

A SELECTION OF RESOLUTIONS TAKEN AT THE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CHRISTIAN  
CITIZENSHIP DEPARTMENT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA, HELD AT  
ALBERTON ON AUGUST 18, 1977. THESE RESOLUTIONS ARE TO BE SUBMITTED AS  
RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN BENONI FROM  
OCTOBER 20 - 27, 1977

DETENTION WITHOUT TRIAL

- + Conference is increasingly concerned about the need for spiritual care for those detained by the Security Police under various acts.  
Conference believes that they should not be deprived of spiritual ministrations during this period of interrogation.  
Therefore the Conference calls on the Minister of Police to
  - i) reconsider the present legislation and to make such amendments to the relevant acts so as to enable them to receive such ministrations
  - ii) licence ministers of religion of the denomination concerned to undertake this pastoral responsibility.
- + Conference is deeply concerned by the increasing number of deaths occurring among persons being held in detention. It therefore calls on the Minister of Justice to establish a Judicial Commission of Enquiry to investigate fully these untimely deaths.
- /+ Conference is deeply .....

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- + Conference is deeply concerned that often post-mortems on detainees who die in detention are held at such short notice that the next-of-kin are not always aware of, or able to exercise, their full legal rights. Therefore, Conference requests the department of Police, in each case, to inform the next-of-kin timeously of the post-mortem and inquest that may follow and of their full legal rights.

UNEMPLOYMENT

- + In the light of the growing unemployment, Conference urges that the churches equip themselves to give material and other forms of aid to those most severely affected. Further, that District CCD committees be required to keep the general secretary informed of needs arising from time to time.
- + Conference requests that, in view of the rapidly increasing problem of unemployment the relevant Government departments initiate a National Relief Scheme whereby financial assistance may be given and/or part-time employment opportunities be made known.
- + Conference notes that African residents in urban areas, on becoming unemployed in the current recession, are being evicted out, calls on the Government to amend the Bantu (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act so that those who qualify under Section 10 (1)(a) or 10 (1)(b) do not forfeit their residential rights.

SQUATTERS

In the firm conviction that squatters are the children of God, Conference calls on the Department of Community Development to exercise all restraint and compassion in its resettlement programme and to refrain from both the inhuman practice of removing people from their homes until alternative accommodation is found within an area familiar to those being resettled, and from the deplorable practice of separating husbands and wives.

Conference calls on the Minister of Community Development to consult with all interested bodies with a view to seeking a solution that will result in the removal of the distress experienced by resettled people.

Conference directs Christian Citizenship committees to actively involve themselves with the problems of people removed from squatter camps by establishing relief centres and by seeking other constructive alternatives with all interested bodies.

RESETTLEMENT SCHEMES

The Conference, being deeply conscious of the pitiable conditions of those compelled to live in resettlement camps through enforced removals, would seek to mobilise the whole Church through every possible channel to respond to the immediate needs of these people in caring for their material and spiritual needs. The Conference therefore directs:

- a) That its ministers should be involved in the necessary relief work.
- /b) That until such .....

- b) That until such time as regular society amenities are established, house services and prayer meetings and regular visitations be programmed.
- c) That the District Committee (of the Christian Citizenship Department) direct their attention to the situations that have arisen and become actively involved in the ministry to resettled people.

#### SYSTEM OF MARRIAGE LICENCES

- + Conference resolves that the districtal sub-committee be commissioned to draft a paper expressing the biblical and theological understanding of marriage with particular reference to the relation of Christian marriage and civil legislation.
- + Conference expresses its alarm at the present system of licensing of marriage officers in the various countries and provinces of Southern Africa. As Conference is involved in the area of its activity, as ministers are moving between the various areas, considerable problems are frequently experienced. Conference therefore calls on the Minister of Interior to negotiate agreements with the governments of all neighbouring countries with a view to the mutual recognition of marriage officers' licences.

#### SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT POLICY

Conference re-affirms its rejection of the homeland policy of the South African Government. Conference is of the firm opinion that this policy is divisive and disrupting the mission and the unity of the church. Conference calls on the Prime Minister to reconsider the homeland policy before the consequences of this policy result in devastating effects on the nation as a whole.

#### TEMPERANCE

- + Conference resolves to approach the authorities concerned with a view to halting and/or curbing the sale of liquor on Sundays in all African townships.
- + Conference, conscious of the damage caused by alcohol to the economy and to our society, resolves to request the Government to impose a curfew on the sale of alcoholic beverages which shall be used:
  - i) to educate the public regarding problems arising from its consumption, and
  - ii) in the care and rehabilitation of alcoholics and their families.
- + Conference strongly deplores the contemplated legislation which, if passed, will cause incalculable damage and hardship to our less fortunate.

Further, Conference urges that drinking water be not established near township entrances or in close proximity to schools, sports grounds, community centres and similar institutions.