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SECTION V  
STATEMENT BY THE ARCHBISHOP OF CAPE TOWN  
THE MOST REV. BILL BURNETT DATED  
20TH OCTOBER 1980

The Minister of Police has once again repeated his incorrect statement that Anglicans have made a decision that Security Police may not hold office in the Church. I have already pointed out this misconception.

The resolution of the Church of the Province at its 1979 Provincial Synod said if members of the Security Police hold any office in our Church they are to consider their witness before our Lord Jesus Christ and also asked Church Vestries to exercise care in the election of Church Officers.

It would seem the Minister assumes if Security Police consider their witness before our Lord Jesus Christ they will find they cannot hold office in the Church. That is surely an alarming conclusion.

Our resolution, however, assumes they may hold office but, in view of many deaths in detention and frequent allegations of torture, it is surely not surprising that the Church should ask Christians in the Security Police to consider their witness before God.

Our brother Christians in the Government should expect us to do that.

The reason for Anglican Chaplains not being allowed in the Police Force must surely be other than that we have aligned ourselves with the Methodist Church in promoting civil disobedience.

I am not aware that the C P S A has since the passage of the notorious Church Clause in 1957 counselled its people to civil disobedience and so we could not at present be aligned with anybody in having done so.

Since conscientious objection is a matter of conscience and Christians are to manifest "the mind of Christ", it is surely wholly logical that a conscientious Christian should seriously consider whether he can participate in military operations in defence of a particular political ideology and the legislation it produces.

It is also the duty of the Church to give pastoral counsel to its members who find themselves faced with this difficult decision. The Church must continue to do so.

It is indeed surprising that the Minister of Police should attack Churches for discussing and striving for inter-racial contact. That God has in Christ reconciled men to Himself, and so to one another, is integral to the Gospel.

I would hope then that as a fellow Christian the Minister might criticise us for talking about it better than we demonstrate it. It must, however, be said that the Government which legislates against those whom God has joined together in Christ actually being together, invites civil disobedience.