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## APARTHEID EN ANARGIE

*anargie: afwesigheid van regering; wanorde; politieke en sosiale verwarring.*

Apartheid lei tot anargie. Die gedwonge verdeling van die samelewing in eksklusiewe aparte groepe vernietig kontak, begrip en vertroue tussen hulle en bring 'n situasie voort wat nie regeerbaar is nie omdat leierskap nie meer erken word nie en nie meer effektief is nie. Wanneer 'outoriteit' alleen met knuppels, gewere of gas beoefen kan word, hou dit op om outoriteit te wees. Niemand weet waar om effektiewe leiding te vind nie. Polities en sosiaal is die lewe van die land verskeur en daar is geen gemeenskaplike basis meer nie. Verwarring heers.

### Blankes

Suid-Afrika nader hierdie situasie vinnig terwyl die apostels van apartheid ons na ondergang lei. Swartmense wil vrede, voorspoed, geregtigheid en geluk vir almal hê. Die blanke regering dring aan op 'n sisteem wat gewelddadig afgedwing word en wat armoede, diskriminasie, ongeregtigheid en ellende meebring: Dit is waarvoor gewone sagmoedige Christene stem as hulle die regering ondersteun. Mense weet nie wat hulle doen nie.

Ministers en SAUK-woordvoerders reik verklarings uit wat ontwerp is om entoesiasme vir partysaamtrekke op te wek, om beleggers te kalmeer of buitelandse besoekers te pampers, maar hierdie verklarings erken glad nie die werklike situasie nie. Mnr Vorster is dikwels so geheel en al irrelevant ten opsigte van die swart-toneel dat swartmense eenvoudig net nie meer na hom luister nie.

Baie historiese kerke gaan voort om aktief te ontplooi — binne hulle eie mure. Hulle is in onbeslisheid vasgevang tussen die oproep tot ekumenisiteit en die begeerte vir denominasionele onafhanklikheid; tussen die noodsaaklikheid om die SARK as 'n kanaal vir hulle konfronterende aktiwiteite te gebruik en die noodsaaklikheid om die SARK te kritiseer omdat hy te konfrontierend is; tussen hulle teoretiese opposisie teenoor apartheid en hulle praktiese weiering om enige iets beslissends in hulle eie gelede of teen die regering te doen; tussen tradisie en relevansie; tussen godsdienstige praktyke en Christelike lewe. Buitekant die kerkmure gaan die lewe voort.

Konings van Handel, Industrie en Finansies beweeg doelgerig van die raadskamer na die eetkamer en na die

kantoor om soveel geld as moontlik uit die situasie te maak, terwyl hulle so ver van die lewens rondom hulle verwyder is as die Tsars van Rusland. Geld is ten slotte hul besigheid.

Universiteite, oorbluf deur regeringsdruk en ouerwoede, skyn of hulle die soeke na waarheid en vryheid in die aktuele sake van die dag laat vaar het ten gunste van hulle swart teenhangers. Dit is hulle verantwoordelikheid om met hulle studies voort te gaan.

Opposisie-politici is net so vasgevang in hulle eie ideologieë, terwyl hulle handige teenhangers is vir die regering met sy aanspraak om demokraties te wees. Die opposisie sal vir geen oomblik daaraan dink om die ontburgerde swartmense te verteenwoordig, of om werklik uit hulle pad te gaan om die gewere, gas en knuppels te opponeer nie: Hulle ontmoet swartmense om ondersteuning vir hulle eie opposisie-groepe te win.

Die kabinet, die rade en die beheerrade is in 'n tronk so seker soos wat Winnie Mandela, Fatima Meer en Oshadi Phakathi in die Johannesburgse fort is, maar baie minder bevry.

### Swartmense

Alhoewel die swart bevolking verenig is in hulle opposisie teen apartheid, is hulle op 'n slim wyse deur die regeringsbeleid verdeel en spreek hulle nie met een stem nie. Die werklike leiers is in aanhouding, is in skuilplekke, of is uitgeban: Totaal apart.

Swart leiers wat deur die regering aangestel is, erken self dat hulle grootliks deur die bevolking verwerp is. Die meeste leiers van die regering se tuislande vind weinig ondersteuning van die stedelike swartmense en onder mekaar is hulle ingrypend verdeel tussen diegene wat 'onafhanklikheid' najaag en diegene wat dit verwerp: Tog vernietig hierdie spesifieke houding hulle enigste basis van kommunikasie met die blanke regering.

Swart bewussynsgroepe — die 'S.A. Students Association' en die 'Black Peoples Convention', et al — is nie in staat om op 'n normale wyse die geweldige mag wat hulle verteenwoordig, te organiseer nie omdat hulle leiers herhaaldelik aangehou word. Die studente is nou daarmee verbind en hulle het die situasie in Suid-Afrika vir verskeie maande sonder hoegenaamd enige formele struktuur of organisasie beheer. Suid-Afrika sing saam

met swart bewustheid — onaanvaarbaar en nie erken deur die blanke regering nie.

Sodoende ontmoet al hierdie groepe in hulle onderskeie areas wat deur apartheid voorgeskryf is; praat in hulle verskillende tale; luister na hulle eie leiers; juig hulle eie demonstrasies toe; oortuig hulle eie ondersteuners; en bly geheel en al buite verband met enige iemand anders terwyl chaos ontplooi.

### **God se weg?**

Erens in hierdie verwarring spreek die stem van God tot ons om ons in 'n nuwe land in te lei.

*Hy was in die wêreld, en die wêreld het deur Hom ontstaan, en die wêreld het Hom nie geken nie. Hy het na sy eiendom gekom, en sy eie mense het Hom nie aangeneem nie. Maar almal wat Hom aangeneem het, aan hulle het Hy mag gegee om kinders van God te word . . .*

Geen enkele groep kan daarop aanspraak maak om God se antwoord te ken en dit op ander af te dwing nie, en as iemand dit doen, is hy beslis verkeerd. Maar vir dié mensekinders wat nederig bymekaar kom om God se

weg te soek, is daar 'n antwoord.

Aan die een kant is daar ten alle koste die harde optrede van geforseerde apartheid wat lei tot groeiende polisie terreur, siviele ongehoorsaamheid, stedelike en industriële stakings, (wat so maklik in die apartheidstede georganiseer word), kragonderbrekings, waterskaarste, vervoeronderbrekings, brandstofrantsoenering, voedseloustaanery, brandstiging, buitery, slagting, terwyl anargie wat inherent in apartheid is, sy loop neem.

Aan die ander kant is die ander weg vir mense daar om in vrede saam te beraadslaag. 'n Nasionale konvensie wat al die mense verteenwoordig, sal met name begin soos Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Steve Biko, Gatsha Buthelezi, Manas Buthelezi, Beyers Naudé en John Vorster. Dit sal nie 'n maklike pad wees om te loop nie. Daar sal nie verwag word dat alles oornag opgelos sal word nie. Maar dit is die enigste weg. Daar sal nie 'n samelewe in vrede wees voordat ons in vrede saamkom nie.

Leërs en polisie sal nooit die anargie in ons land beëindig nie. Die sekerheid van 'n nasionale konvensie sal dit oornag beëindig.



## **EDITORIAL**

### **APARTHEID AND ANARCHY**

*anarchy: absence of government; disorder; political and social confusion.*

Apartheid leads to anarchy. The enforced division of society into separate exclusive groups destroys contact, understanding and trust between them, and produces an ungovernable situation because leadership ceases to be recognised and effective. When 'authority' can only be exercised with batons, guns, or gas, it ceases to be authority. No one knows where to turn for effective guidance. Politically and socially the life of the country is disrupted and there is no common ground left. Confusion reigns.

#### **Whites**

South Africa is rapidly approaching this situation as the apostles of apartheid lead us towards destruction. Blacks want peace, prosperity, justice, and happiness for everyone. White Government insists on the violent enforcement of a system meaning poverty, discrimination, injustice and misery: that is what ordinary gentle Christian people are voting for when they support the Government. People know not what they do.

Government ministers and SABC spokesmen make statements designed to enthuse party rallies, calm investors, or woo foreign visitors, but these statements do not recognise the actual situation at all. Mr. Vorster is often so totally irrelevant to the African scene that blacks simply do not listen to him any longer.

Many historic churches continue to wax exceeding busy — within their own walls. They are locked in indecision between the call to ecumenity and the desire for denominational independence; between the necessity of using the SACC as a channel for their confrontational activities and the necessity to criticise the SACC for being too confrontational; between their theoretical opposition to apartheid and their practical refusal to do anything decisive about it in their own ranks or against the government; between tradition and relevance; between religious practices and Christian life. Outside the church walls, life continues.

Kings of Commerce, Industry and Finance move purposefully from Board Room to Dining Room to Office, making as much money as they can from the situation, adapting to government edicts or circumventing them as necessary, as removed from the realities of the lives around them as the Tsars of Russia. After all, money is their business.

Universities, cowed by Government pressure and parental wrath, appear to have relinquished the search for truth and freedom in the actual things of today to their black counterparts. It is their responsibility to get on with their studies.

Opposition politicians are similarly locked in their own ideologies, presenting a comfortable foil to the Government in its claim to be democratic. Not for one moment would the opposition think of representing disenfranchised blacks, or actually going out of its way to oppose the guns and gas and batons: it meets blacks to win support for its own opposition group.

The Cabinet, the Councils, and the Boards are in a prison as surely as Winnie Mandela, Fatima Meir, and Oshadi Pakhati are in Johannesburg Fort: but far less liberated.

### **Blacks**

The Black population, though united in its opposition to apartheid, has been cleverly divided by Government policy and does not speak with one voice. The real leaders are in detention, in hiding, or in exile: totally separated.

Black leaders appointed by the Government themselves admit that they are largely rejected by the population. Most leaders of Government Homelands find little support from urban blacks, and are themselves deeply divided between those who seek 'independence' and those who reject it: yet this very line destroys their only basis of communicating with the white Government.

Black Consciousness groups — S.A. Students Association and the Black Peoples Convention et al — are unable to organise in a normal manner the enormous power they represent because their leaders are repeatedly detained. Closely associated are the Students who have controlled the situation in South Africa for several months without any formal structure or organisation at all. South Africa sings with Black Consciousness — totally unrecognised and unaccepted as a reality by white government.

So all these groups meet in their different areas prescribed by apartheid; talk in their different languages; listen to their own leaders; cheer their own demonstrations; convince their own supporters; and remain totally unrelated to anyone else as the chaos unrolls.

### **God's way?**

Somewhere in this confusion the voice of God is being spoken to lead us into a new land.

*He was in the world; but the world, though its owed its being to him, did not recognise him. He entered his own realm, but his own would not receive him. But to all who did receive him, to those who have yielded him their allegiance, he gave the right to become children of God ...*

No single group can claim to know God's answer or enforce it on others, and if anyone does so he is certainly wrong. But to those who will come together humbly as human children seeking God's way there is an answer.

On the one hand is the hard line enforcement of apartheid at any cost, leading to increased police terror, civil disobedience, urban and industrial strikes (so easy to organise in apartheid cities), power cuts, water shortages, transport hold-ups, petrol rationing, food queues, arson, looting, killing as the anarchy inherent in apartheid works its way out.

The other way is for the people to reason together in peace. A National Convention representative of all the people will start with names like Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Steve Biko, Gatsha Buthelezi, Manas Buthelezi, Beyers Naudé and John Vorster. It will not be an easy road to travel. It will not expect to solve everything overnight. But it is the only way. There will be no living together in peace until we come together in peace.

Armies and police will never stop the anarchy in our country. The certainty of a National Convention would stop it overnight.



### **THE SEVEN STEPS OF PLANNING**

1. *Diagnosis.* What is the problem?
2. What is our *goal*?
3. How can we do this? *Various solutions* are suggested, often by the brainstorming method.
4. Decide the *Pros* and *Cons* of each suggestion. What resources are required, in each case, of equipment, people, time, money and skills?
5. *Decision on action.* Focus the goal. Enough time must be taken in this decision-making for everyone to become fully involved in the final objective.
6. *Implementation.* What? How? Where? When? Who? Which strategy is to be employed?
7. *Evaluation.* When and how are we to evaluate our failures and successes, so that we might act upon them in the future?

# AN OPEN LETTER TO LYDIA MORROW

from Colin Winter, Bishop of Damaraland in Exile

Namibia International Peace Centre,  
The Abbey,  
Sutton Courtenay,  
Oxon, OX 14 A AF,  
England.  
1 August 1976

Dear Lydia,

I have not seen you for over a year now since you left England and went with your Mummy and Daddy back to Namibia. Of course, we have had the occasional intimate chat over the phone, when you have acquitted yourself extremely well, especially when you spoke to me in Kwanyama (and I nearly fell flat on my face in surprise).

You will not be able to understand this letter, but I am writing it to you anyway in the full knowledge that one day you will be able to and in the hope that you will then interpret to your contemporaries the great events you are living through now and in which you are playing such a significant part.

First of all, you are in Namibia because your parents want to be there, they have chosen to go there, not for greed or ambition, but to stand up for what is right. You Daddy, as chief representative of the Anglican Church, has a position of great responsibility and is respected throughout the world for his stand with the oppressed. He does many things and does them well.

I have seen the pictures of you and your friends at the activity centre, a new school, which your father has opened for all races in Windhoek. You are playing happily with building bricks and sand with your friends. You paint pictures and hang them on the wall. These friends mean a lot to you as you do to them. I think your Daddy is a brave man to start such a school, because it is the only one of its kind in Namibia today. Of course, in years to come, when Namibia has left behind the violence of racial prejudice and little children are allowed to love each other freely and naturally, when laws no longer inhibit them from playing, singing, laughing, dancing, and being little children together, people will look back at you and your friends and say, "They were the pioneers, they dared to live a dream."

I also have a big photograph in front of me where, watched by an old nun, you are roaring with laughter. I think it is my favourite one of you, not just because it has caught you in a natural mood, but because it is a symbol of hope to me. Among

all the suffering, the hate the injustice in the world, God has placed little children among us who can brighten our days with their laughter and fill us with hope for a brighter future. Someone has called a sense of humour the eighth sacrament. Politicians and bishops should use it more often: it cuts us down to size.

There are earth-shattering events going on around you, Lydia. Men are scheming, debating, plotting, intriguing for the future of our country but, despite all their talk, it is the little children who are really creating the future. While these big men spend hours talking and arguing, you and your friends are busy building a nation. I don't exaggerate: all societies must be based on justice, love, trust and sharing. Though only 3, you are already practising them in your playgroup. Left to yourselves, you black and white children are actually doing that, while the politicians nervously insert clauses into bills to guard their investments and vested interest, or to protect people from people. You don't need to be protected from children of other races, because to you they are simply your friends, and you accept them totally for what they are. Your playgroup is based on trust. That is a precious commodity. I hope you never lose it. When men in Namibia act on that lesson we too, like you, can begin to build a nation.

Though I am six thousand miles away from you, I take courage that you and your friends in your school are already at work helping to shape the future of our nation. When men learn the fairness of the children's games, when they can face each other across conference tables, or wherever, with the open hearts and expectant faces of little children, peace will be showered on our land. Meanwhile, Lydia, go on loving, playing and laughing and know that we all have a lot to learn from you.

I think this is what Jesus meant when he said to the people (and that includes the politicians, statesmen and bishops), "Unless you become as little children, you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven." I think he was telling me about Lydia Morrow.

Lots of Love,

Colin Winter

# THE W.C.C. — AMRO LETTERS

*During 1974 the World Council of Churches requested seven banks to no longer grant loans to South Africa, and in 1975 decided to cease depositing funds with those banks. This gist of their case is set out in the following letter to the Amsterdam — Rotterdam Bank which Pro Veritate has been given permission to publish.*

We wish to answer in detail and to the best of our ability the questions raised in your letter to us of 29 April 1975. But first we wish to explain to you why we believe South Africa is a special case, and one to which a set of special criteria should apply. As well, we think it necessary to explore in some depth a question which was implicit in our original request to you and in your reply to us, namely the nature of your organization and of ours and the purpose which each exists to serve. This letter therefore falls into three distinct but related sections: South Africa; the nature and purpose of AMRO and of WCC; and the detailed arguments used in your letter, together with the response they evoke in us and the doubts which they raise.

## **I. South Africa**

You write at the beginning of the second paragraph on page three of your letter: "At this stage of the formulation of our standpoint we leave the specific aspects of the case of South Africa out of consideration". That specific case is something which we are totally unable to leave out of consideration. Our request to you concerned simply the making of loans to the South African Government, and did not seek to make explicit what we believe to be the underlying purposes of our respective organizations. It appears to us from your reply that you include yourselves in the "consensus of opinion among right-thinking people" in wishing to see an end to racial discrimination in South Africa; that you see no reason why the business services of your bank should not in principle be available to that country and its Government; and that you believe the maintenance by you of such services will do more to end discrimination than their withholding by you, which would "land South Africa in economic and spiritual isolation".

AMRO and WCC, on this interpretation, agree only on the goal of ending discrimination. Despite what we go on to say in the second section of this letter, we are not at this point pursuing the argument that banks should not increase their capital by making loans to those who wish to borrow from them: that argument is necessary to explain the differences we perceive between your and our nature and purpose. But in the case of South Africa we are assuming that consideration of the making of loans will be a continuing part of the business of your bank.

WCC believes that South Africa is a special case, not because we have arbitrarily declared it to be one, nor because of any decision or action of any third party. It is a special case because it has declared itself to be one. AMRO and WCC could doubtless each produce a list of countries where they would like to see significant changes in the direction of greater freedom for the greater part of the population. It is quite possible that the lists would overlap to some degree. What makes South Africa unique is the fact that its constitution denies any possibility of the emergence of a society in which human beings are treated on their human values and not on

their skin colour. A policy which defines or categorizes human beings on grounds of skin colour is basically anti-Christian. We did not impose that policy on white South Africa. It chose it for itself. It is therefore white South Africa that has already isolated itself, and that is the reality with which we have to deal. To talk of the withholding of loans from the South African Government as "isolating" that country is therefore to ignore the isolation which South Africa has sought for itself. It is also to ignore the fact that over 80% of the country's people are already isolated from all the processes of decision-making in the country.

Nor do we believe that the continuation of dialogue with South Africa's white minority — in your case, through loans — will do more to challenge discrimination than the end of dialogue. In the *State of South Africa Yearbook 1971*, the South African Government stated its belief that foreign investment reflects "the confidence in South Africa's economic stability and growth", and on 1 March 1975 the then Minister of Transport, Mr. S.L. Muller, told the South African Parliament: "The fact that South Africa was today financially and economically far better off than most other countries stemmed from the sound internal policies which the Government was following". Withdrawal of loans might therefore suggest the need for a change of heart over those policies. The South African Government has said that, despite verbal criticism at the United Nations, it can continue its policies as long as financial support continues. The last two decades, which have witnessed the increasing brutalities of apartheid, have also seen an immense increase in the degree of foreign investment in South Africa. So the argument that disinvestment would delay the end of apartheid, apart from being categorically denied by the South African Government, has never been tried in practice.

Dialogue does continue between WCC and the greater part of the South African population, through the liberation movements abroad and in the country itself. How much dialogue has AMRO undertaken with black South Africans? How much does it wish to develop such a dialogue in the future, and how far can it do so? South Africa is a bitterly isolated and polarized country. That isolation and that polarity will continue so long as the actions of others — even "right-thinking people" — are eloquent in their support of the present policy of apartheid. Last month's uprising in Soweto is an indication of the prospect which confronts South Africa.

## **II. The nature of AMRO and of WCC- and the purpose each exists to serve**

The essential function of a bank, we believe, is to administer capital, in liquid or quasi-liquid form. Capital itself is morally neutral, because only a society which consumed everything it produced could avoid the accumulation of capital (whether

liquid or in fixed assets), and such a society would betray future generations. What can never be morally neutral, however, is the use to which capital is put. So while banking is an activity in common to many human societies, the particular policies which it chooses to adopt are a proper object of moral judgement.

In our understanding there are two main things which banks do with capital (we make no distinction here between the capital which is provided by shareholders and that which comes from depositors). One is to ensure its safety and transferability, and in this sense bodies like WCC, and most individuals in the monetary market economies, find banks essential. Without them we should have to keep our life savings under our pillows and carry them with us every time we went to another part of our own country or to a country abroad. This we term the "service" function of a bank.

The other way in which banks administer capital is to use it to attract more capital, through the interest they earn from those to whom they lend it (and, in the case of merchant banks, from their equity holdings in borrowers' undertakings). Banks, therefore, have their own built-in rationale, which is to increase their capital, in order to have more money to lend which can earn more interest, so that they can lend still more ... A bank, therefore, by definition, exists in order to grow bigger and more powerful.

For banks like AMRO, we deduce that their loyalties include only their shareholders and depositors; that they have to satisfy them, and no one else; that they are growing more powerful; and that their increasing power is benefiting them. Consequently we deduce that AMRO is by nature a private organization whose purpose is to increase the power of those to whom it owes loyalty, i.e. its shareholders and depositors.

The World Council of Churches is a group of 286 churches which confess Jesus Christ as their Lord. The "deposit" required of "members" of WCC is therefore one of faith and commitment — commitment to Christ and to one another and to the world for which their Lord lived and died. Because it is central to the Gospel that faith without works is dead, churches individually — and as grouped in the WCC — owe their primary loyalty not to their own members but to the Lord of the *oikoumene*, the whole inhabited earth. As God's redeeming purpose in Christ embraces all people, so the Church must reach out in compassion to all. As the divine love is oriented especially to the poor, the marginalized and the oppressed, so the Church should reflect the same partisanship in the way it lives, the way it acts and the way it uses its resources. This has some very concrete practical implications for the World Council.

If capital is the accumulated surplus of the past, this places on those who dispose of it a heavy responsibility, simply because it is not everyone who can produce enough to accumulate such a surplus: in fact, less than one-third of the human species is doing so. One obvious example of those who cannot amass a surplus is the nomads of the Sahel region of West Africa, people who live constantly on the margins of existence and even of survival itself. In a good year they can find enough to feed themselves. In a bad year, they cannot. Therefore they have to kill their animals, which represent virtually all their capital. In the long term it is impossible for them to accumulate any surplus beside their clothes and their tents.

**Any organization such as WCC, therefore, which cannot limit its loyalty to any one group of people and has a built-in bias towards the forgotten and the powerless of the world is**

**bound, by its nature, to see that any capital for which it has responsibility is used for its God-given purpose. That purpose is not the accumulation of more capital, but self-giving service in the name of its self-giving Lord. The message of the Gospel is unmistakable on this point: Christians are specifically enjoined not to lay up treasure on earth, but to use what they have to seek the Kingdom of God on earth. Here we must acknowledge the degree to which churches and individual Christians throughout history, and no less today, have failed to measure up to this standard, and do not bear witness as they should by travelling light through life: we do take thought for tomorrow and we have not yet made a remotely adequate response to the obligation to liberate ourselves from our own riches and from that anxiety which is the antithesis of faith.**

The only permissible use of capital for Christians, therefore, is for the service of the world which necessarily includes the liberation of the poor and the oppressed. This very process includes the liberation of the rich (the possessors of capital themselves). So capital is for WCC a means, while for AMRO, it appears to be an end in itself.

It must follow from this that the WCC must exercise care when it asks banks acting on its behalf to go beyond their service function. It can never be right for Christians to allow the capital of which they are trustees to be used solely as an end in itself, for the accumulation of more capital. Any such accumulation must be used for purposes consistent with Christian obedience, and the way the accumulation takes place must itself not be such as to undermine such purposes.

It is reflections of this sort, we believe, which should help to determine the new international economic order which we, with many others wish to see emerge. Fundamental to that order will be the conviction that capital can no longer exist for the benefit of individuals, or of private organizations, or of States, but that its possession is a trust for the good of all. If the poor are to become less poor, the rich must become less rich, and we should deny the Gospel if we failed to say so. It is the Gospel which provides an answer to those who claim that the accumulation of capital on a private basis provides the incentive necessary for effort.

### III. Your letter to us of 29 April 1975

In this section we refer to the page number of your letter and then to the number of the paragraph on that page. We have dealt in our covering letter with the points you made on page 1 and on the whole of page 2 except for the last paragraph. It is to that paragraph that we turn now.

2.9 You refer to WCC as a "private organization". We would refer you to our comments above, in which we stated our belief that we are by nature incapable of being beholden to any one group of individuals rather than another. The character, purpose and actions of the WCC are public. You go on to refer to AMRO as one of a number of "private enterprises", which interests us in view of your reference in 5.6 (which must mean AMRO) to a "public company". May we now ask you to state clearly to whom your loyalties extend? Do they include simply your shareholders and depositors, or do they also include "the public", however defined? We accept that there may well be one or more legal senses in which it is legitimate to refer to a bank as a "public company". If it is in one of these senses that you have used the term, we suggest that the full extent of your public responsibilities (those which you owe to categories other than your shareholders and depositors) is covered by your service function, and that there can certainly be no obligation upon you by virtue of any

“public” status you may claim to make loans which you do not wish to make.

Your banking principles and practices obviously rate highly the paramount importance of the operation of free market forces (which, we note, are prevented from operating at all in apartheid South Africa). It seems strange to us that you can involve yourselves in a country where there is no free market in which buyers of goods or services can obtain the highest degree of satisfaction of their needs wherever they can. So we find your use of language in this paragraph a travesty of the truth. You say that WCC is trying “to force its ideas upon others” (i.e. AMRO). You say that our action is aimed at inflicting damage. Do you make similar grave charges against every individual who chooses, for whatever reasons, to close his or her account with you? Do you regard yourselves as above criticism, as beyond the judgement of that market you exist to serve? Would you, we wonder, have made a similar accusation against us if, for example, we had been urging you to *increase* your loans to the South African Government? Would we then have been just as guilty of trying to force our ideas upon others? The logic of your argument is that you are above criticism and should not be the object of comment.

3.2 This seems to us to be the crucial passage in your letter. We quote: “The question which confronts responsible management, however, is this: are they allowed to use as a means of power — be it under pressure from outside — the vast financial and economic machinery with its inherent objective, which has been put to their care, in order to force on others certain private views (however commendable these may be in the opinion of some or many)?” This sentence contains two phrases which are the kernel of our dialogue with you.

First, power. As we have defined capital above, that is power. By your nature, therefore, you are bound to use “as a means of power” your “vast financial and economic machinery”. You can do no other, unless, possibly, you were to restrict yourselves to your service function. Every decision you take about a loan is a decision about how to use your power. You have decided, you tell us, to continue to use your power to support and to increase the power of the South African white minority. So be it. But do not ask us to accept that it is possible for you not to use your power.

Secondly, you mention your bank’s “inherent objective”. It may be that we have misunderstood you, and we should be glad to receive your clarification of this phrase. But so far as we can understand it, the phrase means that there is an objective which belongs, not to individual banks, but to banking as an activity. If that is in fact what you do mean we are in agreement with you, for we stated earlier our belief that banks exist in order to increase their capital. Are we right therefore to conclude that this is your “inherent objective”, that AMRO’s activities form an entirely closed system which are their own justification without reference to any point outside AMRO?

3.3 You say here that the management of AMRO has “always refrained from using the apparatus of the bank (either in a positive or a negative sense) for political ends”. We cannot accept that you have so refrained, or indeed that the management of AMRO (or of any other bank) is by nature capable of so refraining. Capital is power, and its use by our definition concomitantly always serves political ends. In the case we are discussing, the ends served by your loans to the South African Government are its own, which include as an over-riding priority the extension of the policy of separate development. In this case, therefore, we judge that you are using your power to serve an immoral political end.

3.4 You say here that individual members of the staff and board of AMRO would not be prepared to render bank services which would evidently be of decisive significance for those activities of third parties to which they would in conscience be opposed. How do you define “decisive significance”? If you ceased to make loans to the South African Government, it is likely that other banks would step into the breach and make the loans. Are you content to rest your case on a claim that your activity is not decisive simply because others would act immorally if you ceased to do so? In 4.2, you go on to say that such “exceptional cases” are “highly theoretical in character”. How theoretical are they? We should be glad if you would provide us with examples of the sorts of case you had in mind when you wrote that.

In 4.2 you also refer to what is for you the crucial role of law in deciding on the transactions you will make. This seems to us to be an abdication of your responsibility. You say that you will do anything that is not illegal, which must mean that, save for the “exceptional cases” which you have not defined, your board members can dismiss ethical considerations. We understand law as a mechanism which provides a minimal degree of regulation to society by defining certain broad limits beyond which behaviour will not be tolerated. It does not and cannot prescribe individual actions. It does not and cannot absolve individuals from the need to subject their actions to their own consciences.

In 4.4 you state that you consider it to be “out of the question that conscience could make a definitive decision on how to act” in this context. Again, that strikes us as an abdication by you of your responsibility. If we refuse to allow conscience to operate, we surrender a fundamental human right and duty. Your argument here in any case seems at variance with the tenor of your last paragraph on page 6 and its continuation on page 7, where you suggest that you are acting in a way that will work towards a less discriminatory society in South Africa. So we must ask you whether you believe you have or have not allowed conscience to influence your decision to continue your loans to the South African Government.

Yet again, we consider your reference to the contradictory views which exist in church (and other) circles on the right policy to be adopted towards the South African Government to be a further instance of your wish to abdicate your own responsibility. Having claimed that the law must determine your actions, you now suggest that those actions gain some legitimacy from the lack of unanimity on the part of “right-thinking people”. This appears to us to mean that you wish your behaviour always to be regulated and if possible legitimized by a third party. Is this what you mean by reference to your “inherent objective”? Will you continue to make the biggest possible profit unless and until someone stops you?

Finally, we wish to draw your attention to something which you do not mention in your letter, and that is your own vested interest in the maintenance of the present South African Government. You stand to gain by its continuance in power (it pointed out in an advertisement in *THE BANKER* that “capital investment in South Africa yields one of the highest returns in the world and is an areas well worth further investigation”), and you help to ensure its maintaining power by your continuing loans. We do not think you can claim to have faced squarely the implications of your current policy unless you acknowledge your own interest in the present *status quo* in South Africa, and the degree to which your interest would be threatened by the precipitate disappearance of the existing South African Government. Were that Government



significantly to modify its apartheid policy your interest would also suffer, as the profits to be made in South Africa depend on apartheid. The fact of the matter is that you have no choice but to accept the laws and practices of apartheid in South Africa. Dealing with symptoms and effects in such situations will only reinforce the system.

In sum we find two arguments underlying your letter. According to the first, you, counting yourselves among the "right-thinking men", abhor apartheid and by your policies are opposing racial discrimination "in a more practical manner" than those "who, if successful, would land South Africa in economic and spiritual isolation". If opposing racial discrimination "in a more practical manner" is the result of your policies, then you are contradicting your earlier claim that the apparatus of the bank is not used for "political ends". If those policies have been chosen by you precisely because they will, in your view, help to change South Africa's racial discrimination, then your second argument must be dismissed. In any case the logic which is used to support this first argument seems to us highly selective, preferring to ignore the evidence of white South African spokes-persons, black liberation movement leaders and your own profitability.

According to your second argument, however, banking has an "inherent objective" which is the sole determinant of all your conduct, and which means that no act of yours can ever be construed as having political consequences. Any consequences which may stem from your fulfilment of your objective are in any case entirely irrelevant to you, save for those highly exceptional cases which you have not specified.

If you tell us that the first argument is the one on which you rely, we shall have to conclude that you have misjudged the South African reality, and that it is our task to describe that reality. If you choose to rely on your second argument, then we believe that AMRO will publicly have done itself infinitely more damage than it could ever have claimed to fear from us.

Yours sincerely,

Philip Potter  
General Secretary.



## STRESS IN THE URBAN SOCIETY

**denis gardiner**

*Whether in Soweto or Birmingham, Hillborw or Harlem, people in cities are often forced to live under great pressures Why? And what can be done?*

Stress is a word that is often used perjoratively, and it is important to recognise that it represents a condition that may be positive. A person under stress is a person under pressure, and human beings need a level of pressure upon them for their growth and fulfilment. Margaret Mead's Samoan people might be described as an understressed society. As Samuel Johnson's over-quoted phrase has it, "When a man is to be hanged in the morning, it concentrates the mind wonderfully." Stress can be a positive and welcome stimulus. The problem arises when the threshold is crossed where a person cracks and collapses. So the question that arises is, 'what makes a person in urban society especially vulnerable to stress, more than in any other sort of society.'? I suggest six main factors.

**1 Living in rapidly changing conditions, with an inconsistent environment.**

This situation often obtains within the family in any kind of society. Parents who are inconsistent in their attitudes, and a family situation in which there is too much change can produce a continuing sense of insecurity for children, which may persist long into later life. The urban situation itself, however, and urban life for many people, involves a much greater mobility of living situation, constant change in environment, especially in development areas, and often a rapid turnover in neighbours, friends, and the familiar faces of everyday life. This contrasts with the more settled, and more slowly changing environment which has been the norm for most human communities in the past. Insecurity is bred.

**2. Uncertainty of other peoples' expectations and standards.**

The unclear expectations of behaviour and attitude exercise conflicting pulls on different members of a family, often related to the experience of different generations. The greater mobility of populations often physically separates the extended family, and emphasises the unclear family. Re-development often has the same effect. There is no longer a homogenous culture into which succeeding generations are clearly initiated. There are of course other factors apart from urbanisation which tend in this direction, but the life of the city increases the erosion of family and cultural solidarity. Again, insecurity is bred.

**4. A sense of personal unimportance; of being a nonentity.**

Being a part of a mass urban society increases the possibility of individuals feeling themselves to be of small worth in the eyes of society as a whole. With high unemployment, this is inevitably increased, so that an individual may feel himself to be an expendable member of a labour force, and only of value if he is usable. Insecurity is bred.

**5. The uncertainty and remoteness of power and authority structures.**

Inevitably, the larger the conglomeration of population, the more impersonal and remote the authority structure of the city or urban area will appear to be. This is seen most clearly in the effects of local government reorganisation, in the growth of

larger industrial units, and educational establishments. Unless there is a parallel process of breaking down the source of authority into smaller groupings within the larger organisation (as in the more effective comprehensive school systems) the person will again feel dehumanised, mistrust and suspicion will grow, and there will be a loss of the sense of personal belonging. Insecurity will be bred.

#### **6. Inadequate living space.**

Not only too cramped family living space, though that is often a factor, but more importantly, there is in the mass urban situation a loss of a sense of spaciousness about living itself. The human need to be separate and apart, to have what Fromm calls 'psychological living space' is more difficult to fulfil. There is a sense of being personally cramped by the pressures of living in close proximity, which inhibits the growth of personal inner security.

### **How Do People Cope with this Increased Vulnerability?**

The answer obviously depends on a mixture of social and personal inner factors. I suggest that there are at least six major avenues that are followed, often of course inter-related.

**1. Anger and Frustration**, expressed in vandalism and hooliganism. This is an almost traditional reaction to stress, seen very clearly in the increasing problems of football crowd control, and in the apparently irrational destructiveness that erupts in the urban situation.

An alternative is the projection of anger onto some other person or group. Thus we have the increased necessity of violence expressed on TV or the cinema screen.

**2. Infantile Dependence.** Insecurity and uncertainty can lead to an exaggerated dependence on a group, or party, or union, or boss. This often represents a clinging to the familiar. Other forms of dependence are shown through the old person clinging determinedly to a home, while the bulldozers destroy all houses around. Again, the development of gang solidarity in our larger cities is another way in which the need for dependence is met.

**3. Peer Group Solidarity** at all levels and ages. The so-called 'generation-gap', the emphasising of class differences, the development of a village-type community in particular groups of streets, are all manifestations of this type of response.

**4. Exhibitionist Activity.** This shows itself in a variety of ways, both personal and corporate. Demonstration-going, and street fiestas, are organised forms of corporate response.

**5. Flight.** Drink, fishing, bingo, art, music, football, fanaticism ... an endless list of ways people may use to flee into fantasy.

**6. Putting up Barriers to Relationships.** Keeping all relationships at the most superficial level. In extreme cases refusing to develop any relationship beyond the level of primary necessity. Lack of opportunity for privacy, especially, may lead to this response.

### **What Happens When People Fail to Cope with the Pressure?**

These events may be familiar enough at the personal level, but it is not always so readily recognised that communities and groups may exhibit the same symptoms.

**1. Withdrawal.** The family hides itself in its pod-like house, turns in upon itself, and 'forgets the world'. The commune or community lives together and creates its own culture and norms. Coronation Street develops its own life, and looks with suspicion (if it looks at all) at the next street, let alone city.

**2. Depression.** Communities drift into an atmosphere of inevitable hopelessness, and become listless and uncaring.

**3. Hysteria.** Communities and groups become irrationally anxious and violent, may hit out in all directions, or may focus dependantly on some strong or attractive personality or cause. (At least a factor in the Belfast situation).

**4. Paranoia.** Communities may react with irrational fear to whatever, or whoever can be seen as the cause of stress. So ethnic minorities, and those of a different skin colour, and those who may be seen to have power, may suffer violence and vilification. Where the threat is in fact an underprivileged society, as in Rhodesia, this reaction is all the stronger.

All these symptoms of a sick society may be mixed up, or even found together and they are all irrational, encourage fantasy rather than reality, and they all have the seeds of self-destruction to sow. So, the family that withdraws upon itself, in the face of urban stress, tends to destroy the sense of personal identity and worth of its members. They become prisoners. The community that becomes hopeless and listless increases the sense of isolation and alienation of its members. The society that is overcome by hysterical reaction becomes easy meat for the demagogue. The society that is paranoid is likely to go up in flames.

### **What of the Christian Reaction to this?**

Firstly, we need to be committed to the alleviation, and where possible the removal, of the causes of stress in the urban situation. Secondly we need to be committed to the support and sometimes the initiation of all those things that will assist the humanizing of society, and which will emphasise the sense of personal significance of people. Thirdly we need to recognise the necessity of providing the means by which people can express their needs, and so cope with stress; e.g. opportunities for anger to be projected rather than vented directly, the maintenance of the familiar in the environment, the encouragement of small community feeling in a street or area, the provision of the fiesta-type occasion, (what about church worship, incidentally) 2, the arts and recreation.

**Finally**, and most importantly, we need the commitment of those who have seen the vision of true humanity and true community in Christ to living, working and being in the midst of the urban area and its institutions, so that the Church can perform its task of embodying the Kingdom in the place where human-ness and community are most at risk.

# MISSION IS AN END TO A CAPITALIST ECONOMY

david j. winwood

*This paper discusses a subject of basic importance to South Africa, although in fact it was prepared for a group in England.*

Some Christians respond defensively when faced with the matters raised in this paper, as though it is intended to be an attack on evangelism, personal faith and personal commitment. Nonsense! A Christian could not begin to face the personal threat and painful reorientation of these matters, in a practical way, without personal commitment, and a trust in God for an unknown future.

During an address on the 'Meaning of Mission' at a conference, 'Towards Wholeness' at Notting Hill Ecumenical Centre, I dropped a phrase, in passing, which not only caused a little but prompted a number of middle class ladies in the audience and a few others, to seize me afterwards — almost literally! 'Mission is an end to a Capitalist Economy.' I have been pressed to say what I mean.

I believe that we will never rid ourselves of the poverty, suffering, powerlessness and inhuman degradation of millions of our brethren in the developing world, or of our false sense of security, superiority, power and inhuman privilege in the Western world, without a transformation, a re-creation, without the radical change that the Christian Gospel urges, not only in the hearts of men — but at the heart of our economy.

In the Methodist Conference this year, debates on the South African situation, homelessness, unemployment, the economic situation in Britain, all threw up questions about the Christian attitude to the economic system. But as yet, the pollution, the environment, alienation in our society, the meaninglessness of work, decreasing participation in decision-making, negative aspects of consumerism and the erosion of sustaining faiths and philosophies — all focus eventually on the economic system. It is a system which not only tolerates poverty and inequality to maintain a high standard of living for the minority, but promotes the deprivation of the poor and powerless, and is thoroughly dependent on their exploitation.

And what has it done for us wealthy beneficiaries of the system. The Western nations? I hear expressions of more and more frustration and resentment at increasing urbanisation. Vandalism, violence, mental illness, suicide rates, loneliness, alcoholism, delinquency, drug abuse — all are on the increase in the 'over developed' world. Our society is still more horrified by a naked body than by exploitation of African workers, and would still rather see a lad in military uniform than a long haired Cyrenian volunteer. Our society gets steamed up about violence on the football terraces but doesn't recognise violence in international trade agreements! We have a 'revolution' in toilet paper, a 'new world' in after shave! Man-handling students is called 'Law and order' and evicting homeless squatters and tearing up the floorboards, is 'protecting the community' — and the whole damn mess reflects the economic system, the legal system which protects it, and the educational system which perpetuates it.

I ought to mention, and this is not a confession, that I am biased. This paper is not an objective, academic appraisal of Capitalist society or of the Christian faith but is biased and selective. For most of its history, Christian theology has been biased towards the right, and has been used to maintain the status quo. In his introduction to 'A Reader in Political Theology is biased towards the left.

"In the Gospels Jesus is biased towards the left, he takes his place with those who are certainly not the King's men. He associates with the poor and despised, rather than the rich and influential. He takes sides, and justifies it in parables — because God takes sides."

Let me take this a little further and summarise for our purposes today; a Biblical Theology of Mission.

The Prophets recognised that God is concerned with the course of history and the ultimate destiny of the world. Their message arose from and spoke to international affairs. God was at work in social and political matters and the prophets thundered out His judgement on exploitation and inequality, and His demands for righteousness and social justice. In the Old Testament we become aware that suffering is an essential element in God's Mission and that cataclysmic events are anticipated as a means by which the purposes of God are sometimes wrought.

The pattern of Christian Mission unfolds in the New Testament as the people of God are called to share God's incarnation, to be sent into the world as Christ was, to identify with the poor, sinners and outcast, as He did. The ministry which He passed on to the Church, was described by Jesus in words from the Prophecy of Isaiah, which are concerned with political action, stimulating and directing the processes of change, revolution and liberation, in unjust and inhuman situations.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, He has sent me to announce Good News to the poor, to proclaim release for prisoners, recovery of sight to the blind and to let the broken victims go free."

New Testament faith anticipates a New World — 'New Heaven and New Earth', a 'City whose builder and maker is God'; a New Order in which status has no place — 'No longer Jew or Gentile, Male and Female, Freeman and Slaves' and by extension no longer Black and White, Oppressor and Oppressed, Capitalist and Proletariat.

This new order is anticipated in the life-style of the New Testament Church followers of Jesus who were transformed by the Spirit of God in their faith, in their relationship with God, and each other, in the way in which they organised their corporate life, and in their commitment to the world.

Their faith was no longer for their devotions in the upper

room alone, but also to be shared with the poor. Their calling was to share their way of life in Christ with the world, in defiance of the 'principalities and powers and rulers of the age'; a political incarnation, part of the very process by which God was, and is transforming the world.

From my understanding, within the Biblical Theology of Mission, there is intended the end of a capitalist economy. There is blatant opposition to the injustices and inequalities it causes, and a demand for radical change of its system at the root. There is no suggestion of modification and reform in the New Testament, but a new order. And from my reading of the New Testament, the Church is called to be part of the means whereby such change is effected.

Christianity has not, however, stood in open opposition to modern capitalism. There are one or two issues the Christian faith demands some comment upon.

**Dependence** Capitalism maintains and increases dependence, in terms of international division of labour, employment, housing, and the availability of capital in the West. Even at its most generous, through the Welfare State or international aid, the capitalist economy increases the sense of dependence, and undermines the sense of human dignity, value, and responsibility and control over one's destiny. All of which are fundamental to a Christian understanding of the nature of men.

Equally, the superiority, inequitable privilege and power which the system gives to a few, is contrary to a Christian understanding of Man's nature. Such economic dependence is little short of a master and servant relationship, increasing the inequalities.

'No longer do I call you servants, but friends' The example is set by the Master!

**Decision Making.** With gross social and international inequalities, power is concentrated in the hands of a few — again removing more of the element of control people should have over their own lives. Personal responsibility for our neighbourhood or our nation depends on the extent of our involvement in the decisions which affect the community. Central planners can rarely identify potentialities for local development as well as local people can, or the right order of priorities. Intervention by authorities, stifling initiative, reduces one's identity with the community and undermines a sense of corporate responsibility for the world.

**Ecology and Expansionism** The capitalist economy depends on expansionism and high productivity, thus rapidly reducing raw materials, increasing industrial waste, and polluting the earth, seas and atmosphere, consuming energy, and creating excessive waste from built-in obsolescence.

'The earth is the Lord's!' And how much of it will be available for our great grandchildren to enjoy? Our present way of life may literally, cost the earth!

**Values.** Values emerge from the Christian Gospel which are quite contrary to the values inherent in modern

capitalism. Christian priorities include:

People rather than possessions, property or profit.

Giving rather than gaining.

Co-operation rather than competition.

### **How can Capitalism and Christianity Co-Exist?**

We have forgotten how to share, lost the secret of humility and contradicted Christian values. We are overdeveloped in material goods and underdeveloped in spiritual goods. We desperately need the poor of the world to liberate us from our poverty!

Increased privatisation creates a bigger market for houses, cars, TVs, washing machines; all of which have become symbols of status and importance in our society. I am valued, and value myself, according to my ability and education. Consequently I sell myself to the highest bidder. My income and my ability give me a sense of status in society. Without them, should I be disabled, mentally ill, unemployed, a woman at home with the children, or an elderly retired person — I am virtually worthless!

Such prostitution has no place in the Christian Gospel. I am valued as a person, created in God's image and loved by God. I am valuable to others as a brother and a fellow workman, sharing a common responsibility for the world, and common rights and privileges in the world. My abilities and experience are gifts from God, of which I am a steward; they are my contribution to life and society, and not a means of bargaining for power, status or value.

Another glimpse of New Testament ethics enables us to recognise, and to counteract, the effect of Calvinist attitudes to 'Work' and see uses for wealth which are more creative than reinvestment.

A new spirituality in the Church, and elsewhere in our society, could be the means of saving our generation from a scientific rationalisation, which leaves no place for mystery.

A new emphasis on worship in the community, as well as identifying other focal points in our society, could be a springboard for social solidarity, and creatively ritualise just and equitable social values — in a new order.

But if, in the meantime, the life-style of the Christian Church should embody the values of the Gospel, we would soon find ourselves confronting the terrible, devastating, destructive, crushing power of Capitalism. Our 'word and deed' would become an expression of God's judgement, it would precipitate a catastrophic confrontation. We would realise again that suffering is an essential element of God's Mission — and the life of the Church would be part of the very process by which God is transforming the world.

A sign in our own age of the presence of the Kingdom of God.

The cutting edge of the cross.

A political incarnation.

God's Mission in our world? The end of a Capitalist economy, and the beginning of a new economic order.

# NUCLEAR REACTIONS

*The contest between France and Holland to build the first Nuclear Power plant in South Africa produced strong reactions in church circles.*

## **DECLARATION ADDRESSED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN THE NETHERLANDS TO THE GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENT, 26 MAY 1976<sup>1</sup>**

Further to the conversation on the delivery of nuclear reactors to the Republic of South Africa which a delegation of our Council was privileged to have in October 1975 with some of the ministers most concerned, the Executive Committee of the Council of Churches in the Netherlands wishes to submit the following considerations for your attention:

The Executive Committee is aware of the difficulty of the decision with which government and parliament are faced. In politics it is always a case of weighing the pros and cons, and very often, alas, of choosing the lesser evil. That is equally the case today.

Two positions are involved: on one hand the unanimous rejection by all concerned, of the policy of apartheid, and the appeal justifiably addressed to us by the black African peoples to help them in their situation of oppression, and on the other hand the pledged word of a government<sup>2</sup>, that is to say, its credibility in the eyes of national and international industry as well as its anxiety in regard to the labour market. On both sides ethical values are involved.

The Executive Committee wishes to submit for your deliberation the following points:

- The Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches has strongly appealed to governments not to support this delivery; at the request of Dutch institutions, Dr. Beyers Naudé recently issued a statement which you may have seen in the press.
- The situation in Southern Africa is very grave. In recent years the policy of the Dutch government has been based on helping the oppressed; one form among others that this aid has taken, is the grant of financial assistance to liberation movements in the colonial territories of Southern Africa.<sup>3</sup> The black population of Southern Africa, however, including those who live in the Republic of South Africa, is looking for actions which will make it plain that the governments are not supporting the power of the oppressing government, the Vorster government.
- Though aware of the problem which government and parliament have to face, the Executive Committee considers nevertheless that it must submit to your attention the fact that on Christian and human grounds, high priority must be given to solidarity with the black population. What are at stake are the most fundamental rights of the human person, the human being created in the image of God, the equality of rights of our neighbour, whatever his colour.
- Collaboration with the production programme in question means increased participation with a regime of oppression which, while it claims to act on principles from the Bible, incorporates oppression into the national laws.

The Executive Committee of the Council of Churches in the Netherlands urges you to take account of the above considerations in making your final decision.

## **DECLARATION OF THE FRENCH PROTESTANT FEDERATION ON THE SALE OF NUCLEAR REACTORS TO SOUTH AFRICA, 30 MAY 1976**

'Hearing of the sale by France of nuclear installations to South Africa, the Council of the FPF is anxious to express its disapproval of this kind of business transaction. It considers that legitimate internal economic interests cannot justify a step which involves a serious risk of spreading atomic weapons. This particular case also involves support given, despite the clearest recommendations of the United Nations, to a regime based on racial discrimination which is leading the peoples of Africa towards violence and bloodshed. There are many other ways of economic co-operation at the present time answering men's real needs.'

## **FRANCO-DUTCH ECUMENICAL COMMUNIQUE ON THE SALE OF NUCLEAR REACTORS TO THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

On 14 June 1976, representatives of the Catholic and Protestant Churches of the Netherlands met representatives of the Social, Economic and International Commission of the French Protestant Federation, of the French Justice and Peace Commission, of the Catholic Committee against Hunger and for Development, and of CIMADE, on the subject of the sale by France on 31 May 1976, of two nuclear reactors to the South African Republic.

At the conclusion of their talks, they wish jointly to express their agreement on the following points:

1. Apartheid is a system based on discriminatory principles contrary to the Gospel. In the eyes of the believer in Jesus Christ, every human being is created in the image of God;
2. The apartheid regime practised in Southern Africa has long been condemned by the United Nations;
3. Alerted by the Churches of Southern Africa, the representatives of the Churches of France and the Netherlands express their solidarity with the Africans in their action to gain recognition and respect for their rights;
4. They accordingly consider that any aid should be called in question which reinforces considerably the scientific and technological potential of South Africa and thereby the domination of the white minority within that country and the pressure it exerts on neighbouring countries;
5. They regret that the decision taken by France has been evaluated, in their respective countries, in terms of the interests of commerce and prestige, instead of taking account first and foremost of the significance of such a deal for the peoples immediately affected in South Africa;
6. In future, when faced with situations of this kind, they pledge themselves to be vigilant. Here and now they alert public opinion to a coming event. Governments are going to be called on to decide whether to recognise the Transkei as an independent state. In fact it would be a state created to maintain the regime of apartheid, and for that reason international recognition should be refused.

The representatives of the Churches meeting in Paris on 14 June, express their determination to remain in contact in order to continue the exchange of information, to take decisions as occasion requires, and to obtain the participation of the Churches of the other European countries involved.

— Paris, 14 June 1976

# A LETTER TO THE WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL FROM 25 SOUTH AFRICAN METHODIST MINISTERS

Dear Fellow Methodists,

We write to you as a group of deeply concerned Methodist ministers from within a crisis situation in South Africa. No longer can we hold our silence in a situation where injustice, death and destruction have become the order of the day — a situation in which our church has failed to raise her voice in any meaningful way. We are sustained by our faith in God, value our links with World Methodism and take the liberty of putting before you our concerns in an ever increasing situation of isolation.

Our national situation is grave. The seeds of Soweto events have blown across our land and taken root in a fertile soil prepared and sustained by decades of suppressive legislation. This legislation together with attendant white attitudes, prejudices and fears has left a deposit of bitterness, hatred and frustration in our society. Unless the Church in South Africa identifies itself with black hopes and aspirations there is every possibility that blacks will totally reject the "white-Christian" church. Our continued political, ecclesiastical and societal intransigence indicate that we have no intention of heeding the lessons of history.

## Politics

Future suppression and injustice are institutionalised and legalised into our political structure. A brief appendix documents some of the legislation designed to this end.

## Church

We, the Methodist Church in this sub-continent are simply a pale reflection of this divided and unequal society. For over twenty years our church has spoken of change but our division and inequalities persist.

We still pay unequal stipends to the ministers of our different racial groups.

The archaic terms "European, Coloured, African" remain in the terminology of our church.

We still have racially divided circuits, local preachers' associations and women's groups.

Representation at Conference level is designed to preserve "white" control.

## Contemporary History

The events of recent days have directly affected our people with school children having been shot dead. There was a presidential and an editorial comment in *Dimension*, our church newspaper, and more recently a painfully weak comment from a District Chairmen's collegium meeting at the time of the unrest saying: "We believe in the Christian answer but recognise our way will not be clear cut or easy. In addition as a church we will be accused by some of being irrelevant, while others might even regard us as siding with evil at times. But we are called to be faithful to our Lord and loyal to each other." This statement is both defensive and

abstract. We know of no further official comment from the Methodist church.

Methodist ministers who are concerned to proclaim a prophetic and priestly gospel, very often at high cost from both society and church, are diminishing in numbers.

Over the years we have seen an increasing number of this small group of men either resigning from the ranks of the ministry in disgust or being "edged" out.

The black oppressed people of this land can no longer tolerate suppression nor the church's irrelevancy. We who are ministers must rise up in their support. Now is the time for our church to reaffirm that faith that sustained and made the early Methodists vitally relevant to the social problems of their day. Now is the time for us to be obedient to our Lord Christ who paid the price of proclaiming the truth and experienced the loneliness of a cross.

Obedience to God's Word demands that we break the prolonged silence of the church that is tantamount to the support of the status quo.

We call upon the World Methodist Council to pass judgement on the Methodist Church of South Africa.

To challenge this member church to which, we, the signatories to this letter belong and whose guilt we share, to bring to an immediate end all apartheid practices within the Methodist Church of South Africa.

To support financially those institutions in South Africa who are working for radical, peaceful change.

To widen the bonds of fellowship between World Methodism and S.A. so that those who are suffering under the structural violence of our political system may know that they do not suffer alone.

To pressure your respective governments to demand that all those in South Africa who are detained without recourse to the courts, be released or brought to trial without delay.

To provide through your Church bodies financial assistance for the defence of all "political" detainees.

With warm greetings,

Yours sincerely,

N. Wilson, T. Kotze, C. Villa-Vicencio, D. Cochrane, W. Mabuza, D. Prins, D. Adendorff, J.T. Liphoko, J.P. Mangole, S.N. Languza, K. Meaker, D. Palos, I. Lindsay, E. Baartman, J. Polley, T. Gqubule, E. Mgojo, J. Massey, S. Magoba, A. Kimber, P. Whittaker, H. Ngidi, J.A. Tshabalala, M. Openshaw, J. Fourie.

The following examples of South African legislation support our statement "Future suppression and injustice are institutionalised and legalised into our political structure. A brief appendix documents some of the legislation designed to

this end".

1. The Group Areas Act has dispossessed people of their homes, destroyed businesses and disrupted communities.
2. Proclamation 26 under the Group Areas Act, makes it a crime for a White person to sit down, as customer, in a public place, restaurant or club with a person of colour. Some "Five Star" hotels now have special permission to admit black guests.
3. There is even interference in religious freedom, for Africans may be prevented from attending church services in the White part of a town, by the minister, with the concurrence of the local authority if they are causing a nuisance or if it is undesirable for them to be present from the point of view of their numbers.
4. The reservation of Separate Amenities Act in its implication means that all the select beaches of all the best resorts are reserved for White people.
5. Job reservation has closed the door to non-Whites in many areas of employment.
6. The separate Universities Act denies non-Whites free access to the best institutions of higher education. It is

clearly designed to make non-Whites feel different with which goes the concept that they are different.

7. Abolition of Coloured Representatives in Parliament means that a large indigenous population have no voice.
8. The Motor Carrier Transportation Amendment Act extended enforced racial separation in all transport services.
9. The State-Aided institutions Amendments Act empowered boards of cultural institutions such as art galleries, museums, zoos and libraries to enforce racial separation by determining during which hours and on what conditions the public, or persons of a particular race may visit those institutions.

Laws like the Terrorism Act, the Internal Security Act (which has taken over and widened the powers of the Suppression of Communism Act), the General Law Amendment Act, give the Government enormous powers which enables them to crush all opposition to these monstrous laws.

The laws, and customs of South Africa do not only affect blacks. They directly affect the witness of the church for they make us all less than christian.



## WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL

*The World Methodist Council met in Dublin in August 1976 and passed the following Resolution on South Africa*

1. We condemn the wanton slaughter of unarmed black men, women and children by South African Government soldiers and police.
2. We support majority Government for Rhodesia, South West Africa and South Africa.
3. We urge all nations, Church Groups and multi-national corporations to support United Nations economic sanctions against apartheid states of Southern Africa by the withholding of investments.
4. We insist that all present and future political negotiations concerning Southern Africa must involve the qualified participation of indigenous black African leaders.
5. We believe that justice and peace cannot return to Southern Africa while the policy of apartheid remains. Apartheid is codified, congealed racism condemning black Africans to permanent inferiority and poverty. We call on Methodists everywhere to pray for the people of Southern Africa and to support any form of non-violent action which may bring pressure on the South African Government to abandon the policy of apartheid.

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