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SECTION V : DOCUMENTATION

This week we publish in full the reports of the four working groups of the consultation of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches South Africa region on the Church and Social Responsibility, as well as extracts from some of the memoranda submitted by the member churches for consideration at the consultation.

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON POLITICAL STRUCTURES

Proem

The acts of God are not disconnected fragments which can be placed side by side or even one after the other. They form an organic whole which, like a living tree, is mutilated by the loss of even a single branch or leaf.

This actually means that every single act of God, whether it is the incarnation, God's providential fulfilling in the needs of his creation or his predestination, forms a link and should therefore not be seen as isolated occurrences having no relation to other acts of God.

The concept of the Kingdom of God reveals the essential meaning of all these acts of God and at the same time indicates the eventual purpose of everything.

In general terms we may say that the Kingdom of God is God's sovereignty, on the one hand and, on the other, the obedient acceptance thereof by his subjects. Wherever God reigns and obedience to him is found, there the Kingdom of God is revealed. But the fall of man into sin changed obedience into disobedience because God's sovereignty was repudiated. Christ came to re-establish this obedience in his person, words and actions, so that both the reigning God and obedient man are present in him.

This message of God's Kingdom which is already present but will be revealed in its full glory only in the fullness of time, with the second advent of Christ, is preached by the Church which itself exists through repentance and faith, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, is a holy community of true Christian believers, all receiving and expecting this salvation in Jesus Christ, being washed by his blood and sanctified and sealed by the Holy Spirit. This Church is not confined, bound, or limited to a certain place or to certain persons, or to certain people but is spread and dispersed over the whole world, and yet is joined and united with heart and will, by the power of faith, in one and the same Spirit.

This church has a prophetic ministry to the whole world in that every political order falls short of the requirements of the Kingdom of God.

Areas of General Agreement

We acknowledge the fact that the vastly different situations from which we come, with their different life experiences and values, tend to make our interpretations of the South African situation and our understanding of the gospel and its demands for that situation diverge.

As defined by the message of the Bible, the Church is involved in all aspects of human life, and its ministry therefore involves an integrated participation in the totality of life.

While the Church has at times fulfilled its responsibility of involvement it has failed to do this adequately.

As part of this ministry of involvement the Church has the prophetic role of reminding its members and Government of their calling to establish and maintain justice in all areas of life.

Since the present situation in South Africa does not incorporate adequate justice for all, we declare that social and political change in these areas is urgently needed.

It is the calling of the State and its subjects to maintain society both with law and order and with peace, personal freedom and justice for all.

The norms of good Government and social justice are to be derived from the word of God.

We call upon the Government to bring together political and other leaders acceptable to, and elected by, all the people of the country to work out a new political and social dispensation for South Africa.

In spite of our apprehension about the future, we recognise that we need to move forward in faith and obedience to the leadership of Christ, as we await the coming of God's Kingdom.

AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT .....

Areas of Disagreement

We differ in evaluating the impulse to preserve distinct ethnic and cultural identities. While we agree that the gospel's call to unity is pre-eminent, we are not able to agree about the way diversity should be related to unity.

While some of us can reconcile a form of separate development with social justice, the majority find this impossible.

While for some of us separate ethnic structures do not contradict the unity of the Church, for the majority they do.

We are not able to agree about how to implement the total ministry of the Church. While some believe that we should limit this ministry to the proclamation of the word and deeds of charity, the majority hold that this ministry is more extensive and includes, for example, acts of protest and explicit political involvement.

Administration of Justice

All laws should reflect the truth that God gives justice to those who are oppressed (Ps. 103:6) (Unan)

This justice is a gift of God in which His glory and the liberation and wholeness of all people are central. (Carried by majority vote).

All human judgements by earthly judges should reflect the judgement of God which is wholly just. (Unan.)

Public witness and evidence needs to be given in an open court if judgements are to be just. (Unan).

Because God wills people to be free, the Government must use its power of the sword in a way that allows the greatest possible freedom of the individual compatible with a peaceful order of society. (Unan).

Therefore:

The church must strongly and publicly oppose all legislation that unnecessarily restricts this freedom, and particularly banning and detention with trial. (unan)

The church must strongly oppose the way in which banning and detention have been used to silence those who criticize the injustice of the political status quo. (Majority).

The church must strongly oppose the way in which people have been hauled out of their beds in the middle of the night to the alarm of their families and have been shut away in detention and even solitary confinement for months and even years on end, without any recourse to the due processes of law and trial in an open court, and sometimes even without their families knowing where they are. (Majority).

The church must insist that every person arrested has the right to be charged without delay, to have immediate access to legal counsel of his own choice and to be heard within days in an open court or allowed to go free on bail. (Majority).

The church must strongly protest against the use of any form of torture in interrogating detainees, as has been proven in certain cases. (Majority).

(Note from a member of the group:

"On the matter of administration of justice I wish to state:

Superficial adjustments to the existing administrative machinery, namely to security legislation, influx control regulations, local government, the education system, etc. will alleviate matters but will not penetrate to the root causes of the problems. That is why tension, unrest and violence will be unavoidable and can be expected to recur at even closer intervals if the status quo continues for any length of time. Therefore, fundamental social and political change in the direction of a unity of nation-states should be brought about in the status quo in South Africa".

Prof. Carol Boshoff)

/REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP .....

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON LABOUR AND ECONOMIC MATTERS

The committee agreed to discuss the meaning of labour and the Biblical principles in respect of labour before moving to practical issues involved. A scheme as drawn from the reports was presented to the meeting to cover the full area of discussion. The following points were discussed:

Principles:

The mandate given by God to man, created in his image, to guard, protect, till and develop creation, the so-called cultural mandate, the mandate to work.

The fall of man in sin and the severe effects of this on man's labour, making it difficult and troublesome (kopsel) and full of strain and effort (ponse) instead of a blessing. (Gen. 1:28; Gen 3:17-19).

Through the new covenant, the covenant of grace, man is redeemed, whereby his labour is placed in a new context and is directed to the honour of God and the benefit of man and creation (1 Cor. 15:58).

Labour and the fruits of labour are a privilege and a blessing as well as a responsibility to God, your fellow man and creation, not merely a responsibility to the state or society as in Marxist ideology.

Labour must be seen as a calling and a vocation of man in order to promote and develop his faculties, talents and gifts to the honour of God and the well-being of man, his family and creation.

It was agreed that it is not necessary to give an elaborate definition of labour, but to emphasize that labour includes cultural, intellectual as well as manual labour, involving all the spiritual and intellectual, as well as the physical activities of man, in order to achieve a dignified existence for man, his family and his fellow-man.

Migrant Labour:

The committee discussed extensively and in depth migrant labour and the migratory labour system, with special reference to its application in South Africa, and in particular to Black labour. Points on which a large measure of consensus was reached were:

Migratory labour as such is a world phenomenon and part and parcel of the economy of many developed countries and should be accepted as a present day reality that may or may not have such serious ethical implications that the church(es) have to pay attention to these implications and speak prophetically to the governments and/or employers on these implications.

However, we consider the migrant labour system in South Africa as distinguished from migrant labour as such to be contrary to the principles of the Bible, because of the system's disruptive and devastating effect as well as its discriminatory application. In view of this and the irreparable harm that results, this whole system should be reviewed urgently. All the people directly concerned, including the workers, should be involved in the decisions and actions concerning its change or elimination. These decisions should be based on Christian principles and should take into account the comprehensive interests of all concerned.

Control and Freedom of Labour

The group reached consensus on the following points:

From the biblical point of view, i.e. the cultural mandate given to man created in the image of God, man must be free in his labour in respect of responsibility, ability and creativity.

Determining factors are the capability of man, effective training, experience and a measure of control by the state and/or the economy. But control that is discriminatory or unjust can not be accepted on Biblical and ethical grounds.

Those in positions of authority and decision-making with regard to the use and movement of labour (for eg employers, the State, etc), are also responsible to God on the same Biblical and ethical grounds as stated above.

2nd Reservation .....

Job Reservations:

The following were the main points in respect of job reservation which the group discussed and on which a large measure of consensus was reached:

There can only be one principle on which labour control can be acceptable, that is when it is regulated in accordance with the Biblical principles for labour and the principle of justice to all concerned.

When job reservation is applied for specific racial/ethnic groups and their protection it can be seriously questioned whether the abovementioned principles still apply.

When such control is applied to people or a group who have no decision in the election or removal of the controlling authority, not only political but also ethical implications are involved which are not acceptable.

The church should not identify itself with any of the existing economic theories or systems, such as capitalism or socialism, but must be in a position to speak prophetically in consonance with the Biblical and ethical principles to the authorities, employers, industrialists, businessmen, etc. - especially those who are also committed to Christ, the church and these principles.

In practice a form of job reservation is also caused by a lack of training, and by the import of labour from elsewhere through immigration or trained migrant labour. This indicates that much more or more efficient training is needed for certain sectors of the labour force available in South Africa.

For the phasing out of job reservation, even as declared policy by the authorities, attention should be given to the practice of job reservation as practised in the private sector, which is discriminatory to certain racial/ethnic groups.

Unemployment:

The Committee reached consensus on the following:

The Committee repeats its previous principal statement that labour and the fruits of labour are a privilege and a blessing as well as a responsibility to God and your fellowmen. Employment and unemployment therefore have very serious Biblical and ethical implications not only for those in authority, the employers in industry, mining, commerce, etc. but also for the Christian community and the Church as institution and organ (membership). The local congregation and members have a responsibility in this respect.

There are no fully reliable figures for unemployment in South Africa, but there are indications of very large and increasing Black unemployment on account of factors like the phenomenal growth of the population, the recession in the economy, automation, rigid application of influx control measures and limited training and employment opportunities. The collapse of the building and other industries has also caused considerable unemployment amongst other population groups.

The serious implications and results of such escalating unemployment must be a matter of grave concern to the churches as well as the authorities. Hunger, suffering and the rising crime rate can not be bypassed.

The need to provide opportunities for labour by those in a position to do this must be accepted as a responsibility in consonance with the Biblical and ethical principles stated above.

Conflict and reconciliation in labour:

The committee agreed that the right to negotiate and provision for the rights and privileges of both employer and employee are basic principles which should be safe-guarded. There should be provision for meaningful consultation for all concerned in the whole process of negotiation and bargaining. In this process both employer and employee have responsibilities as well as rights for which meaningful provision should be made.

The frailty and selfishness of human nature requires that there should be a recognised legal structure or system of negotiation and bargaining which provides for justice, reconciliation, participation and co-operation in the labour situation for all concerned.

Investment and disinvestment .....

Investment and disinvestment

Those members of the committee whose churches dealt with the issues involved in investment or disinvestment individually or in the contact of the South African Council of Churches informed the committee of the views of their churches, of which the main points are listed below:

They have noted and accepted the bona fides of those churches who have seriously considered or supported disinvestment as a tool for effecting change or getting people to give serious attention to change in South Africa in a non-violent manner. They have also indicated the disadvantages and possibilities of both investment and disinvestment for social change.

They have agreed that if churches or groups should decide to invest in South Africa it should be done in such a way that it improves the labour situation and should not be to the disadvantage of those employed. There are guidelines for this to which they have been referred.

From the discussion in the committee the following was noted:

The existential cry from the hearts of the Black members of the committee that serious attention should be given to the situation of their people in South Africa which forms the basis for the whole dialogue on disinvestment or investment, and that this should be taken and considered very seriously, and be acted upon urgently. They see themselves as Christians and churchmen as the shock-absorbers of serious pressures from the Black community as well as those in authority in the government. They speak with a desire for urgent peaceful change in South Africa.

General:

Aspects of the government policy which affect the Black members of the committee existentially and on which they spoke out clearly were inter alia:

Destructive effects of the migrant labour system in respects of large hostels for men or women in the Black communities with concomitant illegitimacy of children born, in some cases as high as 90%, venereal diseases etc.

The registration of children of parents who have 99 year leases for houses in the Black townships as citizens of homelands.

The delinquency and escalating crime problems.

The lack of understanding and real concern for the situation and suffering of their Black fellow-Christians on the part of many White Christians.

Other members of the committee expressed their deepfelt spiritual suffering on behalf of our Black brethren. We are one in Christ. If one member of the body suffers all suffer.

Future action:

The committee agreed that this consultation should consider seriously and urgently what future action should be taken, not only to continue discussions such as this consultation, but to report to the churches and to motivate and urge them to appropriate concern and action.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend:

- That the biblical principles as set out above be accepted as a basis for determining labour and economic questions in our country.
- That churches ask the appropriate authorities urgently to review the system of migratory labour through involving all people directly concerned, so that the system can be changed or eliminated in terms of Christian principles.
- That it be agreed that in terms of the Biblical mandate man must be free in his labour with respect to responsibility, ability and creativity, and that control of labour (eg job reservation) that is discriminatory or unjust, whether in law or in the practice of the private economic sector, cannot be accepted on Biblical grounds.
- That it be agreed that labour control is acceptable only when regulated on the non-discriminatory principle of equal justice for all, and that such justice implies the right of consent for all involved.

As the church cannot .....

- .....
- That the church cannot be identified with any particular economic system, but must speak prophetically in consonance with biblical principles to all involved in determining and maintaining the economy.
  - That the churches strongly urge more comprehensive and efficient training for the labour force, and caution against aggravating unemployment through the importing of labour, except where it is just to all people and essential to the well-being of the country.
  - That the churches take much more seriously the growing unemployment situations which have reached alarming proportions especially within the Black community.
  - That the churches take urgent steps both as institutions and through their members to deal with the causes and the social and personal results of unemployment.
  - That the churches strongly support the need for recognised legal structures of negotiation and bargaining which will regulate the responsibilities and rights of employers and employees on a non-discriminatory basis, and that all concerned should be meaningfully consulted in the whole process of negotiating such responsibilities and rights.
  - That the churches explore the burning issue of investment and disinvestment in the serious light of change in SA and respond and act upon the issue as soon as possible.
  - That this consultation expresses its deepfelt concern for the suffering within the Black community at the present time brought about by social practices which are Biblically unjust.

#### Future Action:

This consultation requests the WARC SA regional committee to initiate the following action:

- Submit the reports and resolutions of this consultation to its member churches with the request that:
  - they be submitted to regional bodies and local churches for study, comment and action including consultation with local member churches of the churches represented at this consultation;
  - reports be obtained and submitted to the regional committee.
- Establish regional committees to study the Biblical principles affecting social justice in South Africa
- Arrange a further consultation along similar lines within 18 months, if and when possible.

#### REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON FAMILY LIFE AND EDUCATION

##### THE BIBLICAL MESSAGE CONCERNING MARRIAGE

##### Introduction

Marriage is the oldest institution in the Bible (Gen. 1:27). Marriage is a holy (Eph. 2:14) permanent (Matt. 19:6) relationship between two people of opposite sexes.

##### Biblical Background

Marriage is the most highly honoured human relationship.

In the Old Testament marriage is repeatedly used as an image of the relationship between God and His people. (Note especially Isaiah, Jeremiah and Hosea).

In the New Testament marriage is honoured even more highly. Whereas the Bible regularly uses examples from everyday life to explain religious truths, (in the parables) we have an example in Ephesians 5:22 ff of a religious truth (the relationship between Christ and his Church) being used to explain what the relationship between husband and wife should be.

Concepts like love, oneness, communion, fellowship, are central concepts in defining marriage, especially in the light of the example of Christ and His Church.

The husband should love his wife as Christ loved His Church and gave Himself up for it. (Eph. 5:25).

How intimate the relationship should be is clear from the fact that elsewhere the Church is called the body of Christ, who is its head. Therefore, it is no wonder that marriage is seen as two people becoming one (Eph. 5:31; Gen. 2:24).

In this light it is .....

In this light it is clear why marital sins occupy such an important place in the admonitory sections in the Bible, e.g. in various prophets and especially in the letters of the New Testament.

It is illuminating to read the lists of sins in the New Testament. In most instances marital sins occupy a prominent place. (Cf. 1 a Rom 1:26-29; 13:13; 1 Cor 6:15; Gal 5:19; Eph. 4:25-5:3; Col. 3:5-9; 1 Tim 1:9-10; 1 Petr. 4:3; Rev 21:8; 22:15).

According to the Heidelberg Catechism (p.109) Christians are forbidden "all unchaste actions, gestures, words, thoughts, desires, and whatever may entice thereto".

According to the marriage formula used in the Reformed Churches, the purpose of marriage is twofold. Firstly, it is necessary that one must faithfully help and assist the other in all matters relating both to temporal and eternal life. This is a sound Biblical approach if Gen. 2:18-25 is taken into consideration. Here the woman is called a helper or a partner. Furthermore love, especially in the New Testament, is directly related to the concept of giving (eg John 3:16). Thus the marriage partners should love each other and therefore give to, and help each other.

Secondly the purpose of marriage according to the formula mentioned, is that through marriage the human race is to be extended, and the parents are to raise their children in the true knowledge and fear of God, to his honour and their salvation.

This means that a marriage without children is indeed a marriage though not every purpose of marriage is fulfilled in it.

#### The most important problems in marital and family life

##### Mixed marriages

Mixed marriages according to the Bible and the Christian tradition are religiously mixed marriages.

The only restriction placed on the choice of a marriage partner in the Bible, is thus a religious restriction.

Israel was forbidden to marry heathen people (either of the same race or of different races) because they were heathen and Israel was God's chosen people.

The basic reason for this prohibition is the fact that a Christian marriage is moulded in terms of the relationship between Christ and His Church, and a non-believer does not share the faith in Christ that inspires Christians to follow this example.

Though other causes endangering marital bliss exist, these are not emphasized in the Bible, and they represent such a variety of factors that any strictly legal approach is not possible. These causes may be of a social, cultural, intellectual or economic nature, and may or may not exist among different races or language groups or ethnic groups, or even within these groups. They may exist before marriage or at the time of marriage, or may develop after the marriage has been consummated. The Church has therefore an important but very difficult task in making its members aware of such possible causes endangering marital bliss between any two people. On the other hand marriages between persons belonging to certain groups of people should not be prohibited merely on account of the possibility that factors of this nature may endanger a marriage, because there are no means by which this can be determined beforehand.

The group did not come to a consensus about the recommendation, but by majority vote the group recommends that -

"The Church should urge the authorities to repeal the laws against racially mixed marriages."

##### Migrant labour

First and foremost the task of the Church is to preach the message of the Bible, and flowing from this, to relate this message to every sphere of life because Jesus Christ is the Lord of all. (Acts 10:36)

The Church therefore has the responsibility to preach the message referred to above to all people.

The Church has the pastoral task to teach its members what the implications of this view on marriage are and how these implications can best be worked out in the different situations in which people live their married life.

The Church has the prophetic task to preach this message about marriage to all people including especially those responsible for creating the conditions, under which believers and non-believers have to live their married lives. (eg. migrant labour)

A marriage according to the Bible .....



As marriage according to the Bible implies that married couples live together, part of the Church's pastoral responsibility is to teach its members that unnecessary long periods of separation endanger their marriage.

As "the migrant labour system is one of the factors which disrupts the stability of marriage and family life among the Blacks" (Human Relations p.75), the Church is responsible to discourage it among its members (both employers and employees) and to urge the authorities concerned to take specific steps that it be "eliminated as far as possible" for e.g. to enable the families of workers to live with them or to be enabled to visit them if they wish. (Human Relations p.76).

#### Family Life and Land Ownership

Land ownership and home ownership is one of the factors which play an important role in the stabilizing of family life. A shortage of land and home ownership for various reasons, play a role in unstable home life, especially among Blacks in South Africa. This might be seen as one of the causes of squatter problems, with an emphasis on the housing problem. Urbanization is another cause, as well as migrant labour, together with the fact that families of migrant workers are not allowed to live with husbands and fathers who are employed in the mines, industries, etc. Wives in desperation to join the husband simply come to town without the prescribed documents to reside in that area, and then find a home in some squatter area. Local authorities find it impossible to cope with the influx problem.

The Church can relieve the situation by

- Church groups taking an interest in and ministering to the needs of the people in squatter camps, for e.g. by providing community workers and diaconate services.
- by persistently negotiating with the State and local authorities re the ways of removing people before they have found other accommodation
- by encouraging the State and local authorities as they try to deal with the need for home ownership for Blacks in urban and rural areas.
- by encouraging member churches to make a thorough study of the squatter problem as related to cause, effect and remedy.
- The consultation is of the conviction that it is not only the responsibility of the State and local authorities to provide housing, but also of industry and other employers.

#### (Ministry Report)

The Rev. S.S. Fince wishes to point out that the discussion of land ownership is essential in this discussion group of the consultation. To dodge the issue is unrealistic. The land in S.A. belongs to the people of S.A. At the present it is being appropriated by one section of the community. It is unfairly distributed and this he personally deplores.

He acknowledges that home ownership and land ownership, both in rural and urban areas in South Africa is a God-given privilege of every South African.)

#### The One Parent or Matrifocal Family

The matrifocal family is the family where the mother carries the sole responsibility for the family. Such a family can also be called the abandoned family where the father has left the family unit without getting a legal divorce.

Studies made at eight different day care centres in Soweto, brought to light that of the 8000 families represented, as many as 358 were one-parent families.

These families suffer from emotional insecurity as the mother has to take on both the role of father and mother - as breadwinner, lovegiver and disciplinarian. Children need both parents for developing healthy identification patterns for functioning as a disciplined unit.

- It is the responsibility of the Church to prevent families from becoming abandoned families by laying great stress in marriage guidance on the importance of the father and his role in the family unit.
- The church must through its pastoral care help the one-parent family to adjust by discussion, aid and both financial and spiritual support.

/THE CHURCH'S RESPONSIBILITY .....



THE CHURCH'S RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AREA OF EDUCATION

Introduction

Education, in the Christian sense of the word, means the preparation and equipping of men for his true purpose namely service to God and to His Kingdom in all spheres of life.

The church has a two-fold task in this regard:

Firstly to guide its members to understand their role in relation to education of the families through Christian education programmes.

Accepting that Jesus Christ is Lord of all and has a claim on the whole of mankind and in all facets of human life, the Church has a calling to influence the (academic) educational system to ensure that each person, created in the image of God, develops his/her God-given potential. The church should educate parents to appreciate the value of education so that they could in turn encourage their children to avail themselves of every available educational facility for as long as possible. Furthermore, the Church should encourage its members to consider the teaching profession as one of the opportunities for exercising responsible Christian service to the community.

The contents of education

Not only has the church a responsibility for religious education, but also in academic (or general) education,

religious education should provide for the spiritual growth and nurturing so that the members may play a responsible Christian role in family and society.

The contents of the syllabus should be such that it does not conflict with the process of discovering the plan and work of the Almighty for them.

Role of the Church in education

It is the conviction of the group that the church should, as far as possible, exercise its influence to ensure equal opportunities for all of society.

It is noted as a matter of fact, that the Church has in the past initiated educational opportunities and played a vital and decisive role in providing, at least, elementary education to all sections, and until recently, to the share for black communities.

Revelation of the current position in education

It is recognized that the education achievements of the various population groups vary considerably.

Recognition is given and appreciation expressed for the substantial progress made through the assistance of the State, and to a limited degree by commerce and industry. However, compared with the whites, the other population groups still have considerable headway to make.

It should be urged to accelerate, in consultation with the various population groups, progress in providing education and other facilities, including teacher-training and the introduction of appropriate legislation which will result in compulsory education for all.

The fact that educational planning and execution of educational programmes is vested in various authorities, contributes to further separation of the races and tensions which are evident. This racial disharmony has been referred to as being one of the major concerns for the state and the country at large.

The crisis in Black education

The commission noted that the recent unrest which erupted in certain Black areas in 1976 revealed, among other things, a strong resentment by the Blacks to the educational system for Blacks.

The church has a special task to play a reconciliatory role between State and the affected group: pupils and teachers, parents and children and all engaged in and affected by the unrest.

In specific instances, churches may be able and are hereby encouraged to provide facilities which may be available for educational purposes.

CONCLUSIONS .....

RECOMMENDATIONS

- That equal educational facilities and opportunities be provided for all. (One voted against)
- That the State be requested to expedite educational programmes for those up to now adversely affected to achieve this goal.
- That the training and remuneration of teachers be equal and the realisation of this be aimed at by a predetermined programme for progress.
- That attention be given to an extended educational programme, i.e. to include pre-school, in-service training, adult education.
- Realising that in a multi-racial or multinational society it is necessary for these groups to come to know, appreciate and respect one another, the church should assume and exercise its reconciliatory responsibility by providing opportunities for Christian contact and educating members in responsible human relations.  
As a first step, programmes for Christian contact and education in human relations, may be organised within the membership of those participating in this consultation.  
This could be valuable pre-requisite for the ideal of non-racial education.
- That the Consultation acknowledge with gratitude the acceptance by the State of the principle of equal salaries for equal service and qualifications and urges the authorities to speed up the realisation of this goal.
- That the churches who are not as yet paying those in their employ equal salaries, be urged to do so in order to practice what we preach.
- That commerce and industry be urged to provide equal promotion opportunities for qualified personnel, and not to discriminate on grounds of colour, so that the employees may develop to their full God-given potential.

CONCLUSION

We are the people of God called out of darkness into His glorious light. We are saved by grace and by grace have we become the people of the Kingdom of God. We therefore acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ who has given us the gift of His new life and fills us with His Holy Spirit. As He has called us to Himself, so He sends us out into His world as a sign of His Kingdom, as a sign of reconciliation.

We have discovered a vast need for reconciliation and renewal, within the area of family life and Education. We have only been able to deal with some of the areas, namely mixed marriages, migrant labour, family and land-ownership and the one parent or matri-focal family. We have worked in a spirit of openness which revealed a deep desire to understand one another and to come closer to one another as the Body of Christ. Our reports have not, in every case, been accepted unanimously, but a laudable measure of unanimity was achieved, for which we praise and thank the Lord.

We finally recommend:

- that we as Church of Christ persevere in seeking to find one another in the unity of the Body of Christ.
- that we persevere in seeking the will of God for the Church in this country, together, and that we erect the signs of His love for us all in this country hopefully and courageously!
- that we persevere in speaking God's Word to the Church, and the State, as the Holy Spirit directs us!
- that we see the need for teaching and ministry in the areas of marriage and family life as one of the present priorities in our proclamation and in our pastoral and teaching task.
- We recommend prayer and work towards a deep spiritual renewal within the Church, so that the gifts for ministry which the Holy Spirit gives to His people may now become the means whereby healing and reconciliation will grow within the Body and be extended within the community, among others, by means of pastoral work towards individuals and groups; marriage preparation and marriage enrichment, especially by means of group work; children and youth groups and a renewed emphasis on Bible study and fellowship groups.

/REPORT OF WORKING GROUP ON HUMAN RELATIONS .....

The Church should initiate special programmes and projects that will make communication across racial and cultural barriers possible. Some such projects should be:

- the bringing together of multi-racial groups with similar interests e.g. women, youth, dramatic societies, choirs, doctors, nurses, teachers, builders and businessmen. Such contact to be on equal terms.
- the establishing of contact between local congregations, such as sitting in on each other's meetings in order to understand the context of the other's life.
- the creating of special opportunities for mixed worship, acknowledging that in our society at present some such meetings may at first appear artificial.
- the working together on common service projects such as Centres for Concern, creches, and adult classes.

The church in its preaching and teaching must make the call to love one's neighbour concrete. The church must show clearly that this love can and should be exercised across the racial and cultural barriers of South African society.

The church has a twofold task in responding to Black Consciousness. On the one hand the church must acknowledge and support that which is positive within Black Consciousness, while on the other hand the church must warn that Black Consciousness like White Consciousness, can become a form of racism.

#### Findings and Recommendations

The working group requests the Consultation to make a call through the member churches on every Christian (irrespective of colour, race or denomination) to confire by word and deed that the Gospel of Reconciliation of Jesus Christ is an instrument of reconciliation between God and man and between man and man.

The working group requests the Consultation to urge member churches to make determined efforts to meet with other denominations for consultation and discussion of the church's task of bearing witness in South Africa.

The working group requests the Consultation to seek ways and means by which similar consultations can be held on a regional level.

The working group requests the Consultation to consider asking the participating churches to call their members to repentance for having failed in relation to and to positive action in terms of:

- The Biblical demand to love and care for thy neighbour;
- the existing avenues open for meaningful relationships, and the need to promote a better and deeper communion of the saints within its own fellowship;
- the combined need for the churches to appeal to the authorities to normalise and respect personal relationships and to remove such legal measures that may hamper these.

(The consultation urges member churches to uphold the right of those who feel in conscience compelled to disobey a law in order to obey Christ and support them with their prayers and solidarity of their fellowship).

#### MEMORANDUM OF THE UNITED CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA FOR THE CONSULTATION ON HUMAN RELATIONS

##### The Church and Social Responsibility in South Africa

"Assembly affirms Jesus Christ as the Lord of all life and the only King and Head of the Church. It believes that the Church is set in the world to be a sign of the Kingdom of God and, as such, cannot be identified with any political party or system.

"The UCCSA is both inter-racial and international and operates in five countries of Southern Africa, each having its own system of Government and distinctive social and political problems.

"Notwithstanding the fact that the UCCSA witnesses in its own life to an allegiance which transcends race and political boundaries and in which loyalty to Jesus Christ is acknowledged as supreme, the UCCSA is caught up in a situation of escalating violence and deteriorating human relations in which issues of Christian principle often become blurred by group or national identity and interests.

"The Assembly acknowledges in humble repentance that the UCCSA has not always upheld and proclaimed the fundamental principles of the teaching of Christ it has advocated.

"Our spiritual unity in the Church has often been a facade hiding the division and hurt in our real life outside the Church.

"In order that the Church may address itself with greater integrity to the complexities and the conflicts which motivate the desire for liberation and the establishment of a just social order in the sub-continent, the Assembly re-affirms its commitment to rapid and peaceful change and appoints a task force to prepare an 'in depth' study on 'Human Relations in Southern Africa in the light of Scripture', and to report thereon to the Executive Committee and the Assembly".

/In the foregoing 1978 .....

.....

As the foregoing 1978 Assembly resolution the UCCSA affirms the Lordship of Jesus Christ as the only basis of its life, witness and service.

It recognises, however, that in a plural society cultural patterns and social norms often take precedence over obedience to Christ.

From its inception in New Testament times, the Church has been set in a social order which has been dominated by the policy of the State, and the confession of Jesus Christ as Lord has brought it into conflict with the laws and the social structures of society.

The Church is called to bring all life under the scrutiny of the word of God and to assert the authority of that word over all human authority, both within its own life and in society.

The Church cannot usurp the authority of the state or do its work for it. But in a country where that authority is exercised in such a manner that the majority are denied meaningful participation in central and policy-formulating government, the Church must become a pressure point for change.

"The Nonconformist Conscience" is part of the Congregational heritage and witness. Nonconformists advocated a redistribution of political power so that a majority of people in England came to believe that they had sufficient constitutional power to effect peaceful change in society.

The Church's social action is based on the "Divine Imperative" to love one's neighbour as oneself. It is a principle which has to be applied universally to Church, State and social structures.

In South Africa today the Church cannot confess the Lordship of Christ without taking cognisance of current events. A Church which is preoccupied with its own domestic concerns is witnessing to a "gospel of irrelevance" and not to the Gospel of the Incarnation, which declares to the world and seeks to manifest in the life of the Church, however imperfectly, "that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, and he has committed to us the ministry of reconciliation".

The Incarnation of Jesus Christ demonstrates that God deals with the "real issues" of man's condition at the level of human existence - "the word of God became a human being and lived among us" (John 1:14). As Christ became the "new man" revealing the full potential of every man as well as the glory of the Father, so the Church is called "to live as an alternative community according to the demands of Christian love, justice and reconciliation".

"We confess that in the reality of bitterness, selfishness and fear, the Church as the Body of Christ reveals very little of the mutual love which Christ gave as the distinguishing mark of his Church".

(\* from the resolution of the South African Missiological Society : 1977).

Christian social responsibility is the product of Christian discipleship. It is only when Christians are obedient to Jesus Christ as Lord and live out the implications of their discipleship in society that the Church becomes "the salt of the Earth" and "the light of the world" (Matt. 5:13-14).

Christian discipleship and social responsibility cannot be separated. The Christian can no more elect to be neutral about social affairs than he can elect to be neutral about Christ.

The Church relates to society in terms of the Kingdom of God, of which it is a sign (see 1978 Assembly resolution). For the Church to ignore society is to deny the righteous rule of God in the world and Christ's universal lordship. (Col. 1:15-20).

Political involvement

The sponsors of this Consultation suggested that it should be based on the consideration of Chapter III of the NGK report on "Human Relations and the South African Scene in the Light of Scripture".

While identifying itself with most of the theological critique of the NGK report contained in the PCSA memorandum (see below), the UCCSA is prepared to accept the following statement as a common basis for Christian social and political involvement.

"The Church must preach the Kingdom's message of reconciliation and healing. At the same time it must denounce sin and seek to correct sinful structures in society. In executing this function the Church should not be merely consumed with the promotion of popular opinions which cannot be justified according to Scripture.

"In fact, whenever the word of God should demand it, the Church should fulfil its prophetic function in spite of popular opinion.

"The Scriptural commandment of neighbourly love is the decisive norm for social justice. This commandment should always be realised in practice in all political, economic and social situations".

There can be no neighbourly love without justice. As Pope John Paul II has said, "Love surpasses justice, but at the same time it finds its verification in justice. If justice is uncertain, love, too, runs a risk".

As a response .....

As a response to the Scriptural command of neighbourly love the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa rejects the policy of separate development (apartheid) on the following grounds:

- that it denies the unity of all people in Creation;
- that it classifies a person and determines his place in society solely on the grounds of colour;
- that it has caused and is still inflicting untold human suffering and misery.

As a response to the Scriptural command of neighbourly love the UCCSA calls for the dismantling of:

- racial classification;
- social and residential separation;
- the indiscriminate and enforced eviction of whole communities;
- the confiscation of freehold property rights for Blacks in urban areas;
- differentiated education;
- the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act.

As a response to the Scriptural command of neighbourly love, the UCCSA calls on the South African Government to convene a national convention, fully representative of all South Africans - including those imprisoned and in exile - to prepare a new constitution based on justice and equality of opportunity for all the inhabitants of a unified South Africa.

As a response to the Scriptural command of neighbourly love the UCCSA calls on all Christians to work for the dismantling of separate development (apartheid) by refusing to recognise racial barriers and by working for a society in which the human rights and political and social privileges of all are recognised for the benefit of every person and the deprivation of none.

A majority of members of the Church in South Africa are still living under conditions of injustice, poverty and oppression caused by a system of separate development and racial classification entrenched by law.

Black young people no longer look to the Church for support in their fight against tyranny and injustice. Black young people today are engaged in a struggle for basic human rights. They identify the Church with the establishment - an institution dedicated to the maintenance of the status quo.

Many Black young people maintain that the Church has lost its credibility in the struggle for justice and freedom.

The White person will never know what it is to be Black in South Africa, and the Black person will never know what it is to be White in South Africa. It is impossible to build a non-racial community within a racially-segregated political system. The policy of separate development, because it is built on rejection and fear, can only result in the deterioration of human relations and escalating violence, both in maintaining and resisting the social structure.

The creation of Independent States within South Africa has been repudiated repeatedly by the Assembly of the UCCSA for the following reasons:

- because South Africa is one nation and its territorial integrity should be maintained;
- because the allocation of 87% of the total land area for Whites, and only 13% to the homelands is an unfair distribution of land;
- because Black South Africans can be deprived of their citizenship without their consent and be forced to become citizens of and even take up residence in a State which is not the land of their birth;
- because people are uprooted from areas in which they have lived for generations and literally "dumped" in an inhospitable new homeland without work or any means of subsistence.

Notwithstanding this Church's repudiation of the homelands policy, many of its members have opted to work within the system, and hold office at all levels - from Chief Minister and party leaders to ordinary voters and party members.

It is practically impossible to obtain a true picture of the attitude of Black people in the homelands. The abolition of racial discrimination, both in the Transkei and Bophuthatane, reflect a preference for a non-racial society, on the part of homeland leaders.

But the end of race has not brought an end to oppression. Detentions and burnings are almost as prevalent in the homelands as in South Africa and the right of opposition and dissent is not conceded.

Compliance with the .....

Compliance with the system is often based on fear of reprisals rather than an acceptance of the system. Consequently, many people are within the system, not because it is their own choice, but because:

- there appears to be no alternative;
- pressures are applied by the Homeland leaders which are difficult to resist, if a person is to reside unhindered in the Homeland.

The 1978 Assembly resolution of the UCCSA affirms that because "the Church is set in the world as a 'sign of the Kingdom of God' it cannot, as such, be identified with any political party or system".

This resolution does not state:

- that members of the UCCSA may not be identified with any political party or system, as individuals;
- that the Church must adopt a neutral stance with regard to political and social structures.

Some church members are working for peaceful, social and political change by bringing pressure to bear on the structures from outside.

Other church members are working for peaceful change by participating in the "structures of a separated society" as members of the South African and homeland parliaments and the Coloured Persons' Representative Council.

Although this Church totally abhors the policy of separate development (apartheid), it maintains that multiple strategies are required to dismantle the policy and the institutions of separate development.

It is the system which, in our view, must be abandoned, and it must be left to the individual Christian to work out the social and political implications of his acceptance of the Lordship of Christ.

We acknowledge that there are Christians outside the system, and Christians within the system who are actively seeking for the removal of the intolerable injustice and oppression by which our racially separated society is maintained.

They, however, is no longer on the side of the forces of gradual change. White promises of change are marginal and, to a large extent, cosmetic. Black patience is exhausted. There is a mood of desperation abroad in the Black community.

The Church must hear in the urgent cry of frustrated, oppressed and suffering people the voice of God, saying, "Remove the chains of oppression and the yoke of injustice, and let the oppressed go free" (Isaiah 58:6).

The Church's political involvement cannot be exercised by identifying fully with any current social system or by establishing a "Christian" society to replace existing political structures.

The Church is called to PROPHETIC PARTICIPATION in the life of society. It is a position which acknowledges that every social structure and political party, like the Church itself, falls under the righteous rule of God.

The Church must be the spokesman for justice for the oppressed. This involves addressing itself to the oppressed as well as the oppressor, and awakening them to the possibilities of a fuller life.

The process of "conscientization", as it is often called, has found expression in South Africa in the Black Consciousness Movement.

This has been seen by the South African Government as a sinister influence and the Minister of Justice has exercised his considerable powers to detain those who have advocated Black Consciousness.

The banning of Black organisations and their members stems from the fallacy that Black Consciousness is subversive.

At its 1977 Assembly, this Church affirmed that "Black Consciousness upholds the dignity of Blackness and the refusal to be de-personalised by white attitudes and policies which reduce Black humanity and dignity to a minimum".

Labour and economics

The economy of South Africa is still, to a very large extent, based on the migratory labour system operating on the mines and in the major industrial centres. It is a system which puts money before men, and the consolidation of the economy before the building up of the community and the people who comprise it.

The whole economy of South Africa depends on African labour. Commerce, construction, industry and the railways employ increasing numbers of Africans, many of whom are doing skilled work.

The phenomenal growth in the Black population, the recession in the economy, automation, rigid application of labour control regulations and the movement of people to the homelands, where there are limited employment opportunities, have resulted in increased unemployment amongst Blacks.

Below are quote extracts from the Black Seeh Johannesburg Advice Office Interim Report (February to August, 1978):

The employment crisis has .....



"The unemployment crisis has brought hundreds of people to the Advice Office during the past months. One aspect of unemployment which has not been properly considered is the extent of the crisis in rural areas and in the homelands.

"People who live in the prescribed areas are at least becoming aware of how urban black people are affected by Influx Control and the Labour Regulations ensure that the extent and effects of national unemployment remain hidden and of no concern to white South Africans.

"Recruitment of labour from the homelands is now severely restricted and people who have no Section 10 rights have little hope of being allowed to register in jobs they have found. Those borderline cases where people have been in the area for many years in unregistered employment and might previously have been registered after special application to the Regional Labour Commissioner are now impossible of resolution. Such applications are now generally refused on the grounds that 'there are too many people who were born here in town'.

"This exposes the whole underlying fraudulent nature of the influx control policy. It enables the South African Government to shed all responsibility for unemployed people who are not in 'white' urban areas by pretending that they do not exist and are not part of the South African population.

"Unemployed people who live in homelands and in impoverished rural areas are in a far worse condition than those in urban areas. They have little hope of earning a livelihood in the informal sector because the communities in which they live have no purchasing power.

"Increasing numbers live in closer settlements in the homelands where they have no land and are not allowed to keep livestock. Unemployment insurance fund benefits, pensions and welfare assistance are almost impossible to obtain and many complain of unympathetic and obstructive treatment meted out to them by Commissioners of the Rural Relations Department.

"They are not allowed to leave the area where they live to look for work and if they do so illegally and find a job they cannot be registered. With the greatly increased penalties imposed on employers for employing unregistered workers and the fact that such employers must go to court if charged and can no longer pay Admission of Guilt fines, people without permits are finding it impossible to obtain any kind of work at all".

The African community, lacking financial reserves, is the hardest hit by unemployment. Consequently, frustration, hunger and crime are on the increase.

Justice rather than charity is the answer to unemployment among Africans. Crash training programmes should be initiated to reduce the number of Africans who can only offer their services in the field of unskilled labour and increase the number of Africans capable of doing skilled work.

More job opportunities should be created in the business and official sectors.

The number of African Trade Unions should be strengthened in order to make the African labour force capable of collective bargaining.

The payment of unemployment benefits should be expedited.

The Church can assist the unemployed by establishing "cottage industries" and "centres of concern", where people are taught to help themselves, and by becoming depots for channelling grants and help to the indigent.

It is clear that economic growth could have a marked effect on the social and political structure of South Africa, and may determine the pace at which we proceed in the direction of a non-racial democracy.

The African has only his labour to offer in the South African capitalist system, which depends entirely on white internal investment or overseas investment. This places the African at a disadvantage because his participation in the economy of the country is necessary, in terms of labour, but negligible in terms of capital investment.

It is estimated that South Africa provides the West with 72% of its GOLD, 10% of its URANIUM, and 50% of its DIAMONDS. This mineral wealth has a stabilising effect on the economy and still makes the country reasonably attractive to European investors.

Foreign and internal investors in South Africa have been motivated by economic advantage and not by moral and humanitarian ideals. South Africa has given a good return on investments and if wage discrimination has been responsible for higher dividends, the rich have not objected to becoming richer at the expense of the poor and the oppressed.

This Church has called on all investors to revise their investment policies and employment practices in regard to South Africa by bringing pressure to bear for change, the total removal of discriminatory practices and wage structures, more educational opportunities for Blacks and the right to self-determination for all population groups. In other words, investment should not entrench existing patterns of privilege but be used for the benefit of the total population of South Africa.

/Christians are asked .....



Christians are asked to commit themselves to just stewardship and sharing of material resources and economic opportunities. This means a re-distribution of wealth in South Africa, new bargaining power through training and trade unions for Blacks and, for the Church, a radical revision of its own employment practices and investment policies.

International opinion was crucial in the opening up of sport to all races in South Africa. In the same way, international investment can become a pressure point for internal change.

#### Family life and education

#### Resolution of the 1977 Assembly of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa on Migrant Labour and Family Life

"There is one social issue on which the members of the Dutch Reformed Churches and other Christians in South Africa are agreed - the sanctity of Christian marriage and family life.

"All Christian people have been shocked by the enforced removal of African families from Rodderden Road, and many other parts of South Africa. There is no moral justification for uprooting families who have lived as family units in the urban areas for many years and repatriating the wives and children of registered workers to homelands from which they did not come in the first place".

The following statement on the Squatter problem in the Western Cape was prepared by a local Congregationalist at the request of this Church:

"Inevitable economic forces keep driving Africans back to Cape Town. Indestructible human wants draw the wives and children of such workers to them. In order to enjoy family life, Africans will continue to squat, no matter how hard the authorities try to move them away. Present legislation is destroying family life.

"Legislative restrictions on the movement of Africans to cities and legislative mechanisms for 'repatriating' Africans to the homelands, do not apply to the Coloured people of Cape Town." The Minister of Community Development, Mr Marais Steyn, has said that the authorities 'have no intention' of applying influx control on Coloured people (Cape Times 26/2/77).

"However, another statement by the Minister implies that the authorities see the solution to the squatter problem in the return of Coloured squatters to their 'places of origin' (Cape Times 4/2/77). The Theron Commission claims that 75% come from Cape Town. To speak of sending these people back to their 'places of origin' is clearly nonsensical.

"In all, some 200 000 squatters need to be re-housed somewhere (The Argus 18/2/77). 'If this demand is met by the unprecedented building rate' mentioned by Mr Marais Steyn, it still means that tens-of-thousands of people will be living in squatter huts for the next five or seven years until they can be housed' (Argus 18/2/77).

"At the present time, the bulldozers are daily demolishing a.. the present squatter camps, without any provision of alternative accommodation.

"The Churches in the Western Cape are facing a crisis of impotence in the situation. Everything hinges on THE DESTRUCTION OF FAMILY LIFE and THE FAILURE TO PROVIDE HOUSING. Both these issues were presented in the strongest possible terms to the Government by the DRC in 1975. NOTHING HAS BEEN DONE".

It was resolved that:

The Assembly re-affirms:

- the sanctity of marriage as a divine institution (Genesis 2:24);
- the rights of families to live together near the breadwinner's place of work;
- the need to strengthen home and family life so that children may be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

The Assembly declares as gross misrepresentation the statement, alleged to have been made by the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner of the Western Cape, namely, that the cry of Black squatters to be allowed to live with their wives and children was not their own and that African custom condones adultery.

The Assembly cannot .....

The Assembly cannot condone as Christian any Government legislation or policy which breaks up family life and forces married men to live in single-sex hostels; such a system will increase the incidence of prostitution, adultery and homosexual relationships.

Whereas all the major Churches, including the Dutch Reformed Church (NGK), have repeatedly upheld the sanctity of marriage and deplored the migrant labour system as a social evil ~~because~~ it breaks up family life:

Now, therefore, this Assembly directs that this section of the report of its Church and Society Department be submitted to the South African Committee of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches with the following request:

- that a joint statement be made by all the member Churches of the WARC in South Africa, on the basis of scriptural teaching, upholding marriage as an institution ordained by God as a sacrament of human society and that families may be reared and trained in Christian truth, love and discipline;
- that the said WARC member Churches make joint representations, at the highest level, calling on the Government to desist from further enforced removal of Black people and to make more adequate provision for Black housing in the urban areas, if necessary in co-operation with the private sector.

Changing the name of the Department of Bantu Education has not changed the nature of the Department. The educational system in South Africa is still based on the philosophy and practice of apartheid.

Large numbers of Secondary School children are still wandering the streets of Soweto.

The Witwatersrand Council of Churches has called on all Churches to consider the crisis in Black education and to find ways and means of giving support to the students and staff who are still out of school.

The admission of black pupils to some white Private Schools is a ray of hope on an otherwise dark horizon, which acknowledges the principle that education is a preparation for life and not a preparation for a place in an ethnically segregated society.

#### Personal relations

In the Bible people have priority; the priority God gave them when he made them in his own image (Gen 1:27).

God loves people so much that in order to help them be truly human, he became a human being. In Jesus Christ he came to live among people as one of them so that he might make known to them by his life, teaching, death and resurrection, his dynamic saving action whereby he makes available his plan of salvation for all people.

The Church is called to demonstrate the reconciling power of Christ in the relationship between people of different races, classes, cultures and opinions in its own fellowship. This means that justice must be done in the Church, and done specifically and concretely, if there is to be that trust and understanding which produces reconciliation and good human relations.

When the Church demonstrates this reconciliation between people in its own life, it sets before the nation God's purpose and will for our society, a society in which we cannot expect good personal relations and reconciliation between the various peoples of our land as long as basic injustices remain operative. (Isaiah 58:3-12).

Human relations are intensely personal and extremely delicate.

You cannot "programme" a person like a computer.

Human attitudes are conditioned by history, environment, culture, upbringing and public opinion. For this reason they are often motivated by the emotions rather than the intellect.

What a person "feels" can exert a greater influence on his attitude to life and people than what he "thinks".

Personal relations are not improved by "staying on your own" - isolated and independent.

Personal relations depend on human contacts between persons, either in a person to person relationship or by coming together in groups.

Personal relations cannot .....

Personal relations cannot work on paper - they can only work with people - people who are prepared to meet one another and understand one another as persons.

There is no substitute for people meeting each other across the racial, social, linguistic, economic and cultural barriers which divide them.

There has been a deterioration in personal relations between the races since 1976. This is due to reduced contact and the nature of that contact.

Black people know white people as employers, policemen, Government officials and as members of the privileged group. Whites are identified as those who vote for and implement the system of separate development. Black and white rarely meet in a person-to-person relationship.

Despite a greater solidarity among whites, contact between Afrikaans-speaking whites and English-speaking whites is minimal, particularly since the abolition of dual-medium schools.

It will be difficult to develop personal relationships without changing the laws which keep people of different races apart.

In particular, the following legislation was enacted to restrict personal relations and is responsible for the fundamental dehumanisation of persons:

- Race classification;
- Prohibition of Mixed Marriages;
- Immorality Act.

Communications across human barriers are the key to personal relations. There is a need to understand the feelings and the attitude of other groups and this can only happen as one group is exposed to another at a personal level.

Conscious efforts must be made by the Churches for people of different races to communicate with each other. The following are suggested:

- Exploiting every occasion when some kind of communication is possible.
- Bringing together multi-racial groups with similar interests.
- Establishing contacts between local churches, such as, sitting in each other's meetings in order to understand the context of the other's life.
- Creating opportunities for mixed worship.
- Link-up between families who become involved in each other's lives and problems, joys and sorrows.
- Making use of existing Church organisations as occasions for communication.

Working together on a common service project can be a most effective way of improving personal relationship.

The human value of service is not to be found in what whites do for blacks or blacks do for whites, but in what blacks and whites do together. Not working for one another, but with one another.

In South Africa, black people and white people live in two different worlds, which rarely converge on one another. Human relations can only improve when the two worlds meet. It was a process started by God "who through Christ changed us from enemies into his friends and called us to the same ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18).

It is only in the relationship of new people in Christ that we can fully relate as persons (2 Cor 5:17).

Joseph Wing  
SECRETARY

March 6, 1979

Prepared on behalf of the Task force on Human Relations.

- The Rev S R Arends (Chairman of UCCSA)
- The Rev Dr J M de Gruchy
- The Rev L L C Duze
- The Rev B N B Ngidi
- The Rev Joseph Wing (Secretary of UCCSA)

MEMORANDUM OF THE N. G. SENDINGER ON THE CHURCH AND ITS SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

It is no longer feasible for the Church to accept that in doing charity, it has discharged its social responsibility in the world. Helping people to survive within oppressive and exploitative social structures, however necessary and important that may be, is not the only, nor the highest priority of the Church in this respect. The Church must do more.

It is the oppressed, the downtrodden and the lowly who are especially the responsibility of the Church. And in this respect, a mere examination of, and categorizing of the problem does not suffice.

For the Church, oppressive socio-political structures and exploitative economic systems are more than merely that: they are the products of sinful men and as sin should be combatted with all our might.

The Church must not merely recognize that society is sinful. It must also proclaim that it should, and can be changed.

The Church is the Church of Christ, but it is the Church of Christ in the world. It is in this world that Christ has placed his Church to be a witness for the Kingdom. It is in the world that the Church has the calling to be the people of God who believe in his Son Jesus Christ and proclaim His Lord's. He is Lord, and for His Church His Word holds the highest authority.

For the purpose of this memorandum, we emphasize two basic points.

Firstly, the Lordship of Jesus Christ is proclaimed not merely as "spiritual" reality, not merely for a particular portion, nor certain sections of life, but for all of life.

Listening to God's Word means hearing His commandment to love Him and to love one's neighbour.

To love God is to be involved in the plight of people, to be in the struggle for justice and liberation. This involvement, moreover, does not arise from human resources, but it is the reflection of the great love the Father has lavished upon us.

In socio-political terms, which is our concern at the moment, to love means to engage oneself not merely on a personal level, but also on a structural level. To truly seek the well-being of and shalom for the other, Christian love must find social, political, and economic concretization.

Therefore, love cannot be divorced from justice. To love is to do what is right for the other, to have the interests of the other at heart, even if these go against the own interests.

Love not merely wants justice done, it wants it seen to be done.

This love is not an optional, sentimental feeling the Christian Church could just as well do without. It is a divine duty, something we owe one another as Paul writes in Romans 13.

This is a love which does not operate in a vacuum, but always within a specific historical situation, responding to the demands of the Gospel within that situation.

In being involved, (in the social political affairs of the world for the sake of God and people) human beings are executing their mandate received from God to govern over the earth.

This is a mandate to exercise the power received from God, a power which from the beginning was meant to serve, to be shared with others and to be executed for the well-being of others.

It is a mandate to create history for the sake of people and to the glory of God. A mandate to make and to keep God's world a human world.

All of this can be summarized by saying that the Church is in the world, socially and politically involved, for the sake of the Kingdom of God. This is not to say that the Church will bring about the Kingdom.

The Kingdom of God will ultimately not be the result of human effort. The Kingdom has in fact come in Christ, and was already being realized in the life and work of the Messiah in the world, in his victory over the powers of sin and destruction. The Kingdom has come.

But the Kingdom is yet to come, a culmination which will be effected gloriously by God Himself. Yet it is remarkable that the gospel itself does not distinguish between the Kingdom Now and the Kingdom later. There is a unity in presentation which is based upon the Person to whom this Kingdom has been given.

The Church does not claim to know everything, nor does the Church think that it can provide a blueprint for party policy.

The Church is .....

.....

The Church is, however, prophetic witness to the Kingdom, and as such is compelled to proclaim its demands of love, peace and justice for all walks of life.

It is the expectation of this Kingdom which causes both passionate involvement in, and critical distance of all man-made political orders and at the same time is the inspiration to strive for a realisation of love, justice and a God-responsive, shame-directed use of power to the good of all.

#### PARTICULAR ISSUES AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCH

##### Political structures

In order for political structures to be just, they must reflect this one characteristic: they must allow every citizen to share equally in the responsibilities and privileges of decision-making up to the highest level of government.

The N G Sengileh (NCSK) has passed judgement on the existing political structures in South Africa at its recent synod and has rejected the present political dispensation (apartheid, separate development) as a policy which cannot stand the test of the gospel.

The NCSK expressed its conviction that the policy of apartheid as maintained by the present government and its supporters, is in contradiction with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The NCSK reiterated its conviction that it is not the duty of the Church to provide a party-political policy for South Africa, but the Church considers it necessary, in order to fulfil its prophetic calling, to call upon the Government, in the formulation of its policies, to maintain, and where necessary, to restore the human dignity of people.

At the same time the NCSK also rejected the new constitutional proposals of the Government as still based on the same principles which underlie the present unjust dispensation.

With regard to the Terrorism Act, the NCSK took the following decision:

"The character of the law should reflect the truth that God gives justice to those who are oppressed.

"This justice is a gift of love from God in which his glory, the liberation and wholeness of people are central.

"Because God is totally just in his judgement, this should be reflected in the judgement of earthly judges.

"In the Scriptures strong emphasis is laid on the role of witnesses and evidence, so that judgement could be made justly.

"Human judgement should reflect the just judgement of God.

"Therefore:

- Synod protests in the strongest terms against the Terrorism Act, and especially against detention without trial;
- Synod rejects this law as totally unchristian and calls upon the Government to repeal this law in its entirety;
- Synod holds that people who are detained should be charged without delay; should have legal counsel of their own choice; and must be heard immediately in open court."

The N G Sengileh has previously made known its position that the Government should be no oppressor of people, but that while duties are imposed upon the subjects, the Government should also respect their rights.

In South Africa this principle should be applied according to the requirements of the system of democratic government. Full and meaningful participation in the political process by all citizens is such a basic requirement.

In view of the mandate received by man from God, a person must have the right to "belong", as expressed in his right to participate in political decision-making, and in his right to own property in the land of his birth.

If this link between political rights and the right to own property is correct, we must most seriously question a system wherein the right of acquiring landed property is withheld from those who are excluded from political rights in certain areas.

Labour and economy .....

Labour and Economy

Basic to the proclamation of the Kingdom of God, as well as all our efforts, is the just and right which is inherent in this Kingdom. (Mt. 6:33). The Kingdom of God and justice are inseparable.

Socio-economic and political questions are questions of justice, with regard to which we already know the same argument that we have used before can be applied here.

The fundamental and most important thing is that existing structures of injustice should be changed and a just economic order should be established.

The Bible does not provide us with a set of rules with regard to the social and economic order, industry, labour, economy.

But the Bible does provide us with the fundamental principles of right and wrong, of justice and injustice, and that always within the limits of the concrete existence of people.

It is in accordance with these principles that the Church makes its judgment on the labour situation and the economic order it has to deal with.

It is not on labour itself that the curse of God rests. The cause of this curse rather lies in men himself, and in the social institutions he has created.

Labour is human business. It is being done by people. For the Christian this insight means that in his labour man must illustrate the Biblical truth that he is created in the image of God.

Labour cannot be separated from the person who gives it, it cannot be sold and bought as labour as such. A person's labour is not an object that can be cut off from human reality and human considerations.

In our work our humanity is being reflected. For this reason we cannot understand the true meaning of labour unless we understand the meaning of personhood.

That a person is created in the image of God, is of predominant significance for his labour and forms the very basis of his relationship with the socio-economic reality (Brillenburg, 1978). A person's labour is valuable not because he enhances the profits, but because he has value as a person.

The Christian's daily work is not separated from his faith in Jesus Christ. If labour is indeed a human business, it is part of the life surrendered to Christ so that the Christian seeks to glorify him in his labour.

The message of liberation that comes in Christ has a binding hold also on the labour situation. That is why the labour situation is for the Church an opportunity to witness, to proclaim the reality of the kingly rule of Christ.

It is an opportunity to recognise and to point out conditions of injustice, violence and oppression, to rectify them and to call for and work for conditions that will recognise the human reality within the labour situation.

For too long, too many Christians have seen the contact between Church and industry solely as an opportunity for evangelisation. This is not to say that the idea is not acceptable. On the contrary, it is necessary.

But in doing this the Church has too often not realised that it should join in the struggle for justice for the worker, and that this struggle is part of her witness in the world.

The Church should be part of the struggle to humanise the labour situation and the economic order. And as in all things, the change it seeks is a qualitative change, that goes to the very roots of social structures.

Because it is concerned about people, and about the quality of their lives, the Church is concerned about working conditions, about wages, about proper and just representation of workers, about unemployment - for all of these make for the human situation.

The Church, taking its criteria from the Kingdom of God, should therefore be critical of economic systems that exploit people and prevent equal distribution of the wealth of this land.

It should be critical of economic systems that have the tendency to make the rich richer and the poor still poorer.

It should reject economic structures wherein peoples' humanity is completely undermined, or wherein the human reality is totally alienated from their labour; where labour is being bought and people are being seen as mere cogs in the economic wheel.

The South African modern capitalistic society falls short of too many of these criteria for the Church to ignore this. It is an economic system that ignores fundamental elements of social justice.

/Perhaps the most .....

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Perhaps the most objectionable feature of the South African economy is the system of migrant labour.

The fact that it has been said that migrant labour is necessary for the South African economy is recognition not merely of the "cancer" that this system is, but also a judgement on the South African dispensation as a whole.

The Church must also face honestly its own acceptance of or involvement in oppressive economic structures; an involvement which may encroach upon the Church's ability to witness clearly and effectively with regard to the demands of God's Kingdom.

In all of this, the Church is not a rival for the labour unions. But in a situation where millions do not even have labour unions which are being recognised, the Church is, as always, a humble servant, seeking only, for the sake of Him who came, and for the sake of those He came for, to proclaim His love and justice, His kingly rule, till every knee shall bow and every tongue shall call Him Lord.