op.Cit.

The DRC has a great deal of influence in South Africa. We have already seen how this came about, and how the DRC is integrally related with the Afrikaner nation, its culture, and its rise to power. Of course not all its members are Afrikaners nor are all Afrikaners members of it, but the DRC with its million-and-a-half white members is quite clearly the dominant church in terms of its access to the policy makers of the nation. Included within its ranks are most of the members of Parliament and of the provincial councils. Its members virtually control many of the town councils throughout the land. The vast majority of institutions, including the police and the military, belong to the DRC. It has also had considerable influence over nearly one million members of its black "daughter churches." Given this impressive position within society, and the access it brings to the corridors of power at the national and local level, it can be argued that the DRC holds one of the keys to the future of South Africa.²⁸

De Gruchy reminds us that in our examination of the Report we must not lose sight of the fact that it reflects the carefully considered opinion of the Dutch Reformed Synod and not necessarily the thoughts and the views of the man in the pew. Synodical resolutions and pronouncements are often far from the "gut-feelings", of the average Church member. Throughout the history of the Church in South Africa, notes de Gruchy, the position of the Dutch Reformed Church especially in its major pronouncements invariably begins with a statement of principle, and it is made clear that the principles must arise from Scripture. This is true "Reformed tradition."²⁹ The Scripture is always the norm by which we test our opinions, decisions, and indeed actions.³⁰ We must ask ourselves, what is the theological hermeneutic that according to criticism opens up a possibility of accommodating the latent motive of the historical experience in what is supposed to be a scriptural analysis of human relations?³¹ It would appear that the Dutch Reformed theologians who framed the Report not only made room for, but acutally sanctioned their own thought patterns as applied to the South African scene. In the last analysis, feels Durand, it is the way in which we use Scripture, the theological method, that so often determines the outcome of a theological investigation.³²

28. De Gruchy, J.W. The Church Struggle in South Africa, David Phillip, Cape Town, 1979, pp.69-70.

29. Ibid., p.70.

30. Ibid.

31. See Durand, J.J.F. 'Bible and Race: The Problem of Hermeneutics', in Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, No. 24, September 1978, p.5. We must take note that since its appearance the DRC Report has been subject to severe scrutiny and constructive criticism.

32. Ibid.

It is quite evident from the Report that the Dutch Reformed theologians deliberately decided upon certain hermeneutical principles as a guideline for their theological analysis and reflection.³³ For our purpose we shall confine ourselves to the most outstanding of these hermeneutical principles, namely:

1. The Bible must be interpreted in accordance with the recognised, reformed, scientific hermeneutic principles in keeping with its actual intention - it is not a scientific text-book for empirical sociology or anthropology. The Scriptures must not be used biblicistically - texts must be interpreted in their own context of the entire history of salvation.
2. Although the Bible is not a scientific text-book, it does nevertheless present fundamental data and principles of normative significance in all spheres of life, and this applies to relations between races and peoples as well.
3. In dealing with Scriptural data the Church will constantly have to be aware of the central theme of its preaching - i.e. the way of salvation in Christ and the coming of the kingdom of God - and it will have to indicate and extol the norms that coincide with the theme in all spheres of life.
4. On the other hand the Church has a prophetic function in respect of the state and society when the Scriptural norms that should apply in all spheres of life are not respected.
5. In the implementation of this function the Church must guard against two extremes: on the one hand it must guard against a lack of daring, and on the other hand against a lack of discretion. The Church must not adapt itself to such an extent as to forfeit confidences, but neither may it act without pastoral compassion and understanding.³⁴

We must state from the beginning that we are in full agreement with the hermeneutic principle advanced by the Report, at the same time we have to examine whether the Report remains true to itself i.e. to its chosen method.³⁵ In response to this we note that the Report is not true to itself especially on one crucial point, namely, the diversity of people, instead, "it opts for the hermeneutical method that is expressly rejected."³⁶

33. Ibid.

34. See 'Human Relations and the South African Scene in the Light of Scripture' a Dutch Reformed Church Report of 1974, p.11.

35. See Dunbar, Op.Cit., p.5.

36. Ibid.

This becomes apparent when the Report deals with the idea of a diversity of peoples. What is crucial and important at this stage is the fact that the idea of a diversity of peoples is actually used in the Report as a biblical datum and that certain peculiar South African situations are derived from it, without it being clear how this idea functions within the biblical history of salvation. It is, therefore, to be noted that the idea of race is elevated, in the language of Dunbar, to the sphere of being a biblical principium which can be directly applied to our contemporary situation in South Africa. We agree that the Holy Scriptures indeed acknowledge and accept the fact of human diversity, but it makes no "theological" problem of it, nor does it relate it to the salvation history in such a way that it becomes a constitutive part of history.³⁷

We must also take note of the fact that "The unity and solidarity of the human race clearly functions in the Bible within the Framework of salvation history as an integral and constitutive part of it. The human race is one in its common origin, its fall into sin, its salvation in Christ and its eschatological destination. In this regard we need only to refer to Romans 5:12 "Therefore as sin came into the world through one and death through sin, and so death spread to all man because all men sinned..." and to the apostle Paul's description of Christ as the "last Adam" (1 Cor. 15:45. Cf. also Eph. 1:10).

In this regard de Gruchy remarks that Scripture rather than traditional policy is the only court of appeal for the Church and indeed for any Christian.³⁸ He asks, How does the Dutch Reformed Church interpret the Scriptures? In the same breath he notes that though the Dutch Reformed Church is not fundamentalist, it is rather conservative. Few, indeed, within the Dutch Reformed Church could take exception to the hermeneutical principles advocated to by their Report. The Dutch Reformed Church does not build its biblical case for its approach to race relations especially on such Old Testament episodes as "the curse of Ham", nor does it transpose "the people of God" motif from Israel onto the Afrikaner volk. But it does make great deal of the creation narratives and the protohistory of Genesis 1-11. The Tower of Babel features rather prominently as one of the key passages for the support of separate development.³⁹ This is

37. Ibid.

38. See de Gruchy, Op.Cit., p.71.

39. Ibid.

described by Douglas Bax⁴⁰ as the cardinal text in the Report and it has always been in the NGK thinking about race relations in South Africa. The Report put it as follows:

Ethnic diversity does not have a polyphylogenetic origin. Whether or not the differentiation process first started with Babel or whether it was already implicit in the fact of Creation and the cultural injunction (Genesis 1:28), makes no essential difference to the conclusion that ethnic diversity is in its very origin in accordance with the will of God for this dispensation. The choice between these alternative explanations of origins depends on an examination of the important chapters 10 and 11 of the book of Genesis. The universal message of the "genealogical table of peoples" (Gen. 10) is that God created all people from one progenitor, and that this view of the human race not only avoids the danger of ethnocentrism, but also that of cosmopolitanism. Gen. 10 and 11, which should be read in conjunction, each individually recounts the fact and process of the division and distribution of peoples. According to Gen. 10, the diversity of peoples is the result of a progressive split in the genealogical line, while Gen. 11:1-9 presents it as being the result of dispersal. The two processes are not unrelated. In Gen. 11 the spontaneous development of generations is given its momentum and specific character. In the process of progressive differentiation of the human race into peoples and races there is not only a curse, but also a blessing, not only a judgment on the sinful arrogance of the builders of Babel, but also an active mercy preserving mankind from destruction so "That they should seek the Lord" (Acts 17:27) and so that God's purpose for the fulfilment of the earth should be achieved.⁴¹

A careful examination of the Report especially its reference to Gen. 1:28 makes one conclude that its interpretation is based on eisegesis and not exegesis.⁴² The wording of Gen. 1:28 is not a 'cultural injunction' as the Report suggests. On the contrary, the stress on Gen. 1:28 is on homogeneity of people who are to live all over the earth since they are descendants of one set of parents. This is also true of Genesis 2-10.⁴³ The unity and, indeed, homogeneity is far more fundamental for the Bible than any subsequent differentiation (e.g. in Genesis 11) is shown by the

40. See Bax, D.S. 'A Different Gospel: A Critique of the Theology Behind Apartheid' being a Memorandum presented to a Consultation between the South African members of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

41. See Human Relations, Op.Cit., p.14.

42. See Bax, A Different Gospel, Op.Cit., p.14.

43. Ibid.

fact that Genesis pictures it as a fact of man's very origin and creation. And, again, the Report's interpretation of Gen. 1:28 and Gen. 9:1,7 is wrong. These two references do not suggest a command but a blessing and a promise. The form, "And God blessed them..." must be regarded as merely a literal translation of typical Hebrew parataxis that in other languages would ordinarily be expressed in some such way as, "Then God blessed them saying..."⁴⁴ This brings the meaning of Genesis 1:28 quite clearly that it is blessing from God's own hand to man to replenish and multiply the earth and to subdue it and to have dominion over all creation.⁴⁵

We have said earlier that Genesis 11 is the cardinal text in the Report's argument in support of the doctrine of apartheid and the compartmentalization of different ethnic groups into different urban, rural, and 'homeland' areas and jurisdiction. The Report interprets the sin of the men of Babel as a deliberate defiance of the command in Genesis 1:28, 9:1,7, a defiance which is said to have frustrated God's plan to replenish the earth. The incident at the Tower of Babel is interpreted by the Report as not only artificial but contrary to God's will. The Report supports the differentiation of races from what it calls 'the facts of history' claiming that the ancient Egyptians already knew of this division into races.⁴⁶ It is, however, true that the Report's interpretation is based on an incorrect assumption⁴⁷ and in this regard Bax has the following to say:

Genesis 11 by no means interprets the fragmentation of mankind into different, conflicting language groups as merely giving 'a new momentum and character' to any former 'cultural injunction in 1:28'. On the contrary, whereas 1:28 is called a blessing, 11:6-9 is clearly the opposite of a blessing: it is a curse that frustrates and punishes men. For just as God's wrath follows the sins of Adam, Cain and Lamech, the angel marriages and the general wickedness of men in Gen. 3-6, so it follows the towerbuilders' sin in Gen. 11. Whereas before God blessed men so that they would gradually fill the earth (1:28), now (and now only) by confusing their language He divides them into separate, alienated and potentially conflicting groups, and therefore by now (and by now only) scatters them abroad over the face of all the earth (11:8f.). Thus they lose their unity (and their common language and

44. Ibid.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid. p 15.

47. Ibid.

culture) not because God originally willed this at all, but because they have misused this unity and their cultural progress, and have sought their security in their own group identity, culture and power of achievement, instead of in God alone.⁴⁸

It is quite interesting to note that the Report misses yet another vital point that:

the story in Genesis itself presupposes the linguistic unity of men as a prior, given cultural fact (11:1), before the city and the tower were built, not as something men accomplished by their humanistic arrogance. It is something that men lost only after and as a result of what happened at Babel (11:6-9). (This again confirms how mistaken the Report's interpretation of Gen. 1:28 is.) It was not men's unity or their cultural or ethnic homogeneity that was 'artificial' or contrary to God's will or command, but their attempt to use this unity to achieve a cultural and technological identity and greatness and fame of their own, and so by their own achievement to save themselves from the threat of finitude, dispersion and insignificance which they felt in the face of the vastness and mystery of the world.⁴⁹

Therefore it could be said with justice that the story of the Tower of Babel in Genesis Chapter 11 poses not only a threat but also a warning to the dominating Afrikaners in South Africa who are after all interested in the security of their future by attempting to secure its cultural and national identity. The Report goes so far as to abandoning the principle of Sola Scriptura. We readily admit that no one, least of all within the Church denies the fact that from the annals of history there have always been races but Genesis 11, in no way whatsoever connects this with what happened at Babel.⁵⁰ The irony about the Report is that it makes race rather than language the fundamental issue for Gen. 11. It is using this chapter to justify the separation of races but not the separation of English and Afrikaans speaking white South Africans into different group areas; and it also uses the text among other things to attack marriages between different racial groups, but not marriages between different language groups.

Bax argues that the fact that God has punished men by confusing their languages, so that they divide into groups that misunderstand and are

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid. pp.16-17.

alienated from each other does not mean that we should seek to exacerbate this. There is no commandment whatsoever to this effect in Gen. 11. A theology that refuses providence and commandment in this way, however, would, if it were consistent, end up by allowing such absurdities as, for example, the logically similar inference that because God punished man with death (Gen. 3:19, Rom. 6:23), He must want men to kill each other. Moreover, he notes, that with particular regard to Gen. 11 it would oppose members of any group learning the language of any other group, on the grounds that for them to do so would be to frustrate the alienation that God in His providence willed.⁵¹ What could be said with justice is that on the contrary the diversity of languages in Genesis 11 is a means to frustrate man's attempt to taking his cultural achievements and identity too seriously, as building himself and his kinsmen a kingdom to their own glory.⁵² The same would be said of Deut. 32:8 which the Report exegetes to suit its own ends. Even here it fails to take into consideration that "the text depends on the distinction between Israel as a nation believing in Yahweh and the other nations as heathens, nations who do not worship the true God."⁵³ In the words of the Report:

For the purpose of our study it is important to note that the Old Testament fully accepts the reality of the existence of nations and peoples. There is no question of Western dualism and spiritualism in considering and evaluating the geographic and national aspects of the existence of the people concerned. Although Deut. 32:8 has no firm interpretation (the text is subject to dispute), it nevertheless seems to indicate that the fate of the people is not beyond the will and the intervention of God: on occasion He even assigned each its own homeland (cf. also Amos 9:7).⁵⁴

But in this context we must take the words of Bax seriously because though Bax also admits with the Report that the interpretation of the text is quite problematic but nonetheless he would see the aim of the text as clear from its context which merely asserts the special relation between God and the nation of Israel. It says, he argues, absolutely nothing, in either reading, to imply that the individual members of any two nations (let alone members of two different races within one national area like South Africa) should not migrate, mix, integrate or should be confined to

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid. p.18.

53. Ibid. p.19.

54. See Human Relations, Op.Cit., p.23.

their separate (national) areas. Moreover, even to attempt to read such an imperative into the text is to make the fundamental mistake once again of confusing providence and ethics. And to use the text as though it somehow supported the argument that Scripture prohibits integration between the races but not between members of different nations of the same race is illogical and complete eisegesis!⁵⁵

We also note that on the event at Pentecost the Report has the following to say, "Spiritual communion is primarily the communion between God and the believing worshipper through the Word and the Spirit of God. The spiritual worship of the believers is based on and flows from this. But the manner in which God speaks to His children through His Word and Spirit will to a certain degree depend upon the national identity of the person or people concerned. Language and culture play a significant role in this communion. By the very nature of things, each ethnic group must practise its religion within the context of its own language and culture."⁵⁶ Such interpretation of the text as well as its understanding is opposed by Bax on the grounds that the language miracle on Whit-Sunday must be understood as enabling those present to 'learn the deed of God...To imply that this erected a law that every man must thereafter hear the gospel in his own language and could thereafter be excluded in anyway whatsoever from either local or national churches which proclaim the gospel in other languages quite misses the point and perverts the meaning of the text under discussion.'⁵⁷ On the contrary, Peter's preaching converted people in order that they should belong to one Church of Christ.⁵⁸

On the question of the Tower of Babel de Gruchy holds that:

Babel is the consequence not just of God's judgment on sin, but also of his preserving mercy (cf. Acts 17:27), effecting the fulfilment of his saving purpose. Thus, while the unity of mankind is always the basic reality given in creation, there is also a given differentiation in creation. Furthermore, because of human sin, the unity of mankind has been seriously affected, and can only be restored through God's redeeming grace in Christ. The ultimate restoration of this unity will only occur at the final coming of the kingdom of God. This does not mean that the message of the kingdom has no immediate social significance.⁵⁹

55. Bax, Op.Cit., pp.18-19.

56. See Human Relations, Op.Cit., p.85.

57. Op.Cit., p.19.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid. pp.71-72.

On the contrary, it still remains one of the primary duties of the Christian Church to relate its proclamation to social and political structures of society.⁶⁰ Secondly, the theme of justice, neighbourly love as well as peace, truth and justice should be the core of what it has to offer in human affairs. Certainly the Report has a great deal to say on the contemporary issues that beset South Africa in the Twentieth century e.g. homeland policy, migrant labour, mixed marriages etc.⁶¹ But at the same time, the DRC offers a contradictory picture to the outsider because although it rejects racial injustice and discrimination in principle, it nonetheless accepts separate development. Now what appears contradictory in its policy is the fact that to the outsider apartheid and separate development appear synonymous.⁶² In this regard de Gruchy makes a good point that "Failure to understand this distinction drawn by the DRC between the blatant racism of apartheid and the anticipated blessings of separate development had lead to considerable confusion in assessing the position of the DRC. For one thing, it has led to false hopes, for whenever the DRC has spoken out against racism many people have presumed that this means an attack on Government policy. That does not follow, although it could be an attack - as it sometimes is - in the way in which policy is implemented."⁶³

The Report admits that there are areas of agreement and disagreement with other ecclesial bodies and briefly outlines these.⁶⁴ In our criticism of the Report we must not over-look the critical voices especially within the DRC itself. There are a number of DRC theologians who severely criticised the Report and the same is true of the Afrikaans news-media.⁶⁵ In this regard (before concluding the chapter) it would be wise to listen to some of the prominent voices within the confines of the Republic of South Africa, for they, too, are Christians equally concerned about the mortification of our contemporary world of South Africa.

60. Ibid.

61. See Human Relations, Op.Cit., p.73ff.

62. de Gruchy, Op.Cit., p.73.

63. Ibid.

64. See Human Relations, p.96ff.

65. See de Gruchy, p.74. Cf. also (1) F.A. Van Jaarsveld's article, 'The Afrikaner's idea of His Calling and Mission in South Africa', in Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, No. 19, June 1977; (2) J.J.F. Durand's article, 'Bible and Race: The Problem of Hermeneutics', in Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, No. 24, September 1978.

1.3 PROMINENT VOICES

On the question of race relations in South Africa, Dr W.F. Nkomo observed that self-preservation on the racial level is justifiable, but it must be rid of the prejudices that go with it. This, he further observed, has been a basic factor in the 'South African way of life'. The result has been that whenever the advancement of the other racial groups has been considered, the planners have always wanted to know how such development or advancement would affect or prejudice the position of the Whites in South Africa.⁶⁶

Another noted prominent voice, Archbishop Hurley,* observed that the role of the Church in the promotion of sound race relations is dependent upon the role it sees itself playing in human society generally...A vision of society produces, he adds, a social ethic, that is, a moral system inspiring community relations in matters, for instance of governing and being governed and of buying and selling. The two important areas of social ethics are politics and economics.⁶⁷ He noted a renewed vision in the world which is producing a new social ethic.⁶⁸ The Church, he argues, has been notoriously poor in mass communication in recent years.

It is very difficult to predict what the future holds but we can be sure of one thing that with every year that passes, the old individualistic and pietistic view of Christianity gives way to the conviction that faith must have meaning for the totality of human life, the social as well as the personal. The young will accept no other religion but one concerned with man and his community, man with all his aspirations and miseries. Inevitably

66. See W.F. Nkomo's article, 'An African's View of Apartheid' in South African Dialogue, N.J. Rhodie (ed.), McGraw-Hill Book Company, Johannesburg, 1972. Dr Nkomo (deceased) was one of the best known black South African leaders. He was a qualified medical practitioner and at one time served as President of the South African Institute of Race Relations.

* Denis Hurley is a Roman Catholic Archbishop of Durban. He is a fierce critic of the doctrine of apartheid and a firm believer in racial equality, social justice and human rights. He served at one time as President of the South African Institute of Race Relations.

67. See Denis Hurley's article, 'The Churches and Race Relations' in South African Dialogue, Op.Cit., p.459.

68. Ibid. p.463.

as the spiritual mutation accelerates so does the disorientation and confusion in the Church. But it is a creative confusion. The Church is pregnant with a new age, stirring under a new Pentecost.⁶⁹ There is nothing ecclesiastical about the Dutch Reformed Church, that is, viewed from the political side it is nothing but the Afrikaner clan at prayer since its political status and prosperity take precedence than its divine mission. This is not to suggest that there is something wrong in the relationship between the Church and its nation. On the contrary. What is wrong is the Church's total identification with the status quo even when it (status quo) is militating against human survival as is the case in South Africa. The danger of this is that the Church once it reaches this stage of identification with the State, falls short of the broader demands of the Gospel of Christ. This, Denis Hurley would rightly see, as the problem of the Dutch Reformed Church. It speaks as a soul, with all the sense of a divine destiny that Calvinism has imparted, with memories fresh and thick upon them of how that nation carved out its place in South Africa against the British and Africans, with the determination, as steely as the sense of nationhood they aspire, that this nation will not lose its identity and perish from the earth. He points out, however, that the recent experiences of the Dutch Reformed Church in the field of race relations has been of tension rising to a dangerous climax in the early sixties, then subsiding somewhat in the last few years - simmering probably beneath the surface until another and undoubtedly fiercer' climax boils up.⁷⁰

This, of course, explains the fact that the National Party (the temporal side of the DRC) was not founded on the rock of apartheid (as most outsiders seem to think), but on the rock of Afrikaner unity, Afrikaner nationalism and Afrikaner nationhood - the latter being simply the other side of the coin of separate development.⁷¹ So, de Gruchy notices that instead of seeking a common solution at a conference table, the Government is trying to ward off internal and international opinion by advocating to a policy of separate states. De Gruchy advances the following opinion:

Any political program or policy which promises a better future, as does separate development, but which requires considerable suffering in the present for the sake of that end, needs considerable

69. Ibid.

70. Ibid. pp.465-466.

71. See Otto Krause's article, 'Trends in Afrikaner Race Attitudes' in South African Dialogue, Op.Cit., p.537.

moral justification. The question had to be faced: Who is doing the suffering, and for what end? Apart from the fact that political programs are notorious for failing to deliver what they promise, does the promised future justify the present human pain and cost?⁷²

De Gruchy goes on:

It can be argued that separate development had brought some previously denied advantages to blacks in the homeland areas. For one thing, it has provided some kind of political base. But any talk of advantages is offset by the fact that they system has not been freely chosen by blacks. After all, such advantages as there are only confer what is normally regarded in democratic countries as an inherent right of people. There has been changes, but these highlight how bad things have been in the past. Those black leaders who have accepted the system are almost unanimous in holding that they have had no option. This does not mean that they regard separate development as right or just. Separate development had dictated what blacks should have.⁷³

Therefore, it could be argued, without at the same time passing judgment that the policy of separate development has failed. The policy among numerous things has driven more than eighteen million blacks to occupy only 13% of the entire South Africa while a tiny fraction of four million whites (Coloured and Indians included) occupy 87% of the land. Lately, blacks have been stripped of their citizenship in their fatherland.⁷⁴

As for the Dutch Reformed Church, it has been subject to severe criticism both at home and abroad. The international ecclesiastical example of this is that of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Holland (a Mother Church to the DRC), which severed the ties with it in 1978.⁷⁵ The policy of separate development up to now has failed to solve the problem of farm labourers who form a quarter of the South African black work force.⁷⁶

We have gone thus far with the Dutch Reformed Church but there is no running away from the fact that we are still face to face with the dilemma of the DRC. For on the one hand it does not profess to be a national Church like, for instance, the NHK once did. But on the other, it finds

72. De Gruchy, Op.Cit., pp.77-78.

73. Ibid. pp.79-80.

74. Ibid. p.78.

75. Ibid. p.81.

76. Ibid. p.79.

itself pushed in that direction many a time. Therefore, an outsider cannot but wonder about the political pressures that are brought to bear on its decisions, resolutions and pronouncements. There is no doubt about one thing, namely, that the survival of the Afrikaner identity and power play a determinative role because at all costs the concept of separate development must not be surrendered as they are tied up with the success or failure of the policy.⁷⁷ A second important point to bear in mind is that the promise of the DRC is that it will enable whites to rise above such selfishness and seek to practice the love, justice, and mercy to which the Gospel of Jesus Christ calls us. Although it is able to do this, one does not see how it could successfully do so without resolving the dilemma in which it is placed by its closeness to the Afrikaner history and culture.⁷⁸ A third and a last point to be made is in connection with its extreme Calvinism (on most standards) is like any other Church doctrine or theological statement can be misused and driven to the extreme especially when such doctrines or theological statements are propounded to serve one's own end, and once this happens the meaning and the gist of the doctrine has lost its original substance.⁷⁹ On the Dutch Reformed Church Report on 'Human Relations' we conclude by noting first of all the concluding statement of the Report:

This report does not pretend to cover completely all aspects of the problems besetting South Africa. The church has with much appreciation taken cognisance of the attitude and actions of the central, provincial and local authorities and of the relevant ministers, departments and officials of the Republic of South Africa and of other states in which the mother and daughter churches of the Dutch Reformed Church do missionary work. The church has also taken note of the massive task which has been successfully undertaken by these states, and of the progress made in the solution of the multifarious problems in our multinational country. They are assured of the church's sustained interest and intercession for the great challenges and problems of the future. The Dutch Reformed Church is only too well aware of the serious problems in respect of inter-people, inter-racial and inter-human relationships in South Africa. It seeks to achieve the same ideals of social justice, human rights and self-determination for the peoples and individuals, based on God's Word, as do other Christian churches. It is also convinced that it is imperative for the church to fulfil its prophetic calling, to be sympathetic, to give guidance according to Scripture and to intercede on behalf of man.

77. Ibid. p.76.

78. Ibid. p.84.

79. Ibid. p.83.

If the Dutch Reformed Church does differ from other churches, the difference is not due to a different view of moral concepts and values or of Christian ethics, but to a different view of the situation in South Africa and the teachings of God's Word in this regard. There is no difference in ideals and objectives, but merely disagreement on the best methods of achieving these ideals.⁸⁰

The Report's analysis of the South African situation is indeed excellent, but it has little (if nothing at all) to offer by way of practical solution, except to urge the study of their thoughts and convictions carefully in order to eliminate their disadvantage. Perhaps the theologians who produced it ought to be thanked and prayed for, for the enormous task and energy they put in the Report. But we cannot thank them for their intentional or unintentional misuse of Scripture. They disregarded the Reformers from whom they sucked their understanding of theology. We have noted, too, their ideological basis as well as their renowned way of doing theology.⁸¹ Is Douglas S. Bax right when he concludes thus:

South Africa stands on the edge of a political disaster 'too ghastly to contemplate'. It is a false theology and a false ideology, as well as greed and the fears of both Afrikaans and English-speaking Whites that have dragged her people there. The urgent question is: is it too late for us to repent and turn back from the abyss?⁸²

Is he perhaps voicing an empty sentiment? Haven't we heard all this before? Perhaps he is - except for the reality he has touched upon, the reality of Jesus of Nazareth, the Light of the world, before whom we must stand in our nothingness.⁸³

So far, so good! But we have to be realistic in this regard lest our objectivity is questioned, and take into consideration that the Dutch Reformed Church is not the only white ecclesial community in South Africa. We have on the other side the English-speaking Churches. The next chapter therefore will examine the response of the English-speaking Churches to the problem of apartheid.

80. See Human Relations, Op.Cit., p.100.

81. See Douglas Bax, A Different Gospel, Op.Cit., pp.23-45.

82. Ibid., p.45.

83. Cf. J.A. Lamprecht's inaugural address, 'Theology Here and Now or A Theology of Acceptance', delivered at the University of Fort Hare on September 14, 1973. John A. Lamprecht is the Dean and Professor of Systematic Theology at the University of Fort Hare, Alice, South Africa.

I am tempted to say that the 'matrimony' or intimate relationship between the Broederbond and the Dutch Reformed Church has not only destroyed the prophetic office of that ecclesial community but has actually spoilt the living waters of the Christian faith thereby reducing Christianity to a mere ideology without eternal destiny as a goal of its mission. We have to emphasize here that the source of this catastrophe springs, among other things, from indoctrination through education. No field in South Africa is more completely dominated by the Broederbond than education. Serfontein, one of the principal investigators of the secret organization, has observed that the history of the Afrikaner Broederbond has always been closely interwoven with the Afrikaner fight to assert his control over education - first, his own; then that of all other races and languages. Therefore, the children of all races suffer in South Africa because of this monstrous evil. This is how Serfontein puts it: "After the 1948 election victory the Bond was not directly active in the educational field. Matters were left largely in the hands of the Government or, rather, the Broeders in education. The essential aim was control of all education in South Africa under one single controlling body - so that education would be completely in Broeder hands...In a report completed in 1963 the group demanded that the spirit and direction of education for the Afrikaner speaking children must accord with the teachings of Afrikaans churches and conform with the history and culture of the Afrikaner nation." (Serfontein, Op.Cit., p.159). Serfontein goes on, "The question of a national education system was debated at the 1964 and 1965 Bondsraad meetings. The main issue was to what extent the provinces, which traditionally controlled their own education, should retain some authority. A study paper entitled "The Task of our Education" stated bluntly: "The question is whether education is so completely involved with vested interests, personal empires and political implications that only the use of a central power will achieve any movement. Is the Broederbond not that central power?" (Ibid.). This was done with the tacit approval of the Government. In fact the Broederbond is both the Dutch Reformed Church and the Government in South Africa hence the saying that the 'DRC is the South African Government in prayer'. Decisions about the nature and content of education are the prerogative of the Bond. This is supported by the view of Piet Meyer (a former chairman of the Bond and a former chairman of the South African Broadcasting Corporation). This is what he is reported to have said to the secret society, "It is our Brotherhood, which with unstinting labour at Bondsraad study committees and by means of consultation with educational heads at provincial and national levels - who were and are Broeders - which has been able to formulate the ideal of a national education policy for our volk and our country. We have carried it through to its present stage and will continue to do so in the years that lie ahead." (Ibid. p.160). Treurnicht saw the co-operation of the Government on this matter as "epoch-making". By the beginning of the last decade the Afrikaner Broederbond's dream of a single national education finally came through. The present education policy is the policy of the

Serfontein "the foremost writer on National Party and Afrikaner affairs" was born in Pretoria in the year 1933. On reaching maturity he became a leading member of the Transvaal Youth Wing of the National Party. He broke out with the Government in the 1950's on the issue of its race policies. He then became Chairman of the Pretoria Political Study Group. His career as a journalist began in 1965 on the Sunday Times. In the year 1976 he joined the Rand Daily Mail (for a short period of 18 months), and is now a full-time freelance journalist. "On the Sunday Times he made his name by a series of sensational exposes of the Broederbond in the sixties and early seventies".

Broederbond. This triumph led to the creation of a new post, namely, "Head of Department - Education Guidance" which was to handle vocational guidance. It involves "responsibility for religious education; youth preparedness; educational programmes in hostels; training cadets; enlightenment programmes; and visits to veld schools. Serfontein describes this as "an ideal post for brainwashing young schoolchildren with the doctrine of Christian Nationalism. The precariousness of the Afrikaner identity is constantly drummed into the pupils." (Ibid.). This brainwashing also seemed to affect the English pupil or was aimed at doing so. This was the aim of Piet Meyer who voiced a possibility of the English participating in national festivals, an idea against which treurnicht warned, adding that the political support of the English citizen should not mean they have become Afrikaners. He seems to have had in mind the question of their language, Church, and philosophy. Obviously Meyer had seen the need and the advantage that may flow from the philosophy of brainwashing the offspring of the English citizens. For the English-speaking people to be won over for the support of the Afrikaner cause, they had to be Afrikanerized (Ibid. pp.160-61). The need was also seen that there should be liaison with Broeders at the various Afrikaans universities and colleges regarding the holding of the youth leaders' courses and the expansion of the Ruiterswag (which is a 'fully-fledged junior secret organization of the Afrikaner Nationalists under 35' under the 'tight control of the Bond'). There should also be liaison between various universities and colleges regarding the influencing of students - thus public funds, concludes Serfontein, had to be used to promote the secret Broederbond's aims'). For what has so far been said above we must not think that it has always been a 'bed of roses' for the Broederbond. It met suspicion and even opposition within its ranks and especially within the Dutch Reformed Church. Serfontein sums this up: In 1946 a NG Synod - after an "investigation" in which the committee was packed with Broeders - found that the Bond and membership of it were not in conflict with the Scriptures and loyalty to Christian principles. The matter, however, would come into the open with a vengeance for the first and last time in the early Sixties. This was after the Cottesloe Conference drama when some of NG Church leaders associated themselves with highly critical resolutions on aspects of government policy. For the first time, Afrikaans theologians, ministers and church members went through the agonising process of questioning the very moral basis of apartheid and whether it was compatible with the demands of the Scriptures and Christian justice. This, of course, brought them into direct conflict with the Broederbond as the custodian and guardian of Afrikaner Nationalist interests, and with its Broeder church members who presented the policy in "acceptable" theological terms. The conflict was to provide historic evidence of the AB's workings...It is important to note that in all investigations into the Bond by the church the final advisers were the church Broeders themselves, who thoroughly blocked any objective non-Broeder evaluation... over the years the Afrikaans churches have remained the foremost bastion of Afrikaner Nationalism, with the Broederbond entrenched in the inner temple of the tabernacle." (Ibid. pp.163 and 174).

Without discrediting the information contained in this chapter, and in view of the repressive security legislation especially with regard to the lack of freedom of speech and of writing in South Africa we are tempted to ask, (i) seeing that so much sensitive literature has been banned, how has this one bypassed the watchdogs of the Nationalist Government especially the security of the Broederbond. Here I assume that the Directorate of Publications is also infiltrated by the Broederbond. The asking of this question necessarily poses another set of fundamental questions, namely,

(ii) how much of the information already at our disposal is authentic or touches the core or the inner chambers of the secret society? (iii) how much of it has come out as a result of the liberals' resentment of the Afrikaner rule? (iv) how much of it came out as a result of the journalists' tendency to paint controversial issues in black and white in order to attract the attention of the public? I am tempted to think that the crucial aims and objectives of the Afrikaner Broederbond (regarding the future and the survival of the Afrikaner volk have not yet seen the light of day - otherwise the present available literature on the subject would have been muzzled by the Director of Publications whilst still within the 'interstices' of the publishing machine.

CHAPTER FOURTHE ENGLISH-SPEAKING CHURCHES AND APARTHEID

It is true that the Dutch Reformed Church is not the only ecclesial community within the confines of the Republic of South Africa. There are, indeed, many Churches on the South African soil. They, too, are responsible to God for the way they worship Him and the way they witness to His Word in our everyday life and existence. It is also true that the English-speaking Churches "cannot expect of the DRC anything that they are not prepared to work for as well. Different as they may be, they are all part of the Church of Christ and need each other in the struggle for justice and peace."¹ We must, however, be on our guard in our terminology, for by labelling the non-DRC white Christians as "English-speaking" may indeed be misleading especially to a non-South African reader. It is also true that the designation "English-speaking Churches" "does not refer in any primary sense to some common doctrinal or liturgical commitment and practice, nor does it include those churches in the country who use English as their main language of communication and worship. Rather, the designation refers to those churches of British origin which have grown together over the years as a result of the ecumenical movement and their common attitude towards the racial situation in general and apartheid in particular. They have not claimed this title for themselves. It has been given to them by the mass media, politicians, other churches, and the populace in general. The English-speaking churches are regarded as those who oppose the racial policy of the Nationalist Government."² At any rate, the majority of membership in the so-called English Churches is black any way.³

Historically speaking the English-speaking churches had to wait till the year 1970 for the crise de conscience, and this, too, came through the World Council of Churches. Their situation is vastly different from that of the DRC, in that they are not identified with a nation that has been engaged in a continuous and bitter fight for existence throughout its

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1. See De Gruchy, Op.Cit., p.84.
 2. Ibid. p.85. Cf. also Denis Hurley's article in South African Dialogue, Op.Cit., p.469.
 3. Ibid. For a further discussion and information on "English-speaking Churches" see the discussion in De Gruchy, Op.Cit., Cf. also another article by De Gruchy, 'English-Speaking South Africans and Civil Religion' in Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, No. 19, June 1977. Cf. also C.W. Cook's article 'Any Alternative to Complicity or Conspiracy? Some aspects of the English-speaking Churches in South Africa since World War II' in Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, No. 27, June 1979.

brief and turbulent history.⁴ Dating the English voice to this decade does not in any way deny their vocality in much earlier decades. For instance, in the year 1948, the Methodist Conference sitting at Synod declared: "In this multiracial land we are bound to take account of the basic Christian principle that every human being is entitled to fundamental human rights and dignity and belongs to the family of God...No person of any race should be deprived of constitutional rights or privileges merely on the ground of race."⁵ The Methodist Church went a step further that in 1960 it advocated a programme of education aimed at race relations in mixed study groups, district conferences, exchange of pulpits as well as visits between Methodists of divergent race and cultures.⁶ It also tried very honestly to become as practical and as visible as possible in its affairs. This is shown by the fact that in the year 1963 the Methodist Conference elected its first black President of Conference, the Rev. Seth Mocketimi and five years later yet another black Methodist Minister, the Rev. D.A. Mtinkulu was inducted as General President of the Triennial Conference.⁷

This visible ministry was to be followed by the Church of the Province of South Africa (Anglican). The CPSA became active in its Synodical pronouncements and sometimes through various of either Diocesan or Provincial Synods. As long ago as 1930 it made its voice heard on such a controversial issue as 'human rights'. Nineteen years later the same voice reiterated the same statement again. A year later (still fresh from the Lambeth Conference) the Provincial Synod declared as follows:

The Conference is convinced that discrimination between men on grounds of race alone is inconsistent with the principles of Christ's religion. We urge that in every land men of every race should be encouraged to develop in accordance with their abilities; and that this involves fairness of opportunity in trades and professions, in facilities for travelling and in the provision of housing, in education in all stages, and in schemes of social welfare. Every churchman should be assured of cordial welcome in any church of our Communion, and no one should be ineligible for any position in the Church by reason of his race or colour.⁸

4. See Hurley, Op.Cit., p.469.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid. p.470.

8. Ibid.

Like the Methodist Church, the CPSA had to fall into line, that is, as far as its hierarchy is concerned. Of the twenty-six bishops (suffragan-bishops inclusive) of the CPSA, eight are black. This is quite a new departure in the life of both the Methodist Church and the CPSA. For since the missionary days (of old) the decision-making had been largely in the hands of the white hierarchy. The CPSA is noted for producing quite a number of militant clergy, that is, clerks of holy orders who are opponents of apartheid. It also holds the record in expulsion.⁹ The Roman Catholic Church in South Africa began making its voice vocal in the year 1952. In that year the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference declared:

...discrimination based exclusively on grounds of colour is an offence against the right of non-Europeans to their natural dignity as human persons'... justice demands that Non-Europeans be permitted to evolve gradually towards full participation in the political, economic and cultural life of the country.¹⁰

The Roman Catholic Church, too, like the CPSA has black bishops in its hierarchy.¹¹ It is interesting to note among other things that the Church has constantly (though very slowly) re-examined its attitude towards racism in South Africa. This is no less true than the pronouncement of the 1950 Provincial Synod of the CPSA in which it stated that it recognizes that it has not in practice been faithful to her own principle and has allowed herself to be infected by the racial prejudices prevalent in the world about her. It therefore called upon her members for the re-examination of their racial attitudes towards their neighbours in the light of Scripture.¹² The same is also true of the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church noted in 1957:

The practice of segregation though officially not recognized in our churches, characterizes, nevertheless, many of our church societies, our schools, seminaries, convents, hospitals, and the social life of our people. In the light of Christ's teaching, this cannot be tolerated for ever. The time has come to pursue more vigorously the change of heart and practice that the law of Christ demands. We are hypocrites if we condemn apartheid in South African society and condone it in our own institutions.¹³

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9. Ibid. By expulsion is meant deportation of activists for political beliefs.
10. Ibid. p.471.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.

In this regard, a more thought-provoking pronouncement came from the lips of the Presbyterian. The Presbyterian Committee on Church and Nation reported as follows to the 1962 General Assembly:

With few exceptions that rebound to the glory of God, contact between Black and White in the Church is so rare and superficial, that there can be no understanding of one another, no desire to pray for another, no desire to bear one another's burdens. The contact is rare because the world has infected us with its own fear and suspicion, and has stifled that perfect love which can cast out fear. What kind of spiritual insight can be granted to a church where brotherly love is so conspicuously lacking?¹⁴

The above excerpts show beyond any shadow of doubt that the English-speaking Churches have not been silent on the question of apartheid. Indeed, since 1948, notes John De Gruchy, Churches through various denominational organs have (as we have already seen) protested against any programme or bill whose motive is to further the aims of the apartheid policy. The response of the English-speaking Churches is best summed up by De Gruchy in the following (revealing) paragraph:

The churches have spoken out against race classification; the forced removals of population groups due to the Group Areas Act; the Immorality Act and Mixed Marriages Act, designed to preserve racial purity; the various education acts which have created separate certain kinds of education along ethnic lines; job reservation, whereby certain occupations are reserved for one racial group, to the detriment of black; the many security bills and acts which have allowed banning and imprisonment without trial, the deportation of church workers and missionaries, and the extension of police powers beyond normally accepted democratic limits; the pass laws, which govern the movement of Africans, and which have led to vast numbers of arrests and imprisonment over the years; the migratory labor system; and the farm prison system. The list is almost endless, since the racial policies of the Government affect every aspect of social life in the country. Moreover, quite apart from legislation, the churches have protested against state action, whether it be in connection with the removal of squatters, or the banning, detention, and imprisonment of particular people who have not been brought to trial, or who have been kept in solitary confinement for extended periods, or who have died in prison. There must be few instances in the history of the Christian church where such a sustained protest and battle has been waged over such a long period against state legislation and action. Naturally, this has led to considerable tension between these churches and the State.¹⁵

14. Ibid. p.471.

15. See De Gruchy, Op.Cit., pp.88-89.

The conflict between the English-speaking Churches and the Government of the Republic of South Africa takes many forms and dimensions because the very nature of the policy of separate development is an anathema to these Churches.¹⁶ When these Churches examine apartheid and separate development they cannot but come to one conclusion that they are two sides of the same coin.¹⁷ It has become necessary for the English-speaking Churches to take the Government not only by its spoken words (i.e. by various ministerial pronouncements) but also by the words entrenched in the very Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. For instance, the Preamble of the Constitution runs:

In Humble Submission to Almighty God, Who controls
the destinies of nations and the history of peoples;
Who gathered our forebears together from many lands
and gave them this their own; Who had guided them from
generation to generation;
Who has wondrously delivered them from the dangers
that beset them;
We, who are here in Parliament assembled, DECLARE
that whereas we

ARE CONSCIOUS of our responsibility towards God and man;
ARE CONVINCED OF THE NECESSITY TO STAND UNITED

To safeguard the integrity and freedom of our country;
To secure the maintenance and spiritual and material
welfare of all in our midst;

ARE PREPARED TO ACCEPT our duty to seek world peace in
association with all peace-loving nations; and

ARE CHARGED WITH THE TASK of founding the Republic of
South Africa and giving it a constitution best suited
to the traditions and history of our land:

BE IT THEREFORE ENACTED...¹⁸

The God of the Afrikaner (to whom they pledge their so-called 'Humble Submission') is a strange God indeed, who 'put down the humble and meek and exalt the mighty from their thrones'. But in spite of all this hypocrisy, Henry Lever would have us think that the white people of South Africa acknowledge the sovereignty and guidance of Almighty God. This is the bone of contention between the English-speaking Churches and the Government.¹⁹ It is no exaggeration that the Government of the Republic

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Lever, H. South African Society, Jonathan Ball Publishers, Johannesburg, 1978, p.58.

19. Ibid. Compare also De Gruchy, Op.Cit., p.89f.

of South Africa gives the impression to the outside world and indeed, to its citizens that it tolerates free religious thought and utterances from its 'subjects'. But we must again be on our guard here, that is, as far as our terminology is concerned lest our vocabulary easily give credence to the Government. For the Government has often shown that it needs to realize that it is not within its power or competence, (however highminded or harsh it may be) to direct either the proclamation of the Church or its ministry and vocation. And yet we must admit with honesty (as De Gruchy himself does) that over the years, the English-speaking Churches have been enjoying some measure of autonomy i.e. as regards the criticism of the status quo even to the extent of touching the very core (fundamentals) of the policy of separate development. They have opportunities to approach those in authority.²⁰ "Yet, no matter how free they have been to speak out, or cordially their deputations have been received by state officials, little has been achieved because of the basically different understanding of the attitude towards separate development...The critique of the English-speaking churches is disregarded, and sometimes leads to conflict and confrontation."²¹ When the actions of the State become unbearable both to the Christian conscience and well-being it becomes necessary for the Christians to advocate acts that are said to be in violation of what the Government regards as the wellbeing of the State.²² Many times South African Christians (however few they may be) have had to take painful and threatening decisions. They have had to choose between obedience to repressive laws and Jesus Christ as the Lord of all.²³ Whenever the Government retaliates, it refuses to acknowledge that it is actually persecuting the Church. It almost always insists that it takes action against individuals and organizations that are engaged in subversive movements.²⁴ It would therefore seem that in South Africa to proclaim in practical and radical terms that

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has annointed me
to bring good tidings to the afflicted;
he has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour,
and the day of the vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;

(Isaiah 61:1,2 RSV).

20. Ibid. p.91.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid. p.92.

is an affront to the Government of the day and it is to risk persecution from a Government that calls itself Christian. Such is the situation that is confronting the Church in South Africa - and this hindrance of the prophetic office of the Church has "sown seeds of bewilderment, and helped spawn opposition to the witness of the Churches among their own members." De Gruchy, further argues that this has been exacerbated by a lack of clear biblical teaching on the part of the Churches regarding their social witness. He concludes on this part that many members accept Government policy as right and therefore necessary. Therefore it would be wrong (on the part of the Church) to give an impression that in their conflict with the status quo, members of the Church pull together. Because of this and many other experiences, the Church is facing what he prefers to call "A major dilemma."²⁵

Before we reach our conclusion on the response of the English-speaking Churches on the problem of apartheid, we have to turn once more to Conference and Synodical resolutions and pronouncements and, in the course of this, we will have to ask ourselves critically whether resolutions and pronouncements of the English-speaking Churches are (nowadays) worth anything? And, if so, are the English-speaking Churches still fighting for the collapse of separate development? Or, are they merely fighting, (however remote the chances) to regain that which they lost to the Afrikaners? In answering these questions, we shall have to take into consideration the difficult if not haphazard circumstances under which the English Churches labour. At the same time conditions are not static in South Africa. They keep on changing for the worse. The Church therefore, finds herself in this situation. In its Twenty-first Session of the Provincial Synod in 1973 the CPSA declared:

That this Synod:

- (a) Mindful of the times of change through which the Church and the world is passing, affirms its faith and confidence in the guiding hand of God whose unfailing mercy and love are the sure foundations upon which the shape of things to come will be determined.
- (b) Conveys this message of Christian hope to all our Church people.

25. Ibid. For further information on the dilemma of the English-speaking Churches, read p.92ff.

- (c) Calls the Church of the Province to join during 1974 in observing the Year of Spirituality, to which Pope Paul VI has called members of the Roman Catholic Communion.
- (d) Calls upon the Dioceses to seek ways of encouraging increased and constant prayer both public and private for the direction and power of the Holy Spirit in the work and witness of the Church.²⁶

According to the Resolutions and Reports of the Special Meeting of the Provincial Standing Committee on the Church's Response to the State of the Nation, the CPSA once more made another important declaration:

Conscious of our calling to proclaim the Gospel in its wholeness, we acknowledge with shame and repentance the many ways in which the Church has failed in this responsibility. Present developments in Southern Africa have made us realise the need to re-examine our commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There are current ideologies which need serious examination in the light of the Gospel. We refer specifically to Marxism, capitalism, nationalism and racism (white and black). We believe that to see them objectively and critically would clarify their dangers and their strengths, and focus attention on the challenges which they make to the present witness of our faith.²⁷

Many voices within the English-speaking Churches have been heard on numerous occasions in the course of the struggle for social justice. Prominent among these voices is that of the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa. In the 1978 General Assembly, the Presbyterian Church made a celebrated declaration, first, on the problem of apathy and second, on the Mission of the Church. On apathy, the Church and Nation Committee noted that:

We see the real need for the church to again be the church, and for the ministers to realise that they are the men who sit in the position of power. What happens in their local congregation (or does not happen) depends almost entirely on them. As much as some may desire it so this responsibility cannot be avoided...²⁸

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- 26. See the Acts and Resolutions of the 23rd Session of the Provincial Synod of the CPSA, 1973, p.50.
 - 27. See Resolutions and Reports of the 1978 Special Meeting of the Provincial Standing Committee (CPSA) on the Church's Response to the State of the Nation, p.15.
 - 28. See the PCSA's Church and Nation Committee, 1978, General Assembly Papers, p.32.

On the Mission field the Committee noted that:

Mission involves total change and thus total involvement. The church advances (or waits) on many fronts and in this Mission there is a multitude of tasks. What is lacking in the church is its ability to 'put it together' and especially as in worship. We are a reformed church that preaches and teaches as part of our worship. Nothing is lacking so much in our 'meeting together' as the lack of the wholeness of the gospel in the wholeness of worship. Does that mean we have to preach politics? By no means; that would be wrong. But this does not mean that we are to ignore the hard parts of the source of all that we are, the Holy Scriptures. The connection is always in worship.²⁹

So far, so good! But we must ask more concretely whether these resolutions and pronouncements are worth anything in the face of such harsh injustice in South Africa? Archbishop Denis Hurley notes that "Faith in the ability of resolutions and statements to effect any significant change had pretty well evaporated by the beginning of the sixties. He further notes that there were comments from many churchmen to this effect.³⁰ He quotes Robert Orr, a Presbyterian, who summed up the situation in the following words: "To the best of our knowledge, these statements and recommendations, piously noted by this Assembly, have had less effect than the rattling of tin cans tied to a cat's tail."³¹ In the words of Trevor Huddleston, "We like to think that the voice of the Church uttered through official channels its condemnation of the different Acts or Measures is a proof of its vigour and its life. Yet we know very well that these utterances have been totally ineffective in preventing inroads upon personal freedom, and when particular persons have been attacked and shackled in this way no united effort has been made by the Church to aid them. The blunt truth is that the Church, the ordinary man and woman, is not prepared to regard the State as an aggressor in South Africa. The Church is conniving at a policy which openly proclaims itself one of racial domination, of white supremacy...because it fears that any effective or determined opposition will lose it the allegiance of its members. The Church is in the deadly grip of fear, it is mesmerised by the power it thinks it sees in the hands of the Government."³² De Gruchy echoes the same message that it is normal practice among Christians to disregard Church resolutions and pronouncements

29. Ibid.

30. See Hurley's article, Op.Cit., p.472.

31. Ibid.

32. Huddleston, T. Op.Cit.

since they are not being implemented in any way. He sees the cause of this failure as lying within the leadership of the Churches. He points out a tendency of the Church leadership to be overconfident on resolutions. This easily leads to the assumption that if the right word or statement has been uttered, the task is also achieved on the spot.³³

The above views are also supported by the Report of the Church Commission of the Study Project in Christianity in Apartheid Society. The Report notes among other things that the attitudes and motives of the members of the Church reflect an ideological captivity which seriously inhibits the possibility of the Church fulfilling its mission in South African society. For the most part, the Report further notes, the life of the Church reflects the prevailing and political attitudes of the country. Fear and compromise have dominated and imprisoned the Church in South Africa. Again, the Report notes that the fear of those who administer the law has led to the building into our lives a complex of prejudices which in turn are intensified by history, by psychological conditioning, by legislation and by economic factors. There is therefore a sense in which we are justified in concluding that Christianity has become the weapon if not the prerogative of those in power who constantly read their ideas into the Bible instead of extracting them from it as a means of guidance and source of salvation for all mankind. The powerful include not only the status quo but also the ecclesial bodies who profess Sunday after Sunday, and day after day that we have a Gospel and a Saviour sufficient for the times. It is an undiluted truth that "The Church, in spite of all its words, sometimes appears to be a conspiracy against those changes in society required by the Gospel. Many of us, even while paying lip-service to the need for such change, are content that basically the status quo be maintained. Where the concern and drive to act boldly for Christ manifests itself in the Church, it is too often dampened...mainly because they have a stake in the status quo."³⁴ We have seen how Biblical authority for apartheid is enmeshed with strong nationalist feelings and how impossible it appears to separate the theological from the political in order to offer a reasonable critique of both. To question the foundation upon which an apartheid society is established is to threaten the whole structure of that society. Racism is always locked into corrupted notions of nationalism, of ethnic superiority and, this is blatantly obvious in the DRC than in any other Church in

33. See De Gruchy, Op.Cit., p.93.

34. Huddleston, Op.Cit.

South Africa. Nationalism is the glossy cover-up for the most savage dehumanising procedures and policies. It is the sticky glue to which white peoples' fears are stuck. Though Alan Paton feels that the day of this strong Afrikaner nationalism is coming to an end³⁵ one still gets the feeling that we have lost the substance of Christianity in our minds and souls. This is shown by the fact that while nationalism of whatever kind divides, authentic Christianity draws people of different cultures and tribes together.³⁶

This shows that we in South Africa need something more than statements that will be launched into space, something that will inspire new developments. (This, I think, had begun). This is true when one examines the responses of the English Churches during the last decade. The last decade has witnessed at least two epoch-making events in the life of the English-speaking Churches (through their organ, the South African Council of Churches). These are (1) "The Message to the People of South Africa" which drew a considerable response at home and abroad. At home the 'Message' shook the ground beneath the feet of the National Party leadership. The then Prime Minister and former State President John Bathalzar Vorster could not keep silent. The 'Message' outlines what it believes to be the mind and the will of Christ for South Africa. It makes clear what its concern and task is and, above all, to whom its allegiance is. It therefore deserves quoting:

...Christians are called to witness to the significance of the Gospel in the particular circumstances of time and place in which they find themselves. We, in this country, and at this time, are in a situation where a policy of racial separation is being deliberately effected with increasing rigidity. The effects of this are to be seen in a widening range of aspects of life - in political, economic, social, educational and religious life; indeed, there are few areas even of the private life of the individual which are untouched by the effects of the doctrine of racial separation. In consequence, this doctrine is being seen by many not merely as a temporary political policy but as a necessary and permanent expression of the will of God, and as a genuine form of Christian obedience for the country. But this doctrine, together with the hardships

35. See Paton, A. Op.Cit.

36. See Naude's article, 'Christianity and Nationalism in the Light of Pentecost' in Sundermeier, T., Church and Nationalism in South Africa, Raven Press, Johannesburg, 1975, p.141ff.

which are deriving from its implementation, forms a programme which is truly hostile to Christianity and can serve only to keep people from the real knowledge of God.³⁷

The English-speaking Church sees as its task the expression of the message of reconciliation of different and opposing forces in this land.³⁸ It is no exaggeration to assert that "A Message to the People of South Africa" is the greatest ecumenical event in the history of the Church in South Africa in modern times. We must recall that seven years before the 'Message' there was an important Conference which took place in Johannesburg in 1960. The Conference otherwise known as the Cottesloe Consultation which brought together six representatives of the World Council of Churches and eighty delegates from the South African Churches. Thirty of these were from the Dutch Reformed Churches. After deliberations the Consultation published its findings in which (among other things) the policy of apartheid was attacked. As to be expected, the Consultation met with disapproval both from some of the members of the Dutch Reformed Churches and the National Party. The final result of all this was that the DRC withdrew not only from the World Council of Churches but also broke off any ties that might have existed between them and the South African English-speaking Churches.³⁹

The attitude of the Government towards both the Cottesloe Consultation and the 'Message' shows not only how schizophrenic the ruling party is but also how trembling the National Party is, in fear of its own freedom. It has been said that South Africa is a country that is at war with its own conscience. It is worth mentioning that the English-speaking Churches in the 'Message' were not compromising and were not prepared to either. They pulled no punches and spared no feelings and put the question squarely under the nose of every Christian: "to what are you truly giving your first loyalty, your primary commitment? Is it to a subsection of mankind, an ethnic group, a human tradition, a political idea; or to Christ?"⁴⁰

It was indeed the intention and the hope of the authors of the 'Message' that it would serve as a prophetic call to all who really cared about

37. See 'The Message in Perspective' by J.W. De Gruchy, (ed.).

38. Ibid.

39. Cf. Hurley, D. Op.Cit., p.467. Cf. also the PCSA's Report of Church and Nation submitted to the General Assembly 1979, p.27.

40. Cf. Hurley, D. Op.Cit., p.474; Cf. also (1) A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa, 1968; (2) De Gruchy, The Message in Perspective.

Christianity. It was widely disseminated and evoked a wide response. As mentioned above the then Prime Minister and later State President J.B. Vorster reacted angrily to the 'Message'. To the authors of the 'Message' he had the following to say, "I want to say to them, cut it out, cut it out immediately, because the cloth you are wearing will not protect you if you try to do this in South Africa."⁴¹ In his reply to the Churches, he went on to say, "...you are only concerned to make propaganda and I shall not, therefore, reply any further to your letter except to say to you that your pious prattling does not impress me and only reminds me of the Pharisee of yore who beat upon his breast and gave thanks that he was not like us. I, too, am grateful for this difference."⁴² On the other hand the 'Message' met the official approval of most of the active English-speaking Churches (with the exception of the Baptist Union of South Africa, owing, of course, to its peculiar position). The Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa said, "...the Committee would like on its own initiative to suggest that they also consider the possibility of reading the Authorised Summary of the Message to their congregations and inviting them to sign it at the conclusion of the service..."⁴³ The United Congregational Church resolved: "that the Message to the People of South Africa from the South African Council of Churches be commended to the serious consideration of the local churches of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa."⁴⁴ The Church of the Province of South Africa through its Provincial Synod said, "This Synod endorses the principles underlying the "Message to the People of South Africa" and associates itself with its call to repentance and renewed Commitment for themselves and for all whom they represent."⁴⁵ In addition, as a significant gesture, the Provincial Sybod asked its Standing Committee "to make a substantial contribution towards the costs incurred by the South African Council of Churches in producing and disseminating further study material."⁴⁶ The Lutheran Church supported the 'Message' and encouraged its members for further study.⁴⁷ Lastly, The Religious Society of Friends, that is, the Quakers in its Monthly Meeting declared:

41. See the excerpt of B.J. Vorster's speech delivered in Brakpan on September 27, 1968 in Message in Perspective, Op.Cit., p.35.

42. Ibid., p.34.

43. Ibid., p.37.

44. Ibid., p.38.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid.

"The Society of Friends has never felt able to accept doctrinal statements, nevertheless, as the purpose of the Message is to urge us to consider whether our first loyalty is to Christ or whether we are following a false gospel, we fully support the spirit in which the pamphlet was drawn up."⁴⁸

(2) The second giant step of the English-speaking Churches was the setting up of SPRO-Cas (already referred to above).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, let us accept the fact that the Church in South Africa is a DIVIDED BODY OF CHRIST 'floating on stormy waters'. The result of this is that the Churches have not achieved anything for the release of those in bondage and this has given birth to the Black Consciousness Movement to which we are going to turn in our next chapter. But, in spite of all this there is much to inspire hope, confidence and thankfulness to God for the vocation and perseverance of the English-speaking Churches (especially for laying bare the DRC's fanatical nationalism) of trying to disabuse us of the illusion of "a God who brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment, through the ministrations of a Christ without a Cross."⁴⁹ The English-speaking Churches despite a fierce opposition from both the DRC and the Government of the Nationalist Party have kept the lamp of relentless struggle, faith and hope in sweat and toil and these were never extinguished, their flame flickered dimly but nonetheless kept on going. There is still a lengthy and difficult road ahead, and the shape of the destination is still altogether unclear; but a beginning has been made. Everything depends, now and in the future, on the spirit in which the churches encounter each other. They have the choice on all sides between opening and closing, between confidence which goes out to meet the other and defensiveness which retreats into isolation.⁵⁰

48. Ibid. pp.38-39.

49. Renwick, A.M. (Citing H.R. Niebuhr) The Story of the Church, Inter-Varsity Fellowship, London, 1958, p.209.

50. Citing Alisdair Heron's article, 'The Ecclesiological Problems of Interchurch Marriage' in Beyond Tolerance: The Challenge of Mixed Marriages, Hurley, M. (ed.), Godfrey Chapman Publishers, London, 1975, p.91. Alisdair Heron a former lecturer at the Irish School of Ecumenics, Dublin, Eire, now lectures in the Department of Christian Dogmatics, Faculty of Divinity, University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

CHAPTER FIVEBLACK CONSCIOUSNESS REVISITED

In this chapter I wish to examine first and foremost the meaning of Black Consciousness or Black Awareness as understood by the oppressed black community in South Africa. These two terms will be used interchangeably throughout the chapter depending, of course, on the sources at the author's disposal. I wish to warn from the beginning that in some instances (though rare), Black Consciousness and liberation are sometimes used interchangeably. In the same breath I wish to answer the question as to what the primary concern of the chapter is? The primary concern of the chapter is the future of the Christian faith in our contemporary world of South Africa in the light of the historical interpretation of black experience. Secondly, the chapter seeks to suggest, among other things, a more viable future for the black man within the context of a pro-white society.¹

1.1 ON UNDERSTANDING BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS

A South African black man understands Black Consciousness as meaning, "...a road to self-discovery, the philosophy emphasized liberation from psychological oppression; the building of a new awareness; the establishment of a new basic dignity; a framing of a new attitude of mind; a cultural revival."² Black Consciousness in South Africa is still in its formative stages and tends to be a politically divisive element. The dividing line runs between pragmatists who are in one way or another prepared to familiarize and come to terms with the realities and repercussions of the policy of separate development, and ideologists who are not. It is interesting to note that the pragmatists are led mainly by 'homeland' based politicians and middle-class moderates; and the ideologists by black university, and high school students and urban middle-class radicals.³

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1. See Jones, M.J. Black Awareness: A Theology of Hope, Abingdon Press, New York, 1971, p.11.
 2. See Oppidan, (A Rhodes University Student Newspaper), Vol. 4, No. 6, September, 1979, p.5.
 3. See article by D.A. Kotze, 'Black Consciousness in South Africa', in Politikon: South African Journal of Political Science, Vol. 1, No. 1, June 1974, p.45. There is justice in defining Black Consciousness in South Africa as a philosophy of survival in a repressive and almost 'communist' society camouflaged by the oppressors under the garment of democracy.

From the beginning of the last decade neither of the two streams had succeeded in obtaining a clear margin of support especially among the urban black population. It would appear that here, at least the ideologists are at an advantage, with their emotional appeal and promises of ultimate well-being through self-help efforts and programmes overshadowing the attempts at compromise with separate development. There is a strong Africanist orientation in the South African Black Consciousness movement which tends to strengthen its appeal among the black African population, rather than among the Indians and Coloureds, and it remains largely an African movement with comparatively small support from Indians and Coloureds.⁴ This will be explained fully later. One of the objectives of the Black Consciousness movement is that of becoming a common factor unifying radical opponents of apartheid. It supplies the base for the building of a political movement for those people who do not support the homeland-based political parties, which they regard as the "yes-men" of the Nationalist Party. D.A. Kotze argues that the Black Consciousness movement in South Africa is an elitist movement which recruits mostly from the professionals, theologians, and leaders of black voluntary organizations.⁵

But there is also a sense in which we could describe the Black Consciousness movement as a slogan which directs black people to a new approach and as an inward-looking movement through which the black people could look at themselves with new eyes and not through the values of white society.⁶ In short, it is a movement which is striving for the total involvement of black people alone as an essential pre-requisite for success. The exclusive black attempt at mustering black efforts for realizing black political aspirations is referred to as black solidarity, which implies a struggle between white and black for spiritual livelihood. It is also a realization by blacks of the need for solidarity in order to rid themselves as a group of mental and material servitude.

It accepts blackness of skin as a unifying element and a basis for planning and action.⁷ Black Consciousness also shows the urge for the discovery

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid. It is worth noting that many a time most definitions of Black Consciousness (in oppressed communities in the world) "tend to emphasize what it is not, and so remain vague...even contradictory on the philosophical bases and objectives of the movement." For further discussion see D.A. Kotze, Op.Cit.

7. Ibid., p.47.

of black tradition e.g. music, art, African life-style etc. These express common black identity, found in the field of common problems and aspirations simply presumed, without too close a definition.⁸ Interestingly enough, there are outstanding aspects of African culture which are basic to Black Consciousness. These can be summed up as follows:

1. African culture is "man-centred", i.e. Africans have a concern for each other.
2. The formation of groups by Africans is characteristic of all their actions.
3. An eagerness to communicate is emphasised by the Africans' love for song and rhythm, and it is maintained that all African songs are group songs.
4. Land was always owned jointly.
5. Poverty was a foreign concept and it was a common thing to ask for help from one's neighbours
6. Whereas the westerner has a problem-solving approach, the African's approach is situation-experiencing.
7. Africans are deeply religious and religion was practised in daily life and not at given time: in particular buildings.⁹

Kotze notes with interest that Western values, which emphasize man's material well-being, are rejected and the African's contention is re-emphasised that the cornerstone of society is man himself. At the same time it is believed that Africa will make a major contribution to the world in the field of human relationships. Black identity could, at least in part, be achieved through political fulfilment which could contribute towards the legitimising of those human values and economic systems regarded as characteristic of black culture.¹⁰ It is also to be noted that African culture refers to, among other things, the "communalism" of what we could call, 'African economics', namely, the African eagerness to share his poverty and possessions within a corporate society and a collective way of life. This, of course, is caused and strengthened by poverty and a natural caring for the neighbour. It is at this point that fear seems to be apparent among Africans that 'affluence' would be contrary to this

8. Ibid., pp.48-49.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

highly prized cultural trait, since it would erode the feeling for the love of neighbour.¹¹ At this juncture it is worth remembering that fundamental to Black Consciousness movement is the question of being or identity. What does it mean to be truly human? What does it mean to be "a man among men?" The same questions are asked by Jones:

To what kind of self-identity does black consciousness call a black man? Is the new birth into blackness to be acceptable as an end in itself? Is the mere acceptance of one's blackness enough? Does the mere acceptance of one's blackness give a full and complete enough justification for one's existence? Is it not possible to achieve power "black power", without acquiring an authentic black self-identity? Is it not true that, as a black man, a person may well possess power enough to make others notice him in any important context without the consciousness of a true and authentic self-identity? Indeed, is black self-identity all?¹²

Before we attempt to answer the above thought-provoking questions, perhaps it would be to our advantage to acknowledge that the Black Consciousness movement has its own weaknesses and unless these are recognized from the beginning, it will be well nigh-impossible for such a dynamic movement to stand the test of history. These weaknesses include wrong assertions by "non-Blacks" that the black man exhibits traits of insecurity in the place assigned him in the structure of separate development. First, "The place of traditional African culture, and the relationship between the culture of Africans, Indians, and Coloureds - who regard themselves as black, is not made clear: Black power, except for isolated mention, remains undefined; and the key concepts such as liberation, emancipation, alienation, self-reliance, and identity are to be understood more by their contextual usage than through explicit elucidation."¹³

Second, the place of Indians and Coloureds is suspended in a state of uncertainty so that they see themselves as black when the policy of Separate Development operates against them while not completely identifying themselves with Africans. Third, the statements of the Black Consciousness movement on the question of Indians and Coloureds either with regard to what they did say or did not say did not impress the Africans. What I am saying

11. Ibid.

12. Jones, Op.Cit., pp.66-67.

13. Kotze, Op.Cit., p.46.

is this: the content of Black Consciousness is the discovery of freedom, first, through the discovery of the lost "ingredients" of Africanism e.g. music, dance, songs, culture, etc., all of which are foreign to both Indians and Coloureds. The question now is: how do Indians and Coloureds fit themselves in this pattern? The answering of this question will suggest their place in the Black Consciousness movement and therefore in the whole liberation struggle in South Africa. If, in fact they cannot have any such place, then, by what authority do they label themselves black? It would appear (as things stand at the moment) they are step children in an established home and therefore jumping on a bandwagon and, this alone suggests their alienation by the white community of which they thought (and many of whom still do) that one day they would be part and parcel of. This, of course, poses more problems such as whether it was, in the first place, necessary to include Indians and Coloureds in the movement since they (up to now) show no signs of effective opposition) to the Government created institutions. This last part is understandable because they have a stake in the status quo.¹⁴ Since Indians and Coloureds are neutral in the struggle for liberation, certain seeds are beginning to germinate in my mind as to their future. Without being cynical or prejudiced against Indians and Coloureds in South Africa, I envisage a time in the course of the struggle when they will automatically, if not willingly, join hands with any group which is likely to win at the end of the day. They are therefore opportunists. This is, of course, understandable especially when one takes into consideration their peculiar position in South Africa, namely the problem of being minorities of a minority. In their history in South Africa they have never been known as strategists. They seem unable to distinguish between what is theirs by right of creation or by right of immigration. They seem also unable to distinguish between pacifism, cowardice, justice, etc. I might in the same breath take a bold stand and declare that they appear hypocritical and deceitful in comparison with those who willed power in South Africa. They do not seem to be prepared to lay down their lives when the struggle so demands. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth that modern conditions perpetuated

14. Here I cite as one example the position and the status of Indian and Coloured students at Rhodes University, where by Government policy (from the second year level) they can choose any white hostel in which they would like to comfortably stay during the pursuit of the rest of their academic course, a situation which they do not question. Even lines of communication between these learned groups is at the lowest ebb, suggesting (to the author who has himself tried very hard to find means and ways of communication with the groups in question) their background, moral outlook and future aspirations.

by the policy of separate development are forcing upon the mind of the African, Indian, and Coloured an idea of fighting each other. This is no more demonstrated, among other things, than by (i) the conditions and geographic areas which we separately inhabit; (ii) better living conditions for Indian and Coloured communities as compared to the shanties of the African community; (iii) the access of Indian and Coloured communities to the Government and the cordial hearing they receive; (iv) the Indians owning of business properties in the so-called white areas - thus becoming honorary whites in our common fatherland. There is something very strange in South African policies, namely, that the Government in this country can and does grant a foreigner a status of equality with whites but refuses the same right to the African citizen. This, to say the least, is totally against the Charter of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" of the United Nations Organization. It is against the "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights". Finally, it is against the "Helsinki Agreement" (see Chapter Two). It ought to have been known that the Africans, Indians, and Coloureds could (and up to now) cannot sing the same song since the latter two are addressing themselves to the black problem not only from the positions of privilege and comfort (which the majority of them enjoy but also as spectators in a racial theatre. They also contribute in the manipulation of the black market of cheap labour in the name of black fraternity. One is justified in asking the questions: For how long will these people deceive us? For how long will African intellectuals evade the issue? This is one of the mysteries of the Twentieth century which has escaped the scrutiny of the advocates of the Black Consciousness movement. This is the hazardous and lonely road Africans have to travel in search of true humanity and brotherhood. Unless these and other related issues are noticed and settled, the aims and objectives of the Black Consciousness movement may be suspect or even discredited by the new breed of Africans.

Now in answer to Major J. Jones' questions, I would contend that it is a duty of any peace-loving man in our situation in South Africa to be able to go behind the sources of the South African institutions in search of relevant tools to articulate a philosophy of hope, determination, and unity that will enable all victims of apartheid to examine the scope, extent, and the nature of the malady facing the nation, namely, the oppression of blacks through systematic racism with well calculated goals of the supremacy and domination of blacks by whites. Indeed, "...we have to find out what went wrong - where, when, and how, and, we have to find out whether our

position is a deliberate creation of God or an artificial fabrication of the truth by power - hungry people whose motive is authority, security, wealth and comfort. In other words, the Black Consciousness approach would be irrelevant in a colourless and non-exploitative egalitarian society. It is relevant here because we believe that an anomalous situation is a deliberate creation of man."¹⁵

We should remember that inherent in the whole struggle of white survival and their prosperity is the colour question because in South Africa the colour of a man's skin is also a dividing line. It determines your race 'classification'. It determines who your friends should be; where and how to live; where and what kind of work you could do; which door and what elevator you could use in public places. Psychologically this also applies to private places, namely, the houses of white people e.g. an African knows without being told or ordered that he or she cannot use the front door, that is also reserved for whites. In railway stations you know pretty well where to buy your train ticket (in a place reserved for blacks) and which gate or train carriage to use. There has also developed a tendency even in super-markets' queues for blacks to automatically step aside to give way to whites to pay first. Sometimes a mere glance at the face of a white customer seems to suggest such an 'etiquette'. Hence whites in South Africa create such barriers of practical and psychological nature among various racial groups so that they can enjoy power and privileges at the expense of blacks. In the face of this inhumanity they still have an audacity to sanction moral and Scriptural justification for their unjust cause and deceit. On the degradation of black people, R. Turner¹⁶ has observed the following:

It is 'commonsense' (to white South Africans) that black people are inferior to white people. And this commonsense is not just some sort of delusion. It is based on white South Africans' experience of the objective 'inferiority' of most blacks in, for example, education, income, dress and language (i.e. proficiency in the only languages which whites recognise). And,

15. S.B. Biko's article, 'Black Consciousness and the Quest for a True Humanity', in Footnote 18 below. I prefer to refer to the Nationalist Government as the Government in South Africa rather than the Government of South Africa because the latter would suggest that it is democratically elected into office whereas the opposite is true. It governs by inherited conquest - hence the repressive and almost communist measures.

16. Richard Turner.

moreover, nearly everyone they know treats blacks as inferior. They see black 'inferiority' as one of the imperatives of human nature. They 'explain' a social fact by direct reference to biology and thereby misunderstand it...¹⁷

In this connection we must also note that:

To make the lie live even longer, blacks have to be denied any chance of accidentally proving their equality with white men. For this reason there is job reservation, lack of training in skilled work, and a tight orbit around professional possibilities for blacks. Stupidly enough, the system turns back to say that blacks are inferior because they have no economists, no engineers, etc., although it is made impossible for blacks to acquire these skills.¹⁸

Can whites argue with any sense of justice or with any degree of honesty that blacks are incapable of anything humanly achievable? Blacks have not failed but have been failed by the policy of apartheid. If blacks cannot stand on their own, they shall forever remain perpetual commodities or tools in the hands of whites. Again, going back to Jones' questions, I wish to suggest that there are numerous answers, ways, and means in South Africa by which black people have responded to, at least, some of the crucial questions. Some responded by slogans and songs, all in search of freedom from the yoke of racism and oppression; some by wearing African traditional attire; some by engaging daily in the language of liberation whose motto is: Enough is enough. Black man you will be free at last. And, if need be - by any means necessary. And yet, others answered these questions by willingly laying down their lives for the sake of South Africa.¹⁹

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17. Turner, R. *The Meaning of Utopian Thinking*, p.83. (pamphlet reserved at Rhodes University library, Grahamstown.)
18. See S. Biko's article, 'Black Consciousness and the Quest for a True Humanity' in Motlhabi, M. (Ed.), Essays on Black Theology, University Christian Movement, Johannesburg, 1972, p.18.
19. We should note here that the advocates of the Black Consciousness movement do not say 'Africa for Africans' as some destructive theorists allege. On the contrary they believe that South Africa belongs to all who have contributed to make her what she is today, irrespective of colour, creed, nationality or sex. Secondly, that all people in South Africa shall share equally (See the ANC's Freedom Charter 'Human Rights for all: A People's Charter, 1955' in The Struggle for Racial Equality, Julius Lewin (ed.), Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd., London, 1967, p.53ff. Julius Lewin was Associate Professor of African Law and Government at the Witwatersrand University, Johannesburg, South Africa.

This, on the part of the black man is not reactionary but revolutionary suicide. Yet, it is no exaggeration to assert that black men and women who refuse to live under oppression are dangerous to white society because they become symbols of hope to their brothers and sisters, inspiring them to follow their example. This is the way white society has and still views the Black Consciousness movement. But, we should be clear about the fact that Black Consciousness as a political movement must be judged not in terms of its effect upon the psychological well-being of the black masses, but rather in terms of a history of resistance, and the relevance of the particular form of struggle that is adopted by the advocates of the movement. Furthermore, the banning of the Black Consciousness organizations and leadership by the State has been no more harsh and repressive than the destruction of the political movements in the last eighteen years or so.²⁰ Since these organizations have been declared illegal, they had to face draconian laws imposed by the State upon them. What astonished the Government was and still is the fact that the ANC and the PAC (as the chief-architects of the ideology of Black Consciousness), recognized the contradiction between black and white in an apartheid society.²¹ "Consequently they focussed their activities against what they perceived to be the exploitative nature of the South African capitalism. With the absence of these groups there existed an organizational vacuum towards the end of the Sixties, in which white liberal organizations, assuming responsibility for the masses, started taking up issues against the State. The activities they engaged in were considered inconsequential. Not only was it felt that whites could not identify with the position of the Africans, but that too little activity was directed towards the goal of freedom."²² The examination of our subject by Wits Student further confirms that in the light of this, and with the inability of white organizations to adopt a stance compatible with black aspirations, Steve Bantu Biko and Barney Nyameko Pityana...contributed to blacks' understanding of the true nature of the issues involved in the struggle against apartheid.²³ Indeed, the

20. Here I have taken the liberty of following and even of paraphrasing the Wits Student's article entitled 'Black Consciousness Reassessed' in Wits Student, Vol. 31, No. 19, 1979. The Supplementary article is not numbered.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid. Steve Bantu Biko was the founder of the South African Students Organization formed in 1968. He later became its chief leader and representative. He died in police custody on September 12, 1977. Barney Nyameko also a controversial legendary figure in the Black Consciousness movement - later served SASO in his capacity as a Secretary General. He lives in exile.

Black Consciousness movement did make its mark felt among black people of South Africa. It enabled them to look at themselves and the situation surrounding them rather critically. It raised the masses especially students and urban blacks beyond the level of consciousness desired and aimed for by Bantu Education.²⁴ It enabled them to ask the question, Who am I? By answering this question for themselves blacks became aware or conscious of the fact that they were not by any means inferior to whites.

Furthermore, it enabled them to see that South Africa is a society that is structured on racial prejudice which has its foundation in the exploitation of the black labour as a cheap market for the South African white society.²⁵ "The initial liberation was itself not enough...the establishment of political organs such as SASO, BPC, SSRG, SASM etc. challenged the State on issues of education, racial policy, foreign investment, employment conditions, but were severely limited by the State against them. The bannings and detentions of Black Consciousness leaders, apart from the harrassment and intimidation that these organizations suffered diminished their effectiveness considerably."²⁶ It is noteworthy that after the Rivonia Trial of 1964, there seemed to have been a period of inactivity in the Black Consciousness movement, partly because of the harsh and repressive measures of the Government and partly because many black political activists at this time had gone underground. It was not until the year 1969 that the fire of Black Consciousness was rekindled with the formation of the South African Students Organization. The activities of the Black Consciousness movement culminated with the Soweto uprising of June 1976 which aroused the conscience of the international community on an unprecedented scale. It is, however, important to note that:

The students of Soweto, who took the initiative to present the most serious threat to the State since the banning of the ANC and PAC, in the form of the 1976 Soweto riots. The nationwide resistance that resulted from Soweto indicated that BC would have to redirect its activity to the more mass based forms of militant resistance, and also emphasize the need to unify worker resistance

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24. Bantu Education is a pseudo-education offered to blacks and purported to serve the needs of the black community in the 'homeland' in South Africa. It was pioneered by its chief-architect and the 'god-father' of apartheid, Dr H.F. Verwoerd, who later became the first Prime Minister of the Republic of South Africa. He was assassinated in September 1966.
25. See Wits Student, Op.Cit.
26. Ibid.

with that of the other groups against the structures of exploitation in order to gain any significant level of success.²⁷

It is also to be remembered that:

Whereas it was essential that Africans overcame the effects of racial ideology i.e. the notion of the white superiority over blacks, the dangers of BC were that it continued to explain Apartheid ideology as maintaining a structure whereby the mass of the population would remain rightless, voiceless and ultra exploitable to ensure that business profits remained high, it focussed on the symptoms of Apartheid - That blacks suffered so that whites could prosper. By failing to see the State as an instrument to protect and co-ordinate a system where one 'class' could exploit another 'class', it looked no further than the relationship between black and white.²⁸

We therefore conclude (on this part) that for blacks, Black Consciousness is an instrument not only to unite black masses but also to liberate them from the way of thinking that has been determined by the apartheid doctrine and the effects of its racial ideology. The frustrations of being denied access to power and privilege were translated into an understanding that looked no further than the fact that blacks in general were subject to discriminatory practice by the apparatus of apartheid. Existing nationalism was converted into Black Consciousness on this basis.²⁹

Thus the oppressed of South Africa by accepting a paternalistic ethos and legitimizing class rule, had to develop their most powerful defence against the dehumanization implicit in oppression. Needless to say that South African paternalism may have reinforced racism as well as class exploitation, but it also unwittingly invited its victims to fashion their own interpretation of the social order it was intended to justify. And, therefore blacks, drawing on a religion that was supposed to ensure their compliance and docility, rejected the essence of oppression by projecting their own rights and values as human beings. Thus blacks in South Africa found an opportunity to translate paternalism itself into a doctrine different from that understood

27. Ibid., Vol. 31, No. 19, 1979.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

by their masters and to forge it into weapons of resistance to assertions that oppression was a natural condition for blacks, that they were racially inferior, and had no right or legitimate claims of their own. It is therefore the task of Black Consciousness to restore the black man to his full humanity, his original beingness. Black Consciousness is aiming at eradicating from the mind of the black people all the traits of the non-whiteness. I mean the non-Europeanness instilled in our minds by the repressive colonial system perpetuated by the Louis Bothas, the Jan Smuts, the Malans, the Verwoerds, the Vorsters and now the P.W. Bothas.*

Our image has been distorted and our minds are polluted by racial ideology of apartheid. Black Consciousness is an antidote against this malady from spreading to future generations of blacks and indeed of whites themselves. Black Consciousness is in essence:

an attitude of mind and a way of life. It is the most positive call to emanate from the black world for a long time. Its unadulterated quintessence is the realisation by the black man of the need to rally together with his brothers around the cause of their oppression - the blackness of their skin - and to operate as a group in order to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude. It is based on a self examination which has ultimately led them to believe that by seeking to run away from themselves and to emulate the white man, they are insulting the intelligence of whoever created them black. The philosophy of Black Consciousness, therefore expresses group pride and the determination by blacks to rise and attain the envisaged self. Freedom is the ability to define one's self with one's possibilities held back not by the power of other people over you but one's relationship to God and to natural surroundings. On his own therefore the Black Man wishes to explore his surroundings and to test his possibilities - in other words to make real his freedom by whatever means he deems fit. At the heart of this kind of thinking is the realisation by blacks that the most potent weapon at the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed. If one is free at heart, no human-made chains can bind one to servitude but if one's mind is so effectively manipulated that he is a liability to the white man, then there will be nothing the oppressed can do to scare his powerful masters. Hence thinking along lines of black consciousness makes the black man see himself as a being entire in himself. It makes him less

* These are the South African Prime Ministers in order of their "apostolic Succession" to the hierarchy of Afrikaner politics.

dependent and more free to express his manhood. At the end of it all he cannot tolerate attempts by anybody to dwarf the significance of his manhood.³⁰

To show the importance of our subject we would also contend that:

Black consciousness calls for a decultured being in the black society. It means "a whole new vision, a totally different perspective, a penetration to the depths beneath the depth of blackness". (Lerone Bennett). Black consciousness implies a vision of the heritage of our forefathers. It is the beginning of a new search for roots, roots to anchor them firmly in the midst of a militant struggle. Black consciousness is not only a search for humanity but it is in fact an assertion and affirmation of the worth and dignity of the black man. Black consciousness is indeed a hunger for solidarity with the oppressed people of this world. Those who "reject the definition of themselves in cliched categories of the whites when they speak of 'race relations'". The real black people are those who embrace the positive description "black" as opposed to the negatives of others who set themselves up as the standard, the criterion and the hall mark of value. It is a positive confrontation with the self. It is black consciousness that is seeking for a social content of the lives of the black people. It seeks to involve the other in the suffering of the others. For that has been the cornerstone of the traditional black community.³¹

At this juncture it becomes necessary to examine certain characteristics of the Black Consciousness movement which have kept it alive in the midst of tensions and repressive legislation, namely:

1.2 THE COURAGE TO BE BLACK

We must take note of the fact that the primary question of what it means to have the courage to be a black man within the context of a pro-white society and culture poses a much deeper theological question when related to the black man's current quest for self-identity.³² Perhaps the question is

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30. Quoted from Steve Biko's article, 'Black Consciousness and the Quest for a True Humanity', in Essays on Black Theology, Motlhabi, M. (ed.), Published by the "Black Theology Project" of the University Christian Movement, Johannesburg, 1972, pp.21-22.
31. Quoted from Barney Nyameko Pityana's article, 'What is Black Consciousness?' in Essays on Black Theology, Op.Cit., p.40.
32. Jones, Black Awareness, Op.Cit., p.67.

best asked: What does it mean to have the audacity to love and dignify one's blackness? When the question is posed in this light, its implications go to the very roots of the self-identity struggle. Being itself is related to this special question - that is, being under God.³³ It is, however, interesting to observe that the quest for a usable "black self-identity" is an ontological question that must be answered clearly and precisely. Such an answer must deal with the basic and persistent question of what kind of personhood is being sought by the black man. The kind of personhood or self-identity which is sought is as theologically important as the seeking itself. The problem of the authentic selfhood can be seen in, at least, two different ways. First, as a negative assertion, it can be a mere indication of a deep insecurity. This lack of security can be seen in the pseudo-superior self-identity sought and held by the white supremacist, who has always thought himself, because of colour alone, to be better than his black brother. Insecure in his whiteness, he asserted an exaggerated personhood, which he has traditionally refused to accept or to recognize.³⁴ Second, we also note that another part of the black man's ontological problem lies at the point of projecting any kind of personhood which must be respected, as such, in the pro-white South African society.

We must also take note that "Those who would assert a mere black personhood may well run the risk...of having that black personhood finally accepted, thus, making it still mean or connote less than white personhood."³⁵ There are numerous ways to self-identity or selfhood, being formulated by blacks of this country - some of which are good and excellent and some of which are contradictory and self-defeating and therefore counter-productive. It should be admitted quite frankly, that it had never happened before in history of racial friction in South Africa that the White establishment feels the full weight of the anger and frustration of black people as they do now in this decade. The reason for this, I should think, lies in the fact that since the 1976 students' uprising and the determination of the African community to support its children, Africans have taken an uncompromising attitude towards South African institutions. To use the language of Jones again, "Black awareness has become a reality and a new hope within the black community...Because of the new boldness with which the black man is asserting himself, his "no" may well mean that death is more

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., p.68.

35. Ibid., pp.68-69.

preferable than life, if he is resisted and his personhood is not fully recognized - especially if the latter means that he is not free to be black and at the same time enjoy the fullness of the fruits of freedom. Too many black people are now asserting that it is "better to die on one's feet than to live on one's knees."³⁶ In this decade, we constantly hear the black man saying, "I shall affirm my being, that being is black, and that black being must be recognized as an authentic human selfhood."³⁷ We can argue then, that the courage to be black is the courage to affirm one's black being in the face of all that would seek to deny that black being is also human.³⁸ Therefore, it is vital for black people in South Africa to search for a true humanity by formulating a black identity or black being that would enable them to strive and to claim from those in power that which is rightfully theirs. They have to do this with courage in spite of the derogatory place assigned them by the white establishment.

It is because of the destructive nature of white attitudes and harrassment from the State that blacks decided to engage in an umbrella movement, namely, Black Consciousness to educate the black community and at the same time, to give hope to the black cause. In such a struggle as ours it becomes necessary for black people temporarily to step aside from white paternalism and to say to the white man: your assessment of my black-being is irrelevant and suicidal.

1.3 SEPARATION

Many schools of thought have been propounded by Black Consciousness exponents in this decade and, among these is the visible tiredness of black radicals who rightly feel that the best way out of the impasse is to ignore the white man and go it alone. The contention is that the black man will never find true self-identity within the context of, or in relation to, the white man whom he blames for so much of his current confusion and frustrations. So, the black man will have to withdraw psychologically, physically, and socially; only in this apartness will he be able to find the time for adequate self-assessment, and out of such a deep quest will come a concept of true self-identity. In such separation, it is further contended, that there must be studies in black history, art, music, culture etc. These will arouse within the black man a true sense of knowledge,

36. Ibid., pp.71-72.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid., p.69.

of worth, self-esteem, and at-homeness with himself.³⁹ Another contention is that in apartness the black man will be able to free himself from all that disdains blackness; he will no longer be confused with a desired white identity that he can never quite attain.⁴⁰ At this juncture, we might as well ask, "...if we accept the basic belief that authentic selfhood is achieved only in a total community of selves, what does this do with any self-identity achieved in context less than multiracial? Is it possible to achieve adequate self-identity apart from the total life situation? One wonders is this much separation within the context of our culture possible anyway."⁴¹

In this regard we may say that the truth of the matter is that black people, no less than the Afrikaners, value their past and the cultural heritage that is theirs. But, thank God, that quite a number among the Black Consciousness movement are rightly quite aware that modern conditions generate continuing social change. They believe that in the process a common culture has evolved in South Africa, to which all groups have made contributions. No group, in fact, can develop on its own lines, uninfluenced by the total society of which it forms a part. Cultural isolation is not possible in the modern world - and this includes South Africa. It would impoverish us all if the young black intellectuals, goaded by rejection and recurrent humiliation, were to choose to opt into an exclusive world and culture designed for blacks. Such a move or desire is rather unrealistic and unfortunate, to say the least. And, if this were to succeed in future - it will, then means that apartheid has succeeded - because basic to separate development is the exclusion of blacks from the 'white man's world', civilization and culture.⁴² Therefore, those in the Black Consciousness movement who would advocate to separatism as a means of achieving a true selfhood and the ultimate realization of authentic Black self-identity, often ignore the fact that the humanity of man is much deeper than skin pigmentation. This is not to deny the fact that there is a great need for the strengths that can be derived from the Black Consciousness movement. There is a dire need for the self-respect that Black Consciousness movement teaches. Theologically speaking, there is no running away from the fact that the ultimate manhood or personhood sought should be, under God, truly human.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. See Dr W.F. Nkomo's article in South African Dialogue, Op.Cit., p.352.

1.4 THE CONCEPT OF HOPE IN BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS

On examining the development of the Black Consciousness movement in South Africa, one becomes convinced that although much spade work is still needed for its ultimate triumph, it is nonetheless, characterized by a kind of educated hope that presses, especially those of its members who are Christians, to acknowledge the ontological priority of a kind of future mode of black-being which has not yet revealed itself in the fullness of maturity. This hope may be said to be at the very heart of the Black Consciousness movement. It seeks to make itself known to the non-black world. This hope is mingled with a tinge of revolution. In some instances, though rare, hope and revolution are fused concepts for Black Consciousness advocates - for the simple reason that so many black people do not feel that the two concepts can be separated in a complex, flexible, fixed, and unchangeable social structure such as ours in South Africa. When one further examines the situation, one becomes convinced that meaningful change is so hard to come by that many, if not most black people, have lost faith in a hope unrelated to violence, revolution, or extreme social pressure.⁴³ It is, however, "...time for the Christian man, black or white, to take note when fellow-Christians seek to find an adequate theological justification for a hope that also embraces some concept of a violent revolution. Hope in too much of the black community is a violent hope, and yet it is a hope that seeks an outlet at every level of human life. It is a total hope that is founded on the arrival of the absolute and finalized future of the black man within history. Whether such a hope can be Christian will depend in part upon what the Christian churches, black and white, are willing to contribute to its ultimate fulfilment within the context of this world. If it is centred in the church or theological concepts of our time, such a hope might well be labelled "black eschatology". And yet, in this context, it must be conceived as an eschatological message that is utterly and completely human. It leads us, not away from man, but towards the perfect image of man symbolized in the person of the Jesus of history (who comes again). It does not direct attention away from the earth, because it conceives that somehow the greatest wisdom is bound up with a cross staked in the ground and a grave dug into the earth."⁴⁴

To this we must hastily add that "An intelligible black theology of hope has been almost nonexistent, and yet for some time now black Christians

43. Ibid., p.87.

44. Ibid., p.88.

have needed to take a look at the problems that might confront any attempts to develop an adequate theology of hope. This is not surprising when we recall that for too long white theologians have been producing systems in which the alien virtues of harmony, order, and stability have been stressed."⁴⁵ Here one could rightly anticipate some problems that would soon (if not already) face a black theologian who is to address himself to the problem of Black Consciousness. Indeed, he would fail in his duty if he were to finish his address without introducing in it a good dose of revolutionary ideas in an affirmative sense. But it must be said with frankness that the average black or white Christian may not yet be convinced of any need for a mixture of theology, hope, and revolution. To this group, theology as a study and articulation of the Word of God cannot be revolutionary. It is salvific and eschatological in nature - forgetting that we are living in revolutionary times and therefore theology by its very nature and content cannot be static. Its message must always be addressed to particular situations and at particular times. This, indeed, is the only way by which it takes form and shape. This is also the criteria by which it is judged by the world.

Within the black community we have Christians living in ghettos and for them, I imagine, "any theology to be meaningful it must speak to only those factors or actions which are going to help him realize a better day within his life-time; he would rightly insist that the only time he has is now...It may well be because they have not seen hope as a viable possibility without revolutionary actions that are totally alien to their present mode of thought."⁴⁶

In the Black Consciousness movement the Church is viewed rather with suspicion. These days even the once benevolent arms of white Christendom are found to be quite cold. The Church is regarded to a large extent or degree to be quite responsible for much that has contributed to the plight of the black people. Although it must be admitted that the advocates of revolution within the Black Consciousness movement "are for the most part non-theological in their views. Thus, their view of revolution has very little of the content of a theology of hope. And yet, in many ways, whether violent or nonviolent, a theology of hope must

45. Ibid., p.89.

46. Ibid., p.90.

be related to a theology of revolution. This is a task supremely of the Black Church which is supposed to be the Mother of black experience. The Black Churches of our land must therefore be deeply involved in propounding and correcting or assisting Black Consciousness movement. They must be involved in the struggle of the rediscovery and in determining 'who black people were in order that they may be in a better light to know who they are and who they may be'.⁴⁷ There is a deep feeling within the Black Consciousness movement that the "Christianity that the black man received at the hands of the slavemasters was calculated to make him, the black man, free in neither his mind, his body or his spirit. Freedom was not a possibility for which he was considered worthy this side of the grave. That version of the faith given to the slaves was administered as a spiritual narcotic intended to protect the economic interests of the slavemaster by so confusing the mind of the slave as to make his dehumanization seem to him reasonable, right and consistent with the will of God."⁴⁸

At this stage one can rightly ask: What sustained the blacks in general and the advocates of the Black Consciousness movement in particular especially in the midst of massive and almost unbelievable repressive legislation in South Africa? The answer lies in the fact that God has in the last three hundred and twenty seven years shielded the "discarded people" from brutal destruction and annihilation of oppression in this country. Black people are imbued with an ethic of hope in the God who "frees and unites" (Nairobi Assembly, 1975). Their ethic of hope is still resting, in the words of Major J. Jones, "upon a God concept that will embrace or catch up in its meaning all the aspirations of the black man for the now and for the not-yet of the future. When a black man seeks a God without hope or a future without God, not only is the foundation of his hope in danger, but the very structure of human existence is being assailed...hope is the human quest for fulfilment beyond the present experiences of alienation and destruction within each individual, and within the collective life. Black religion as hope is also related to the possibility of black man's becoming truly fulfilled beyond the deformities of his past."⁴⁹

47. See Eric C. Lincoln's article, 'Black Consciousness and the Black Church in America' in Mission Trends, No. 1, Anderson & Stransky (Eds.), Wm. B. Erdmanns, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1974, p.182.

48. Ibid., p.184.

49. Jones, Op.Cit., p.127.

Therefore, we are justified in saying that Christianity which has been used by whites as justification of the conditions in which blacks found themselves today - has in turn become a hope of survival and the solution of the black being. This new understanding of Christianity has led to the current Black Theology of Liberation in South Africa (an idea which would have been impossible without the emergence of the Black Consciousness movement) whose task is to attempt an answer to the Christological question, namely, Who is this Jesus of Nazareth for the black man in South Africa today? This is the subject of the next chapter. In conclusion, to whites of South Africa in general and to their Government in particular (which instead of listening and responding to the cry and warning of the Black Consciousness movement), riddle our beautiful black bodies with assassin bullets that quickly devour and send us to the graves, each oppressed black soul is singing (for the white man) a black litany with George Jackson:⁵⁰

Hurl me into the next
existence, the descent
into hell won't turn me.
I'll crawl back to dog
his trail forever. They
won't defeat my revenge,
never, never. I'm part
of a righteous people
who anger slowly, but
rage undaunted. We'll
gather at his door
in such a number that the
rumbling of our feet will
make the earth tremble.⁵¹

50. George Jackson "the black man with a beautiful black soul" was one of the illustrious leaders of the Black Panther movement in the United States of America. In a commemoration oration, Robert Chrisman said of this gallant soldier: "THE HEROIC LIFE OF GEORGE JACKSON, Soledad Brother, was terminated on Saturday, August 21, when he was shot in the back by an unidentified San Quentin guard. The brutal killing was intended to halt the forward, revolutionary surge of the black movement in this country, but it has failed... his thoughts, his life, his theory, his practice shall seed the consciousness of oppressed peoples throughout the world and guide the liberation struggle..." (see Black Scholar: Journal of Black Studies and Research, Vol. 3, No. 2, October 1971). At this stage in writing this thesis, I cannot fail to remember that we are conceived to be born; we are born to toil and to enjoy life in abundance; we die to resurrect, and we resurrect in order to enjoy life eternally. *But we are not born to be persecuted and ravaged by the white establishment.*

51. See The Black Scholar, Vol. 3, No. 2, Oct. 1971.

CHAPTER SIXBLACK THEOLOGY, LIBERATION AND RECONCILIATION

Because human liberation is God's work of salvation in Jesus Christ, its source and meaning cannot be separated from Christology's sources (Scripture, tradition, and social existence) and content (Jesus in his past, present, and future). Jesus Christ, therefore, in his humanity and divinity, is the point of departure for a black theologian's analysis of the meaning of liberation.¹

1. BLACK THEOLOGY

First of all we note that the term "Black Theology" was first coined in the United States by the people of the Negro race.² It is therefore American in origin. In the United States, Black Theology, came about as a result of a new discovery by American blacks that they were treated (in the name of Christianity), by their former slave-holders, as no more than sub-humans or second class citizens and thus began to investigate anew the fountain heads of Christianity, namely, God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Church. The results of their investigation led them to conclude that the Gospel as preached to them in the United States "lacked practical application of true brotherhood at all levels of social, religious and political life."³ Although the United States of America is a continent of one official lingua franca, places of worship were still segregated into white and black compartments⁴ without any Scriptural justification other than white supremacy. The reading and exegesis of Scriptural texts especially the Gospel according to St Luke 4:16-21 convinced them that spirituality (as has been taught and preached by whites), is not all the

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1. Cone, J.H. God of the Oppressed, Op.Cit., p.138.
 2. In the pre-1960's it was a common practice in the United States of America to distinguish people of colour into Negroes and Afro-Americans. This seems to have been a common practice, too, among people of Colour. But the rise and the development of the "Black Power" movement synthesized these two terms into one, namely, Black. So we now talk of American blacks. Cf. Rap Brown, Die Nigger Die. Cf. also J.D. Roberts, A Black Political Theology, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1974, p.21.
 3. See D.D.L. Makhathini's article entitled, 'Black Theology', in Relevant Theology for Africa, Jurgen-Becken, H. (Ed.), Robinson & Co., Durban, 1973, p.9.
 4. See Genovese, E.D. Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made, London, 1976.

TRUTH but part of it and that the MISSION of our Lord Jesus Christ is basically about FREEDOM. This was the birth of Black Theology of Liberation in the United States of America.⁵ The emergence and application of this new insight into theology regained for the Church in America the LOST WORD.

1.2 SOUTH AFRICAN BLACK THEOLOGY

The South African Black Theology is an import, first from the new way of doing theology by the black Americans, and second, from the militant writings of the Latin American theologians, and third, from the radical⁶ writings and literature of the militant Black Consciousness movement. Black Theology is therefore an agenda put before the Black Church by black militants for the transformation of traditional theology from its malaise of theoretical assumptions. But above all, the South African Black Theology, like all theology, is a critical reflection on praxis.⁷ By praxis is meant not only practice in the ordinary sense of the word but practice as deliberate human achievement and it is appropriate and necessary that there should be such critical practice and that this critical reflection should be an indispensable task of theology. In other words theory and practice should influence and transform each other in faith.⁸ The South African Black Theology is situational since it results from the Christian practice in a particular situation at a particular time in history. It begins with God in relation to black people in their existential situation. It is within this perspective of practical experience and its relation to the Gospel of Salvation that black theology has come to see itself not only as a new way of doing theology but also as a means of survival.⁹ The primary goal of Black Theology is, in our context, the

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5. See Makhathini, Op.Cit.
 6. By "radical" is meant in this context, writings that express in vigorous and uncompromising terms, a desire for a "thorough-going but constitutional social and political reform." For this definition see the Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary to which I am indebted.
 7. See Gutierrez, G., A Theology of Liberation, S.C.M. Press, London, 1974, p.6.
 8. See Lane, D.A. (Ed.), Liberation Theology: An Irish Dialogue, Gill & MacMillan, Ltd., Dublin, 1977, p.10.
 9. Ibid. Cf. also Cone, J.H. A Black Theology of Liberation, Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1970, p.43.

transformation of our society in order to become a better and a more humane place worth living in. Black Theology is, to put it in a nutshell, a "reflection, based on the Gospel and the experience of men and women committed to the process of liberation of the oppressed and the exploited...It is a theological reflection born of the experience of shared efforts to abolish the current unjust situation and to build a different society, freer and more humane."¹⁰ In other words, by formulating a Black Theology, the Black Church in South Africa allows itself an opportunity to be judged by the Logos, to think through its faith, to strengthen its love, and to given reason for its hope from within a commitment which seeks to become more radical, total, and efficacious. It is to consider the great themes of Christian life within this radically changed perspective and with regard to the new questions posed by commitment.¹¹ This underlies the primary goal of Black Theology. In this last quarter of the Twentieth-Century, the Black Church finds herself being confronted and challenged by militant voices of young blacks, from within her environs, to show her mission, her authenticity of message, relevance, scope, strength, task, vitality and claim and, above all, her alternative in the light of the situation confronting us in South Africa today. In the words of De Gruchy, "The future of the Christian faith in this country will largely depend on how the Gospel proves itself relevant to the existential problem of the Black man...The days of the white man to tell the black man about the love of God are rapidly decreasing as the flood of daily events increases the credibility gap...The black theologian must therefore discover a theological framework within which he can understand the will and the love of God in Jesus Christ...Out of the depths of the groaning and aspirations of his fellow black people...The future of evangelism in South Africa is therefore tied to the quest for a theology that grows out of the black man's experience. It will be from this theological vantage point that the black man will contribute his own understanding of Christian love and its implications in evangelism."¹²

10. Gutierrez, Op.Cit.

11. See Qutierrez, Op.Cit.

12. De Gruchy, Op.Cit., p.161ff. The Christian love to which De Gruchy refers must also be read in the light of 1 John 4:11. The crux of the Johannine Epistle is that God is love and that we too, as South Africans created in His image should love one another as He loved us. This is true Christian love, the Agape - to give it its New Testament meaning. And this always summons us in South Africa to take each other seriously which we have hitherto not done. We have to do this either as individuals and/or as groups. The Commandment to love transcends all barriers created by sin which is often blind and stubborn to comprehend heavenly things. Christian love also focuses on other people and their humanity. (See also J.L. Houlden, A Commentary on the Johannine Epistles, London, A. & C. Black, 1973, p.112ff.

The contribution to evangelism by black Christians to which De Gruchy refers, has been greatly retarded by either the failure or the slowness of the Black Church and her theologians to grasp or detect the social sin which is deeply embedded in our society and which automatically found its way into the corridors of the Church. Let us now examine this briefly.

1.3 SOCIAL SIN

By social sin is meant here a deliberate act by one or several people whereby the welfare of the majority of the people is suppressed or jeopardised or vice versa. The popular attention to sin and also the significance of social sin in theological thinking has tried to interpret social sin as individual sin pure and simple. We should note, however, that the notion of social sin is created by numerous kinds of injustices and dehumanizing trends which seem to be corner-stones of many political, social, economic and religious establishments in which people participate in their everyday life.¹³ This can easily annihilate a society's morality. The most devastating effect that social sin embodies within itself is that it can go on indefinitely without being noticed. A second characteristic of social sin is that it is a set of ideologies accumulated and inbuilt in people's minds to the extent that their mentality becomes so twisted and distorted that they believe things they see to be right whereas in actual fact they are wrong. It is this twisted mentality that makes corruption in the corridors of power not easily noticeable. In circumstances like these repentance and conversion cannot easily take place. And, because of this rather unfortunate situation, social sin thereby enters creation and perpetuates greed and corruption in various sectors of the community.¹⁴

However, we have to admit that one feature of social sin is that not all people who are involved in committing it do so as an act of deliberate choice.

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13. See Baum, G. Religion and Alienation: A Theological Reading of Sociology, Paulist Press, New York, 1975, p.200ff. The problem of social sin is primarily the task of critical and constructive theology - a theology that seeks to investigate the inner chambers of individuals and societies for constructive criticism and reconstruction. Secondly, to overcome social sin would require intense investigations not only by theologians but also by sociologists, political scientists etc., i.e. if the Church and society are to adjust towards a 'Godly-way' of living. There can be no just society where social sin is prevalent. The Gospel of Jesus Christ demands that we die to ourselves in order to live and to imitate our Lord and Redeemer.
14. Ibid. Social sin produces evil consequences but a person in this position is not held to be guilty in the subjective sense.

Occasionally they are simply caught up in the deliberate sins of people more powerful than themselves. But occasionally there are social sins that are committed by many living people, but which cannot be said to be the responsibility of the deliberate act of a living person or any number of living persons. Equally true is the fact that the powerful in society are tempted to use their power for self-serving purposes. Hence economic injustices encourage greed and superficiality among the successful, which easily leads to the sins of the rich; the same injustices produce anger and despair among the disadvantaged, which easily lead to the sins of the poor.¹⁵ It is quite evident therefore that this privatized notion of sin has not only a social dimension but also a political one. And, it is the duty of the Church, indeed, of theologians, that in their exegesis of Scripture, they should guard against the temptation of emphasizing the social at the expense of the political. There should be no under-estimation of the one at the expense of the other - for by so doing they would be distorting the image of human life. The social and political sins are the diseases from which we all need to be liberated through the saving Gospel of Christ.

1.4 OPERATION OF BLACK THEOLOGY

A closer examination of the current South African Black Theology shows that it operates on two levels:

- (1) The individual level: Christianity should liberate and raise people from inferiority to a new human dignity by awakening them from sloth and feelings of inferiority.
- (2) The social level: Christianity should help free a people from structures in which they live in grinding poverty, dependence, and restriction, with their dehumanising effects making it virtually impossible for blacks to realise their potential as people.¹⁶

15. Ibid.

16. See J.A. Lamprecht's inaugural address entitled, 'Theology Here and Now or A Theology of Acceptance' delivered at the University of Fort Hare on the 14th September, 1973. John Lamprecht is a Professor of Theology and Dean of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Fort Hare, Alice, South Africa. It is instructive and informative to note how John Lamprecht (an outsider) addresses himself on Black Theology. Among other things he has the following to say: "It is by definition the work of black men, because nobody else can put himself exactly into the black man's experience, and so we can only seek to understand black theology from what blacks have written. In South Africa it is the attempt by black men to relate the Gospel to their total situation." (Ibid.).

We have to agree that Black Theology is still in its infancy and, secondly, it is also far from systematization. But, what we cannot dismiss is the fact that it is a heart-cry by the oppressed i.e. by a "new breed" of Christians yearning for freedom. It is clear from the above two levels that Black Theology is not a denial or rejection of Christianity but a reaction against the way it has been lived by many whites in our history. It is significant, too, to note that in spite of white benevolence and even sacrifice, it is said that the Church itself, that is, Christians, have benefitted by restriction of the blacks. It is not an attempt to substitute a black-skinned Christ as in some messianic sects, but an attempt to find the relevance of the universal Christ.¹⁷

2. BLACK THEOLOGY AND LIBERATION

At the heart of Black Theology is that thought of liberation enshrined in the Gospel according to St Luke 4:18-19 which runs as follows:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has annointed me to preach good
news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the
captives
and recovery of the sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the acceptable year of the
Lord

(RSV)¹⁸

Black Theology is essentially a theology of liberation both in its basic methodology and content.¹⁹ It is a theology of liberation since it seeks to put into practice the above utterances of Jesus to the existential situation of black people in South Africa. Black Theology, therefore, is an expression of the desire for black freedom, black dignity and

17. Ibid.

18. Cf. also Is. 61:1-2. In this regard Cone rightly notes that "...most biblical scholars are the descendants of the advantaged class, it is to be expected that they would minimize Jesus' gospel of liberation for the poor by interpreting poverty as a spiritual condition unrelated to social and political phenomena." (See Cone, God of the Oppressed, Op.Cit.).

19. See De Gruchy, The Church Struggle in South Africa, Op.Cit., p.160.

solidarity, primarily within the Christian community, but also within the black community as a whole. Like other liberation theologians, the exponents of Black Theology regard the Exodus as the paradigmatic event in God's dealing with the world, an event which finds its culmination and fulfilment in the Gospel of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. According to these events, it is clearly God's purpose to set people free from bondage, and to make "all things new".²⁰ Unlike white theology, Black Theology believes in the primacy of action. The former "concentrates almost exclusively on action inside the Church...theology of liberation shifts the emphasis toward liberating action in a strongly political sense, in the context of the conflict of Christians in the struggle to build a just fraternal society in which men live with dignity and the agent of their destiny."²¹ Black Theology as liberation theology temporarily withdraws from white theology in an attempt to show white theologians that their articulation of theology is irrelevant since it does not address itself to and about the situation and the liberation of the people they keep in bondage. Black Theology does this by examining the significance and the meaning of the "Exodus-Sinai tradition".

The story of the Exodus plays an important part in Black Theology's understanding of its mission and task. The Exodus was the decisive event in Israel's history, because through it Yahweh revealed himself as the Saviour of an oppressed people. The Israelites were slaves in Egypt; thus their future was closed. But Yahweh "heard their groaning, and remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; he saw the plight of Israel, he took heed of it" (Exod. 2:24-25 NEB). Yahweh, therefore, took Israel's history into his own hands, and gave this people a divine future, thereby doing for Israel what she could not do for herself.²²

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20. Ibid. p.163. When Black Theology addresses itself on the theme of liberation it does so with a conviction that there can be no external apart from internal liberation. Black Theology first attempts to liberate man from his internal estrangement (this includes liberation from sin), which easily alienates man from his fellow men and from God. It is on this that Black Theology becomes a healing theology in that it seeks to heal the wounds of human brokenness. Compare an article by Bonganjalo Goba entitled, 'The Role of the Black Church in the Process of Healing Human Brokenness' in Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, No. 28, September 1979, pp.7-13. Bonjanjalo Goba lectures in Theology at the Federal Theological Seminary in Edendale, Pietermaritzburg, where he is Principal of the Albert Luthuli College. See also Footnote No. 25 below.
21. Assmann, H. Practical Theology of Liberation, Search Press, London, 1975, p.59.
22. Cone, Op.Cit., p.63.

Equally true is the fact that "in the Exodus-Sinai tradition Yahweh is disclosed as the God of history, whose revelation is identified with the power to liberate the oppressed. There is no knowledge of Yahweh except through his political activity on behalf of the weak and helpless of the land. This is the significance of Yahweh's contest with Pharaoh, the plagues against Egypt, and "hardening" of Pharaoh's heart. The biblical writer wishes to emphasize that Israel's liberation came not from his own strength but solely from the power of Yahweh, who completely controls history."²³ Cone rightly argues that "The doing of theology...on the basis of the revelation of Yahweh, must involve the politics which takes its stand with the poor and against the rich. Indeed, theology ceases to be a theology of the Exodus-Sinai tradition when it fails to see Yahweh as unquestionably in control of history, vindicating the weak against the strong."²⁴ Only by understanding the "Exodus-Sinai tradition" can one come to the understanding of the nature of the Black Theology of liberation and also the need for participation (by black hearers) in the process of liberation.²⁵

23. Ibid., p.64.

24. Ibid., p.65.

25. Although in the above paragraphs we have attempted a sketch of the nature of Black Theology in South Africa, it is, however, enlightening to know the position of Black Students and their aspirations conveyed through their Secretary General to Black Seminaries and Faculties of Theology in Universities. Resolution No. 57 taken at the General Students' Council of 1971 reads as follows: "(1) Black theology is not a theology of absolutes, but grapples with existential situations. Black theology is not a theology of theory but that of action and development. It is not a reaction against anything but is an authentic and positive articulation of the black Christians' reflection on God in the light of their black experience. (2) Black theology asserts its validity and sees its existence in the context of the words of Christ, who in declaring His mission said: 'He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to the blind new sight, to set the down-trodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favour.' (3) Black theology, therefore, understands Christ's liberation not only from the circumstances of external enslavement. Black theology means taking resolute and decisive steps to free black people not only from estrangement from God but also from slave mentality, inferiority complex, distrust of themselves and continued dependence on others, culminating in self-hate." Cf. African Perspectives on South Africa, by H.W. van der Merwe (Ed.), David Philip Publisher, Claremont, Cape South Africa, 1978, p.309.

1.5 THE SOURCES OF BLACK THEOLOGY

Black Theology is liberation theology and, in order to do authentic liberation theology, one must be content in pursuing and speaking the Truth in his articulation of theological statements. One must talk sense both to himself and to his listeners. People are not freed from the yoke of racism and oppression by false assumptions and false hopes, but rather by reasoning based on honesty, courage, and compassionate love for the wellbeing and the eternal destiny of man. Even Black Theology in South Africa, if it cannot bend on its knees, ceases to be a theology and becomes a product of pseudo-Christianity. Indeed, unless it bows before the Revealed Word of God in Scripture (Barth), it cannot talk with Divine authority much less by the guidance of the Holy Spirit Who proceeds both from the Father and the Son and who with the Father and the Son is glorified. Herein lies the foundation of Truth. I therefore contend that the TRUTH of the experience of the suffering of the black people is an undeniable part of the source of Black Theology of liberation in South Africa. But what do we mean by TRUTH in this context? In answer to this we note that James H. Cone has the following answer:

In this context, truth is not an intellectual datum that is entrusted to academic guilds. Truth cannot be separated from the people's struggle and the hopes and dreams that arise from that struggle. Truth is that transcendent reality, disclosed in the people's historical struggle for liberation, which enables them to know that their fight for freedom is not futile. The affirmation of truth means that the freedom hoped for will be realized. Indeed, the freedom hoped for is already partly realized in our present history, because the realization of hope is the very ground of our present struggle. We do not struggle in despair but in hope, not from doubt but from faith, not out of hatred but out of love for ourselves and for humanity. And as black theologians, who have been grasped by truth, we are accountable to black people.²⁶

The agony of a painful situation of suffering and poverty (as depicted in our first chapter), which becomes more evident in the silence of those who are absolutely shattered by tribulation resulting from apartheid; the invocation of the Holy Spirit and the speedy return of the "Son of Man"

26. Cone, God of the Oppressed, Op.Cit., p.17.

for the physical redemption of the world - so characteristic in the African extempore prayers; the weeping and the loud crying, a clear indication of the weight of oppression in the mind, blood, and soul of black people; the well-fed who have no regard for the neighbour; the ragged; the hopeless; the faithless because the sign before them is oblivion; the social misfits who believe that one is better in crime than brooding for twenty-four hours with nothing to look forward to; the drug addicts of society because they are victims of a broken society; the bare-footed walking the streets of urban and rural areas with thorns; the divorced because neither of the parties can afford social responsibility for the up-keeping of the wholeness of family life; the lonely and the deluded, and in many cases illiterate young children at home because parents are languishing in white cities for wages that are below the bread-line; the holders of passports which could be confiscated at a stroke of a pen; the resettled because they have no inn in the white neighbourhood; the deprived because they have no voice in the decision-making body in their own fatherland; the diseased; the imprisoned; the exiled who are paying taxes to foreign governments in foreign lands and yearning to be home and be reconciled with family broken ties; the executed; the dying and the mourning; the detained; and, above all, those who die in solitary confinement. These are the daily sources of the South African Black Theology of Liberation. "This", to quote James H. Cone, "is the daily stuff of the black experience which makes black theology possible and necessary."²⁷ Needless to say that "It is the encounter of the truth of black experience that enables black theologians...To speak the truth to black people...to relate the story of our mothers' and fathers' struggles and thereby create a humane future for our children."²⁸

It is also important to note that, "like Scripture the black experience is a source of the Truth but not the Truth in itself. Jesus Christ is the Truth and thus stands in judgment over all statements about truth."²⁹ (This view will be dealt with fully later when we deal with traditional sources of theology to which Black Theology also adheres and of which it is a part). Hence all the statements for and about black experience must come under the test of Scripture because Scripture "is the witness to God's self-disclosure in Jesus Christ...Scripture established limits to white

27. Ibid., p.27.

28. Ibid., p.29.

29. Ibid., p.33.

people's use of Jesus Christ as a confirmation of black experience."³⁰ Here we note again with Cone that there are white theorists who have some difficulties in understanding the relation between Jesus and the black experience in Black Theology. Cone suggests that this is due to their inability to appreciate the dialectical character of theological speech, especially when related to the black struggle for liberation.³¹ Hence the spirit of the Black Consciousness movement must be applauded in its insistence that "white society must be rejected either by a radical retreat from it, by a style of life which negates the ideal image that this same society has created, or by radical action against it."³²

This must not be interpreted or even seen on the part of our white brethren as meaning that black people in South Africa are perfect and immune from sin. Indeed, "to a certain extent we have all of us, under modern conditions, become unfree men. In every rank of life we have from decade to decade, if not year to year, to carry on a harder struggle for existence. Overwork, physical or mental or both is our lot. We can no longer find time to collect and order our thoughts. Our spiritual dependence increases at the same rate as our material dependence. Economic, social and political organizations, which are steadily becoming more and more complete, are getting us more and more into their power. The State with its increasingly rigid organization holds us under a control which is growing more and more decisive and inclusive. In every respect, therefore, our individual existence is depreciated. It is becoming ever more difficult to be a personality."³³

The above point is nowhere more recognized than in the Black Consciousness movement. Its understanding of this point has led to its being suspected and misunderstood and/or even feared by the white establishment and even by black moderates and pacifists. The 1978 Resolutions and Reports of the CPSA Provincial Standing Committee attribute this to a reaction on the part of the missionary movement in Southern Africa which, according to the Report, brought with it much that involved a conversion from African to European culture rather than a conversion from sin to Christ. It led, continues the Report, to a general assumption of superiority, even in the Church, of Whites over Blacks. The Report also noted that:

30. Ibid., p.31.

31. Ibid., p.34.

32. Alves, R.A. A Theology of Human Hope, Abbey Press, Indiana, 1974, p.13.

33. Schweitzer, A. Civilization and Ethics, Adam & Charles Black, London, 1949, p.4.

After years of having their worth and dignity denied by others so that these were beginning to be denied even by many Blacks themselves, a further Gospel truth is now being seen by Blacks. This is no new truth, still less a new Gospel, but it is a new discovery. For the Christian Gospel of liberation is leading many Black people into a new understanding of themselves in terms of our relationship to God and to one another - black and white alike and of responsibility for the world in which we live.³⁴

The Report further argues that:

The Church's response to the Black Consciousness movement is to evaluate it in terms of the extent to which it both draws inspiration from a person's self-understanding as being made in the image of God (renewed in Christ), and liberates people for covenant with God and each other.³⁵

Meanwhile, it is true that there is a growing body of conviction of mankind's ability, duty, and responsibility to strengthen its mastery over nature and of the need to establish a political, social, and economic order at the service of man to assert and develop the dignity proper to individuals and society (Vatican II). Failure to achieve or winning victory for our generation and time would rightly be regarded as tantamount to abdication of the sense of social responsibility by contemporary society. Therefore, I wish to contend with Brunner that the fight with modern thinking is the task supremely of theology; and since it is a fight more critical than any other the Church has to wage the responsibilities of theology are perhaps greater than ever before.³⁶

So far, so good! But it is important to remember that as with any branch of Christian theology, it is well nigh impossible for Black Theology to arrive at its conclusion without at the same time stating in black and white its relation to the fountain heads of Christianity (see p.116 above). It is necessary here to speak of sources and "formative factors". We owe the second (i.e. "formative factors") to the terminology of John Macquarrie.³⁷ Macquarrie points out that many of the items which are often

34. See the 1978 Resolutions and Reports of the CPSA Provincial Standing Committee, p.20.

35. Ibid.

36. See Brunner, E. The Word and the World, S.C.M. Press, London, 1931, p.6.

37. See Macquarrie, J. Principles of Christian Theology, p.35.

included as sources of theology cannot be considered as sources. They could rather be referred to as "formative factors", for their weight and importance weigh rather less in the "hierarchy of truths". Roberts put it thus: "The abundance of raw materials for Black Theology is overwhelming. Among the sources that may be freighted with religious insights we may list literature, history, sermons, spirituals, folklore, art and the testimony of some saints and sages of the black community. All these feed into a Black Theology that is a process of reasoning about God in the context of the black experience."³⁸ All these do contribute enormously as sources of Black Theology. But since theology is a knowledge about God Black Theology quickly acknowledges that the foundation of any source is biblical revelation. A deviation from this norm is distortion. The first thing is to gain knowledge about God and His relation to man is His Word, namely, Jesus Christ as portrayed in the Scriptures. There is no knowledge of God apart from Scripture. Black Theology is "Theologia Crucis" first and "Theologia Africana" second and therefore holds Scripture as its fundamental and principal SOURCE.

I agree with Elliot Mgojo that "If Black Theology is to be truly Christian theology, if it is to avoid ending up as a meaningless intellectual activity of a few black scholars, then its authority cannot be less or other than the revelation of God."³⁹ Biblical revelation is the ultimate test of truth in any theological discourse. But I do not agree with his misrepresentation of Cone on this point that "Essentially what Cone has done is to absolutize the black experience as the principal source of the knowledge of God and the ultimate authority in religion."⁴⁰ I think otherwise.

Rather what Mgojo could have said or done with justice is to bring out (i) the meaning of the suffering of the black community in the United States of America under the banner of Christianity; (ii) the demands and the meaning of the Gospel of Christ existentially interpreted; (iii) Cone's background in the community in which he was born and brought up and came to identify its evils; and (iv) Cone's erudite scholarship and faith existentially interpreted. These four factors had a tremendous impact and influence in Cone's understanding and articulation of theological

38. Roberts, J.D. Liberation and Reconciliation: A Black Theology, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1970, pp.18-19.

39. See article by E. Mgojo entitled, 'Prolegomenon to the Study of Black Theology', in Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, No. 21, December 1977, p.30.

40. Ibid.

statements. To see his stand on this matter as absolutism, to say the least, is to miss the whole point. Mgojo's over-reaction is not new in the history of Christianity. When "radical movements" such as Black Theology, Black Consciousness etc., emerge for the first time on the public podium, they are sometimes "strewn with the wrecks of words, wrenched from their original meanings, widened or narrowed, and forced into a bewildering variety of vessels that churn their ways in seas of semantic confusion."⁴¹ The history and the experience of black people in their struggle for the restoration of their dignity and freedom can be branded together. The one is incomplete without the other. Experience is the substance of an ongoing history into the "PROMISED LAND" of honey and milk. This means freedom to black people. No one can deny the validity of the statement that this history and the experience that goes with it are part and parcel of the sources of Black Theology whose AUTHOR and FINISHER is Jesus Christ himself - the PRINCIPAL SOURCE of all theology. Black Theology accepts tradition as one of the sources that make up Black Theology. By tradition is meant in this context the continuity of the life and the doctrines of the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit since the Early Church.

However, I agree with Mgojo when he says, "The significant point here is that Black Theology can no more fly in the face of Christian tradition than it can in the face of Scripture. To deny fundamental doctrines such as

41. See unpublished thesis by G.V. Mqingwana entitled, 'The Israelite Movement and the Bulhoek Episode', submitted at the Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, U.S.A., in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in History, Chapter III. Cf. Cone's views on theological sources that: "...because white theologians were not enslaved and lynched and are not ghettoized because of color, they do not think that color is an important point of departure for theological discourse" (Cone, God of the Oppressed, Op.Cit., p.53). Note also his open confession: "...I must conclude that my theological reflections are inseparable from the Bearden experience...What I write is urged out of my blood" and out of the blood of blacks in Bearden and elsewhere who see what I see, feel what I feel, and love what I love. This is why my Black Theology differs in perspective, content, and style from the Western theological tradition transmitted from Augustine to Barth. My theology will not be the same as that of my white colleagues...because our experience is different...They were not born black in Bearden" (Ibid. p.3). Again he would rightly see that "the dialectic between the social situation of the believer and Scripture and the traditions of the Church is the place to begin the investigation of the question, Who is Jesus Christ for us today? Social context, Scripture, and tradition operate together to enable the people of God to move actively and reflectively with Christ in the struggle of freedom" (Ibid. p.115).

the Trinity or the Incarnation would amount to a rejection of Christian tradition and therefore of the co-continuing identity with the community within which theologizing takes place."⁴² Roberts, I think, brings this out quite clearly while at the same time he cautiously warns:

Creeds and councils are also authorities for theology. These put us in touch with the traditions of our faith. But these are to be honored and not worshipped. They have historical and group significance. It is through creeds and councils that we remember our past and participate in the communion of the saints at all times and in all places. We root our faith in the Christian heritage and participate in the mind of the church as it reflects theologically upon what we as Christians believe. A black theology, insofar as it is Christian, must share in this tradition. But it need not, indeed it cannot, be time-bound or culture-bound by traditionalism if it is to be an indigenized and living theology. While it accepts what is worthy in tradition, it must reject those frozen dogmas which do not represent the living Word of God. We must be sufficiently free from the form of doctrines to grasp the content or the esse of the Christian faith. The black theologian must then appropriate the heart of the message and adapt it toward a message of deliverance for an oppressed and suffering people.⁴³

So we conclude on this part that if anyone should ask about the source of Black Theology - we would suggest the answer: Jesus of Nazareth, the "Son of Man", the Healer of broken lines of communication is the Alpha and the Omega of Black Theology in South Africa as applied and tested in and through the plight of the oppressed black people. He is the yard-stick by which we ask and measure the existential situation of blacks. Above all, Jesus of Nazareth is the "Book of Common Prayer" and the "Rock of Ages" from whom Black Theology is hewn.

2.3 METHODOLOGY

We have already noted above that Black Theology in South Africa is still in its infancy and therefore very far from systematization. One of the main reasons for this is that the movement towards de-westernizing or to put it succinctly, the acculturation⁴⁴ of theology did not start within the Black

42. Mgojo, Op.Cit., p.31.

43. Roberts, J.D., Op.Cit., p.39.

44. By "acculturation" is meant in this context a process whereby the Blessed Trinity through the mission of the CHURCH MILITANT encounters, adopts, transforms and sanctifies the customs of the aborigines without persuasion and without proselytism. Here it could be argued with justice that the impulse for the acculturation of theology was not inside but rather outside it.

Church (as some essayists and academics seem to think), but rather from outside of it,⁴⁵ so that we are justified in saying that Black Theology is a theology worked from outside in, so that when black theologians began their task of responding to the pressure brought upon and against the Black Church as an institution there was not time to consider the question of methodology. (This is very true in our case in South Africa). The demands of the pressure were too urgent and therefore did not allow an opportunity for the gathering of tools essential for an academic discipline. Roberts is right when he says, "Methodology per se has to be considered in a calm reflective climate. It is not the product of troubled waters."⁴⁶ We have to remember that acculturation in our situation (because of the way in which the Gospel was communicated and accepted by our fore-fathers) is not an easy task for a black theologian. Needless to say Black Theology desires to participate in the celebration of an ecumenical theology in the form of a worldly action with the hope that out of it will emerge the unity of faith and vocation that will transcend the racial division in theology. At the present moment there are very few theological articles and journals (in South Africa) which seem to be geared towards this direction. This is understandable from the point of view of the racial situation which is fast exploding in our hands. The question of methodology, therefore, is superceded by contemporary issues. The focussing of theology on contemporary issues seems to be the urge also of noted white theologians among whom Charles Villa-Vicencio is one of the leading disciples or spokesmen. He declares as follows: "Among our occupations with methodological and intellectual discussions of the doctrines of our faith we need to find time to wrestle with the problems of our day - racism, violence, economics, hunger, propaganda, censorship, detentions, bannings, ignorance..."⁴⁷ We conclude, therefore, that methodology, however important in any academic discipline would at the moment appear to be an assignment for a future generation that will perhaps be freer and would, under the miracle of God, have access to the now-banned literature so vital to a researcher.

45. It was the Black Consciousness movement that brought to the attention of the Church the urgent need for the content and the shape of its proclamation and indeed its exegesis of Scripture to take cognizance of the grinding situation of poverty and racism in South Africa under which people have to toil, sweat and die. Therefore all the Church did was to respond to the agenda put before it. This demanded radical action.

46. Roberts, Op.Cit., p.33.

47. See Charles Villa-Vicencio's article, 'Theology and Politics in South Africa: An Examination of Some Theological writings in South Africa', in Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, No. 17, December 1976, pp.25-34. This is an interesting survey of six years in which the author concludes that failure to pay attention to contemporary issues affecting black community "will result in contemporary and future history judging our theological enterprise as not necessarily wrong but simply irrelevant."

2.4 THE ETHIC OF LIBERATION

We must carve out the answer for every new situation in dialogue with Scripture and tradition, as well as with other victims in our social situation. But even this dialogue does not grant the certainty of the truth of our answer. The only certainty we are permitted to know is that the Scripture claims that Jesus will be with us in our struggles. And for those who have met him, this divine promise is enough to hold them together so that they can fight to make the world a humane place to live.⁴⁸

The ethics of liberation in Black Theology is necessarily situational in that it must arise out of the situation of the oppressed community. The grounding of this ethic must, in the oppressed community, decide not only what is Christian behaviour but also what kind of action is necessitated by the situation of the oppressed. Situation ethics is action orientated. In our case, situation ethics arise out of the situation of the oppressed in order to answer the question, What am I called upon to do in this situation of oppression and racism? Because liberation ethic is Christian ethic, it is rooted in God and is therefore meaningless unless it is related to God's concern for the freedom of the weak and the powerless.⁴⁹ This requires obedience. This obedience will for our purpose become clearer when we pause for a while and approach and subject from the Old Testament view point. First of all we note that the Old Testament ethics offers a reward in direct relation to one's obedience to God. Given this obedience to God, the rain will fall and the harvest will be sure, and there will be victory over the nation's or people's enemies; and given disobedience to God, the national life will fall apart (Lev. 5:18; 19; 26; Deut. 7: 12-16; 11:13-17; 28). So it is with a people who are not obedient to God's ethical mandates.⁵⁰

Secondly, we note again, that the prophet set forth in word and deed the moral tone of their culture. For the prophet notes Roberts, the demand was: "All right! you have had the vision, what are you going to do about it?" One who has seen the vision must be seen doing the will of God.⁵¹

48. Cone, Op.Cit., p.208.

49. Ibid.

50. Jones, M.J. Christian Ethics for Black Theology, Abingdon Press, New York, 1974, p.47.

51. Ibid.

According to the Jewish religion the religious and the moral were so closely related that one could not separate each from the other. Therefore, service to one's fellowman was part of the total religion of the Jewish people. What God wants is not the Church service, (however important this might be in our lives), but to share our bread with the poor and the helpless, and so feed and clothe the naked. To be just and to love mercy appears to be the mandate of the God of the Old Testament Scriptures (Is. 1: 12-17; 58: 8-12; Jer. 7: 8-10; Amos 5: 21-24).⁵² Thirdly, we may also argue that the Old Testament ethic accords a central place for the widow, the fatherless, and the poor, for they were held to be very dear to God (Deut. 10: 18; 1:17; 16: 19; Lev. 17: 15).⁵³

This Old Testament idea of responsibility for one's fellowman is deeply embedded in the Old Testament concept of election. To be a chosen race or people requires obedience and stewardship and above all the chosen must be worthy of the One who Chooses, namely, God. Black Theology accepts this Old Testament ethic as an ethic of obedience to accept the responsibility and obedience to be a servant and spokesman for the under-privileged. So far we have been laying the ground for a black Christian ethic and therefore some further consideration should be given to the New Testament ethical tradition as related, for instance, to the teachings of Jesus. Black Theology holds that the ethics of liberation are based on the imitation of Christ. This is the foundation of Christian ethics. The imitation of Christ becomes very important for black ethics of liberation especially when one talks about the relation between Christian ethics and what they mean to the politics of liberation. In the words of Boesak:

The content of a Christian ethic is liberation. The first objective must be the identification of the human situation. Unless one knows that one is oppressed, unless that one knows the oppressor, one cannot be liberated. This process of identification has to do with (re)education of the people and the discovery of one's own negative involvement leading to positive engagement.

Secondly, within the black situation the solidarity with the oppressed becomes active engagement for liberation, leading, thirdly, to the transformation of oppressing and inhuman structures. Black Theology knows that the biblical message of God's liberation has historical as well as eschatological dimensions. It does not only rest upon the historical event of the Exodus, but it also points to the future, the future of Yahweh which He has made also the future of his people.⁵⁴

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid., p.48.

54. Boesak, A. Farewell to Innocence: A Social-Ethical Study of Black Theology and Black Power, Raven Press, Johannesburg, 1977, p.114.

The encounter of God's liberating presence includes, says Cone, hearing the call to be obedient to the claim of divine freedom. Christian behavior is basically the behavior that arises out of the oppressed community in response to God's call to be obedient to His will. But the will of God, he continues, is not a set of rules and principles derived from a philosophical study of the "good". We cannot know or hear the will of God apart from the social context of the oppressed community where Jesus is found calling us into being for freedom.⁵⁵ As for the ethical guidelines for liberation the following is worth noting:

...it seems totally impossible to dismiss the deeper ethical obligations which the black Christian has for the...white man. There can be no true liberation as long as it excludes the oppressor; he is the key to liberation, however it may be conceived. It is from him that one must be liberated. He has to be considered. However, the black Christian can never dismiss the fact that the white oppressor is also God's child in need of a redemption of a different kind.⁵⁶

The Christian love which springs from the imitation of Christ would demand no less than that the oppressed black man must maintain a spirit of love which will dominate his attitude and his response toward both insult and injury from the oppressor. Needless to say that revenge must be left to God. Jones is right when he says that this seems to be so because there is no way one can ever measure the exact amount of revenge for the equal amount of insult or injury that oppressed has and is still receiving.⁵⁷ History has shown that there is always a tendency to overdo it in repaying the enemy for the wrong he has done. It stands to reason therefore that the application of Christian love would bring the oppressor and the oppressed into a totally new relationship wherein there is a dimension of mutual understanding, not of indifference, but of active, positive goodwill.⁵⁸ We may therefore conclude on this part that:

...using love as a guideline assures that there is in every relationship a personal element that makes the relationship reciprocally binding on both parties. The love ethic never sets down an ethical right without assigning an ethical duty to it. The duty of the leader to the subordinate is every bit as

55. Cone, Op.Cit., p.207.

56. Jones, Op.Cit., p.73.

57. Ibid., pp.73-74.

58. Ibid.

clearly stated as the duty of the leader. They are ethically obliged to free each other. Privilege is never all on one side. Simply to possess leadership is to be involved in a responsibility for those who are led. The ethic of liberation binds all together, the...oppressed, black man to the...oppressor, white-man- they cannot be unilaterally free in separation. No person can make a claim on any other person without at the same time recognizing a duty to the other person.⁵⁹

The last word also belongs to Jones:

Black Christian ethic must deal with the givenness of revealed truth. God speaks directly to the human conditions. As has been pointed out, God speaks ethically to man in a particular historical context. Black Christian ethics must, therefore, concern itself with the context of the black experience. Black Christian ethics must relate the ethical word of God as it is revealed in the Scriptures to the plight of black Christians as they attempt to act ethically in a racist society in which the black man is victimized daily. God's revealed word must be for black people in a direct sense; it must be clear and fully intelligible as it addresses him within the context of his existential condition.⁶⁰

3. LIBERATION AND RECONCILIATION REVISITED

Liberation and reconciliation are central poles of Black Theology. Indeed, they are its content and its very soul. They are not antithetical - one moves naturally from one to the other in the light of the Christian understanding of God and man.⁶¹ They are the goal that must be sought by black and white Christians together. They must together seek a Christian theological approach to race relations that will lead us beyond a hypocritical tokenism to liberation as a genuine reconciliation between equals. The task of Black Theology is to challenge men and women from apathy to action.⁶² The drifting apart of races in South Africa presents a difficult task and challenge to Black theologians who are interested in the achievement of reconciliation. What South Africans have to do is to

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid., p.81.

61. See Roberts, J.D. Liberation and Reconciliation: A Black Theology, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1970, p.26.

62. Ibid.,p.28.

overcome polarization. Polarization exists in the Churches as it exists in all fibres of South African society. The evidence of this is to be seen in the fact that among whites many "tired liberals" have joined the law-and-order-without-justice people and that many blacks have joined the angry black militants. What is at stake here is the meaning of liberation in the context of reconciliation.⁶³ "Christianity is rooted in the belief that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself (II Cor. 5: 19), and that reconciliation between God and man can only be effected through reconciliation between men."⁶⁴ Both black and white people must formulate a set program of principles in order to effect change towards reconciliation. Blacks have to develop a sense of understanding and tolerance, while whites would assist to accelerate the pace by observing the following program:

- (1) become conscious agents of change;
- (2) seek ethical clarity;
- (3) identify the many forms and expressions of white racism;
- (4) develop social strategies for change to eliminate and move beyond racism;
- (5) discern the appropriate tactics - assess their power to change; and
- (6) experiment, test, and refine personal life-styles consistent with these newly affirmed values.⁶⁵

This program is designed to show the importance of the part whites can play towards the achievement of genuine reconciliation. But this must be preceded by the liberation of the oppressed. In the Bible, Cone rightly argues, (that) the objective reality of reconciliation is connected with divine liberation. This means that human fellowship with God is made possible through His activity in history, setting people free from economic, social and political bondage. God's act of reconciliation is not mystical communion with the divine; nor is it a piestic state of inwardness bestowed upon the believer. God's reconciliation is a new relationship, taking sides with the weak and the helpless Israel, reflecting on her covenant relationship initiated by divine action, summed up its meaning in a liturgical confession...There could have been no covenant at Sinai

63. Ibid., p.27f.

64. Ibid., p.29.

65. Roberts quoting Roberts W. Terry, For Whites Only, (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), pp.20-21.

without the Exodus from Egypt, no reconciliation without liberation. Liberation is what God does to effect reconciliation, and without the former the latter is impossible.⁶⁶ We conclude therefore that the incorporation of reconciliation into a Black Theology needs no justification because reconciliation is an integral part of the Bible. It is the very essence of the good news. But we must take note of the fact that reconciliation is always to be preceded by liberation. This is Black Theology's understanding of reconciliation and this is based not upon a sentimental love or "cheap grace". It rests upon a firm foundation of faith in a God who suffers with the weak and the helpless of society.⁶⁷ God is the Centre where both liberation and reconciliation meet each other in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit who proceeds both from the Father and the Son.

66. Cone, Op.Cit., p.229.

67. Roberts, Op.Cit., p.220ff.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CHURCH: A SACRAMENT OF HEALING

Because the Church has inherited its structure and its life style from the past, it finds itself today somewhat out of step with the history which confronts it. But what is called for is not simply a renewal and adaptation of pastoral methods. It is rather of a new ecclesial consciousness and a redefinition of the task of the Church in a world in which it is not only present, but of which it forms a part more than it suspected in the past. In this new consciousness and redefinition, interecclesial problems take a second place.¹

It is fitting and proper that we should, after dealing with the aspirations, research, writing, and even the propagation of Black Theology of liberation in South Africa, devote the last three chapters (of the thesis) to the invention and the Holy legacy which Christ our Lord, Redeemer and Brother left the children of His Father, namely, the Church. A cursory survey of this legacy shows that since the Second World War the world in which the Church was born has undergone a rapid change. At the same time discoveries both in the arts and the sciences have presented modern man with peculiar problems undreamed of three generations ago. The most basic question threatening mankind of this generation concerns the imperatives of survival in a technological age. Despite this threat to human behaviour and moral outlook, there are still those within the Church who would persuade her not to enter the arena of party politics or join hands with institutions which seek solutions to the problems of mankind. These disciples are the ecclesiastical conservatives or traditionalists who are presenting the Church of Christ with the sign, CAUTION, THERE IS DANGER AHEAD, or BE CAREFUL, THE ROAD ON WHICH YOU TRAVEL IS SLIPPERY, or would the Church not drive at a

1. Gutierrez, G. A Theology of Liberation, p.255. With regard to our subject, namely, the Church as a Sacrament, Gutierrez reminds us that in theology the term sacramentum has two closely related meanings: initially, he recalls, it was used to translate the Greek word mysterion. According to St Paul, he further argues, mystery means the fulfilment and the manifestation of the salvific plan, "the secret hidden for long ages and through many generations, but now disclosed..." (Ibid. p.259). The second meaning being that a mystery is something that is mysterious - a future event - which retains its mysteriousness but which is being unfolded. The Church cannot be considered an end in itself but a foretaste and a celebration of what God wants the world to be. The Church in its healing activity may not want to do the right thing now but may wish to show how God wants this world to behave.

too discreet a speed for there are CURVES AHEAD! These 'latter day saints' need to be assured that he who meanders through the pool of the Catholic faith in search of truth is not likely to go wrong for he is doing so in the Name of "Him who is reported as claiming to be without qualification 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life.'"² The task of this chapter therefore is to argue that it is imperative that the Church participates in resolving human conflicts whenever they exist.

Second, we have to bring out the fact that healing is central to the Cross of Christ. This aspect has, indeed, been neglected by the current theologies of liberation and of hope thereby belittling the role of the Holy Spirit in the liberation struggle.

1. POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT OF THE CHURCH

Historically speaking the Church in her pilgrimage has always had a political involvement. Whether she likes it or not, the fact remains that she represents a political factor. The question is only how she represents herself as a political factor. Any Church which acknowledges the Cross of Christ plunges herself consciously or unconsciously into the political conflicts of the world in which she is established. It goes without saying that any logical and consistent Christian discipleship has political consequences.³ In this regard we must take note of the fact that "If all the congregation's activities are part of the service of the messianic mission, the political sphere cannot be excluded. Witness to salvation belongs in all life's dimensions. The ecumenical concept of the church also comes up against the liberation of the church from its political imprisonment...The expression 'political Church' therefore does not mean a politicizing of the church. On the contrary, it means a Christianization of the church's politics according to the 'yardstick and plumbline of Christ'...The church against world horizons also means: the church's existence against the background of the world's increasing interdependence and its growing tension, the struggle for the world domination and the fight against exploitation and oppression."⁴ Therefore political involvement is imperative for the Church because God is a political God and

2. See John 14:6 quoted by John Suggit in his inaugural lecture, Op.Cit.

3. See Moltmann, J. The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology, S.C.M. Press, London, 1977, p.15.

4. Ibid.

politics is one of our required responses to His love for us and for our neighbour. It necessarily follows, then, that to know and to serve God is to be concerned for the establishment of justice and this demands love and action, which, in our situation, is only possible through political activity. The Church has therefore a vital role to play in the affairs of man. In this role she would prepare the way for the Kingdom, to fulfil and to further the rule of love and so to be concerned with the penultimate in the light of the ultimate. This in other words is to preach good news to the poor; to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of the sight to the blind; to give freedom to the oppressed; the proclamation of the accepted year of the Lord and, above all, to rebuild the ruined cities, the devastation of many generations.⁵ It is worthwhile to remember that the fundamental distinction here is that between micro-charity and macro-charity.⁶ We must also recall that the former was the characteristic expression of Christian love in the pre-technological age when virtually the only possibilities open to it were in terms of one's immediate neighbours. Christian love however has to assume the form of macro-charity in the age of technology when all parts of society, and indeed of the world, are linked together by impersonal structures which have to be changed if love is to be effective. This change is only possible through political action. Politics is another means by which we express or exercise our dominion over the created order as St Paul has recognized centuries ago: 'for all things are yours, whether...the world or life or death or the present or the future, all are yours; and you are the Christ who identified himself with the needs of human beings, physical as well as spiritual, and demands of his followers an identical service which itself is only possible today by the exercise of responsibility in and through political spheres.'⁷ Davies rightly argues that the imperative Christian involvement arises directly from Christian belief, in particular, belief in God and in the incarnation, and from the Christian understanding of human nature and the scope of ethics.⁸ Further, argues Davies, that political action then becomes imperative for Christians who believe in Jesus of Nazareth as a Saviour and Redeemer of mankind. Such a view does not at all repudiate that the Church's task is to confess Jesus Christ and bear witness to him.

5. See Davies, J.G. Christians, Politics, and Violent Revolution, S.C.M. Press, London, 1976, p.36. Cf. also Lk 4:18f., and Is. 61:1-4.

6. Ibid., pp.36-37.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

On the contrary the very acceptance of these functions carries with it the requirement of political involvement.⁹

In this regard Davies takes as an example our South Africa where the black man's response to God is daily tempered by his poverty, by his separation from wife and children because of the evil of migratory labour laws, by constant insult to his human dignity and daily exposure to corruption and disease - all of this being the outworking of the system in which he is enclosed. In the same breath he asks: how can any man reach his full human potential if he lives in subhuman conditions such as poverty, virtual slavery and other humiliations? Again, he notes with justice that in a situation of this nature no one can doubt that racial discrimination is a moral issue. It may be practised within the field of so-called private behaviour, i.e. in terms of one's relations to the person living next door, but when it is embodied in legislation, as it is in South Africa, then it becomes not only a moral issue but a political one, to which Christians cannot be indifferent.¹⁰ In this regard a Chilean Maruja Echegoyen has the following to say:

Faith? Our faith is not something in the air; it has always been an incarnate faith, an historical one. For this reason it implies political involvement. It cannot be separated from human progress, and the priestly function is indissolubly linked to the awakening of human awareness. Hope? Our hope may refer to the Kingdom, to the second coming of Christ, but it begins here and now, in this society in which I happen to live and for whose transformation - humanization - I am inescapably responsible. Charity? Loving one's neighbour, which is the first commandment by definition, today means working to change the structures that can destroy my neighbour, the people, the poor.¹¹

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9. Ibid. p.41. Here it is important to note how Davies addresses us on the necessity of the Church's involvement in politics: Politics, he says, it is time to recognize, is one of the essential dimensions of all human activity. It is a superstructure that embraces the economic, the social and the cultural fields, as well as that of the family and of the individual. Each of us is a member of a political community and politics has either a negative or a positive influence upon all the other structures which interlock in modern societies. Politics is therefore never a side issue, but an essential and constitutive part of life in society. Simply as men and women therefore Christians have a political obligation...they cannot ignore the political superstructure within which their lives are set (Ibid. p.37).
10. Ibid., pp. 38 and 42.
11. Quoted by Davies, Ibid. p.43.

Indeed, the salvation of the human race will depend to a large extent on the way in which Christians are prepared to change the earthly structures that destroy our neighbour. The Doctrine of Salvation is supreme in the proclamation of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. In this regard the Bangkok Assembly did well to express that:

- (a) Salvation works in the struggle for economic justice against the exploitation of people by people.
- (b) Salvation works in the struggle for human dignity against political oppression of human beings by their fellow men.
- (c) Salvation works in the struggle for solidarity against the alienation of person from person.
- (d) Salvation works in the struggle of hope against despair in personal life.¹²

This understanding of salvation leads to the view that human beings are saved if they open themselves to God and to others - even if they are not consciously aware of their service - and this openness is directed towards the world as the place of their service - and this is directed towards the world as the place of encounter with God.¹³

At this juncture we must pay attention to the danger facing the Church - represented for our purpose by an intensive research undertaken by Jurgen Moltmann who rightly holds that modern industrial society has assigned roles to the Church of Christ which may be fatal to her mission especially in the demonic technological and industrial society in which she is situated. He sees the Church in such circumstances as degenerating into three categories, namely, (1) the Church becomes simply a group of like-minded individuals. He notes that the primary conception of religion in modern society assigns to religion the saving and preserving of personal, individual and private humanity where it is expected that 'the man of our day may once again become a vessel to receive the influx of transcendent forces'.¹⁴ In such a situation the world is surrendered to the reason of man. In the words of Moltmann, "This theology assigns faith its home in that subjectivity and spontaneity of man which is non-objectifiable, incalculable and cannot be grasped in his social roles. It localizes faith in that ethical reality

12. Ibid., p.39. Cf. also a Sodepax Report on Development which was a statement of Section III of the Bangkok Assembly of the World Council of Churches.

13. Ibid., p.40.

14. Moltman, J. Theology of Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology, S.C.M. Press, London, 1967, p.311.

which is determined by man's decisions and encounters, but not by the pattern of social behaviour and the self-contained rational laws of the economic circumstances in which he lives...the Christian ethic is then reduced to the 'ethical demand' to accept one's self and take responsibility for the world in general. But it is no longer able to give any pertinent ethical instructions for the ordering of social and political life. Christian love accordingly quits the realm of justice and of the social order."¹⁵ Such a faith is relieved of social obligation and thus socially irrelevant because it stands in the social no-man's-land of the unburdening...¹⁶

(2) The Church becomes a number of small groups of pious people who are apolitical. This, he points out, is represented for our purpose by the Pontifical encyclical *Mater et Magistra*, which states that it is essential "that the above mentioned groups present the form and substance of a true community, that is, that the individual members be considered and treated as persons and encouraged to take an active part in the ordering of their lives"¹⁷. To this, Moltmann comments, "It follows that 'whether the enterprise is private or public...every effort should be made that the enterprise should be a community of persons'. 'In such a way, a precious contribution to the formation of a world community can be made, a community in which all members are...conscious of their own duties and rights, working on a basis of equality for the bringing about of the universal common good.'¹⁸ Yet at the same time, in the course of the progress of industrial society this ideal of community has also lost its revolutionary power and has been integrated into the industrial society.¹⁹ In the final analysis, amongst and between these small groups, the Church, too, as a community can have its place and carry out its function. Here it can become a refuge of the inner life, away from the supposedly, 'soulless' world of affairs.²⁰ In such an instance, such a Church becomes an island of social strangement from the society within which it exists.²¹ "Yet it must surely be plainly

15. Ibid., pp.313.

16. Ibid., p.316.

17. Ibid., p.318.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid., p.319.

20. Ibid., pp.319-320.

21. Ibid.

recognized", concludes Moltmann on this part, "that such a church, as a 'community' and as 'pure event', cannot disturb the official doings of this society and certainly cannot alter them - indeed, it is hardly any longer even a real partner for the social institutions. True, the man who feels estranged and longs for authentic life and genuine community, for the spontaneity of experience, of making his own decisions and of transforming himself, is here met halfway and has his longing fulfilled. But it is fulfilled only in the personal esoteric realm in which he is relieved of social demands. Nor does the emphasis on the genuineness and authenticity of life in this personal community prevent Christian neighbourliness being brought to a social stagnation."²²

(3) A third danger is that the Church becomes an institution with no meaning or significance outside itself. Moltmann rightly calls this the "cult of the institution". The danger here is that the institutional Church has a tendency of overshadowing the institutional security of life, and one from which security is expected against the ultimate fears of existence. In this respect, too, holds Moltmann, the Church has a certain social significance for modern society. Yet it is the significance of an institutionalized non-committal outlook. If the Church, according to the will of Him in whom it believes and in Whom it hopes, is to be different and to serve a different purpose, then it must address itself to no less a task than of breaking out of these its socially fixed roles. It must then display a kind of conduct which is not in accordance with these. That is the conflict which is imposed on every Christian and every Christian minister. If the God who called them to life should expect of them something other than what modern industrial society expects and requires of them, then the Church must venture an exodus and regard their social roles a new Babylonian exile...Here the task of Christianity today, it would appear, is not so much to oppose the ideological glorification of things, but rather to resist the institutional stabilizing of things, and by 'raising the question of meaning' to make things uncertain and keep them moving and elastic in the process of history.²³ At this point we must move further towards the

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid. pp.321-324. N.B. We have also elaborated on this view in Chapter Eight below.

consideration of the Church as the sacrament of healing.²⁴

2. THE CHURCH: A SACRAMENT OF HEALING

Is there perhaps something wrong with the present theological industry through which we are passing in the decadence of this generation? My answer is affirmative. It is YES! None of the current theologies of liberation and indeed of hope take as its starting point the healing ministry of the Church, namely, liberation from physical pain. In order to understand the healing ministry of the Church one will have to understand first, the Zionist Churches²⁵ in South Africa and their immense contribution in the field of healing and of hope of release from pain. Healing was one of the primary concerns of the "Son of Man", Jesus the Messiah. The New Testament bears testimony to healing.²⁶ The faith healers of the Zionist Churches have a theology that could rightly be described as practical in the best sense of the term. In the words of Walter Hollenweger,²⁷ "We must see their theology in what they do, in their prayers, in their self-help programmes...And here we see that the...mode of communication transcends the barriers of education, color, social class and nationality. Taken seriously this offers, it seems to me, a real possibility of discovering a methodology of theology in an oral culture where the medium of communication is - just as in biblical times as form criticism teaches us - not the definition but the description, not the doctrines, but the testimony, not the book, but the parable, not the *summa theologica*, but the song...Anyone

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24. Almost all the theologies of liberation and of hope are addressing us on liberation from oppression and sin and seldom on liberation from pain caused by diseases. Some of these pains or diseases are considered by medical doctors as incurable and yet there are among Black Independent Churches - Christians who heal them through the power of the Holy Spirit. This can no longer be underestimated and should be a *sine qua non* for any theologian or Church leader who wishes to meaningfully assist the liberation struggle within the Church Universal.
25. The Zionist Churches are part of the Black Independent Churches in South Africa which number approximately 3,000. For this see Sundkler, B. Bantu Prophets in South Africa, O.U.P., London, 1961. Cf. West, M. Bishops and Prophets in a Black City: African Independent Churches in Soweto, Johannesburg, David Philip, Claremont, Cape Town, South Africa, 1975. Cf. also Martin West's article, 'People of the Spirit: the Charismatic Movement among African Independent Churches' in Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, No. 7, June 1974. Martin West lectures in Social Anthropology in the School of African Studies, University of Cape Town, South Africa.
26. See I Cor. 12:9, 28, 30; Rev. 22:2; Mat. 4:23; Lk. 9:6; Acts 10:38 etc.
27. Walter Hollenweger is Professor of Mission at the University of Birmingham. He is an authority on the Pentecostal Movement.

who denies that proper theology can be done in these categories will have to prove that the Bible is not a theological book. Our way of doing theology is culturally biased (and that is necessary for us). But in other cultures and in other social classes there are equally relevant forms of doing theology."²⁸ In this regard it could be said with justice that the Zionist Churches are offering the believer and indeed the Catholic Church not only hope of restoration to health but also a summons back to the Holy Spirit as He was experienced by the Apostles and indeed by the Early Church. Inherent in the ministry of healing is the role of prayer without which nothing could be done or achieved by and for the sick.

Again, Hollenweger notes that prayer for the sick is a necessary critique of the Western industry, and of glossolalia as a cathedral of sounds for those who cannot afford - or do not want - a cathedral of stone.²⁹ This is even so because the scientific treatment of illness as practised by medicine seems to the Zionist Churches to be a new and worse magic which claims to be able to overcome the tragedy of sickness but which in fact isolates the body from the soul with the tools of modern science.³⁰

3. THEOLOGY ON ITS KNEES

Before we go on in our discussion of healing, we shall have to understand something about the place of the Holy Spirit in the healing ministry. It has been said that theology today has nothing of greater importance on its agenda than a careful and comprehensive elaboration of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.³¹ It has also been argued that we live in the dispensation of the Spirit. It is the Spirit who realizes the salvation in Christ, also in the social and political sphere.³² Again we come across another

28. See Walter Hollenweger's article, 'Mr Chips Looks for the Holy Spirit in Pentecostal Theology' in Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, No. 12, September 1975, p.46.

29. Ibid.

30. Hollenweger feels that this alternative theology can become a matter of life and death for the universality of the Church. If theology wants to be universal...then it has to be able to transcend the boundaries of our literary culture (ibid.).

31. See Ben Engelbrecht's article entitled, 'The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Part 1: An Evaluation of Contemporary Pneumatology', in Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, No. 30, March 1980, p.19. Ben Engelbrecht teaches in the Divinity Department of the University of the Witwatersrand.

32. Ibid., p.20.

emphasis that no sphere of life can be kept isolated and secluded from the freedom of the Spirit and all liberated spheres can joyfully and contagiously illustrate the presence of God³³ - hence Hendriek Berkhof's remark that the liberating and transforming power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ is at work everywhere where men are freed from the tyranny of nature, state, colour, caste, class, sex, poverty.³⁴ This, therefore, invites us in this chapter to rejoice in the liberation of the Spirit and at the same time it points out our guilt in remaining closed and powerless in the presence of such precious secularity.³⁵

The exegesis of I Cor. 12-14 is important for understanding a persistent variety of spirituality in the Church and the understanding of II Cor. 10-13 would seem to provide, we believe, a final key to the inner sanctum of this spirituality.³⁶ It is important to note here that the Zionist Churches do not have a systematic theology (as written doctrine) in the academic sense of the word but systematic theology in the practical sense of the term. Here we shall follow the argument advanced by F.D. Bruner in his description of the Pentecostal experience. He can convey this understanding of spirituality better than I can. In his own words, "It is important to notice that it is not the doctrine, it is the experience of the Holy Spirit which Pentecostals repeatedly assert that they wish to stress. Indeed, the central attraction of the Pentecostal movement, according to one of its major leaders, consists "purely of a powerful, individual, spiritual experience" which contains the dominant experiential notae of Pentecostalism. He further notes that there is an absence of power in the contemporary Christian Church. He senses the opposite in reading the Acts of the Apostles in the New Testament. He also feels that the difference between the Church of the Acts and the Church of today could on the whole be characterized as the difference between a Church which emphasized the Spirit and a Church which has neglected the Spirit, the

33. See Johannes Degenaar's article entitled, 'The Holy Spirit and Communication' in Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, No. 14, March 1976, p.26.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid., p.27.

36. See Bruner, F.D. A Theology of the Holy Spirit: The Pentecostal Experience and the New Testament, Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1970, p.15.

difference between a Church in which the Spirit was an experience and a Church in which the Spirit is a doctrine.³⁷ The Zionist Churches, like the Pentecostal (believers) believe that they find the source of apostolic power in the encounter with the Spirit which they call the baptism in the Holy Spirit³⁸ = UPHEHLELELO NGO-MOYA OYI-NGCWELE. They believe that in this regard they have a contribution to make in the Body of Christ, the Church Universal.³⁹ Furthermore, notes Bruner, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is an experience which every individual experiences,⁴⁰ whereas it is not a pre-requisite of membership of a Zionist Church that one should "have the spirit", as it is known, but it is regarded as highly desirable, and a sign of divine favour. Possession thus receives a very positive sanction in the congregations of Zionists, and people, notes Martin West, are eager for it. At the same time it is generally recognized, he says, that some people have the Spirit more strongly than others, with some being able to become possessed almost at will and are often prophets. The possession by the Spirit seems to increase in a service with the amount of dancing which takes place, with the amount of emotion engendered in the congregation and even with the length of the service.⁴¹ Dancing is of particular importance in this regard and in many instances is regarded as of prime importance in the invocation of the Holy Spirit. Dancing occurs in almost all Zionists' services. When someone is being presented for healing, he stands in the circle with the healer and the congregation dancing around him simultaneously. As has been said, some people become possessed more than others by the Spirit so much so that it interferes with their daily activities. This is commonly referred to as UKUKHATHAZWA NGU-MOYA = BEING TROUBLED BY THE SPIRIT. This will involve regular visits or consultation with the prophet-healer, and the diagnosis is generally that the Holy Spirit wishes to use the person more fully than others who

37. Ibid., p.26.

38. For a further reading on baptism by the Holy Spirit or Spirit-baptism as this is commonly called in charismatic circles, see Bruner, Ibid., p.56.

39. Ibid., p.22.

40. Ibid.

41. See Martin West's article, 'People of the Spirit: the Charismatic Movement among African Independent Churches' in Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, No. 7, June 1974.

experience only normal Spirit possession. The only way out of the impasse is for one to become a prophet. By prophet is meant in the Zionist Churches a person who with the help of the Holy Spirit, and sometimes also his ancestors, is called to predict, divine and heal.⁴² West sums it all up:

The most important aspect of the prophet's work is not prophesying in the sense of prediction, so much as in healing activities. The prophet is believed to be able to use the power of the Holy Spirit to heal the sick - through prayer, laying on of hands, giving of holy water to drink and so on...The subject of healing is a big one...⁴³

I have personally conducted some short research especially on healing among the Zionists. I was told that baptism (by immersion in the Name of the Blessed Trinity) is followed by a period of mourning which takes three to seven days. This enables one to gather more strength in the Christian faith.⁴⁴ When the Zionists pray for a member of their congregation who is weak in faith, they take three candles - representing the Trinity. When they pray for a sick person who is in a critical condition they light five candles which symbolize, (1) five stones which were held by David in his fight against Goliath I Sam. 17:40; (2) five wounds in the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ at Crucifixion John 19:34; (3) five wise maidens in the parable of the ten maidens (Mt. 25:1-13). When they pray for someone who is suffering from epilepsy they select three men of good faith and send them to the mountain for a period of mourning, praying and fasting. And, when they come back they lay their hands on the patient as they invoke the Holy Spirit. Sometimes in the process of healing the patient faints as though he is dead. This is the moment when the Holy Spirit functions and defeats the evil spirit. Fainting is therefore a sign of the triumph of the Holy Spirit and the radical defeat and departure of the evil spirit that caused the sickness. The healer continues to pray

42. Ibid.,p.26.

43. Ibid.,p.27.

44. I have personally during my early childhood been closely associated with the Zionist Churches in my vicinity and have been very much fascinated by the authenticity and practicality of their healing through the laying on of hands and the drinking of Holy Water. In some instances of healing a patient would be given a red twine which has been prayed for. This helps one who is suffering from kidneys or any other part of the waist.

until the patient fully recovers from fainting. It is noteworthy that when the evil spirit leaves the patient it goes to a dry place in search of an abode where there is no water. When it does not secure such a place it tries desperately to come back to the patient. If the patient has neglected prayer and the instructions of the healer or prophet, the evil spirit then re-enters. It is also to be noted here that the evil spirit at this time brings with him seven other demonic spirits to the patient and the danger of this is that the condition of the patient becomes worse than at the beginning - hence it is important for him (the patient) to be surrounded by prayer. It is also important that the patient trusts in the everlasting Grace of God. Also worth remembering is the fact that the Zionist Churches in South Africa are open to all people irrespective of denominational affiliation, colour, or nationality.⁴⁵ Healing from physical pain knows no boundaries between God's creatures. There are cases where people after being healed become members of the Church and when they have accepted the Holy Spirit they could prophecy - though not everybody prophecies. One who has the gift of prophecy can detect pain, sickness, troubled heart and so on in another person in the congregation. This is in fulfilment of the spiritual gifts mentioned in I Cor. 12-14.

In the process of healing the healer undergoes an almost electric change and/or feeling where his body is filled with indescribable heat which resembles almost that of a furnace of fire. At this moment the healer feels in his own body all the pains and troubles of the patient. As a result of this after praying for the patient the healer must also pray for himself to be relieved from this pain.

4. THE ATTITUDE OF ZIONIST CHURCHES TO OTHER CHURCHES

As for the Zionist Churches' attitude towards the non-Zionist Churches I was referred to I Cor. 12:4-13. This sums up their belief on other Churches. This is therefore worth quoting:

45. We have a tendency to regard the Zionist Churches and indeed the Black Independent Churches as solely black or based on racial lines - this in conformity with the aims and objectives of the State policy of apartheid. This is, however, not true. Though these Churches are apolitical they nevertheless have not closed their eyes to the struggle surrounding them. One of the paragraphs below testifies to this.



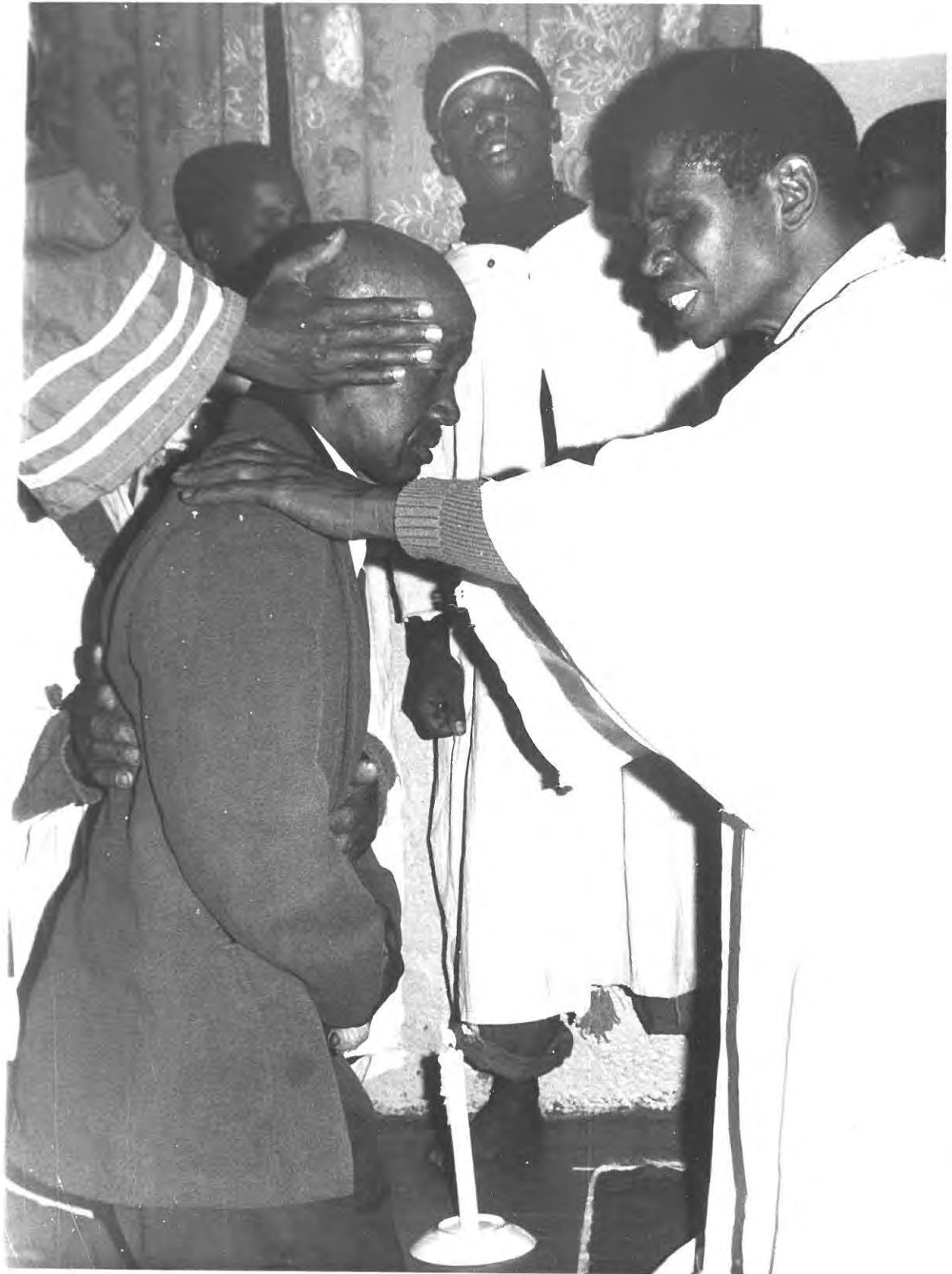
SPECIMEN No. 1

This specimen shows one of the usual services of healing in the Fingo Village near the City of Grahamstown in the Cape Province. It is important to note that members of the congregation participate simultaneously in their invocation of the Holy Spirit to heal the patient. Also note-worthy are the ropes of healing visible on some members in the service. Second from right is the healer, the Rev R.S. Ntshobodi who is the Arch-bishop elect (at the time of writing) of the Zion Apostolic Holy Church of South Africa - the man I interviewed and renowned in healing through the power of the Holy Spirit. As I interviewed him I could not fail to notice his simplicity of faith and the credentials of the Holy Spirit piercing and protruding through his innocent face. This is an extra-ordinary man of the family of the Church Universal.



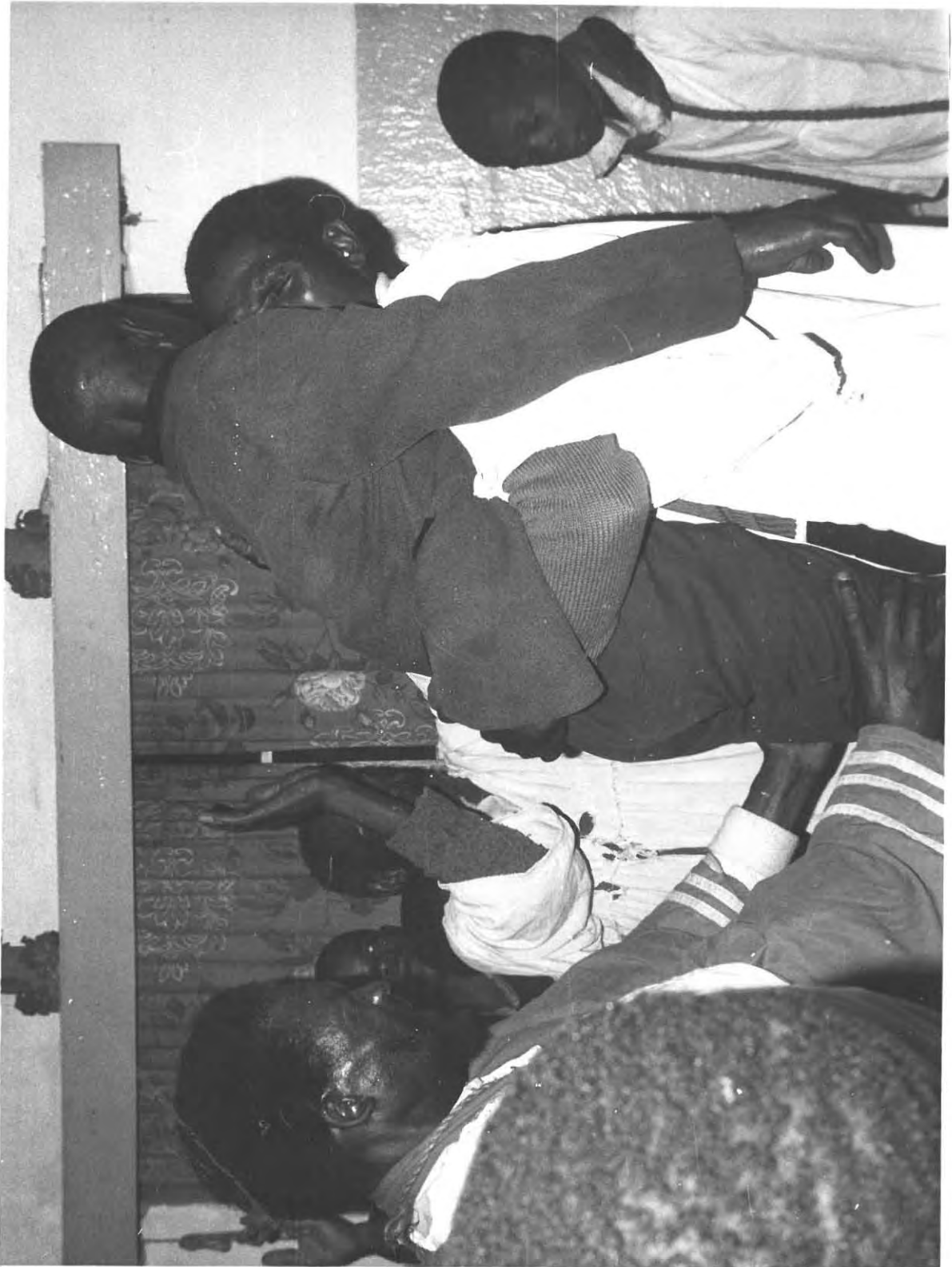
SPECIMEN No. 2

This is the portrait of a mental patient who has been in and out of hospital and mental asylums but could not be healed by medicine. All avenues the family could think of were explored and exhausted. At last they heard about the healing ministry of the Z.A.H.C.S.A. and responded promptly. The patient marked "X" in the photograph has since been healed.



SPECIMEN No. 3

AMAFUFUNYANA: This is a disease whose terminology has no equivalent in the English language. It is introduced into the patient through witch-craft with the intention to kill him. Voices are heard speaking in Zulu from inside the stomach of the patient. Healing would involve the putting on of a blue cape symbolizing healing; two candles symbolizing the light of Christ. On the sleeves of the cape there are three white stripes (see X) as evident from the photograph. During prayers hands are laid on the patient. The patient on the photograph was healed and is now working in the City of Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. (Photograph: with the courtesy of Dr F. Edwards, a lecturer in theology at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa).



SPECIMEN No. 4

The patient is held up high with the prophet-healer massaging his legs. The reason for this is that when the evil spirit departs it does so either through the head or legs. In this case, it goes down the legs of the patient - as a result both legs become weak. (Photograph: with the courtesy of Dr F. Edwards).



SPECIMEN No. 5

This is very symbolic. The covering of the patient by the cape of the prophet-healer is meant (i) to prevent (through the power of the Holy Spirit) the evil spirit from spreading to those present in the healing service. It is better for it to affect the prophet-healer than the congregation; (ii) the evil spirit is transferred to the healer so that he (the healer) knows exactly how the evil spirit affects and moves in the body of the patient. In other words, the body of the patient automatically becomes the body of the prophet-healer; and (iii) to impart to the patient the prophet-healer's holiness and integrity.
 (Photograph: with the courtesy of Dr F. Edwards. To her I am greatly indebted).

LETTER "B"

Apostolic Holly Church -
in Zion. Under Rev R. S.
Ntshozadi.

Name. James Klaas
Adress. 330. A. Jaza,
Age. 56 yrs.

PARAGRAPH STARTS HERE

→ Umqondiso
enduwuqondayo okoku-
zendi guquke kub-
nkongo kukufa, le-
nkongo, yavusa inkosi
kazi yam lamtana-
wanyana wam sendi-
gancamile begula
mpela ogqipa sendi-
ganda ukufa gayoyi-
swa, nango ke umqo-
ndiso, enkosi
James Klaas

TRANSLATION:

The reason why I became a member of this church, it healed my wife - and the child of my child (grand-child), when I had given up all hope. They were critically ill. I became aware that doctors were being defeated by their illness. This is the reason.*

* In some instances a letter of thanks (such as the one above) the writer would use the term 'UMQONDISO' meaning a sign or a vision but according to the context in which the word is used, it was intended to mean reason. This is the only deviation, on my part, from the literal translation I advocated to in this instance.

LETTER "A"

222^c Kings Flats,
Grahamstown
6140

From: M.Z. Ntshobodi

Date: 7th 1977

No. V/F 4335797

- PAR.1 Gpha kule nkenza yase Holy Apostolic Church, ndangena ngo 1963 ndandine 13 years. ubudala.
- PAR.2 Ubudala bam ngoku ngamashumi mabini onesixhe nxe, Ndandigula ndincanywe nango 1974. Ndandingatshe ukuba iyokuba yile minyaka ndi saphila. Oko ndathi ndangena kuyo zange ndiphinde ndive into ebuHlungu.
- PAR.3 Injob ke imisebenzi yalunkenza yase Holy Apostolic Church In Zion. Phantsi komfundisi u R.S. Ntshobodi.

TRANSLATION:

- PAR.1 In this church of the Holy Apostolic Church, I joined in 1963. I was 13 years of age.
- PAR.2 My age now is twenty-seven. I was critically ill. There was nothing Doctors could further do for me. I did not believe that by now I would still be surviving. Since I became a member of this Church I have never felt any pain again.
- PAR.3 Such is the work of this church of the Holy Apostolic Church in Zion under the Reverend R.S. Ntshobodi.

SPECIMEN No. 6

Referred to above as Letters A, B, and C are letters of thanks from healed patients. Translation is literal and is by the author. Although the style of the letter writing here is highly unorthodox, the content nevertheless conveys the message of its author.*

* By author in this last context is meant the patient who is the author of the above photostatic letter.

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body - Jews or Greeks, slaves or free - and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

(RSV)

So the attitude of the Zionist Churches to other denominations is one of fellowship in the Body of Christ performing different functions and ministries each according to the gift of the Holy Spirit. Further, I was told that all peoples and nations throughout generations have been and still are involved in the battle against evil forces of nature. In this regard the Zionist Churches play a role of a physician behind all Churches in the struggle for justice, harmony, peace and righteousness. Any soldier⁴⁶ who has been wounded in the course of battle is prayed for until he is fit enough to resume his role as a steward or ambassador of goodwill. The Zionist Church has healed many people who have been in and out of hospitals (without help), mental asylums, jails. Some have been heavy drug addicts. Some though they have the necessary work permits couldn't find jobs and after they have been prayed for they secure jobs etc. Some of these people

46. Note the metaphor here. The term soldier has been taken out of its military context and has been spiritualized. This is characteristic not only of the Zionist Churches but also of the more established black Churches in South Africa. By soldier is meant in this context any person whether atheist or theist as long as he is engaged in the struggle for the restoration of human brokenness i.e. either physically or spiritually.

have gone back to their Churches.⁴⁷ Some after healing decide to become members of the Zionist Church(es). Some after being healed (though rare) write letters of thanks. See Specimens above.

5. THE ROBES OF HEALING

The members of the Zionist Churches are distinguishable by their robes and indeed by their very bright uniforms: they usually wear white garments, dress or dust-coat, with distinguishing capes, sashes, ropes, sticks and symbols - crosses, moons, stars, hearts and so on, with colours red, green, blue and yellow predominating. No black is worn except in mourning⁴⁸ (some do not put on any black cloth even when mourning). They are also distinguishable by their charismatic signs during services. This also becomes evident in their dancing and drumming and speaking in tongues.⁴⁹ Here we must take note of the significance of robes of healing and protection from evil spirits and temptations:

1. Red Robes = protection against temptation.
2. Green Robes = strength.
3. White Robes = Holy Spirit.
4. Yellow Robes = For inherited spirits through genealogy e.g. INTWASO. In this case the spirit is not necessarily evil. The example of this would be an African Doctor, IGQIRA who has a considerable knowledge of prophesying and healing through the administration of drugs some of which are not yet known to Western medical experts e.g. drugs for curing CANCER. This is by inheritance and not by acquired knowledge through book learning as the case is with Western medicine.
5. Blue Robes = For strength in prayer especially in matters of prophecy.

47. Here it is important to remember that you don't have to be a member of the Zionist Church in order to be prayed for and healed. Secondly, you don't have to be a convert to any faith. The fact that you are a living person created in the image of God counts more than anything else. Healing is rightly regarded as a gift from God and is to be used for His glory by serving one's fellow men.

48. West, Op.Cit., pp.24-25.

49. Ibid.

OTHER:

Amongst these robes there is also a ROUGH ROBE OR CAPE made of sisal bags. This is worn by elder men of the congregation especially when there is a commotion or conflict within the congregation. Significantly, those who wear these robes must also go on top of the mountain for mourning and fasting for the restoration of peace and harmony in the congregation. When the dispute has been settled by prayer and deliberation they then put on their WHITE ROBES a symbol of the PURITY and SANCTITY of the HOLY SPIRIT.

For a further reading on these vestments I was referred to the Book of Exodus Ch. 39. It was interesting to be told during the interview that Zionist Churches do not forbid members from participating in civic affairs e.g. community councils. To them I was told, the very fact that Jesus in the calling of disciples included in the number a tax-collector which was an indication of His concern for the totality of man. It was enlightening and indeed informative to note that in the Constitution of the Zionist Church⁵⁰ I investigated there were remarkable articles e.g.:

Article 4 states that "The main objective is to bring about greater understanding and co-operation among the Churches (Independent Churches)."

Article 5 states that "Among its duties will be the organization of an Advisory Board on matters such as, (a) Application for Church sites; (b) Appointment of Marriage Officers; and (c) Influx Regulations."

Article 7 stresses "Holy Living through the Power of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost whom the Son and Daughters of Zion are being prepared for the coming of Zion's King."

Article 8 stresses that "The member of this Church must not smoke, must not believe in witch-craft or false Doctrine and take any alcohol."

Article 9 states that "The member must be led into an intimate acquaintance with Jesus of Nazareth His Ministry and His Teaching."

50. It is easy to assume that the Zionist Churches since they do not send their ministers to theological institutions will automatically have no Constitution and therefore no rules of conduct on their members. The above articles point to the opposite direction. It is interesting also to note that the Assemblies of God has fulfilled long awaited desire of a trained and therefore an enlightened ministry by sending an ordinand to the Federal Theological Seminary in Edendale, Pietermaritzburg.

It is doctrinally important to note that the Zion Apostolic Holy Church of South Africa, established in Grahamstown, Cape Province, in 1953 does not end up as a healing ecclesial community only but takes a keen interest in the ecclesiastical education of their flock. They have set down the following rules for their congregations (wherever they exist):

1. Members and leaders of the Church must receive education about the Bible. This kind of education also teaches people about Church history and Christian healing.
2. The Z.A.H.C.S.A.* has two kinds of education. The first kind Z.A.H.C. education comes from the study Bible lessons.
3. The second part of Z.A.H.C. is a meeting which the member must attend each week. Each member must receive some study lessons, all of these lessons are subjects which are important to a Christian.
4. Each lesson is followed by questions about the lesson. Monthly there are special assignments and Exams to check if members have learnt their work.
5. Each week a group of Z.A.H.C. members gather to have a meeting with their leader. A group of about ten members is called a Local Centre.
6. The Local Centre can meet in a Church building or in the home of a member. The leader also helps the student members to answer the study questions which are difficult to understand.
7. Sometimes people of the Local Centre help each other to answer the problem(s) they are having. This is because the members of Z.A.H.C. are all active in their Church.
8. When a Church leader has a problem in the Church he/she can discuss the problem with other members at the Local Centre. This is how the Z.A.H.C. members will learn to become better leaders in the Church.⁵¹

The Zionist Churches, it should be remembered, do not regard the medical profession with cynicism nor do they discourage their members or people from consulting them. Indeed, a negative attitude to the medical profession would be highly contrary to Scripture or from the understanding

* Z.A.H.C.S.A. means the Zion Apostolic Holy Church of South Africa, whose head I interviewed.

51. This was information which was handed to me in my research on the educational programme which the Church might have for the preparation of members for a future leadership as well as the understanding of the Scripture. It was written in English.

of the Early Church. It is vital at this juncture to take note of the highest respect the Book of Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) pays to the medical profession (2nd Century BC) when the medical profession was in its infancy:

Hold the physician in honor, for he is essential
to you, and God it was who established his
profession.
From God the doctor has his wisdom, and the king
provides for his sustenance.
His knowledge makes the doctor distinguished,
and gives him access to those in authority.
God makes the earth yield healing herbs
which the prudent man should not neglect;
Was not the water sweetened by a twig
that men might learn his power?
He endows men with the knowledge
to glory in his mighty works
Through which the doctor eases pain
and the druggist prepares his medicine;
Thus God's creative work continues without cease
in its efficacy on the surface of the earth.
My son, when you are ill, delay not,
but pray to God, who will heal you:
Flee wickedness; let your hands be just,
cleanse your heart of every sin;
Offer your sweet-smelling oblation and petition,
a rich offering according to your means.
Then give the doctor his place
lest he leave; for you need him too.
There are times that give him an advantage,
and he too beseeches God
That his diagnosis may be correct
and his treatment bring about a cure.
He who is a sinner toward his Maker⁵²
will be defiant toward the doctor.

In this regard MacNutt rightly holds that sometimes God works through nature and the skill of doctors; sometimes he works directly through prayer and sometimes through both, but always there should be co-operation, mutual respect and an admiration for the variety of ways in which God manifests His glory.⁵³

52. For this extract see the Book of Sirach 38:1-15. This Book is not contained in many Protestant versions of the Bible, but only among the Apocrypha. But it is found in The New American Bible translation. For all this information see MacNutt, F.S., Healing, Notre Dame, Indiana, 1974, pp.241-242.

53. *Ibid.*, p.250.

6. SUMMARY

It could rightly be argued that the Black Independent Churches of which the Zionist Churches are a part have inherited from their parent Churches (white Churches from which they seceded) much malady, namely, the irrelevance of theology to the situation that is surrounding it. This is what A.R. Sprunger rightly calls "a terrible indictment of our South African Theology." He continues, "In Church History schisms and divisions could only come about because of the irrelevancy of the contemporary theology, which could not find the right answer to the problems of the people and of the times. It seems therefore that we, theologians and Christians of Southern Africa, have accumulated, within seventy years, as much irrelevant theology as nineteen centuries of Church History."⁵⁴ This could not be said of the Zionist Churches, at least in the field under discussion, namely healing through the power of the Holy Spirit. What could be said with justice about the contribution of the Zionist Churches is the importance given to direct intervention of the Spirit than on theological arguments in solving the problems of the people and community. The Spirit of Christ becomes a living reality, ever present and ever acting and ever felt acting: in fact, acting so much and so effectively that the spirits of the ancestors have not much to do except to be honoured.⁵⁵ The relevance of the Zionist Churches' healing ministry through the Spirit would point to the need for a serious examination of the traditional doctrine of the Spirit and re-alignment on the New Testament Pneumatology.⁵⁶ Zionist Churches through their healing ministry have "lighted a fire, which thanks to African prophetism may revitalise the Universal Church and bring her back to her former Apostolic zeal and her old missionary power. This may well signal a dire need for repentance (metanoia) and a serious review of the current theological priorities."⁵⁷

It is true and we must acknowledge it without reservation that the Zionist Churches practise an intensive diaconal activity which almost always takes

54. See A.R. Sprunger's article, 'The Contribution of the African Independent Churches to a Relevant Theology for Africa' in Relevant Theology for Africa: Report on a Consultation of the Missiological Institute at Lutheran Theological College, Mapumulo, Natal, September 12-21, 1972, edited by Hans-Jurgen Becken, p.163. A.R. Sprunger was Director of Studies, African Independent Churches of Africa Theological Correspondence Course, Braamfontein, Transvaal.

55. Ibid., pp.165-166.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

place. Women take care of each other and those who are in need or in trouble. The men help each other. The teacher sorts out the pass problem of the newcomer. Throughout the week social meetings take place; prayer groups, domestic help, by those who know for the benefit of those who do not know. There is intensive caring for each other in times of sickness, death, or other calamities. In short, the African community spirit is at its best, lives again, brought to life by the discovery of the love of Christ. Here is the Koinonia which we see or hear about in the book of Acts, which was probably the most powerful factor in the spreading of the Gospel in the first century...The prophetic churches of Africa can certainly help the Universal Church to rediscover the New Testament meaning of Koinonia.⁵⁸ We can therefore conclude on the part of the healing ministry of the Zionist Churches thus: Faith healing is a very important factor in the life of the "prophetic" churches. The physical needs of all members are catered for very effectively: and not only the physical aspect of sickness, but also the cause, the supernatural side of it. We are right back to the New Testament times when the sick were cured in the name of Jesus Christ, when the demons were cast out, when everybody could seek and could find comfort from the apostles, the evangelists, and the healers.⁵⁹ Having gone thus far, it becomes necessary now to have a brief look at the whole Church of Christ in South Africa especially its future role in the course of this century.

58. Ibid., p.167.

59. Ibid., pp.169-170

CHAPTER EIGHTTHE FUTURE ROLE OF THE CHURCH

No one knows what the future holds for the Church and the people in South Africa. No, not even one! It would appear, therefore, that the diagnosis of the present situation and the prescription for the future are not easy to manufacture in the laboratory of human reason. 'Who will roll the stone for us then?' Will the envisaged Church of the future, the Confessing Church,¹ be an alternative ecclesial body to the existing ones? If so, will it stand the test of time? Or, will it in the course of its journey into the future simply degenerate, like the present Church, into the abyss of silence? What will be its marks? Indeed, what will be its nature and mission? It would seem easier to answer the last question but the first set of questions are a matter of prophecy. This chapter does not seek to suggest alternatives, much less the remedies to the ills of both Church and society - for this is the task supremely of the conclusion to which we are steadily advancing. The task of this chapter is to envisage and to portray the breathing of the spirit under the voice of conscience.

In looking at the Church and the situation in South Africa today, it would seem that for the Christians the crux of the matter lies in a Christian ethic, a Consequential ethic i.e., action that follows necessarily from a Christian Gospel because it is what the Gospel requires.² This has an advantage of allowing Christians to focus on the particular issues that apply here. Such a Biblical ethic, in the words of J.A. Lamprecht, necessarily puts self-transformation prior to transformation of society, justification before sanctification, holiness before politics i.e., it follows from a personal Christian commitment, and is empowered by the Holy Spirit.³

-
1. Here we have in mind the Resolution of the Consultation on Racism held at Hammanskraal in February 1980, under the auspices of the South African Council of Churches where this Resolution was taken on the possibility of forming a Confessing Church i.e. if the white Church fails in its ministry "to purge itself of racism."
 2. See J.A. Lamprecht's inaugural address, Op.Cit., p.23.
 3. Ibid. The aim of God's salvation is liberation. But the liberation of people will also include liberation in the political sense and also will involve individual alienation - because man as an individual is important but not in isolation. Where it becomes dangerous is when you distinctively denounce people who are concerned with political issues.

It is no exaggeration to assert that this has immediate consequences for both Church and society:

The point of departure for Christian ethics is the body of Christ, the form of Christ in the form of the Church, and formation of the Church in conformity with the form of Christ. The concept of formation acquires its significance, indirectly for all mankind only if what takes place in the Church does in truth take place for all men.⁴

Serious confusion in South Africa has arisen through the Church's rightful place for her social responsibility. This becomes obvious when one looks at the uncertainty that surrounds us. The Church in South Africa confesses of being the Church of Jesus Christ. Therefore, it necessarily follows that she has a Gospel and a Saviour sufficient for the times and that He has promised to guide her to the end.⁵ Indeed, if the Church in this land loses this message and hope, it loses the one thing that is its power, and its humanitarian concern will be self-defeating. Even if we were to attain a perfect society tomorrow, we would still need the Word of reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ. It is only an ethic that issues from the Gospel that will do its work creatively, not simply as a rhetorical and pious copy of the world but rather questioning the assumptions behind its thought.⁶ It is true that at times the Church will be expected to take the lead! While it may not, and cannot, pronounce in detail on every occurrence, entering the arena of party strife, it also cannot keep away from all involvement, because the Gospel contains a definitive ethical imperative.⁷ It is to be noted in this regard that the concentration of Christianity's social relevance within the category of ethics also allows Christians to make their distinctive contribution in this realm. It would appear that the Church in South Africa is called upon to perform the following tasks:

- (1) To discipleship and practice, setting its own house in order.

4. Bonhoeffer, D. Ethics, pp.64-5.
 5. Lamprecht, Op.Cit.
 6. Ibid.
 7. Ibid., p.26.

- (2) To witness and dialogue, humbly pointing to what it believes is right. We must ask: Can the Church speak a prophetic word in these days?⁸

It is at this point that the white Church in South Africa failed. The Church may not simply preach and witness - however earnestly. It must also have regard for the people to whom it ministers, and in some way identify with them.⁹ The white Church has failed to identify with the aspirations of the oppressed and this has, unfortunately, led blacks to doubt the credibility of the Christian message of salvation and reconciliation as propounded by whites.¹⁰ It is also no exaggeration to say that although the Church has come out of the world, she is nevertheless in the world, and as such she is not exempt from the conflicts of society. As a matter of fact, the character of the Church, her vocation, her message, and the success of her missionary endeavour force her to be concerned not only with the tensions of her world but also to be involved in these tensions. Otherwise the Church would not be a New Testament Church, as portrayed by the Scriptures, a community on the march, a project in the making, or the "firstfruits" - the new order which has come but not yet in its fulness.¹¹ The failure of the Church in South Africa to adopt this attitude or behaviour has led to the epoch-making statement issued by the black Representatives at the Consultation on Racism.¹² The statement reads:

We the black representatives in this consultation, wish to place on record the painful realisation that the churches to which we belong, have conformed to the patterns of a racist society. The persistent cries of the black people that the church is not consistent with the demands of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, have fallen on deaf ears.

We acknowledge our participation in the sin of the church. We are aware that God has been calling and continues to call His church to be a community that transcends all barriers of denominations and race.

8. Ibid., p.24.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. See Costas, O.E. The Church and its Mission: A Shattering Critique from the Third World, Tyndale House Publisher, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois, 1974, p.9.

12. See Footnote 1 above.

We realise that the racial situation in this country has reached a critical stage and that God is calling the church as a liberating and reconciling community to identify itself with the oppressed and the poor in their struggle for the dignity which is theirs as human persons created in the image of the Triune God.

We call upon black Christians prayerfully to seek the guidance of God in our desire to understand what obedience to God means in this situation.

We further call upon all white Christians to demonstrate their willingness to purge the church of racism.¹³

It has been imperative for the resolution to call upon white Christians to demonstrate to South Africans and the world in general and to God in particular, "their willingness to purge the Church" of all that creates division among the people of God. This is even so because white Christians see themselves as morally and dutybound to obey and support the unjust regime which continually assaults the dignity and freedom of black people by keeping them in positions of sloth and suffering. The white Christians have all the potential of leading the country away from catastrophe and genocide towards a meaningful change since they can exercise their votes for or against the Nationalist Party. But, instead of doing this, they salve their conscience and justify their obedience to the State by continually appealing to Romans 13: 1-2; I Peter 2: 13-14; Titus 3: 1, passages which keep on reminding them of their submission to the powers that be. On the other hand, black Christians feel no obligation to obey the statutes of the land (except by force) since they have no vote either to support or oppose the government of the day. When a black Christian is constantly referred to such passages as Romans 13 he will tell you that Paul who wrote the Chapter was a Roman citizen, anyway (unlike black people who have been robbed of their citizenship), and as such deriving privileges from the Roman authorities. He will even go further and tell you that it is a tendentious exegesis that finds unconditional obedience to the State in I Peter 2: 13-14. He will lay the emphasis on Revelations 13 which calls the State "The Beast".¹⁴

13. See Ecunews, the Official Organ of the South African Council of Churches, February 27, 1980.

14. Simon Gqubule addressing the Consultation on Racism on the subject, 'The Church and Alternative Society'. Simon Gqubule teaches New Testament and is Principal of the John Wesley College, a constituent college of the Federal Theological Seminary, Edendale, Pietermaritzburg.

Therefore, division in the Church (between black and white) is inevitable because white Christians are part of a ruling minority that wields all the political power, disposes of 90% of the economic power and owns 87% of the land. For the point of view of Christian justice this must be reversed. Since over 80% of the total South African population professes to be Christian, it should therefore be easy to dismantle the machinery of apartheid.¹⁵ The white Church has failed even to confess its sin of social, economic and political exploitation. It cannot therefore be a "salt of the earth" unless it repents and rights the wrongs that it has perpetuated or helped to perpetuate in the course of the last three hundred and twenty-seven years of racist rule in South Africa. It either willingly undergoes this transformation or else it must cease to be the Church of Christ (Bonhoeffer). In the words of John De Gruchy, "...the Church is not only called upon to put its own house in order. For while this search for integrity is essential, the Church does not have to become a model for society before it can speak prophetically to the nation; there will never be a time when the Church has earned the right to do so on the basis of its own purity. The Church speaks out of a shared guilt, not self-righteousness, and while its criticism must always begin within its own life, part of that self-criticism should awaken it to its responsibility to the nation."¹⁶

1. THE TASK OF THE CHURCH

The task of the Churches (whether DRC, English-speaking or Black) is to seek a radical alternative to apartheid. Let us not deceive our children into thinking that apartheid is an end in itself. It will never stand the test of time. We either change it 'by any means necessary' or perish with it. That it will collapse is inevitable. There are many lessons to be learnt from history. The changing of apartheid will require a radical theology that is applicable to practical concrete situations. And, to answer the question, What can Churches do? will require sacrifice of possessions on the part of the beneficiaries and will also demand absolute

15. Ibid.

16. See J.W. De Gruchy's article, 'Bonhoeffer in South Africa, an Exploratory essay' in Bethge, E. (Ed.), Bonhoeffer: Exile and Martyr, Collins, London, 1975, p.35. "Dietrich Bonhoeffer was born in 1906 and died in 1945. A German Protestant theologian, imprisoned for two years and hanged for his role in the plot to overthrow Adolf Hitler. Bonhoeffer was influenced very early by the thinking of Karl Barth, urged a conformation to the form of Christ as the suffering servant in a total commitment of the self to the lives of others. His writings, many of them fragmentary, were collected and published posthumously".

obedience to "Him who is reported as claiming to be without qualification, "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."¹⁷ This absolute obedience will require the granting of rights, equality, and dignity to black people and, indeed, the dignity of white brethren who equally feel humiliated by the state of things in our common fatherland. They should acknowledge its involvement in this guilt. It should be called upon to confess and to repent of her sins and to make restitution by following Christ in the way of love.¹⁸ It has been argued that despite the present enormous strides by the English-speaking Churches and especially the Dutch Reformed Churches, Churches have done very little in the promotion of sound race relations. This is not a denial of the dedicated missionary zeal of the Churches and their appreciable success in this field. Nor is it a denial of the courageous witness of the individual Christians. Nor is it to decry the influence sparked off in our country by the impact of the "Message to the People of South Africa" and "SPRO-Cas". It is just a recognition of the fact that relations between the races in South Africa are anything but good and that the Churches can point to very little that they have done to improve them.¹⁹ In this regard Hurley rightly asks, "What significant groups of White church members are known for their practical communication and co-operation with their Non-White neighbours? What significant groups of Africans, Indians or Coloured Christians are united in bonds of understanding and friendship with their White fellow-Christians?"²⁰ Hurley feels that one would be hard put to find them; just as one would be hard put to find this kind of Christian communication in any country of mixed languages, nationalities or races.²¹

The Church must therefore identify with its past, present and future history. It must become part of it, so that it may understand the joys, the sorrows, and the aspirations of the people among whom it serves. It must identify itself with the struggle of the people. If they suffer it must suffer, too. The question of identification is very urgent because the black struggle in South Africa is not only a political and exploitative economic system, it is also a struggle for the authenticity of the Gospel of Jesus

17. Cited from John Suggit's inaugural lecture, Op.Cit., p.17.

18. The gist of the argument advanced by J.W. De Gruchy in his article, 'Bonhoeffer in South Africa...' in Bonhoeffer: Exile and Martyr, Op.Cit.

19. See Hurley's article, 'The Churches and Race Relations' in South African Dialogue, Op.Cit., p.475.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

Christ in an apartheid system that demands (through massive security legislation) subservience and obedience in all spheres of life. It is a totalitarian government which demands that which a Christian can only give to God.²² At last the black Christians in South Africa have come to realise that failure to identify with the struggle poses not only a great hindrance to the advancement of the Church's mission but also constitutes a grave act of disobedience to God. A more demanding task is that the Churches are called upon by the black people to work for the achievement of power and economic sharing. Anything less than this is not acceptable to them. Denis Hurley rightly warns that this "will require an enormous effort, a courageous effort, an effort that little in the recent history of the churches has prepared them to undertake. In their long alienation from social and cultural development in the West, the Churches became other-worldly and academic and almost exclusively concerned with the heavenly future of the individual souls. Theology, in truth, cannot escape being other worldly for it is concerned with the relevance of the transcendent to the here-and-now of human life, of human culture, politics, economics and social relations. Even in this field theology must be academic, but again, not wholly academic, for it must tell the Christian conscience what is expected of it is not serving a living, active, concerned faith."²³ Again, "...the implications of the Christian gospel for South Africa must become the detailed, down-to-earth, day-to-day teaching of the churches; a regular feature of the Sunday sermon, the religion class, the guild, the youth programme...The day of conferences and seminars dealing exclusively with intellectual principles and attitudes is over. Whatever conferences and seminars are held from now on must aim at communication and action..."²⁴ A question may arise here, What kind of future does the Church in South Africa hold out to the youth, especially the black youth of this country who are passing through the "valley of the shadow of death?" Does the Church tell them to be patient, under prayer, hoping and trusting in the Divine intervention of God at some future unknown date? Is this what the Church holds out to them? If so, will it not be better, then, for the Church to acknowledge its powerlessness and therefore its ineffectiveness to challenge the status quo.²⁵ Indeed, will it not

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22. Alan Boesak addressing the Consultation on Racism. His subject was 'The Black Church and the Future'.
23. See Denis Hurley, 'Churches and Race Relations', Op.Cit., p.476.
24. Ibid., pp.478-9.
25. This does not mean that the Church has been silent on thorny issues of the day. No, the difficulty is that statements have been made but their quality has been rather poor, and therefore, lacks substance, vigour, meaning and effectiveness.

be better to leave the forces of nature to take their course? I am tempted to think that our future in South Africa lies in the practical outworking of our faith. The Church in South Africa will be judged not because of doctrinal differences as was the case with the Church of the Sixteenth century but solely on disobedience. The Church in South Africa is a Church which suffers from the malady of the hardness of heart. One is tempted to declare that the Church in our land is not the Church in the New Testament. The Church in the New Testament could worship and share things together under the Unity of the Lordship of Christ. This was so because it was sealed by the Blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Whereas the Church in our land is sealed not by the Blood of Jesus but by egoism and by the blood of our forefathers and the beauty of the monuments we have built for the so-called history and civilization which is already a wreckage of the very history and civilization the power structure is purporting to preserve. The blood of our forefathers, the monuments, the party policies, and congress manifestos of ruling parties, take precedence to the demands of the Gospel of Christ, the Good News. White South Africans find it difficult to bow their heads and shoulders to share the chalice of bitterness through which black people are passing. White South Africans found it undesirable to submit to the yoke of Christ in order to exterminate racism and oppression so rampant among the "discarded" and despised black people of South Africa.

In the words of Sam Buti²⁶ it would seem that:

Our future hope lies in turning as Christians to the black Christian constituency and saying: Christ is the liberator, He identifies Himself with your struggle, and therefore I do so too in obedience to Him. He calls me as a Christian to stand in solidarity with you, to suffer as you suffer, to risk rejection, ostracism - yes, even imprisonment - until all of us are free.²⁷

This is the challenge of the black Church leadership to its constituency to participate meaningfully in the struggle for total liberation of South Africa. Words, resolutions and moral exhortations no longer suffice. Inherent in the whole struggle is the tragic inevitability of physical violence (mentioned in the concluding chapter). As peaceful protest is

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26. Sam Buti is the minister of the black section of the DRC and President of South African Council of Churches.
27. An excerpt from Sam Buti's address to the Consultation on Racism. His subject was 'The Shadows of Death and the Future Hope of South Africa'.

made increasingly impossible (by banning orders and detentions), the belief in violence as a solution to our problem is growing intensely - hence the last minute appeal by the South African Council of Churches - for the Church in South Africa to take drastic and complete action to overturn the present oppressive structures. Our Churches must not only initiate but also support programmes of civil disobedience. At the same time they must not cease to challenge the white Christian constituency.²⁸ The black Christian leadership is left with no option but to teach black people not only what it means to obey God rather than the repressive legislation but also to expect intense suffering in the course of the struggle. The way to freedom must be via the Cross and many a time in the history of man this has always meant the shedding of blood. Perhaps, after this we shall be able to say with St John, the Divine:

AFTER THIS I LOOKED, AND THERE WAS AN ENORMOUS CROWD- NO ONE COULD COUNT ALL THE PEOPLE! THEY WERE FROM EVERY RACE, TRIBE, NATION, AND LANGUAGE, AND THEY STOOD IN FRONT OF THE THRONE AND THE LAMB, DRESSED IN WHITE ROBES AND HOLDING PALM BRANCHES IN THEIR HANDS. THEY CALLED OUT IN A LOUD VOICE:

"SALVATION COMES FROM OUR GOD, WHO SITS ON THE THRONE, AND FROM THE LAMB!"

ALL THE ANGELS STOOD ROUND THE THRONE, THE ELDERS, AND THE FOUR LIVING CREATURES. THEY THREW THEMSELVES FACE DOWNWARDS IN FRONT OF THE THRONE AND WORSHIPPED GOD, SAYING,

"AMEN! PRAISE, GLORY, WISDOM, THANKSGIVING, HONOUR, POWER, AND MIGHT BELONG TO OUR GOD FOR EVER AND EVER! AMEN!"

(REV. 7:9-12 RSV).

Needless to say that the fruition of this vision of St John the Divine, would (for the Church in South Africa as elsewhere) necessitate an ecumenical effort to which we are going to turn in our last chapter. In the same breath we have to agree with J.V. Taylor that:

A Church that was true to her calling could exercise a ministry of reconciliation between persons and factions divided by race, creed, or policy, commending by her own example the power of frankness, patience, and negotiation. She could offer the support of her fellowship to all men of goodwill who are bearing the burden of leadership and policy-making. Above all, she could contribute supremely to the building of a

28. See Boesak, Op.Cit.

people's character: for without that essential material in every race no nation or federation can be firmly built, no matter how right its constitution or its laws may be. Mordecai's words to Esther might truly be spoken to the Church...today: 'Who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?' (Esther 4:14). But in the face of such opportunity the majority of Christians of all races...seem dangerously unprepared for the task.²⁹

In conclusion, let us agree that the Church in South Africa is a DIVIDED BODY OF CHRIST 'floating on stormy waters' (John Macquarrie). The words of Alisdair Heron seem relevant for us here that "There is still a lengthy and difficult road ahead, and the shape of the destination is still altogether unclear; but a beginning has been made. Everything depends, now and in the future, on the spirit in which the churches encounter each other. They have the choice on all sides between opening and closing, between confidence which goes out to meet the other and the defensiveness which retreats into isolation."³⁰ Will ecumenism perhaps help us?

29. Taylor, J.V. Christianity and Politics in Africa, Penguin Books, London, 1957, p.8.

30. See Alisdair Heron's paper, 'The ecclesiological Problems of Interchurch Marriage' in Beyond Tolerance: The Challenge of Mixed Marriages, Hurley, M. (Ed.), Godfrey Chapman Publishers, London, 1975, p.91. Alisdair Heron was at the time of delivering this paper (at the International Consultation on Mixed Marriage) a lecturer in Systematic Theology at the Irish School of Ecumenics in Dublin under whose auspices the Consultation was held. He now lectures in Christian Dogmatics at New College, the Divinity Faculty of the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

CHAPTER NINE"UT OMNES UNUM SINT": THE UNFINISHED ECUMENICAL AGENDA

"...that they may all be one..."

The task of this chapter is that of an open invitation to co-operate in the Name of the Father who creates, mortification in the Name of the Son who died and rose, conversation in the Name of the Holy Spirit who it is will lead us 'with all the saints' into the fulness of truth (Eph. 3: 18-19; John 16: 13).¹

I certainly do not intend to offer any discussion but merely wish to arouse (through European ecumenical spectacles) some awareness or consciousness to the South African churchmen about what I consider to be the theological and non-theological factors or motives that retard the advancement of the unity of the Church. Indeed, there are times, where, in spite of approach to theological agreement, unity does not draw any nearer, or where new theological grounds for disunity are continually advanced as soon as the old ones are disposed of, or where it is stubbornly maintained that 'we seem to be saying the same things, but in fact we are worlds apart', then there is grave cause for suspicion that the real grounds for continuing the separation are both non-theological and disreputable.²

Perhaps at this stage in our history in South Africa, especially in the light of the present crisis of faith a School of Ecumenics³ or a Chair in Ecumenical Theology is long overdue and, therefore, its establishment should receive primary consideration in faculties of theology of our universities and/or theological seminaries. Ecumenical theology is absolutely essential if the present ordinands (and indeed, those of the future) are to be geared towards a positive dealing with inter-faith, inter-Church, inter-denominational, national and international issues that render the Church asunder. Ecumenical theology is geared immediately and directly to the aim of establishing one Church united for mission; in this sense it is ,

1. See Michael Hurley's paper on 'Theology of Ecumenics' in Furrow: 2, 1970, 21, p.416ff.

2. Ibid.

3. A School of Ecumenics exists to produce ecumenical experts and not confessional experts. A school of this nature will be divided into (1) Inter-Faith dialogue; (2) Inter-Church dialogue; (3) Religion and Society; (4) Christian-Marxist dialogue. These must have emphasis on methodology, a portrait of a Christian as an ecumenist; to distinguish, examine, criticize, understand and correlate to various operations which cumulatively advance the Churches towards their distant goal of the one Church united for mission (Hurley, Ibid.).

not open-ended. Its second and consequent distinctive feature is that it does not aim at uniformity in understanding, at a monochrome theology. It presupposes that theological pluralism is, within certain limits, something to be enjoyed rather than endured, something not only compatible with unity in faith but necessary to the unity in faith of a living united Church mediating constantly on the Word of God and bringing forth from this treasure house new things and old.⁴ In a School of Ecumenics one would envisage courses that will be conducted by specialists who have engaged in research and original thinking and whose aim will be to enquire not how the problem may be fully solved but to what extent it must be solved and (insofar as it must) how it may be solved in order to achieve that unity in faith (but not uniformity in theology) needed for the establishment of Church union. Such an ecumenical theology, it will be obvious, does not render superfluous but rather heightens the need for the other schools or academies which, whether staffed by members of one or more confessions, will specialize in the open ended study of all sources of theology⁵ and all varieties of theological traditions and also systematic theology.⁶ The mind can never say 'it is enough' and both mind and heart are restless until they rest in whatever fulness of understanding can be acquired⁷ by the believer in spite of the measure of darkness in which he still remains.

In the unity that the Churches in South Africa should seek, they should not do so at the expense of diversity as John Macquarrie so eminently reminds us that "...diversity is just as essential to the well-being of the Christian Church. To combine unity with freedom is a very difficult task, and the temptations to uniformity are very great. But a truly Christian unity can never be a tightly knit affair. It must leave room not just for the preservation but for the continuing development of the rich heritage of different Christian traditions in which men and women of very different types have come to know the inexhaustible resources of the Christian faith. The church of the future will manifest more clearly the visible unity of the people of God and it will be a new creation, but it will also be continuous

4. Hurley, Op.Cit.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

with the church of the ages and will gather up undiminished the wealth of forms which Christianity has brought forth."⁸ Again here Macquarrie warns that any kind of unity envisaged must be different from the unities of the past (often imposed and merely superficial) and must take full account of the freedoms that have been so painfully won in the struggles that have brought us from homogeneous to pluralist societies.⁹

I do not know how studious the Church in South Africa is on the question of unity as envisaged, say in 1910, the year which is regarded by ecumenists as the beginning of the modern ecumenical movement. I know it requires a considerable effort to cast our minds back seventy years, and to apprehend where the Christian Church in South Africa stood then in relation to the question of its own unity. Christians in 1910 became aware for the first time that disunity was not only an obstacle slowing down the geographical expansion of Christianity but also a scandal leading to confusion, disbelief, and indifference. In an effort to remedy the situation they often succeeded in arranging and maintaining territorial, 'no poaching' comity agreements with each other, but this, they had found, was a mere palliative and no real remedy, especially with the advent of travel and urbanization. As a result they were shaken out of their complacency and shocked into the realization that Christian disunity was a disservice to Christ and to the cause they themselves had so much at heart, the coming of God's kingdom. And from this experience was born, firstly, a dissatisfaction with existing divisions; secondly, a conviction that they were not merely unsatisfactory but quite simply wrong - contrary to God's will; and thirdly, a determination to undo these anomalous divisions.¹⁰ It is interesting to note at this juncture how a group of missionaries put the situation in India in 1919:

We believe that the challenge of the present hour... calls us to mourn our past divisions and turn to our Lord Jesus Christ to seek in Him the unity of the body expressed in one visible Church. We face together the titanic task of the winning of India for Christ - one-fifth of the human race. Yet, confronted by such an overwhelming responsibility, we find ourselves rendered weak and relatively impotent by our unhappy divisions -

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8. Macquarrie, J. Christian Unity and Christian Diversity, S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1975.
9. Ibid., p.12.
10. Hurley, M. Theology of Ecumenism, The Mercier Press, Cork, Dublin, 1969, p.20. Michael Hurley is a Jesuit Priest and a Director of the Irish School of Ecumenics, Dublin, Ireland.

divisions for which we were not responsible, and which have been, as it were, imposed upon us from without; divisions which we did not create, and which we do not desire to perpetuate.¹¹

This is one of the reasons why a theological ecumenical study is essential to further ecumenism, to bring the Churches out of their isolation into co-operation and dialogue, must concentrate on the missionary nature of the Church, and in particular on the relationship between liturgy and mission.¹² The restoration of the visible unity was one of the themes at the Second Vatican Council. The supreme Council of the Roman Church put it this way:

The restoration of unity among all Christians is one of the principal concerns of the Second Vatican Council. Christ the Lord founded one Church and one Church only. However, many Christian communions present themselves to men as the true inheritors of Jesus Christ; all indeed profess to be followers of the Lord but they differ in mind and go their different ways, as if Christ himself were divided. Certainly, such division openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalizes the world, and damages that most holy cause, the preaching of the Gospel to every creature.¹³

At this juncture it would be wise to cast our minds back thirty-one years to the meeting of the Faith and Order Commission which met at Chichester, England in 1949. At this meeting the Secretary presented members with a letter from a Cambridge scholar, Professor C.H. Dodd. The letter though not discussed at the meeting was nonetheless presented at Lund in 1952. The letter was to prove epoch-making in the history of the ecumenical movement for it brought to the attention of the World Council of Churches and related bodies what Professor Dodd called "unavowed motives in ecumenical discussions".¹⁴ Here we shall let C.H. Dodd speak for himself:

In the course of nearly forty years' participation in conferences and discussions having reunion as their ultimate aim, I have often been puzzled by a current phenomenon. When certain issues have been

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11. Quoted from Michael Hurley Op.Cit. See also Documents on Christian Unity, A Selection from the First and Second Series 1920-30, ed. G.K.A. Bell, pp.122-3.
 12. Hurley, Ibid.
 13. See Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, ed. A. Flannery, Dominican Publications, St Saviour's, Dublin, Ireland, 1975, p.452.
 14. See Dodd's letter in Faith and Order Commission Papers No. 10, 1952. See also the 1955 Church of Scotland Report, 'What Keeps Churches Apart', p.7.

patiently thrashed out, and we have come, through a deeper mutual understanding, within sight of some real measure of agreement on those particular issues, suddenly the ground of debate shifts. Some fresh point of division emerges, which no one has spoken about, or thought about, much. Interest in the matters hitherto under discussion evaporates, and the measure of agreement attained appears quite insignificant. We are thrown back to the beginning. Sometimes such a throw-back has proved salutary, because we have been neglecting some genuinely important source of misunderstanding. (All of us could produce obvious examples from the earlier history of our movement.) But I am sure it has not always been so. The throw-back is not always a case of reculer pour mieux sauter. It means we are really shying at the logical consequences of steps we felt bound to take, and we are now casting about for good reasons why we should not follow out these consequences. But the real reasons may be unavowed or subconscious.¹⁵

The 1955 Church of Scotland Report 'What Keeps Churches Apart' like all other ecumenical documents calling us to return to the Holy Scripture and notes that "...the New Testament teaches that the Church is One Body in Christ: unity is an essential mark of its true nature. Therefore, when honestly held theological differences, or necessary protests against abuses within the Church, lead to breaches in Christian fellowship and ecclesiastical separations, it must be judged in the light of Scripture that sin has already entered in, whether through the temper of the disputants or by way of the abuses protested against or otherwise."¹⁶ But before we undertake the task of outlining the nature of theological and non-theological factors confronting Church unity, we must be able to differentiate and define what we mean by theological or non-theological factors. By 'Theological Factors' is meant that which exists in Church disunity where a communion is separated from other communions on account of theological differences regarding essential doctrine of Faith,¹⁷ and by 'Non-Theological Factors' is meant that which in Church disunity does not belong inherently to such differences, but springs from some other cause.¹⁸

15. Ibid., p.7.

16. See the 1955 Church of Scotland Report, Op.Cit., p.8.

17. Ibid., p.9.

18. Ibid.

A Report of a Conference held at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey in November 1951 gives a full comprehensive account of the 'Non-theological factors that may hinder or accelerate the Church's unity.'¹⁹ The framers of the document noted that the gospel has always been received by men living within certain particular cultural conditions. Although the Church is founded upon Jesus Christ, its life and doctrine are influenced by language, forms of government and civilization, and by economic and social structures. The Report also notes among other things that from the beginning, all too human factors, self-assertion of persons and groups, have threatened this unity of the Church (II. Acts 4:1; I Cor. 1:10-13).²⁰

1. FACTORS WHICH CAUSED DIVISIONS

1. Development of Churches in Isolation

Ecclesial communities have existed for a very long period of time geographically separated from each other. This has among other things perpetuated cultural and other factors that exploit the situation. This has developed differences in doctrine, Church order and Christian discipline.

2. Compulsion and Persecution

Many a time this is caused by a partnership of Church and State for the achievement of some kind of a Christian commonwealth for the privilege of the few in society. This has more than once forced some Christians to seek religious expression in the establishment or founding of new Churches.

3. Discrimination

Some people have been forced or subjected to disabilities within a Church on social, economic, political, or racial grounds based on colour, prejudice and/or social strata - have actually been excluded from a Church for the same reasons and therefore bound by circumstances to establish new churches.

4. Reaction from Unions

Union of Churches, it is noted, whether negotiated voluntarily or under compulsion of the State, have often been followed by new divisions and the continuance as separate churches of those who would not accept the union for various psychological and social reasons.

19. See Faith and Order Commission, Op.Cit.

20. Ibid.

5. Nationalism

National feeling and differences of language have separated Churches. Apart from this, national feelings and differences in communal and national life have also contributed to separation. There is also an acute danger where a Church or Churches are compelled by the government of the day to give up all connections with other churches for fear that they might come under the influence of the opposing political powers. In some cases these nationalist feelings easily create divisions between Christians of different nationalities otherwise of the same denomination. Added to this already appalling situation is the national administration of the Churches. They are organized on a national level, and have constructed their organization within this pattern, i.e. their supreme authority is always national in character. This dependent condition is laden with consequences, for such administrations prevent any national union among Churches.²¹

6. Conservatism

Although it is understandable that familiar situations do not demand new adjustments, we have to bear in mind that the demands of the Gospel of Jesus Christ require the fulfilment of a Divine Command to go where His Spirit is leading us for the realization and the advancement of that unity which He so earnestly prayed for. Sometimes through the spirit of conservatism we militate against the new demands that we shift from our accustomed positions so that unity may be visible. This change we resist. G.R. Cragg put it thus: "...temporarily some people become nervous at the prospect of any change; disruption creates uncertainty, and the familiar patterns of life, with all their reassuring intimacy, are broken up. The case against change can be carefully elaborated, and often it rests on genuine conviction. But just as often the repugnance to a new venture is an instinctive response to the unfamiliar. Frequently it represents little more than an innate dislike of change."²² Apart from the above enumerated factors that CAUSE division in the Church there are other factors that not only cause but PERPETUATE divisions that already exist including those mentioned above. These factors are as follows:

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21. See 'Non-Theological Factors that may Hinder or Accelerate the Church's Unity' , being the Report of a Conference held at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, Switzerland, Geneva in Faith and Order Commission, Paper No. 10, 1952, p.26.
22. See G.R. Cragg's paper on 'Disunities Created by Differing Patterns of Church Life' in Faith and Order, Ibid.

- (i) Psychological tendency to accept the status quo without questioning.
- (ii) Misrepresentation of other Churches in the secular or religious press and by popular literature or radio creates prejudice and prevents masses of Christians from seeing our divisions in a true light.
- (iii) The teaching of history in our schools and universities (including Church schools) is sometimes a grave distortion of the proportions of historical truth. The same is true of even quite serious writings used in our universities and churches.
- (iv) New factors growing up within separated Churches, when the causes of divisions have become past history, reinforce the inherited reasons for division, for example:
 - (a) gradual identification with social, economic and political groupings;
 - (b) denominational sentiment, pride, the unity and cohesion already attained, symbolic importance of the name and everything associated with it;
 - (c) the dead weight of an administration which tends to be all absorbing and to perpetuate itself; personal ambition; vested interests; undue consideration of the personal sacrifices involved in union; and
 - (d) ignorance and the limitation of the human mind.²³

2. WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

The question as to what must or should be done, for instance, in inter-Church dialogue is a very complex one if not the most difficult one. In the first place it means submission to certain fundamental principles which are characteristic of any dialogue that is aimed at securing a long and lasting solution. In the dialogue between representatives of different Churches the participants should be called upon to submit their most fundamental presuppositions, the very grammar and syntax of their thoughts, to critical questioning. It is therefore absolutely vital at the outset to lay bare the presuppositions of the undertaking. No one enters into a conversation without presuppositions, and it is essential that these should be brought into the open. No one can bring a totally open mind to a dialogue except an imbecile who has not yet learned to use human language.²⁴

23. Ibid., p.29.

24. See Leslie J.E. Newbigin's article, 'The Basis, Purpose, And Manner of Inter-Faith Dialogue' in Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol. 30, No. 3, June 1977. Cf. also principles of dialogue in Paul Tillich, Christianity and the Encounter of World Religions, Columbia University Press, New York, 1963.

Secondly, an inter-Church dialogue takes as its basic presupposition that there is a common core of reality within all the varieties of Church experience i.e. varieties brought about or about to be brought by the Churches that are to engage in dialogue. Thirdly, an inter-Church dialogue is based on the practical need for political and social unity. Lastly, a Christian who participates in inter-Church dialogue will do so on the basis or strength of his faith. The presuppositions which shape his thinking will be those which he draws from the Scriptures. This must be quite explicit. Also important is the fact that he cannot argue that the position of final authority can be taken by anything other than the Gospel either by a philosophical system, or by mystical experience, or by the requirements of national and global unity. It is also important to bear in mind that the integrity and fruitfulness of inter-Church dialogue depends in the first place upon the extent to which the different participants take seriously the full reality of the meaning of the Scriptures as the SOURCE for the understanding and the achievement of the Unity we all seek.²⁵ When the dialogue is open such as the one envisaged here, it allows the Church opportunity to shift from introspective responses and negative attitudes. This is true to a certain extent, of the ecumenical movement. In this regard Macquarrie rightly warns, "It would be a fair criticism of the ecumenical movement - and one which many ecumenists would be willing to accept - that it has been too inward-looking and too self-involved. Churchmen have talked to churchmen about the churches."²⁶ But this is no excuse. We must take our faith seriously. Our faith, if the unity of the Church of Christ is to be visible must cease to be spiritual only. Bill Burnett is right when he says, "Our unity must be plain for all to see as a unity in faith, order, and charity which finds the focus on its expression in the Holy Communion."²⁷ Unity requires truth and absolute obedience to the demands of the Cross. Truth is absolute obligation and that loyalty to truth and loyalty to unity go rarely hand in hand. We must be loyal to the truth we see, for to be disloyal is corrupting

25. Ibid.

26. From 1970 this position has, however, changed dramatically with the W.C.C.'s Programme to Combat Racism by directly financing large sums of money to the freedom fighters in Southern Africa.

27. See B.B. Burnett's Peter Ainslie Memorial Lecture, 'Lambeth 1958 and Reunion' delivered at Rhodes University on August 19, 1959, p.7.

the centre of our personality. We have to be as ecumenical and warm-hearted that the world may believe.²⁸ "I believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church", said William Temple, "and I deeply regret that it does not exist."²⁹ "Will it ever exist?"³⁰ "...When? How will this unity come about? What are the obstacles to overcome?...My faith can only tell me to do nothing but pray with you and in you, that your unity may come..."³¹ Unity is both the will and the gift of God to His Church in the world. No one puts this better than the New Delhi General Assembly of the World Council of Churches:

We believe that the unity which is both God's will and his gift to His Church is being made visible as all in each place who are baptised into Jesus Christ and confess him as Lord and Saviour are brought by the Holy Spirit into one fully committed fellowship, holding the one apostolic faith, preaching the one Gospel, breaking the one bread, joining in common prayer, and having a corporate life reaching out in witness and service to all, and who at the same time are united with the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages in such wise that ministry and members are accepted by all, and that all can act and speak together as occasion requires for the tasks to which God calls his people.³²

The New Delhi Report rightly feels that it is this kind of unity that we must all work for.³³ J.B. Webb warns that "...the quest of fellowship and trust must not stop at any given stage through frustration and disappointment. As our satisfaction in self-sufficiency dissolves and humility becomes increasingly the driving force of the ecumenical movement,

28. See Owen Chadwick's Peter Ainslie Memorial Lecture, 'Christian Unity', delivered at Rhodes University in 1963, p.13.

29. See J.B. Webb's Peter Ainslie Memorial Lecture, 'The Methodist Church And its Place in the Church Catholic' delivered at Rhodes University on September 3, 1956, p.14.

30. Ibid.

31. Excerpt from the prayer of the Abbe Couttier in R.J.W. Bavin (ed.), The Churches and Christian Unity, O.U.P., London, 1963.

32. Kenneth Slack (ed.), Despatch from New Delhi, S.C.M. Press, London, 1962, p.88.

33. Ibid.

so will the possibility of One Holy Catholic and Apostolic loom larger and nearer, until the Church Militant on earth becomes merged in the Church Triumphant in heaven."³⁴ Unity is the responsibility which the Church Militant cannot evade. Her very nature entails responsibility. Therefore the Church on earth is a Church with a heavy load. According to Hans Küng, this nature, this responsibility must be constantly realized anew and given new form in history by our personal decision of faith and this renewal of form implies change of form by means of human decision and responsibility.³⁵

Augustin Bea, a Roman Catholic Cardinal and a biblical scholar, exhorts us to work hard and with all our strength to fulfil Christ's Divine Will. Let us not forget, he urges, what St Paul once said to the Corinthians about his apostolic work: 'It was for me to plant the seed, for Apollos to water it, but it was God who gave the increase...we are only his assistants' (I Cor. 3:6-9).³⁶

But the crux of the matter for the Churches in South Africa is that they are faced with a complicated problem of the evil of separate development, apartheid, to give it its crude label. These are the grave difficulties that are facing the Churches of our territory - but Bill Burnett feels that, "We ought not to allow the many grave difficulties which we face in South Africa so to monopolize our interests that we fail to tackle the problems of our disunity...the Church in South Africa could more easily face the challenge of the times if she learned to act as one."³⁷

THE RUMOURS OF RAIN

The rumours of rain we are talking about here is the fact that we are constantly told of a new change, a new political dispensation but it does not come - nor are there any signs that such a change is within easy reach. What we see and witness in our midst is the continuing suffering of black people. On the other hand the Church seems to be either numbed or

34. Webb, Op.Cit.

35. See Kung, H., The Church, Search Press Ltd., London, 1971, p.263ff.

36. See Bea, A.C. The Unity of Christians, Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1963, p.28.

37. Burnett, Op.Cit., p.22.

impotent in the face of human tragedy. In short, the Church has failed the children of this nation. It seems to be static rather than moving as a pilgrim Church. The failure of the Church in South Africa to unite is widening the gap between different races in the land. This has more devastating effects when it comes to the black youth of today the majority of whom view the Church with cynicism. The answer to the question as to why the Church, despite the evil of apartheid, does not unite to face the common destiny of man together, would seem to lie in the popular assumption that Christ never assumed a South African black garment, anyway. He seems to have been presented as a legendary figure who travelled thousands of miles from Europe, only to lose the mission of His Father on this soil. And, therefore, sometimes He would appear as a Baptist, or as a Church of England high churchman, singing the Nicene Creed, holding the Thirty-nine Articles of Faith and a copy of the Bible. Sometimes He would appear clothed in a Geneva gown as a Presbyterian with emphasis on Scripture. Sometimes a highly sophisticated Methodist, claiming the world as His pulpit but devoid of the African black soil as an Altar of God wherein one can transform the quality of life of black people, and, therefore, half incarnate and half-false.

Probably, there were also times He would appear on a Papal Throne carried shoulder high and therefore without legs or feet to walk on the thorny road amongst the aborigines of this country. In short, He was presented as a man with radiant and high ideals of securing a heavenly place for the soul of a black man and, again, without the understanding of socio-political implications of His mission, the everlasting domination and oppression of blacks by whites. He was presented consciously or unconsciously as a "superstar" with a heart devoid of compassion and without a Divine mission.

This is the ecclesiastical high treason of the white ecumenical movement in South Africa. In short, this is the malaise of the ecumenical movement as it is known in South Africa. To white people, Christ seems to have been 'all things to all men.' He has given them, under the banner of Christianity, freedom, luxury and all that makes life worth-living. It is not unfair to say that the white Church in South Africa has terrorized the mission and the Gospel of Salvation of the only Begotten Son of God and has driven out the Paraclete from the Church so that the angels of destruction and hatred may triumph over the Divine mission of Christ and thereby destroying the Divine plan, "that they may all be one" (John 17:21).

The Hammanskraal Consultation on Racism is a clear indication for the Church in our land that the question of ecumenism will not only occupy ecclesiastical agendas but also the thought and action of black theologians and laymen. The direction of this thought is moving towards answering the question as to "Why don't we structure the black church in such a way that it will become a visible instrument of African liberation? If we are serious about our African identity, as the names of some of our church denominations suggest, why not embody it in a historical commitment on behalf of our brothers and sisters...? Our ability to implement this concern in the structures of our churches will show how serious we are about black ecumenism."³⁸ And again, "The ecumenical perspective that connects the unity of humankind with the liberation of the world's poor does not diminish our focus on black liberation. Rather it enhances it, not only because the vast majority of the world's poor are colored, but because economic exploitation is a disease that requires the cooperation of all victims if the world is to be transformed. The vocation of the poor is to struggle together for the transformation of their history. Their struggle to transform the world according to the Christian vision as disclosed in the cross and resurrection of Jesus makes known to them that "unity only becomes a reality to the extent that we partake of Christ (who is hidden in those who suffer."³⁹

The triumph of black ecumenism will undoubtedly raise another issue which cut across issues that have divided Churches and where that issue is important - it will override other issues in creating a new division which we will have to face. Here I have in mind the united front of the envisaged Black Confessional Church of the future, that its birth will widen the gulf between black and white Christians in South Africa. Here I wish to add a word of warning that ecumenism may not be as easy as it appears at first sight but we are faced with a Christian imperative, namely, to work towards the fulfilment of the prayer of our Lord that we may all be one. Last but not least, we have to remember that "it is the unity of mankind, not just of the church, that is our goal, but a true unity with freedom, such as the church knows in its own life."⁴⁰

38. See J.H. Cone's article, 'Black Ecumenism And The Liberation Struggle' in Black Religious Studies: The Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Centre, Vol. VII, No. 1, Fall 1979, p.9.

39. Ibid. p.10. (J.H. Cone quoting Reuben Alves, "Protestantism in Latin America: Its Ideological Function and Utopian Possibilities", in The Ecumenical Review, January 1970, p.15).

40. John Macquarrie, Op.Cit., p.109.

In conclusion, we have spoken about the dire need of Ecumenical School or Chairs in ecumenical theology in our faculties of theology and in our seminaries and it is therefore appropriate that we conclude by addressing ourselves on the subject once more: it must be noted that schools of ecumenics, like all the institutions of the ecumenical movement, are not only born to die but are born to put themselves to death, to commit suicide; that they live to die as soon as ever possible, as soon as the task is completed of reconciling the Churches in the unity which is God's will for His people. In this regard ecumenism is quite unlike theology itself which of course cannot die and will not die, much less commit suicide, but to go from strength to strength, from clarity to clarity in the understanding of God until the time of the parousia when faith yields to vision and we shall know Him as He is.⁴¹

41. Michael Hurley, Op.Cit.

CONCLUSION

Thou shalt not judge! Without passing judgment on the institutions of power in South Africa, one cannot but come to one conclusion that in all areas we have examined in this thesis violence is the order of the day in the ruling institutions of our land. And, anyone who tries to analyse the meaning of this violence must first of all listen to the voices of people who have grown up, who live or were killed, in a situation of violence. These are voices, too, of Christians fulfilling the biblical mission to overcome and remove violence.¹ Amongst these voices there are two outstanding ones in our situation in South Africa:

1. In order for the Christian in South Africa to be faithful in his stewardship he must show concern and offer aid to the victims of violence. He must be able to investigate the nature and causes of violence perpetuated by the status quo to the "wretched" of the land. Thus by so doing he will be in a better position to change structures that seek to dominate and oppress the victims of apartheid.²

2. While it is a duty of every Christian to assume the role of a Good Samaritan towards those who have been the victims along the Jericho Road, this is only the beginning of stewardship. This Jericho Road must, during our life time, be altered, "so that men and women are not continually beaten and robbed on their journey through life."³ True solidarity is more than the coin thrown to a beggar; it is not so haphazard and unthinking. It realizes that a society which produces the beggar must be rebuilt. What is more to understand is that violence has a long record in the history of the Christian Church. The victims of the tragedy of violence have a long memory of suffering, "and they are also looking for a common reference back to Jesus and His life of love which we often find so strange and understand so little. What counts is deeds, not intentions."⁴ No wonder in the Uppsala Assembly of 1968 James Baldwin of the United States,

1. Cf. Stohr, M. 'Violence as a Theological Problem' in The Ecumenical Review, Vol. 30, No. 4, October 1978, p.339. Martin Stohr is director of the Evangelical Academy in Arnoldshain, in the Federal Republic of Germany.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. Cf. also Martin Luther King Jr., Strength to Love, Fontana Books, London, 1969, p.27f.

4. Ibid.

addressed himself (to his white brethren) in an unequivocal voice as follows:

...if it is true that your testimony as Christians has proven invalid, if it is true that my importance in the Christian world was not as a living soul, dear to the sight of God, but as a means of making money...if that is true...then at this moment in the world's history it becomes necessary for me, for my own survival, not to listen to what you say but to watch very carefully what you do, not to read your pronouncements but to go back to the source and to check it for myself. And if that is so, then it may very well mean that the revolution which was begun two thousand years ago by a disreputable Hebrew criminal may now have to be begun again by people equally disreputable and equally improbable.⁵

The situation of violence in South Africa offers a tremendous challenge to the Church. The Church in this country is more than ever before needed to proclaim the Word which God is speaking, to demonstrate by example, the way of Christ, and to offer her own embracing fellowship for the healing of the wounds of the South African divided society. This becomes more urgent in our situation of institutionalized violence. Manas Buthelezi was right when he said: "We should not deal so much with the problem of violence and revolution, but ask ourselves what the Church's task is when a situation of violence and revolution exists. To deprive someone of his right is revolution. To withhold from someone what God has given him a right to is revolution. That forced deprivation is a radical action. So there is no longer any question whether revolution will come - they have long been a reality. This is the reality the Church has to deal with. What is the Church to do about it? That question has a priority."⁶ This demonstrates the plight of the black people in this country. Everyday the black man is in one place or another in confrontation with the police department and the armed forces which are the two arms of the power structure, the muscles of control and enforcement. Another disturbing feature in the South African violence is that in the formulation and the passing of bills in the all-white Parliament, people for whom the law is being formulated are not consulted since they (according to policy) have no representation in the body politic. These laws are purported to be for

5. See The Ecumenical Review, Vol. 30, No. 4, October 1978, p.374.

6. Ibid.

the betterment of the black people in their so-called places - whereas the truth of the matter is that their real problems go unsolved. And in the 'South African way of life' no dispute can be solved without taking into account the police department and the armed forces. These departments protect the way of life of the ruling class. This is institutionalized violence in its superlative degree. Now when the victims of oppression rebel against the status quo this is looked upon as subversion - whereas in actual fact the resistance of black people has no intention whatsoever of destroying the white people of this country. What is involved is "the overturning of relationships, the transformation of life, and then a reconstruction."⁷ The oppressed people fully realize that they have been and still are victims of psychological and physical dehumanization and can therefore not make the destruction of humanity, even among their oppressors, an end in itself because such a procedure contradicts their struggle for freedom. Hatred in the struggle for liberation has no place. Experience has shown that vengeance and hatred are the two swords that defeat the very struggle for freedom and thus put an end to liberation struggle. Love, is therefore, a foundation of the ethic of liberation not only for blacks but for the whole of South Africa. The losing of this ethic of love is tantamount to losing the very essence of the justification of the liberation struggle. This must not be interpreted as meaning that black people accept the analysis of violence made by theorists of South Africa.

The inference from the above statements is that although no one desires violence there could be no liberation apart from civil or physical violence. "National liberation, national renaissance, the restoration of the nationhood to the people, commonwealth: whatever may be the headings used or the new formulas introduced, decolonisation is always a violent phenomenon."⁸ Angola, Mozambique and lately Zimbabwe are clear examples of what I am trying to convey to the reader. Decolonization and liberation struggles are products of a complete disorder. To redress the brutalities inflicted by oppression to black people through violent means, can hardly be looked upon as a new and a surprising phenomenon.⁹

7. Cone, God of the Oppressed, p.70.

8. Fanon, F. The Wretched of the Earth, Penguin Books, London, 1967, p.27.

9. Ibid.

What is needed for us in this generation is repentance (metanoia) not only for the vitriolic words and actions of those whose hearts are hardened by material goods but for the appalling silence of the kind hearted Christians. We must come to see that human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and persistent call of men willing to be coworkers with God, and without this hard work time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation. Now is the time to make real the promise of democracy, and transform our pending national elegy into a creative psalm of brotherhood. Now is the time to lift...national policy from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of human dignity.¹⁰ The time of honesty has arrived. Practical politics must take place here and now. Practical justice can no longer be delayed. "Justice delayed is no justice at all."¹¹ For there comes a time in human struggle for justice and peace, when the cup of endurance overflows, and men are no longer willing to be plunged into an abyss of injustice where they experience the blackness of corroding despair.¹²

While people in South Africa must learn to come to terms with the ability to speak the sacred truth, they must on the other hand realize that time is our enemy. The white people of this country must not ask what the Nationalist Government is doing or going to do for them, but what they together with blacks will do for the salvation of this country. Here lies the wisdom of our thought. The freedom of a black man can no longer be delayed by military weapons and ammunition nor by psychological devices of hypocrisy - our salvation would seem to lie in the restoration of justice, liberty, and the value of the individual. Whites must accept the inevitable pain of giving up their privileges. Their possession of these privileges of material wealth and exploitation of cheap labour offered by black people (through circumstances beyond their control), are an indictment punishable by both physical and spiritual death. Failing to heed the warning, history will not only resolve against them but will be their judge. "History is a long and tragic story of the fact that privileged groups seldom give up their privileges voluntarily. Individuals may see the moral light and voluntarily give up their unjust

10. See Martin Luther King Jr's 'Letter from Birmingham City Jail' in Civil Disobedience, edited by H.A. Bedau, Pegasus, New York, 1969, p.81.

11. Ibid., p.76.

12. Ibid., p.77.

posture but...we know through painful experience that freedom is never freely or voluntarily given by the oppressor until it is demanded by the victims of oppression.¹³ The question of violence as delicate as it is, is seen as justified by those who are subjected to degradation and oppression. The theory of violence, however unacceptable to the so-called guardians of moral sanctity, is aiming at touching not only God's heart, but the masses', too, so that the "wretched" of South Africa can together move the mountain of oppression and injustice in a society dominated and ruled by the apostles of violence, propagandized by their followers and 'canonized' by their moral turpitude. There is one thing the Church must appreciate and thank God for and it is this: black men, theologians, politicians, and laymen of maturity are beginning to write their own stories, to speak for their own survival in a demonic situation. It is therefore difficult especially for one who is not black to misrepresent their experience, namely, what they have 'touched with their hands and seen with their eyes.' And this alone is a valuable contribution to the understanding of the agony as well as the aspirations of the oppressed people of South Africa. In the light of the turmoil within the country as well as the polarization of race relations with tensions running high in both sections of society, one cannot fail to conclude that the generation of black revolutionary violence is here, and it says that the oppressor has no right which the oppressed are bound to respect. This generation also has a question to white South Africans: which side do you choose? Do you side with the oppressor? The time for decision is upon you. The cities of South Africa have experienced the first flames of revolution. But a hotter fire rages in the hearts of black people today: total liberty for black people or total destruction for South Africa.

The prospects do not look good. Beside being a dumb nation, South Africa is mad with white racism. Perhaps, South Africa has been mad for too long to make any talk of sanity relevant now. But there is a choice and it will be made, by decision or indecision, by action or inaction, by commission or omission. Black people have made their choice; revolutionary generation (tempered by war), that has a temerity to say to South Africa **BLACKS MUST BE FREED**. Otherwise blacks will continue their revolutionary faith that "Whatever death may surprise us, it will be welcome, provided that this, our battlecry, reached some respective ear, that another hand

13. See Martin Stohr, Op.Cit., p.76.

reach out to pick up weapons, and that other fighting men come forward to intone our funeral dirge with the staccato of machine guns and new cries of battle and victory."¹⁴ We must remember that the tragedy of such explosive thoughts and actions is the result of the structural and institutional violence which is the result of the resources and powers that are unequally shared and are the property of a restricted number who use them not for good of all but for their own profit and for the domination of the less favoured.¹⁵ Thomas Merton was indeed right when he said:

When a system, without resort to overt force, compels people to live in conditions of abjection, helplessness, wretchedness that keeps them on the levels of beasts rather than of men, it is plainly violent. To make men live on the subhuman level against their will, to constrain them in such a way that they have no hope of escaping their condition, is an unjust exercise of force. Those who in some way or other concur in the oppression - and perhaps profit by it - are exercising violence even though they may be preaching pacifism. And their supposedly peaceful laws, which maintain this spurious kind of order, are in fact instruments of violence and oppression.¹⁶

In this regard when violence is so institutionalized in this way then the law and order are jeopardized by putting them in its service. This kind of violence results in exploitation and the lack of freedom and deprives the oppressed of their livelihood or of a worthwhile human life. If people are starving when there is no need for this, then violence is committed and if that starvation is an effect of the existing social and financial system, then we have structural violence or alternatively violent structure. The adjective is as applicable in this case as it is to certain weapons of war.¹⁷ This alone calls for a deeper understanding of mechanism of violence. This was also one of the themes of the Uppsala Assembly in 1968. On this the Assembly noted that violence "is the destructive imposition of power". We should, however, not fail to take note of the fact that within the confines of South Africa there are many Christians who fully support the Government representing a white minority

14. Quoted from Elridge Cleaver, Post-Prison Writings and Speeches, Edited by Robert Scheer, Panther Books, London, 1972, p.63.

15. See article by J.G. Davies, 'On Violence and Revolution' in Pro Veritate, June 1976, p.13.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

that imposes its will upon a black majority by coercion, threats and frequently overt violence in protection of the privileged. This is not to deny that there are white Christians who sincerely seek to change Government policies in some respects but face well-nigh complete frustration in their non-violent methods. It is frustrations such as these that lead many black Christians to join arms with the liberation movements. Fixing our eyes on Jesus of Nazareth we faithfully ask: what in the Name of the Blessed Trinity can we do? We seek in Him guidance and clarification about our actions and tribulations in the world of violence. Looking at His words and deeds we come to the realization that God's love comes to all creatures in their daily tribulations of suffering, poverty, and powerlessness, but also in their confusion caused by wealth and power.¹⁸ He is the source of the healing of the brokenhearted and the deluded. We constantly look unto Him for the assurance of bread and peace. We look unto Him for harmony and tranquility in our fatherland.

The Church in this land is faced with a dilemma. But while faced with this dilemma, it must be evident that recommending non-violence to blacks especially at this time in our history would be viewed once more as an effort to retain the Christian vocabulary which has kept them imprisoned in passivity for so long. Asking blacks in South Africa to be non-violent means that whites are demanding a Christian virtue which they themselves do not possess.¹⁹ This is a demand which black people cannot yield to.

To change the power structure will require effective opposition from those who are hurt by their action, and from all who are concerned for justice. This is not an easy task since South African white principalities and powers are rooted in human ambitions and desires, fears and hopes. But they also transcend individual human beings and subject them. The New Testament, when it speaks of the principalities and powers of this world recognizes this ambiguous character. The principalities and powers of this world can oppose God and human justice. They become violent and in that case Christians must resist them (Eph. 6). At the same time Christians are called to bear witness to these powers of God's purpose for this world in Christ to which they, when redeemed, belong (Eph. 3:9-11). The Church has this ministry to the structures and powers of politics and economics, which are often violent in their ways of operating. As Christians we

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

must resist the evil of structured violence. The Church must stand with the poor and the oppressed. She must do so as the Church which includes the affluent and the poor. She must offer an effective ministry to these powers seeking their transformation into servants of the covenant relation into which God seeks to bring all people in freedom and mutual responsibility. Such a responsibility will inevitably lead to realization and concern for justice and freedom according to God's purpose for all people, even our enemies, in the present and in the future (Romans 12:19-21).²⁰ The social forces of evil, notes Shemaryahu Talmon,²¹ are the agencies which retard if not hinder the advancement of freedom, justice, and development. He lists the following:

1. The abdication of social responsibility by individuals.
2. The loss of the sense of history and continuity by contemporary man.
3. The traumatic diminution of the sense of human dignity - man's meaning and worth - in this technological era, with the resultant breakdown in interpersonal and intercommunal relationships.
4. The division of the world by racism, competing power blocs and antagonistic classes of the advantaged and the disadvantaged, such that the latter are permanently frozen in their deprivation, the only recourse being revolution and social upheaval.²²

In the same breath Talmon warns that it is imperative for communities of faith to apply themselves to these problems by devising means of remedying them. He also notes that we have not in the past been sensitive to these burning issues and yet we have to respond sympathetically and creatively failing which all our efforts will be bedevilled by the mutual suspicion and will die while being born.²³ In this regard the words of Una Kroll bear testimony:

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20. See Brown, M.R., Religion and Violence, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1973, p.9f.
 21. Shemaryahu Talmon is Professor in the Department of Biblical Studies of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israel.
 22. See Shemaryahu Talmon's article entitled 'Towards World Community: Resources and Responsibilities for Living Together - (a Jewish view)', in The Ecumenical Review, Vol. XXVI, No. 4, October 1974, p.604.
 23. Ibid., p.618.

The journey from slavery to freedom is not accomplished in a day. Some people may never start at all, either because they think that there is no freedom, or because they think that the journey is too hazardous. Those who do undertake the journey are the people who have some idea that freedom is worthwhile. Once they have started, it is all too easy for them to feel that they are floundering in a sea that is endless. They may lose hope and come to doubt the existence of their goal. They are more likely to feel that they themselves will never get to the end of the journey. They know well that many have already died on the way, and that many more will, before the journey is done. Yet in people who are willing to make the journey, there is a deep urge which drives them on. They are inspired by a vision of what freedom might mean to them as individuals and to the community in which they live. That vision has to do with perfection, with wholeness, with the absolute.²⁴

South Africa must take note of the above words - for they are true of the revolutionary struggle in which she is engulfed. In the same breath South Africa has many lessons to learn from. Needless to remind her that the collapse of the Lisbon Government and the successful penetration of the forces of the Union Socialist Soviet Republic and the Cuban armed forces in the horn of Africa added more hope and determination to black militants than ever before in our history. The impact of the Angolan, Mozambiquan and now the Zimbabwean civil wars and their ultimate triumph on the battlefield cannot be measured or calculated in any way. These have undoubtedly added new seeds of mighty revolutions in the minds of most moderate and radical of the black community. These victories, for we have to call them victories, have testified to the fact that any unjust government can possibly be overthrown through the barrel of a gun. The gun works - this is the testimony of civil wars in Africa and South Africa is no exception. The policies of the Nationalist Party have watered the soil of Africa and there is no doubt that they have laid the foundation for communism. By the year 2,000 the whole of Africa, North and South, East and West, will be Communist and that the world will witness more suffering than ever experienced in the history of Africa and, with heavy casualties and suffering for the white people of this territory. The fearful weapon will be the combination of communism with the dictatorial character of the African mind. These combined together on the foundation of the memory

24. Kroll, U., Flesh of My Flesh, Darton, Longman & Todd, London, 1975, p.100.

of suffering will be more fatal than the mightiness of military weapons and psychological warfare. The memory of suffering is indeed a very dangerous memory.

While the remembrance of suffering is still looming large in our thoughts, we the black people of South Africa should not forget that the international community has directed its attention to the problem of apartheid and its eradication. Here we should recall that the overwhelming majority of governments in the United Nations Organization and in the Organization for African Unity years ago abandoned any real hope of negotiating the South African government into giving up the program of apartheid. We should also recall that when the United Nations Security Council imposed a mandatory arms embargo on South Africa late in 1977, it took a long formal step away from patience and persuasion toward coercion. Equally notable was the cautious acceptance for the first time by the United States, the United Kingdom, and France that the situation in South Africa involves a threat to international peace. As a consequence of this, argues Leon Gordenker,²⁵ the way opens to quite legal coercion of the South African Government by an organized international community.²⁶ He rightly argues that such a coercion can scarcely be expected to succeed in making any kind of significant impression on South African politics unless it is directed toward organized Afrikaner power; punitive measures would have to be intensified, even if they will surely, because of the nature of the target, have high personal, psychological, and material costs for some who never supported apartheid.²⁷ And, again, it is true to say that pressure on South Africa should in the short run aim, as it has, at promoting questions about the integrity and morality of the governing group. By declaration and symbol, it should emphasize the difference between lip service to development of a better life for all South Africans and the privileges of a few, between Christian ideals of brotherhood and actual practice, between the promise of nationalism and the threat of rebellion.²⁸

25. Leon Gordenker is a member of the Centre of International Studies. He is also Professor of Politics, and Chairman of the African Studies Program at Princeton University. In 1976 he taught at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg.

26. See Leon Gordenker's article, 'Afrikaner Nationalism and the Plight of South Africa', in The Yale Review, Vol. LXVIII, No. 4, Summer 1979, p.495.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

Afrikanerdom can be embroiled in its contradictions by simultaneously raising the costs of governing, maintaining order, and profits. The cost of governing, argues Gordenker, can be raised substantially. This he rightly maintains can interfere with the efficient conduct of the South African economy and, while old physical investments from abroad, many of which have long ago passed into the ownership of the increasingly affluent Whites in South Africa, can only remain, new investment can easily be discouraged. Governments including that of the United States of America, can eliminate services, such as consulates and commercial reporting, which benefit business. Government insurance for exports to South Africa can be halted. Business and their representatives in governmental councils can be warned directly of the risk of new investment. General banks can with reason treat lending by private banks to South African enterprises as unsafe. Visas for extended stays by South African businessmen, students, and researchers can be put on one-to-one reciprocal basis and subjected to the same kind of careful investigations and delays that outsiders on their way to South Africa experience. Therefore any remaining joint ventures between South Africa and other governments, such as satellite tracking stations or informal consultations among intelligence officers, can be dismantled. Governments can on their own initiatives direct their procurement officers to avoid South African goods. They can refuse to transfer technology under government control. Many other similar measures can easily be designed within existing laws in many countries, while the possibility of further legislation and regulation remains open and encouraged by legitimation through the Security Council. For such activities to be effective will need co-ordination within an international framework, to give them both efficiency and additional legitimacy. But it would be unrealistic to believe that such measures - or even stronger steps, including general quarantines - would function smoothly or with immediately telling effects. Only a massive armed invasion, sufficient to swamp the formidable South African armed force, could end quickly what has taken a century to construct.²⁹ It would be quite an effort for such a venture to be organized by outside freedom fighters of both the African and non-African stock. Such an end would be disastrous.

But, it must be said that these closing years of the Twentieth century will be marked by sporadic violence and the explosion of chemical devices such as experienced, for instance, in Northern Ireland. There will be sabotage,

29. Ibid., pp,495-6.

assassination of South African diplomats here and abroad and indeed of those who hold the reigns of power within the government of the Republic of South Africa. There will be hijacking of planes carrying South African diplomats and interests, the crippling of economy and the very functioning of the white establishment itself. Collaborators with apartheid in the black community will not escape the wrath of this century. The most thought provoking thing (in the annals of this desperation) is that the man in the street, however innocent or guilty, will be affected by the fall-out of nuclear and chemical devices either used experimentally or through political motives. These will be the desperate results of the memory of suffering we have been describing in our first chapter. Once this has taken shape and meaning everybody in South Africa and abroad will realize, or at least, come to terms with the fact that human patience is exhaustible especially when evil seeks to triumph to the summit of destruction. South Africa and the world, especially those with vested interest in this country will realize that compassion of whatever nature is easily extinguished by the results of the memory of suffering. As a result of this human fraternity will be eroded into the intestines of the sea of oblivion. Will the government of the future be based on vengeance? Will it be military? But whatever nature it takes we are certain of one thing, namely, that it would be shaped by the dictates of history, however bleeding that history would be. What happens today is a clear testimony of the shape of things tomorrow. If I was white I would honestly admit before the bar of history that this envisaged explosion is caused by the fact that:

Our victims know us by their scars and it is this that makes their evidence irrefutable. It is enough that they show us what we have made of them for us to realize what we have made of ourselves...Moreover, you need not think that hot-headedness or an unhappy childhood have given him some uncommon taste for violence; he acts as the interpreter of the situation, that's all. But this is enough to enable him to constitute, step by step, the dialectic which liberal hypocrisy hides from you which is as much responsible for our existence as for his.³⁰

In conclusion, the white establishment in South Africa should be reminded once more, that to withhold from a person that which makes life worth living is sin. They need to be reminded that the ubiquity of human sin is not the

30. Jean-Paul Sartre's preface to Franz Fanon's The Wretched of the Earth, Penguin Books, Great Britain, 1967, pp.12-13.

only lesson to be learned in history and that something about the mercy of God and the sanctification of human relations has come into focus which will help in the future. Professor Charles West³¹ is right when he says that we are back with the problems of retributive justice, unmitigated by the illusion that human avarice can be reconciled with social equality by the indefinite expansion of human productivity. For a while we thought we had transcended it. It was assumed by the capitalists and socialists alike that there was no end to the expansion of man's capacity to harness nature to meet human needs and therefore to raise the standards of living by expanding the economic product of the society. Justice was therefore understood only as sharing of control of the process, of empowering the poor so that they might feed their needs and desires into the decision making process and have a part in the promise. Today we have lost this promise. We face each other again with the stark realization that in a finite world one man's wealth is another man's poverty. The economic question that faces us is also a spiritual question: how should the limited material gifts of God - the raw materials, the sources of energy, water, air and fertile earth - be distributed among his creatures both now and in future generations?³² Apart from this we must keep in mind that:

For the human struggle for justice this has a double implication: First that justice is liberation, or better, humanization. It is the open-ended movement towards the vindication and establishment of the poor and the meek in the community of the covenant which has its end only in the kingdom of God. This means it is a struggle against the powers of self-sufficient domination which lasts just as long. Second, justice is transformation of the conflict itself. It is forgiveness of us all; it is reconciliation which creates new community beyond our self-assertions. Never in this world does this process stop; in every new age it must be recast. Here is the dimension which transcends material creation and the limits of distributive justice. There is no limit on the sensitive imagination discovering new forms of liberation, ways of repentance and new community, and no limit on the possibilities of embodying these in social and personal policy.³³

As the world's major proponents on matters of justice, the Churches especially in South Africa, need to devote far more of their energy to

31. Charles West is Professor of Christian Ethics at Princeton Theological Seminary, New Jersey, U.S.A. See his paper, 'Justice Within the Limits of the Created World' in The Ecumenical Review, Vol. XXVII, No. 1, January/October 1975.

32. Ibid., pp.57-58.

33. Ibid., p.62.

analysing societal problems in sufficient depth so as to be able to identify solutions which can achieve the desired results with a minimum of social cost. Major efforts in promoting discussion and understanding of these issues by the Churches can be the basis for enlightened action by the individuals in other forms if not by their Churches.³⁴

In order for South Africa to advance in matters of social justice will require major changes in the way in which power is exercised, and such changes will not be easy. It is a well known fact that established interest in any country naturally resists reform aimed at removing much of their power. Any effective reform land programme requires a shift in the power from the minority to the majority.³⁵ Failure of the Church in this land to address herself effectively and meaningfully to these problems will result in anarchy and chaos especially at this time in history when we yearn for tranquility and peace. What do I mean by peace in this context? By peace "...is meant a positive combination of justice with a lack of violence enabling two groups or nations to achieve together what they could not have done separately."³⁶ "Peace then has to be the DESPERATE IMPERATIVE"³⁷ of all South Africans. "Many imperatives, it would seem, flow from this only too obvious conclusion. These imperatives would be comparatively easier of achievement if those in authority throughout³⁸ South Africa "were imbued with an ethic that made national peace the primary objective and if they were inspired by a moral sense of social responsibility."³⁹ "It should be the primary role of the Churches"⁴⁰ in this land "to build this new morality."⁴¹ We have to agree, at least, in part, with Sean MacBride that the practical imperatives for peace and the maintenance of healthy relations are many and far reaching. Again, like him, we have to warn that there is no short-cut to their achievement.⁴²

34. Cf. The Ecumenical Review, Vol. XXVII, No. 1, January 1974, p.32.

35. Ibid., p.28.

36. We are indebted for this definition of peace to Professor Adam Curle of the School of Peace in the University of Bradford, England. See also Sean MacBride's address 'Is Nuclear Survival Possible?' delivered at the Graduation Ceremony of the University of Bradford on May 4, 1977.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

In the case of South Africa I consider the practical imperatives (for the achievement of peace) to be among others, the following:

1. The formulation of a new Constitution by people of all races.
2. The Bill of Rights.
3. The General and Complete Breakdown of Apartheid.
4. The Glorification of Peace and not of Separate Amenities.
5. The Effective Protection of Human Rights by Law and Constitution.
6. Automatic and Depoliticised mechanism for the settlement of Internal disputes and prejudices that endanger justice and peace.
7. The formulation of a central body that will ensure a fair distribution of all natural resources.
8. The emerging of all provinces of South Africa into Federal States under one Central Government.
9. A FEDERAL COURT OF JUSTICE and LEGAL SYSTEM with full automatic JURISDICTION to rectify injustices or abuse of power.
10. A FEDERAL PEACE-KEEPING FORCE with LIMITED FUNCTIONS.
11. ULTIMATELY a FEDERAL PARLIAMENT, GOVERNMENT, and JUDICIARY.
12. THE SUPREMACY OF THE JUDICIARY OVER PARLIAMENT and GOVERNMENT EXECUTIVE.⁴³

It is true, however, that the Church in South Africa, has up to now, contributed very little, if anything, to this pattern of progress. It is also true that the physical scientists, the engineers, the physicists, the social scientists, economists, and business administrators are the primary architects and protectors of the machinery of destruction, while the Churches are engaged in the propagation of faith.⁴⁴ But the role of the Church in matters of social justice and peace in today's secular world is a challenge and an opportunity that the Churches in South Africa can no longer ignore. One might well ask, "will the Churches' primary duty be limited in scope to serving man in his relationship to God, or will the Churches also come to see themselves as important instruments in the shaping of man's relationship to his fellowman?"

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid.

The Church in this country of abundance must voice her "concern for the exploited poor in the factories of our industrialized nation, and for the forgotten poor"⁴⁵ in her midst. The Church should "speak not only for their need of basic necessities, but for human dignity as well, and redefine social justice in the mid-twentieth century to mean that all men must share in the wealth produced by modern technology."⁴⁶ "Socialization," "a word that might once have struck terror into the hearts of Church elders,"⁴⁷ should now be "specifically endorsed" by the Churches "so long as it was achieved in freedom and full consideration for the rights of all."⁴⁸ "Socialization" as rightly understood by Pope John XXIII, means an "expression of the tendency in human beings to join together to attain objectives which are beyond the capacity and means of single individuals... The solidarity which binds all men and makes them members of the same human family imposes upon political communities enjoying abundance of material goods, the obligation not to remain indifferent to those communities whose citizens suffer from poverty, misery and hunger, and who lack even the elementary rights of the human person. This is the more so since, given the growing interdependence among the people of the earth, it is not possible to preserve lasting peace if glaring economic and social inequality among them persists."⁴⁹ But in all our human efforts to do good there would always be three nagging opportunities, namely, "that of the devil, who tries to mix up the papers; that of man, who contributes to the confusion; and that of the Holy Ghost, who clears up everything."⁵⁰ I fervently wish that we follow the last.

45. The words of Pope John XXIII in his Encyclical to the Faithful, the *Mater et Magistra* quoted from his biography, *'I Will be Called John'* by Lawrence Elliot, William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd., London, Great Britain, 1974, p.294.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid., p.295.

50. Ibid. p.301. Pope John XXIII quoting Pope Pius XI during the deliberations of Vatican II. Lawrence Elliot the author of this moving biography of Pope John XXIII was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1924 and was educated there and at a City College of New York. He is a prolific writer and now lives in Columbia County in New York.

"...The times are too grave, the challenge too urgent, and the stakes too high to permit the customary passions of (ecclesiastical and) political debate. We are not here to curse the darkness, but to light the candle that can guide us through that darkness to a safe and sane future."⁵¹ As Winston Churchill said on taking office some twenty years ago: "If we open a quarrel between the present and the past, we shall be in danger of losing the future."⁵² In the 'dark valley of the shadow of death' in which the State and the Church in South Africa have plunged this generation, we have to ask ourselves the following soul-searching questions: "Are we up to the task? Are we equal to the challenge? Are we willing to match...the sacrifice of the present for the future?...That is the choice our nation must make - a choice that lies not merely between two men or two parties, but between national greatness and national decline, between the fresh air of progress and the stale, dank atmosphere of "normalcy", between determined dedication and creeping mediocrity."⁵³ With both hands on an open Bible, we ask for forgiveness of sins. May God in His endurance and everlasting Mercy help us to come to sanity and bear His Cross of justice and service for the mission of evangelism and the advancement of His Kingdom during this our life time. So, the last word belongs to St. Augustine:

Thou, who art the light of the minds that know thee;
 the life of the souls that love thee;
 and the strength of the wills that serve thee;
 help us so to know thee that we may truly love thee;
 so to love thee that we may fully serve thee,
 whom to serve is perfect freedom.⁵⁴

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51. These were the words of the late John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the Thirty-fifth President of the United States of America. The excerpt is taken from the nomination acceptance speech he delivered to the Convention of American Democrats and indeed to the American nation as a whole. These words of one of the greatest leaders of our century have a special ring for the people of South Africa.
52. J.F. Kennedy quoting Sir Winston Churchill (Ibid).
53. Ibid.
54. These words of St. Augustine are taken from a Roman Catholic Church poster.

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