

# Open support for the ANC – and sil

## The South African Council of Churches

**T**he South African Council of Churches (SACC) has long been known for its open support for the External Mission of the ANC. It is also known to have decided which movements within the country should – or should not – be supported. Much has been written about this but one document in particular sets out precisely what the SACC is telling Christians throughout the world. Following a "consultation" with the SACC in November last year, a document was drawn up by the Netherlands Council of Churches entitled "The Hour of Truth". It reported that "one can no longer speak of peaceful change – there is a fundamental difference between the primary violence of the oppressors and the counter violence aimed at the

liberation of the oppressed ...". The document also reported that contacts between the ANC and political forces in the Netherlands needed to be encouraged and that the Council of Churches in that country could co-operate by listening to the ANC and by admitting representatives into their delegations. As this document was drawn up by the Netherlands Council of Churches following its consultation with the South African Council of Churches the SACC, in effect, puts its name to it. During the consultation the SACC openly identified itself with the ANC, the UDF and SACTU. The consultation resulted in an open statement declaring that the liberation struggle of the South African people was "represented by the ANC and the UDF".

The question therefore needs to be asked: Has the Anglican church, or any other church affiliated to the SACC, distanced itself from stances taken by the SACC? The answer is no.

The SACC actively sows seeds of dissension between political groups and others within South Africa and abroad. A typical example of its divisive manipulation was highlighted when a meeting Chief M G Buthelezi was to have held in Switzerland last year with members of the Federation of Evangelical Churches of Switzerland was cancelled. An explanation was given to Chief Buthelezi that the general secretary of the SACC, Dr Beyers Naude, had "hinted" that it would be "irresponsible" for



# ence from affiliate Church members

Chief Buthelezi to be given a church platform in Switzerland and that Chief Buthelezi held a "different position" from that of the SACC. Other highly damaging allegations were alleged to have been made by Dr Naude about Chief Buthelezi and Inkatha.

This, then, is the role being played by the South African Council of Churches. It is clearly not a conciliatory one nor one aimed at fostering black unity or peaceful negotiation between black and black, black and white and white and white.

It has taken the side of the External Mission of the ANC which in turn is committed to the so-called "armed struggle" and uses grenades, AK 47 rifles and limpet mines in pursuit of political power. The SACC, in addition, supports disinvestment and sanctions.

Why, then, has there been little or no Christian debate about this — particularly within Churches affiliated to the

SACC?

The Netherlands Council of Churches, guided by the SACC, reported that the 1.3 million non-violence Inkatha movement, led by Chief Buthelezi, was a "collaborator" movement and "served white masters."

Do Archbishops and Bishops of the Anglican and Catholic Churches in South Africa support this statement?

Does Bishop Michael Nuttall of the Anglican Church in Natal believe this to be the case? As this vicious and untruthful attack dealt directly with people who form part of Bishop Nuttall's diocese, why has he not seen fit to question the SACC's role in this document which so patently slanders Chief Buthelezi and Inkatha?

The Netherlands Church document openly supported the Kairos document.

It went on that "one of the

reasons to give the ANC a platform in the churches is the vast support for the ANC among black South Africa. When we want to listen to blacks, we have to listen to the ANC. It is important to do that what is forbidden to do inside the country, namely to name as 'the authentic leaders of the people' the leaders of the ANC and their organisation."

What of the vast support (1.3 million members) for Inkatha and non-violence?

Instead, the document notes that the Council of Churches intends to start an international anti-Inkatha propaganda campaign about "the negative effects of the ideology and policy of Inkatha on the liberation struggle."

*Overleaf are the aims and objectives of Inkatha.*



*Dr Eeyers Naude, general secretary of the South African Council of Churches.*