

system was the idea of being led, being thought for at every turn. Over the years this has meant a distortion of our personality. FUBA believes it can contribute something toward the return, to the artist, of his sense of self-awareness. We think once the artist is aware of his skills and shortcomings, strengths and weaknesses he will be a long way toward the elimination of self-destruction; He will know what exploitation is and how to deal with it under its different guises. We believe the artist needs encouragement so that he can step out positively on the road to self-fulfilment or actualization. It has to be remembered that the black man has been bombarded with all sorts of self-demeaning suggestions over the years. To stand tall he needs to eradicate these influences and we believe we can help him achieve this by having him take decisions in the direction and course of his artistic development. It is for this reason FUBA is run by a management council which is all black. Bearing in mind certain pressures resulting from the S.A. condition other committees which contribute a lot to the success of the organisation are mixed. This love and hate arrangement is not so much a reflection on the black people's dilemma but on the sick society of this country. As human beings we hope there'll come a time when the present structure will not be dictated by expedience but mere merit.

One would have thought FUBA entered the scene in a blazing fire of welcome. For a short while it did but it soon ran between two red-hot cauldrons. On the one side was dissatisfaction with the mixed nature of its Trustees while on the other the security police put it under microscopic scrutiny. We have welcomed this baptismal by-fire. We have nothing to fear, nothing to hide. We think we're on the only realistic path given the circumstances that govern our lives. We mean to succeed. Not by hook or crook but guided by a deep sense of purposefulness and honesty.

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In the meantime we find our problems are those common to a young organisation like ours. We lack money and material to forge ahead. There is a lot of interest in what we are doing from both black and white members of our society. We are gratified by this. But man can't live by bread alone,

so goes the saying. We need rete assistance. We went about looking for donations. Where to look if not first at home? That meant going to whitey. We are being criticised for taking money from those willing to give it without strings attached. We've found this cynicism a little distressing. It seems illogical for people who depend, through circumstances not of their choice, on whitey to criticise others for taking money from him. We are told we give credibility to the exploiter. When we ask for alternative sources of funding mouths clamp. Meantime we have to buy pencils, brushes, paint, paper, musical instruments and other items. Moral support does not win the businessmen's goods but hard cash does. So much for that.

While we operate in Johannesburg only at the moment, the intention is to have FUBA become a national body. But because the arts are a cash-intense body, we cannot be expected to go national overnight. What we have been doing in the meantime was to make contact with artists in the various centres. It seems the better strategy is to encourage artists in the various centres, to forge links with one another and try to attend to priorities according to local dictates. We hope to be able to funnel funds to other centres as soon as this becomes feasible. Modest beginnings seem to have the greater chance of success. We may look like tortoises but we are confident to get to the winning post. FUBA wishes to establish an endowment fund together with a risk fund. The one will guarantee long life for the organisation and provide seeding funds for groups affiliated to the organisation. It is suggested that the risk fund could be available to affiliates needing sponsorship.

We are acutely aware that we may be dream-walking. But life is made of stuff such as dreams. We do not want to resign ourselves to despair. People are living here, we think, and it is the duty of those with some talent to share it with the others. FUBA is the embodiment of the new spirit in the arts. Gone are the days of the Black Creator pandering to the tastes of others. We need to stamp our true personality on what is created. And that has to be done without apology or excuse. FUBA exists to monitor and give encouragement to all that is worthy in the life of the artist. AMEN. □

For further information contact FUBA, P.O. Box 4202, Johannesburg 2000.

## REVIEW OF ALLAN BOESAK: DIE VINGER VAN GOD. PREKE OOR GELOOF EN DIE POLITIEK

(JOHANNESBURG: RAVAN PRESS, 1979, 83pp.)

by Martin Prozesky

For the time being anyway, Afrikaans is the language of the main political power in South Africa. But, so far as I am aware, it has hitherto not been a language of sustained prophetic power in governing circles, though that is not the fault of the prophets. In the hearing of the mighty it has thus not yet developed its promise as the instrument of a southern Nathan or Amos, measuring society with the yardstick of Yahweh's blazing justice. Nor, for that matter, of a latter-day platteland carpenter who sees love in the grain of things and leaves cedar and oak to reshape human lives.

Perhaps the South African rescue package will consist mainly in this little-used but highly potent remedy: a sustained Afrikaans prophetic word. We have already heard it a few times. And now in Allan Boesak's little book of Afrikaans sermons we hear it again, strongly, bluntly, clearly.

Such is the broad context I would see for Dr. Boesak's preaching, with its theme that a sermon is not a litany of unctuous pieties but a direct application of Christ's saving message to the concrete realities of South African life, above all apartheid. And in a sinful situation, a saving message must mean judgement or it cannot mean renewal. That is the essence of prophetic religion.

Dr. Boesak's theme is made clear in the essay under the title "Relevant Preaching in a black situation" with which the collection begins. In it the author declares Christian preaching to be in a crisis caused by various factors, notably the rejection by oppressed people of pietistic, pie-in-the-sky religion but also the anxiety of preachers to speak out. To preach relevantly in South Africa is to walk blindfolded through a minefield" writes Dr Boesak. And yet the preacher

must challenge the iniquities around him, and politics has no immunity from this challenge. No less an authority than Calvin is cited (at second hand) as having fully endorsed the principle involved.

The twelve sermons that follow develop this theme of politically relevant preaching. Originally given to student congregations in the Western Cape, they nonetheless fully deserve the wider audience made possible by the printed version despite Dr. Boesak's modest reservations. In particular they need to be read where political muscle has yet to be chastened by a prophetic conscience. Some of the sermons respond to major recent events: Soweto, Biko, the Information scandal and SACLA. Others probe various aspects of the gospel in relation to contemporary society. Throughout the message is clear : apartheid is incompatible with that gospel. And at times the language is very telling indeed.

Some examples: "In South Africa God is white and votes Nationalist" (p 31).

"The resurrection community simply cannot excuse the gross exploitation of people by a vulture-like economic system as "our defective world" and then do nothing....." (p.48). Regarding the Information affair he says, ".....What we see here is the beginning of God's judgement on people who have long been trampling on his righteousness (p 83).

Charismatics will find food for thought, not to say heart-burn, in Dr. Boesak's Pentecost sermon, which declares the real miracle of that occasion to be a clear utterance of the gospel so that all could understand it. (p.37). And there is a reminder that "reconciliation is not holding a "multiracial" SACLA congress where we suspend apartheid for a month and behave right fraternally "in the Spirit", only to go back home to a separate and separated life-style....." (p.61).

Kinship with an ancient Israel harried by the uncircumcised in its trek to the promised land has at times been claimed by Afrikaans churchmen and others. Now the question is this, will South Africa be favoured by a continued parallel?

Or will the Bible be shut once Joshua goes and the prophet Nathan comes? For Israel's greatness lay not in surviving a Goliath but in cultivating, painfully but nobly, a capacity for moral purification by standards far transcending those of narrow, sectional interest. To give an example : King David is not great because he smote the Philistines but because he smote his own breast in humble penitence after Nathan rebuked him to his face over the wicked Bathsheba affair. As a result the moral prophet becomes a major feature of Israel's life — and Israel becomes a light to the nations. For it lies in the nature of spiritual reality that the shameless shall know neither growth nor glory. Happy this country if its dominant tribe irózed resembles Israel as Nathan comes. □

# THE CHURCH STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA

(Published by David Philip)

## A review of John de Gruchy's recent book by Bob Clarke

Five years ago, I shared with Dr de Gruchy, the synopsis of a thesis I was about to begin on Church State relations in South Africa. I proposed to review all the major developments in Church State relations of the South African Churches from their beginnings to the present day. The principle emphasis would be upon the period since 1948, but I believed I would need to have a good knowledge of the important historical antecedents that had influenced church attitudes on this matter. For instance, in the case of my own church, the Church of the Province of South Africa reaction to the Colenso Controversy had resulted in a constitution of the church wholly independent of the State, careful to avoid any hint of establishment. The reactions of my supervisors was unanimous, that whilst the comprehensiveness for my proposal was commendable there was enough material there for at least five doctoral theses. If my subject were to be accepted by the Senate, I would have to narrow it down to a limited period, and indeed consider whether it ought not also to be limited to one church. My initial reluctance to accept this advice was eventually overcome by the overwhelming burden of the research involved. I eventually reduced my subject to "The role of the Church of the Province of South Africa in Church State relations during the Archepiscopate of Geoffrey Clayton 1948–57 and Joost de Blank (1958–1963). That runs to two volumes of 20 chapters each.

I mention my own painstaking experience at some length precisely because I see Dr de Gruchy attempting in this book the impossible task that I had myself originally em-

barked on five years ago. His book *The Church Struggle in South Africa* derives from a series of five lectures delivered in the United States in 1977. Each lecture has been expanded into an extended essay to make up the five wide-ranging chapters of this book. Dr de Gruchy acknowledges that though the lectures were prepared for North American audiences, the book is addressed as much to his fellow South Africans as to those elsewhere. In this he succeeds. He avoids those explanatory comments which South Africans would find redundant, but also provides for the English-speaking reader essential background information about the Afrikaans-speaking churches.

The first chapter on "Historical Origins" sets the ecclesiastical scene for the assumption of the church struggle in 1948. In 52 well documented pages Dr de Gruchy makes a panoramic sweep through the history of the Afrikaans, English and Black churches. It is a tour de force, that by its very nature could achieve only the most superficial sketch of the principal developments of 150 years of South African Church history. And yet despite the inevitable criticism which one must level here of skating so swiftly over such huge areas of church history, this chapter provides a perceptive analysis of historical origins and does succeed in giving that panoramic view of the South African Church situation so essential to understanding the main subject of the book, the Church Struggle in South Africa since 1948. As an introduction to a book of this kind, or to a series of lectures, it is exemplary.

My serious criticisms are reserved for Chapter Two "Apart-