

CHURCH AND STATE RELATIONS: THE STORY OF BOPHUTHATSWANA AND ITS  
INDEPENDENCE FROM 1977 TO 1994

by

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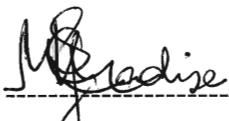
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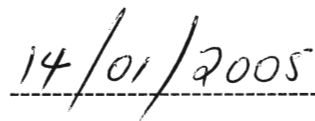
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## Declaration

I declare that: CHURCH AND STATE RELATIONS: THE STORY OF BOPHUTHATSWANA AND ITS INDEPENDENCE FROM 1977 TO 1994 is my work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



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## **ABSTRACT**

The thesis is about the relationship between State and Church, taking note of alternative relations which existed over the ages. The government of Bophuthatswana declared their state to be Christian. The main emphasis was that the Batswana were religious people who were deeply Christian and thus the state was to become Christian as well. This was not separated from the issue of land which also was seen as a gift from God for them. Winterveld was used as a case study to show how the state was justifying its own actions to discriminate against non-Batswana from obtaining citizenship and denying them access to land. The transition period showed that the church stood on the other side of the fence when it supported changes that were sweeping South Africa and calling for the end of states such as Bophuthatswana. This saw the new secular state of South Africa coming into existence.

## Summary

The 'Independence' of Bophuthatswana basically reflected the stamp of its creator, South Africa, and similar relations existed between state and church than in SA. The churches that were close to the government were not mission churches or churches affiliated to the South African Council of Churches (SACC). What this implied was that from the beginning the relationship between state and church in Bophuthatswana was focussed on Independent Churches and individual ministers from other churches. The non recognition of the SACC by Bophuthatswana led to the formation of Bophuthatswana Ministerial Fraternity (BOMIFRA). The latter movement was very close to the government of Bophuthatswana and even had some of its members serving in the cabinet. Some individual ministers were members of BOMIFRA and ministers of their churches at the same time. Those who belonged to the SACC affiliated churches would either leave the church to pursue politics in Bophuthatswana or join another church. Bophuthatswana did not recognise the ecumenical body of South Africa and it was no secret that the SACC was also not recognising that Bantustan.

Ministers from SACC aligned churches opened their church doors to movements that were believed to be politically unacceptable. Bophuthatswana also declared itself a Christian state though its constitution stated that all religions were recognised. The recognition of the other religions was something that was not visible. In most of the state celebrations and functions Christianity enjoyed a slot in the programme. These celebrations included those of the 'Independence day' of Bophuthatswana. As a result Bophuthatswana was more of Christian state than a secular state. Some ministers served both the church and the state at the same time. Christians and ministers from the mission churches who opposed the 'Independence' of Bophuthatswana mobilised themselves and the people demonstrating their rejection of the Bantustan. It became a revelation on 8 February 1988 with the attempted coup when South African Defence Force came to its rescue, and the fall of Bophuthatswana in 1994 when the Afrikaner Weerstandbeweging (AWB) attempted to save it again. Finally Bophuthatswana was no more and the new South Africa was born.



## Key Terms

Bantustans, Batswana, Bophuthatswana, Christianity, Church, Independence, President, South Africa, State, Territory.

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approaching you for funding, as you will be helping them to realise their dreams. The views I express in this thesis are obviously my own and they do not reflect in any way the point of view of the NRF. At the end of it all, many thanks go to my colleagues in the School of Theology and Religion for their support.

## Preface

I was born on 12 November 1967 with my twin brother in the Free State, in a village with a historical significance called Thaba-Nchu. My parents are both Christians who came from the Methodist Church, which is the denomination I belong to. My Primary and Secondary educational background dates back to 1974 to 1986, when I started in Taung Village Primary School (1974-1979) in Taung in the North West Province (then Northern Cape and later Bophuthatswana). From there I proceeded to an intermediate school which was known as Thate Molatlhwa Middle School (1980-1983) and completed my secondary education at Batlhaping High School from 1984 to 1986.

In 1987, I began tertiary education when I first started at the Federal Theological Seminary (FEDSEM) in Pietermaritzburg and completed my studies with them in 1989. I graduated with my Diploma in Theology in 1990. At FEDSEM I was influenced by scholars like Dr Simon Gqubule, Dr Khoza Mgojo, the late Dr Cecil Ngcokovane and Professor Lizo Jafta to pursue my studies beyond the seminary and the diploma level. There were two factors which made them influence me in this way, due to the fact that I was very young at that time and that I had shown commitment to my studies, as well as wanting me to grow intellectually in the field of theology. I took up the challenge and went to the University of Natal in Pietermaritzburg where I registered for the Bachelor of Theology degree in 1991, completed it in 1993 and graduated in 1994.

Unlike many theologians I did not enter the ordained ministry and as a result I was not employed in the church. As a result I had to look for a job and I was employed in a platinum mine (Western Platinum Mine (Pty) Ltd) in Rustenburg from 1995 to 1997 where I worked as a labourer on the surface and later as a Human Resources Officer. I registered for the Master of Theology in the same year with the University of South Africa (UNISA). In March 1997 I left the mining industry to work in a steel industry in Rustenburg as a Personnel Manager. The company was liquidated at the end of the year and I had to stay unemployed for a year again until I was offered a post as an Academic Assistant in the Department of Church History by the Faculty of Theology at the Unisa on a contract that was to last for a year in 1999.



In the same year I managed to attend an international conference where I read a paper which was my first publication. In the same year two of the lecturers at UNISA were leaving and there was a need to employ two more lecturers as there was going to be only one left. Due to my commitment to the department at that time I was asked to apply for the post and thereby stand a chance to face the Selection Committee. I was interviewed for the Junior Lecturer's post which I was ultimately granted after competing with other equally competent and aspiring young academics from other universities, including those who had studied with Unisa. In the year 2000, I graduated with a Master of Theology degree and continued to work as a junior lecturer; I have published a number of articles in accredited journals. I later became a lecturer with the same university, where I registered for the Doctor of Theology degree in 2003. To this day I am still committed to the University of South Africa.

## Abbreviations

AD	Anno Domini
AGRICOR	Agricultural Corporation
AICs	African Initiated Churches
ANC	African National Congress
BDP	Bophuthatswana Democratic Party
BNP	Bophuthatswana National Party
BNDC	Bophuthatswana National Development Corporation
BOMIFRA	Bophuthatswana Ministers Fraternity
BOP	Bophuthatswana
BopTV	Bophuthatswana Television
CE	Common Era
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
FRELIMO	Frente de Libercao de Mocambique
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
JRC	Justice and Reconciliation Commission
LMS	London Missionary Society
NGK	Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk
NP	National Party
PPP	People's Progressive Party
TEC	Transitional Executive Council
TNP	Tswana National Party
SA	South Africa
SACC	South African Council of Churches
SAMA	South African Medical Association
SATSWA	South African Tswana Forum
UCCSA	United Congregational Church of Southern Africa
UCDP	United Christian Democratic Party
UDF	United Democratic Party
UNIBO	University of Bophuthatswana

WAC  
WCC

Winterveld Action Committee  
World Council of Churches

# Introduction

## 1. Statement of the Problem

Church and State relationship has throughout history taken different forms. These forms were either good or bad in some cases it was difficult to distinguish between both because the church would either be running the state or the state running the church affairs, sometimes animosity may be felt between the two. From the beginning when Christianity was becoming a religion and associated with Judaism the relationship between the state and religion was acceptable. However, it became different when Christianity was accepting other people who were thought to be the Gentiles and Judaism began to encounter problems with this experience. At that time (1<sup>st</sup> century AD) the Roman Empire was stretching as far as the Mediterranean region covering North Africa, the Mesopotamia and including areas surrounding the Black sea and the Dead sea. Rome as an empire with good road infrastructure which was used mainly to facilitate the movement of the army that was keeping Roman peace (known in those days as the Pax Romana) in the empire as well as collecting the taxes from the conquered nations. At that time Christianity as a new religion which was growing beyond the Jewish territory.

Christianity as a new religion was beginning to allow non - Jewish nationals or as they were called in those days the Gentiles and it was a religion which was recognising Jesus as the Messiah. In the Roman Empire at that time, religion was taken very serious and there were others that were politically involved and Christianity was not one those religions involved. In those days civil authority was something thought to be given by God and this meant that both the state and religion were inseparable. There also was religious tolerance within the Roman Empire. All the religions were perceived to be equal except the emperor veneration which at that time was referred to as Emperor Worship. Christians did not recognise nor worship the emperor as the they emphasised that there was only one God to be worshipped. This led to Christian persecution on the grounds that they were accused of incest, cannibalism, disloyalty to the emperor and atheism. Persecution of the Christians was started by Caligula in 37 - 41 CE and ended

with Theodosius in 380 CE (it lasted for more than 300 years). However, Christians did not just sit and let themselves be persecuted without defending themselves. and this happened before both Constantine and Theodosius declare it legal. The aim of the apologists was to try and make it clear to the Roman authorities that what they were being accused of was not true. The apologists work meant putting the record straight about what Christianity stood for. After Christianity was legalised, it began to enjoy the privilege of being supported by the state as well as supporting the state in return. In some states, Christianity found itself experiencing some confrontation with the government while in other states it enjoyed the status of either being recognised by the state or as equal with the state.

In some states especially the Muslim states, Christianity found itself being threatened with extinction, and this was particularly in Egypt and some of the North African states like Tunisia, Algeria, Libya and in some parts of West Africa. In Egypt, the situation for Christianity saw the Copts being reduced to a religion of the minority. People who followed the Coptic Christianity in Egypt were not treated in the same way as those who embraced the Islamic religion, however, the Muslims did not drive Christianity out of Egypt except that the majority of the Egyptians embraced the Islamic religion. Some countries did not recognise religion owing to its involvement with the politics of either colonialism or oppression. One good example of this was Mocambique which after its liberation decided to become a Marxist country. With FRELIMO as the movement of liberation in Mocambique, it was clear that Christianity was not welcomed. Christian churches were forced to give - up their properties to the state to be used for other purposes and not for worship and church affairs. The Mocambican government at that time took away church land, schools, resources like priests having to do national duty before they could follow their call. The one Christian denomination which was faced with this situation was the Catholic Church as opposed to the Protestants Churches. In other states, religion was recognised and this was visible particularly with those which declared themselves as being secular. Some of these states did not have relations with any church but had not put restrictions nor ban any religion in the country. There were also situations of the church taking a neutral stance and not be against or support the state. This was the experience which was witnessed by the Anabaptist movement which

alter became a church after the Reformation. This meant that the church decided not get involved in matters which were politically, socially and economically related. Anabaptists believed that these were not affecting the church as theirs was spirituality of the people and doctrinal matters like baptism of the infants and adults. All of the factors involved the three major factors of church and state relationship which are: Opponents, Allies and Neutrality. Some of the scholars in South Africa wrote a lot about church and state relationship and one can think of people like Charles Villa - Vicencio, John de Gruchy, Albert Nolan, Desmond Tutu and Allan Boesak. This was done at the height of political turmoil which South Africa experienced during the apartheid era. In the same context existed two types of churches; those that supported the state and help develop the theology of apartheid and scripturally justified it, these churches were known as the Dutch Reformed Churches. The other type of churches in South Africa were known as English speaking, and they were vocal against the state's policy of apartheid. Both types of churches were imported from Europe through the missionary effort.

## 2. Thesis Statement

Throughout history, church and state relationship came in different forms, but the situation of Bantu Stands in South Africa was a unique one. All of the homelands were the surrogates of apartheid government. Some of them opted for 'independence' while others remained part of South Africa under apartheid. The main problem with the 'independent' homelands was to simply inherit from the big brother South Africa the notion of a Christian state. In other words, apartheid was further carried on but through self governance and 'independence' and Christianity became a pillar of strength to maintain the status quo. The difference with these states was that unlike South Africa, they did not develop the theology of ethnicity as it was the case in the homelands. People were not only divided along the racial lines but also on ethnical grounds. Bophuthatswana in this instance was vocal in publically declaring itself a Christian state and went further to maintain that its 'independence' came as a result of their prayers to God who finally granted it autonomy. It was not surprising to see a replica of the South African situation in Bophuthatswana as church and state relationship took almost

a similar pattern. In this case the African Independent, Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches supported the 'independence' of Bophuthatswana while the mainline churches which were mainly English - speaking were caught up in the situation inherited from South Africa. Bophuthatswana, like South Africa looked at these churches and see them as supporting the communist ideology which they were opposed. In many instances ministers of the mainline churches which in this manner operated under the umbrella of the South African Council of Churches were not acknowledged by the government of Bophuthatswana as they were problematic. African Independent Churches, Pentecostals and Charismatic Churches supported Bophuthatswana and to a certain extent some ministers from these denominations held political positions and enjoyed the privileges of owning the land as well as participating in state celebrations and commemorations. This thesis is intended to show a continuity which was to be broken down into ethnicity and divide the black people beyond racism but also at a level of language difference, culture and tradition. The church found itself entering a new form of extended struggle found in South Africa.

### 3. Personal Motivation for this study.

The aim of the study is to show the other side of the history of church and state relationship from the underside which had been written from a distance and sometimes by unaffected people. The writing of this history of Bophuthatswana comes from a historiographical perspective which is understood by the researcher as an observer who grew up and schooled in the context and had seen the events unfolding. Above this, is the fact that the history of Bophuthatswana has not been written from the Church History point of view. It is in this manner that there was a need to keep the events of what took place in South African history before the post - apartheid era. It is further against this backdrop that there was a need to research about Bophuthatswana as a government established under apartheid, that it should not be allowed to disappear without being recorded and safely kept for future generations to know what took place. This work will also serve as reference for other History and Church History scholars in a situation of further research, some of which may spark the debate or lead to new research output.

#### 4. Methodology

The methodology which was used followed three patterns which were literature review, personal interview as well as personal participation. The literature used was mainly from the existing wrote by the different scholars on the subject of church and state relationship. This is the material which clearly shows the history about the relationship between state and church from the early years of Christianity, to the Medieval period, the Reformation period, Post Reformation, the Marxist state and religion down to the apartheid regime under South Africa.

Personal interviews were conducted with mainly people who were in the cabinet of Bophuthatswana. Some of these people were friendly and willing to share their experiences about the church and state relationship in Bophuthatswana. It is not only the people mentioned in the research who were interviewed but others who belonged to the ruling party were participants. Their names may not reflect in the research but their contribution was significant.

Beyond the interviews, was the visit to the archives, university libraries (both UNISA and the University of the North West). This led to the primary material which included the newspaper material, speeches of the people who took part and minutes of the meetings and gatherings which took place as the events were unfolding. It was mainly from the primary sources and interviews that this research got to be put together and be compiled in the manner it is.

Personal participation was due to the context in which the researcher was brought up, historiographical background tended to also play a role in terms of observation. This can be seen from the time the researcher was in primary school then went to high school in Taung which was in Bophuthatswana. The fact that the researcher went to school in Bophuthatswana and experienced what went on there puts him in a better position in bringing a new dimension which makes it unique. His perspective should not be seen as writing from anger but attempting to write as an outsider. From an observer's point of view it is easier to also know and remember coming across or



listening to the people who were expressing their feelings about the state of affairs in both the South African and Bophuthatswana governments.

## 5. Rationale for chapter division

Chapters are divided in a manner which reflects the historical development of church and state. The first chapter shows the previous experiences of the relationship from opposition, allies to the neutral stance on the relationship between church and state. This chapter captures the significant development which influenced the two institutions over the years, in some contexts this had to be in line with the new trends that emerged, a good example of this being the emergence of Marxist states and their relationship with the church. On the other side was the religious states like those of the Muslims and the Christians where the religious denominations found themselves on the opposite sides of the fence. This was a visible phenomenon in the Egyptian state which fell into the hands of the Muslims after it was led by the Coptic Christians for many years.

On the other hand was the allies type of a relationship between church and state which in the Roman Empire embraced Christianity during the eras of Constantine and Theodosius. This led to the same religion now becoming a state religion with the emperors controlling the church and the popes also getting involved in state matters. This became a trend in Britain as well where the Anglican church was controlled by the monarchy. King Henry VIII became the head of the church at the time of the reformation when many reformers were speaking against state and church relationship. This was fuelled by the fact that the king felt that the church could not meet his demands and went on to dismiss the Catholic Church and established the Anglican Church. As a result the king had the powers to call the church council and even went as far as appointing the Archbishop of the church. Some states preferred to be secular states, where there was no religion which has power over any religion. However, that state could determine what religion must do. What this means is that the state does not have power to dictate religious matters but can suggest certain tasks to be taken up by the religious movements. In some states the situation warranted the civil religion which saw the church being a civil movement. Civil religion meant that people could determine how

their religion should be, in other words it was up to them decided its outlook. There also were the neutral factor between church and state. This was clearly visible especially during the Post - Reformation period with the emergence of the Anabaptist Church who felt that there was no need for the church to be involved in matters related to politics. Europe at that time was going through a rough patch in its history both the church and the state. Some leading church figures felt in those times that the church must keep to its sacred world of spirituality and the state to its secular world of politics. To the South African context it was a tug of war between the two institutions. The Christian church was divided along lines of race, ethnicity and origin. The reason for this was that the Dutch Reformed Churches were seen to be leaning towards the supporting the state while the English speaking churches were opposed to the state. The South African government was led mainly by the Dutch descendants, hence the English speaking churches were opposed to the state. This goes further that the origin of both the English speaking and the Dutch Reformed Churches, as many of the former enjoyed a large number of the black membership in its ranks. Race was a major card which both denominations used to confront the state and support it. For the Dutch Reformed Church the white race was the chosen one to be superior over the black race and even theologically justifying its position. While for the English there was no theological justification for the oppression of the black people in South Africa.

This was further fuelled by the formation fo the Bantustans which ultimately were influenced to beg for 'independence' along the ethnic grounds. Few of the homelands or Bantustans opted for what was offered to them by the South African government. Bophuthatswana became one of the Bantustans which took the offer from South Africa. This led to the homeland government attempting to bring together Batswana as an ethnical group to calling them a nation. Many of Batswana people who stayed in South Africa were seen to be in diaspora and that they should come back to their 'country'. Bophuthatswana took the opportunity to even call refer to itself 'A Place for All' which was counter - acting the South African position of apartheid. As an attempt to get all Batswana into Bophuthatswana the logo which became its symbol was: 'Tshwaraganang lo dire pula ene': unite and progress. The relationship of church and state in Bophuthatswana reflected that of South Africa. The difference with

Bophuthatswana was that church leaders involved only black people from both the mainline churches and the independent churches. This saw the church not agreeing on the 'independence' of the Bantustans, with the mainline ones maintaining their opposition to apartheid while the independent ones supported the idea that at last Batswana could rule themselves. This did not leave Bophuthatswana without the ways of making efforts to prove that they were capable of building their own 'economy' and 'trade'. To the eyes of many people there was no real economy and trade as they depended on the South African government and at the same time they were supply the cheap labour market for the same government.

The third chapter deals a lot about the issue of land which for ages had been a problem. For Bophuthatswana the land was obtained through peaceful means and this was reflected in the national anthem. Land became a contested terrain during the apartheid era and 'independence' was seen by other people as a means to obtain the land back. Churches were divided on the issue of land ownership as some benefited through their support to the homeland of Bophuthatswana, one of those churches which benefited was Assemblies of God Church. This church obtained land through President Lucas Mangope for the building of their church in Thaba - Nchu. Some churches owned the land before the 'independence' of Bophuthatswana, and these were mission churches. As for the African Independent Churches the situation was more suitable based on the fact that many (though not all) supported Bophuthatswana as a government. The ownership of land to Batswana was not outrightly addressed because many of them did not totally owned any land. The agricultural land was only leased out to people who wanted to farm but they could not determine the commercial benefits for themselves as this was done through the Agricultural Bank known as AGRICOR.

This further saw struggle for settlement from the people in Winterveld which led to a conflict between the South African Council of Churches and Bophuthatswana. This was not only on land as there were factors involved such as water supply, education, citizenship, pensions and permanent residence. The fourth chapter shows how the South African government was succeeding in dividing the black people along ethnicity. It was clear from Bophuthatswana's government that you were either a Motswana or

apply for citizenship to be considered for other benefits that were enjoyed by the citizens of a country. This was the experience which people around Winterveld went through. In some instances they had to endure the police brutality in their own homes as some of them were plot owners and that they could not rent out their plots to people who were not Bophuthatswana citizens. This was a controversial matter as many of the people in Winterveld were not Batswana, the majority of them were forcefully removed from Lady - Selbourne in Pretoria. The force - removal was done in the 1960s long before Bophuthatswana. Due to ethnic divide entrenched by the South African government it was easier for Bophuthatswana to implement upon other groups of people who were not Batswana. The South African Council of Churches got involved in the Winterveld case through the Pretoria Council of Churches which was its branch. The SACC was involved in the community projects and also participated in the negotiations with the government of Bophuthatswana in an attempt to resolve the Winterveld case. However, for Bophuthatswana the involvement of the SACC meant that their 'independence' was being undermined by an organisation which does not belong to that country. Countless meetings were held between Bophuthatswana and the South African Council of Churches in which the latter made it clear to the former that its 'independence' was not recognised as it was obtained through the devious manners of apartheid.

Chapter five looks into the history of transition in South Africa which affected Bophuthatswana as well. Though Bophuthatswana was affected, its leaders did not think that way because they believed that their country was independent. For them their participation in the negotiations in the Convention for a Democratic South Africa meant helping South Africa solve its problems. According to the leaders of Bophuthatswana they were outsiders who were invited to reconcile the two racial groups on the different side of the fence. However, things did not go the way Bophuthatswana anticipated, as they found themselves against the wall trying to maintain their 'independence'. Due to the unfolding of events President Lucas Mangope of Bophuthatswana ended up forming an alliance with Inkatha, Oupa Qozo from Ciskei and the Afrikaner Volksfront. The main aim was to counteract the effort of uniting South Africa and keep the politics as they were in the past. This alliance was to see Mangope further seeking some form of

protection from the right - wing Afrikaner group as Bophuthatswana leaders were threatened by the new government which was on its way to rule. The threats that were feared involved the relationship of the Africa National Congress with the Communist Party of South Africa. This alliance saw the collapse of civil service in Bophuthatswana which subsequently led to Afrikaner Weerstand Beweeging invading Bophuthatswana with the aim of restoring order. The result of this invasion was the random killing of the civilians and few of the invaders and finally the dissolution of the homeland government's through the Transitional Executive Council 'independence' ten days before the first democratic elections of South Africa in 1994. After the elections there were remnants of the old order of governance in Bophuthatswana which was visible in the appointment of officials to lead the new province known as the North West. Some of the loyal followers of Mangope felt that they were being sidelined because they did not belong to the ANC, while others felt that the province catered only for Batswana and not any other ethnic and racial groups that lived in South Africa. The appointment of Popo Molefe as the first Premier of the North West Province saw people like Rocky Malebane Metsing challenging him on the grounds of ethnicity despite that the premier was a Motswana, this confrontation was simply that Mr Molefe was not a suitable person who knew the interests of Batswana. Other new structures were implemented when the former Western Transvaal towns of Potchefstroom, Klerksdorp, Wolmaranstad, Delareyville and others began to be part of the new province. However, Mmabatho which was the capital of Bophuthatswana was maintained as a capital of the North West Province and it was called Mafikeng which is the original name of the city. All the buildings of Bophuthatswana were to be used by the new provincial government as well as the civil service with some changes to the old structures.

In the last chapter I shall present my conclusions.

# Chapter 1

## Alternative relationships for church and state through the ages

### 1.1 Introduction

This chapter attempts to discuss alternative relationships between the church and state over the years. The church has found itself to be relating to the state in at least three different ways: as an opponent of the state, an ally, and sometimes adopting a neutral position and not taking sides. Where the church was an opponent of the state, the focus will be on the Early Church, the church under Muslim rule, the church under the Marxist state as well as the anti-apartheid churches in South Africa. This will be followed by a subsection on allies, which will consider the church in the Roman Empire, the national state churches after the Reformation, the church in colonialism, the civil religion and the apartheid churches in South Africa. Lastly, a subsection will discuss the neutrality of the church, in which attention will be paid to the Anabaptist churches in post-Reformation Europe, secular states and present-day South Africa.

### 1.2 Opponents

#### 1.2.1 The Early Church (until Theodosius)

The history of church and state relationship has been problematic from the beginning. Villa-Vicencio (1986: 3) makes a clear reference to the martyrdom of Christians, which both the state and church regarded as a secular and sacred duty. This influenced the relationship between church and state during the medieval and the reformation period and has continued to have decisive and sometimes contradictory implications for the two institutions (i.e. the church and state) even to the present context. For the early church the interpretation was simply that the sacred authority had an impact on the political realm. In other words the kingdom of Christ was not of this world, but as expressed by Villa Vicencio (1986: 4), it occurred to the Christians that an emperor like

Caesar Augustus (27 BCE-14 CE) might become a Christian. The non-involvement of Christians in politics did not imply an indifferent society. Civil authority was seen as given by God to govern justly and it therefore deserved the Christian's honour and respect. This was also seen as in accordance with the will of God. At that time the uncertainty on the part of Christians towards the state was due to the fact that in the ancient Near East and the Mediterranean world, religion and civil functions were perceived to be inseparable, while in the Roman Empire, the government was understood to be supreme in both religious and secular realms.

The real test of the relationship of the Roman Authorities with the early church came as a result of the introduction of the policy of religious tolerance and the introduction of emperor veneration, which did not stop people from practising their individual or private religions. The policy of religious tolerance was extended towards the religion of the conquered people, while the subjects and citizens of the empire were required to participate in the public worship as well as to acknowledge the deities of the state (Rusch 1982: 2). The notion of civil inseparability was at the same time characterising the Jewish concept of the state. In later years this concept was destroyed by Jesus with his inauguration of a new era in the history of church and state relations through his response to the Pharisees and Herodians: 'Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, but give to God what is God's' (Mark 12:17; Matthew 22: 21). Despite the cult of the emperor worship, not all of them imposed it upon their subjects except at the point of death, when they were to be added to the list of the gods. Emperor worship was first introduced by Caligula (37-41 CE), who was followed by others like Nero (54-68 CE) and Domitian (81-96 CE). The conflict between the Christians and the Roman state came about as a result of Christian refusal to render to the emperor a worship due to God alone (Rusch 1982: 2). Nero and Domitian were very suspicious of the Christian religion: they viewed it as superstitious and dangerous to the state (simply because the church was organised and powerful). In spite of the Christians' efforts to be loyal citizens of the empire, they were guilty of one of the most serious forms of treason: sacrilege and nonconformity in public worship. The authority's doubts and suspicions were based on rumours that they (Christians) were practising immoral acts such as atheism, incest, adultery and cannibalism (Villa-Vincencio 1986: 4). On the other side

the Jews, who were monotheists, were exempted from persecution, to which the Christians were subjected. According to Villa-Vicencio (1986: 5) Jews were influential in Roman politics and economic stability, as opposed to the Christians who basically were poor. As a result of this, conflict between state and church in the Roman Empire was constituted by various concepts of good obedience and citizenship. The persecution of the Christians began with the stoning of Stephen, which is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles 6: 1-8. The stoning of Stephen led to the separation of Christianity from Judaism, which later attracted the attention of the imperial magistrates. Soon Rome came to understand that Christianity was an independent religion with a following of noteworthy strength and the imperial administration took action against it (Rusch 1982: 3).

Christianity came to be known as a religion and the church as a society during the times of Emperor Nero (CE. 54-68) and Trajan (CE. 98-117). Before the Constantinian era, the Christian persecution differed in methods of violence and duration. Throughout the empire, the harassment, imprisonment and condemnation to death of those who professed Christianity depended upon the humanitarianism or the cruelty of the emperors and the interpretation of official attitudes by secondary provincial rulers (Rusch 1982: 3). Persecution during the era of Decius (CE 249-251) was intended to totally destroy Christianity throughout the empire. After a short period of relative tranquillity, the Great Persecution came through Diocletian in 303 CE, which was accompanied by the hope of restoring internal unity to the empire through the establishment of religious uniformity. This saw Christian documents being confiscated and places of worship destroyed, while at the same time clergy and laity were imprisoned, tortured and killed. This type of persecution continued even after the era of Diocletian ended in 305 CE, which was followed by the era of Constantine in 312 CE with the Edict of Milan.

The conversion of Constantine in 312 CE marked a new lease of life for the church. This new lease of life has been disputed in a number of ways by some historians in the past and to a certain extent by contemporary history scholars as well (Rusch 1982: 12). The argument concerns the church and state relationship during the Constantinian era,



which became possible when the church envisioned the previously undreamed-of opportunity of spreading the gospel to all the nations. The thoughts and influence of Christianity were welcomed and accepted as a law, education and art. The day of the house-church gave way to the period of the basilica. The negative side saw Constantine extending friendship to the church, which came at the price of dependency and subserviency, which adopted the political, rather than spiritual, values in the church. The new opportunities were now quickly and easily taken by the Christians and persecution was coming to an end, many of them were showing less enthusiasm in their commitment and less heroism in their witness (Rusch 1982: 12).

In the twelfth century, Bernard of Clairvaux complained that the acclaim of the papal court had gone to Constantine and not to Peter. According to Rusch (1982: 12) the church or Christian situation was not transformed immediately during the Constantinian era. It was only during the emperors of Theodosius in 390-395 CE that Christianity became an official religion of the empire. However, the conversion of Constantine was questionable as he had shown loyalty to Christianity but also did the same with the Arians and the Nicene Christians, especially if it was to serve his purpose and the needs of the empire (Rusch 1982: 12,13). In his calling the first ecumenical council it appeared that Constantine was demonstrating his superiority to all the bishops in church matters. He was at the same time not interested to act as an arbiter in conflicts which involved the bishops, as he believed that he was a simple human being who might be guilty before God if he was to assume that position (being an arbiter). Under Constantine the church was faced with two problems: firstly there was the threat of admitting to its membership disguised pagans and heretics who wanted to stay and win the favour of the emperor. The second problem was the exploitation of the church by the emperor's passion for unity and tranquillity in the empire (Rusch 1982: 13). As a result of this, during the Constantinian era there were two theories of the church-state relationship which existed and developed. These theories existed in both the East and the West: in the West the emphasis was on the existence of two societies, one ecclesiastical and the other civil. This meant that the rights and privileges of each were quite noticeable and unique. However, in the East the issue involved a Christian society developing because the empire was becoming fully Christian and the two distinct

societies were to be merged into one, with the emperor as its head. This could also be seen in the creation of a Christian city in Constantinople as the 'New Rome'. Christianity became a free religion during Constantine but was officially legalised only by Theodosius.

A new chapter for the church and state was written in A.D 380 when Theodosius declared Christianity an official religion and prohibited the practice of pagan cults. His defence of the Christian religion led to the destruction of the pagan shrines and he used their wealth to construct the 'Church of the Lord Jesus Christ' (Rusch 1982: 18). After the efforts to convert the leaders of the heretical groups to the faith of Nicea and Arian teaching of the First Council of Constantinople in 381 AD, Theodosius implemented laws against all the heretics. He was no different from his predecessors and his successors as he believed that the state had jurisdiction over the church matters; however, Theodosius was challenged by Ambrose, who was the bishop of Milan, regarding the application of his theory of the church-state relationship. Both Theodosius and Ambrose featured in the deliberate massacre of 7000 people by a direct order from the emperor at Thessalonica in A.D 390. As a result of the massacre Ambrose admonished the emperor, imposing public penance on him. The emperor obeyed the bishop, recognising in this instance what he came to admit on several other occasions: that the emperor's political actions were the subject of the moral judgement of the church. On the death of the emperor, it was the bishop who delivered the funeral oration in memory of the great man whom he admired and loved. Both were courageous in the proclamation and the protection of their deepest interest and convictions in pursuit of the unity of the state and the liberty of the church (Rusch: 1982; 19).

The Christian apologists, who in this case included Tertullian (CE 150-220), emerged as a result of the conflict between Christianity and the state. Though there was also the nonparticipation of Christians in state affairs, their resistance to recognising civil obedience has led to the charge of political unaccountability levelled against the Christians. However, in a turn of events, the winds of political change under Constantine saw the same Christians who were persecuted becoming part of the civil

service, joining the army and even accepting appointments to political offices. Before long, the Christians were themselves receiving privileges, which were becoming prestigious. Constantine, though not baptised, was very sympathetic to Christianity. Despite this, his actions were politically motivated, and this made Christianity an engine of state policy. He (Constantine) considered Christianity as a means of unifying his empire (Pfeffer: 1953, 14). However, one must consider the context in which Christians were persecuted and the origin of Christian persecution, which stemmed from Judaism that felt that Christianity was deserting the Law of Moses in proclaiming Jesus as the promised Messiah and introducing infamous, idolatrous practices into the empire based on the foundation of Jesus' teachings (Rusch 1982: 8). As a result persecution of Christians was begun by the Jews who accused them, and the latter sought to sow the seed of persecution throughout the empire at all levels. The other source of persecution came from people who were not associated with Judaism and were simple citizens of the empire. This form of persecution came about because it was believed that Christianity was a sect in Judaism. Soon after it became clear that Christianity was a new religion its followers were accused of atheism, cannibalism, incest, and idolatry. In the same context the state found support from both the Jews and non-Jews in accusing Christians as well as in attacking them. However, the Christian apologists were a new breed of converts who possessed knowledge about citizenship and the power that was in the empire. Most of the Christian apologists were educated and professional and were acquainted with the subtleties of Greek philosophy, like Quadratus in CE 125 and Melito of Sardis in CE 171 to 190 who undertook the defence, expansion and justification of the Christian faith. The Latin apologists were Felix in CE. 218 and 235 and Tertullian in CE. 220. These apologists were at the same time considered as the earliest Christian Theologians (Rusch 1982: 9). They were the first to organise and make a systematic presentation of the Christian faith. It was from this context that there developed in the church a clearer knowledge of the challenge to express the message of Jesus in the social, cultural, intellectual and political context which was in the world of the Graeco-Roman civilization. 'It was due to the apologists that the state-church relationship was advanced to a new level of encounter and confrontation' (Rusch 1982: 9).

### 1.2.2 Under Muslim rule (North Africa)

Alexandria was conquered and surrendered to the Islamic Arab army in 642 and Egypt, which for many centuries was part of the Roman-Byzantine Empire, as of the Christian Church, became a central pillar of Islam (Hastings 1994: 55). This act changed the cultural and religious history of Egypt and North Africa as a whole. The coastal region of North Africa along the Mediterranean, which in the past had been Christian and non-Arabic speaking, was occupied by the Muslims, due to military conquest especially by the mighty governors of the Caliphate of Baghdad, who were unchallenged in North Africa from the Red Sea to Morocco. For the Roman Empire, the situation was the same for centuries as they could not advance militarily across the desert. Over the centuries the notion about the existence of gold in the South Sahara was Africa's strong drawing card for almost a thousand years. While the situation in West Africa was not the same as in the North and East, especially in communication, trade and growth of knowledge the Sahara was very crucial for these as the South of Safar was being reshaped under Muslim influence (Hastings 1994: 55). However, the area around the Sahara was most difficult particularly in opening up to other cultures, from the Mediterranean coast, and this included Cairo as well. For the West African region Cairo was like a commercial centre and the heart of wealth, learning, power, literacy and religious confidence where the kings would briefly visit when they were on their way to Mecca. The interesting thing about the North African region of the Sahara was that it was never directly linked with the South of the desert but was partially transformed in doing so. The simplest thing was to trade through caravans and even enlarge the market, which was limited (Hastings: 1982; 56). This led to some states from the north (Europe) becoming traders and the market grew in leaps and bounds.

All in all, the Islamic world at that time was flourishing through slavery, particularly that of women. Slaves were part of the domestic, military and even the sexual system of the Islamic world (in the Muslim culture a man was allowed four wives, but in the case of slave concubines it was different as they could take more than this number of wives; this was only permissible after the Sudanese king became a Muslim. The number of his wives was reduced but not that of his concubines). In this case female slaves were

preferred more than male ones especially in the Saharan area but it was the opposite on the transatlantic side (Hastings 1982: 56). This was the trend in the Upper Nile (Middle East) where there was a need for a large scale supply of fresh slaves. But by the late medieval period the slave trade was beginning to decline except in Portugal and Spain, as these were under Arab dominance for a long time. However, in North Africa the political and religious context had changed as most of the region was under the Muslim authority.

In the Egyptian context the Coptic religious sensibility has been expressed in terms of a cluster of core symbols such as that Jesus once visited Egypt as an infant during the flight and that the Coptic Church was started by St Mark (Isichei 1995: 218). The Coptic cross is woven with handlooms, and incised, and is also painted on the walls of the homes of the Copts. Historically the Copts spoke Arabic as their first language from the twelfth century and their practices were common with those of the Muslims as their neighbours. But the identity of the Copts was like that of the Jews which was ethnic, possessing independent religious affiliation, being members of 'the Coptic nation' and finally being the conscious heirs to ancient Egypt (Isichei 1995: 218). Many of the Copts held high offices under the Mameluks but this ended after the French invasion of Egypt in 1798, when they were at their lowest ebb in numbers and morale. 'In 1855, the Patriarch of Alexandria put their numbers at 217 thousand in a population of 5 million, and there were only seven desert monasteries' (Isichei 1995: 218). At that time the role of the Copts in society became very crucial when first Napoleon, recognised their administrative potential and gave them the leading role in the government. Interestingly, the situation of the Copts under Muslim rule improved compared to the time when they were under Christian authority (Isichei 1995: 219). This made the relationship between the Copts and the Muslims very strong as they had never been so close during the nationalist movement. However, this alliance was affected after the assassination of the Coptic Prime Minister (Pasha Burtus Ghali) by a Muslim in 1910. This relationship consequently came to an end and the Copts could only remember it as a golden age, when the Islamic scholars could preach in the churches while Abuna Segius spoke on freedom in the mosque of al-Ashar.

In North Africa, Islam spread through military conquest and trade. Commerce, civilisation and Islam go together and this made Islam become an urban and royal affair. The kings became Muslims and some even built mosques and attended them. In some instances the Muslims imposed the wider Islamic law and practice upon their subjects, who were mainly Christians and Copts. Theoretically, Egypt was an independent state by 1922 but in practice it was still governed by the British military presence until the overthrow of Farouk. However, things were not to become comfortable for the Copts as Islam was becoming synonymous with Egyptian nationalism.

Nasser's reign saw the nationalisation of the property of the 600 wealthiest families, which led to the migration and exodus of the richest Copts and other Christians. As a result the Christian community lost most of its influential members at the time when Islamic militancy was rising (Isichei 1995: 219). It must also be borne in mind that the survival of the Church in Egypt was hard compared to that of Latin North Africa. For the Coptic Church its strength was based on the monasteries and its married clergy, as the latter made it easier for the church to operate closer to the people while the former provided spirituality and were centres of learning. What this means is that the celibate type of ministry which was favoured by Augustine was weakened as a result of it not being exercised close to the communities.

Under the Arab conquest, Christianity enjoyed remaining a majority religion, which the Arab rulers took for granted (Hastings 1994: 67). Without any doubt the Egyptians were ruled by foreigners for a very long time. However, the situation of being ruled by non-Christians was unforeseen when it came through the Muslims. Christians in this manner were inclined to regard Islam as something more like Arianism, which was destined not to last. The oppressive Muslim rule stimulated a major Christian uprising in the ninth century and its merciless repression brought a moment in which the Muslims were in the majority (Hastings 1994: 67). As a result the Christians had to suffer special taxes, and were frequently abused through discriminatory laws. But from 967 to 1171 under the Fatimids the Coptic Christians were tolerated, possibly due to the fact that the Fatimids were themselves not orthodox Muslims, as they attended the public Christian

ceremonies. The situation of Christian tolerance was short-lived when the Mameluks came to power (1171 to 1517). Repression became more persistent and the resources of the Copts were steadily diminishing as they could not withstand it. In the thirteenth century the Coptic Church was still dynamic and had a sizeable membership but it was forced to give up the Coptic language which was spoken in Egypt and adopt the Arabic language (though Coptic was still being used in the liturgy). At the same time the Patriarch of Alexandria had also moved to the Arab city of Cairo. At the end of the Ottomans' rule the Coptic Church was at its lowest ebb, as opposed to the times when they were surviving through sheer numbers and determination. The pressure of many years saw this Church being worn out pathetically. For a short while it even entered the Council of Florence with Rome (Hastings 1994: 67).

### 1.2.3 The Church in a Marxist state

Within the African context the church did not escape the Marxist approach which was adopted in some countries; however, the focus area in Africa will be Mocambique in this study. This country is on the southeastern coast of the continent, north east of South Africa, and is a neighbour to Tanzania and Malawi in the north, while in the west are Zambia and Zimbabwe (Mckenna1997: 71). The majority of its people are black and very few white people can still be seen in Mocambique after its independence. Mocambique was a Portuguese Colony and gained its independence through the struggle which started in 1964, but was only granted autonomy in 1974 under Frente de Libercao de Mocambique (known as FRELIMO). FRELIMO was under the leadership of Eduardo Mondlane, who was a professor in the United States and later became a civil servant of the United Nations Secretariat. However, Mondlane was assassinated in 1969, and his successor was Samora Machel. Originally FRELIMO was the only movement in Mocambique which resembled the characteristics of a political party, while at the same time it did not totally embrace Marxist ideology. It was during the struggle for the liberation of Mocambique that FRELIMO started to embrace Marxism. Some of the members of FRELIMO understood what Marxism was all about through studying in the university circles in Lisbon, while others were influenced by reading Marxist material as well as by leaders from within the movement. At the same time there also were some

settlers who leaned towards Communism because in the Portuguese army it (communism) was a force and some organisers of the Mozambican independence movement were communists from its beginning (McKenna 1997: 73). In spite of all this, FRELIMO under the leadership of Samora Machel was not outright a Marxist organisation, but of their documents expressed Marxist thoughts which were used to consciously find a 'correct' revolutionary line. One of the reasons why FRELIMO did not call itself a Marxist Leninist party was partially due to the fact that many people who followed the movement were not interested in labels and not many of them understood the ideology, except for the content which concerned the liberation of Mocambique. It was only in the 1970s that Samora Machel started to move in the direction of a Marxist Leninist party, and this led to the opening of a school in 1974 to give the cadres a theoretical basis for their work. The lectures were given by both Samora Machel and the deputy president of FRELIMO, Marcelino dos Santos, in the school. Only in 1975 was Marxism fully accepted and adopted in the government public policy as well as in its party's restructuring. Machel was influenced by his military training from Algeria, which was also further deepened by Cuba and the Chinese Communists who played a role in assisting with the guerilla war (McKenna 1997: 74).

In its own policy, the government of Mocambique adopted Marxism as its guide to determine policies and programmes. The main aim of FRELIMO was to take over the riches of the country and distribute them fairly as well as to end exploitation. As a result many projects in Mocambique were nationalised as well as assets like land, transport, shipping, insurance, the export-import trade, medical facilities, banks, plantations and industries. With these developments taking place in Mocambique, the church found itself affected as well: education at that time was under the control of the church and many schools belonged to the Catholic Church. The reason for nationalising education was simply that the majority of the Mozambican population was found to be illiterate, and Samora Machel together with the ruling party felt there was a need to improve the situation. As a result the enrolment of children in primary and secondary schools increased within four years (i.e. 1974 to 1979) and the university programme was temporarily suspended as students were sent to teach in adult literacy classes and schools (McKenna 1997:78). What this meant for the university students was simply



that they were to take up national service, which was equivalent to their period of stay at the university. Under the Marxist rule in Mocambique the medical services which had been under church control were also nationalised, as hospitals and maternity clinics were now run by the state. Housing was also affected: houses that belonged to people who left Mocambique, rented houses as well as residences which belonged to the church were nationalised as a means of providing housing to citizens.

What about church and state relationship in Mocambique under Marxism? Mocambique like South Africa, was evangelised by the missionaries who came from Europe, many of whom were Catholics. These missionaries arrived in the fifteenth century and were only concerned with the religious needs of the Portuguese soldiers and merchants. A common phenomenon regarding the missionaries studied by many historians was that these missionaries were actively involved in conquest - an alliance of 'cross and sword' (McKenna 1997: 81). In some instances some of these missionaries were engaged in the slave trade and other trading. This situation was an embarrassment to the church, and it led to tension between the church and state in 1750. However, the main issue here concerns the church state - relationship under Marxist rule in Mocambique.

FRELIMO, after took over the government made a policy concerning religion. Many of its people belonged to the Christian religion, both Catholic and Protestant, while other religions included the Islamic religion. Samora Machel, as the President of both Mocambique and FRELIMO, was following the classic Marxist line in which he regarded religion as unscientific and as causing people to become submissive and passive, especially when they were supposed to deal with matters of nature and social organisation. Religion had kept people from analysing their problems and tied them to the traditional way of doing things. 'Religion has divided people instead of uniting them and the Catholic Church in particular had allied itself to the Portugese colonialists to hold the Mozambican peoples in subjection and was still allied with neocolonialists to restore that subjugation' (McKenna 1997: 85). Machel intended to do away with this type of mentality, which handicapped the emergence of a newly liberated society. His government therefore harassed the church and in particular the Catholic and other religious bodies but he made sure that there was no martyrdom. The measure of

harassment differed from place to place and time to time but the method was similar to those used in other Communist countries, as perceived in the nationalisation of all the schools, medical facilities and educational institutions which were under the church's authority (McKenna 1997: 85).

The taking over of all the facilities from the church meant the taking over of every property that had been used by the church for other purposes and turning it into educational centres. As for the church residential areas which were taken over, most of them were intended to address the problem of housing, Not all the church residences were taken, only those which were seen as surpluses were used by the state. The church bank accounts were also frozen because they were thought to represent foreign funding from Portugal which was going to be used for subversive activities. The government came down heavily on the church and imposed severe limitations on the traditional ministries and ordered the missionaries to leave the country. Ministers needed to obtain a pass from the authorities to travel locally, but this was not easy for them as some of them were not granted the one. This made it difficult for the ministers to offer Mass and hear confessions in the rural areas (McKenna 1997: 86). To make matters worse the church vehicles were also taken over and the numbers of ministers travelling to the countryside were reduced even further. To this were added restrictions on religious services and instruction anywhere except in the church compounds. New church buildings were prohibited, and the government argued that there was only enough construction material to prioritise the important projects. The situation was further aggravated by the taking over of some church buildings in towns for other purposes. In the case of a church wanting to build a new structure the clergy had to apply for permission to build and permission was not given readily, sometimes not at all.

Ministry to the youth was made difficult as the clergy could not give any religious instruction to, or baptise, anyone under the age of eighteen. In addition the national youth organisation ran the programmes which kept young people too busy to engage in religious activities (McKenna 1997: 86). The government also took the initiative to close down the few theological seminaries that were left in Mocambique and insisted that candidates for the ministry should first do two years of national service, while at the

same time the government was also trying to entice the young people in the seminary into public employment. In FRELIMO policy, which was also that of the government, only government sponsored organisations could exist in the country. The policies that were applied against Catholicism were also applied to Islam and to the Protestant churches. As for the Protestants, it seemed as if the government was not as hard on them as on the Catholics because they seemed to have been more distant from the colonial government. The church publications were severely restricted, with the government contending that it needed to control the allocation of scarce resources like paper, ink, the use of presses and foreign exchange for overseas purchase. But these measures by the government were actually censorship, as it claimed that Catholic publications were criticising Marxism and Communist states. However, the church did not simply lie down and allow the conditions of the Mozambican government to determine its fate. The same could be said about that part of the church in South Africa which stood up against the policy of apartheid.

#### 1.2.4 Anti-apartheid churches in South Africa

John de Gruchy (1986: 84) has described the English speaking churches in South Africa as merely English in terms of communication: these churches do not share anything common in regard to doctrine, liturgy and practice. Their designation is basically that of their British origin, which came to be shared over the years as a result of the ecumenical movement and their attitude towards racism in general and especially apartheid. Due to their position against apartheid they were labelled anti-apartheid churches, and in some quarters English speaking churches mainly by the media, politicians and the general populace. Charles Villa-Vicencio (1988: 150) argues that these churches (English speaking) differ significantly from the Dutch Reformed Churches owing to their opposition to all forms of racism. From 1948, since the National Party gained political power in, South Africa Anti-apartheid churches or English speaking churches had protested against apartheid. However, these churches were also obliged to respond to the needs of their white membership, who were sometimes the custodians and beneficiaries of the government system of apartheid (Villa-Vicencio 1988: 150). As a result of the position these churches took against apartheid the situation in their church

halls, arenas, cathedrals, synods, assemblies and conferences turned out to be platforms for conflict with the state from the 1960s to the 1970s and early 1980s. The ecumenical movement under the banner of the South African Council of Churches (SACC) convened a consultation which was held in Hammanskraal (in 1975) the purpose of which was to confront racism. Many of the black delegates who took part in the conference came up with an ultimatum to the 'white Christians to demonstrate their willingness to purge the church of racism' warning that 'if after a period of twelve months there is no evidence of repentance in concrete action, the black Christians will have no alternative but to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ by becoming a confessing church (Villa-Vicencio 1988: 151). It was never clear what the intentions of the black members of these churches were. However, the position taken by these churches when the National Party gained political power is what is under discussion here.

Churches spoke out against race classification, forced removals of population groups due to the Group Areas Act, the Immorality Act and the Mixed Marriages Act, which were designed to keep racial purity untarnished. There were also different education Acts which were designed along ethnic lines, such as the job reservation Act which was intended to preserve employment for the favoured racial group. Apart from this legislation, the churches were protesting against the state's actions whether connected or not to any form of discrimination, be it forced removals of squatters, imprisonment of certain people without trial or extended periods of solitary confinement. This led to tension between the state and these churches. The conflict between the church and the state in South Africa about apartheid policy was in itself an anathema to the church. For the church there was no difference between separate development and apartheid except that the former was a little more sophisticated. The conflict was effectively about the essence of dividing the people on the grounds of ethnicity, and the church was concerned with its task of reconciling groups of people and implementing the social equity, and hence it was clear that church and state conflict was unavoidable. At the same time the government policy had affected the church in a negative way. The effects of this conflict were felt by the church through its property ownership, on the basis of holding conferences in residential areas open to all races (de Gruchy 1986: 88). Added to this was the state's action of taking over the black churches' schools in pursuit of

separate development; this was the case with their hospitals as well. One example of this was the expropriation of the Federal Theological Seminary, which showed victimisation of the church by the government, despite the state declaring South Africa to be a Christian country in its constitution in 1961. What this apparently implies was that there was no form of religious persecution in the country, as the state was encouraging the propagation and teaching of the Christian faith and respect for the rights of religious minority groups. In addition there was the statement by the leaders of the government that it was in the nature of the church to be prophetic and that it was part of its responsibility to be prophetic, as this was important for the well being of the state. In spite of this, the critique of the Anti-apartheid churches was disregarded by the state and this led to conflict and confrontation.

This tension between the Anti-apartheid churches and the state meant an uneasy coexistence, an uneasiness which intensified when words became deeds. As a result church people (i.e. ministers, missionaries, pastors, leaders and those who were involved in Christian projects and programmes) found themselves on the receiving end of the state's action especially when they were going against the state. The church found itself losing some of its own human resources due to deportations of missionaries, detentions without trial of some of its ministers and banning orders being imposed upon other church leaders (de Gruchy 1986: 91).

It was clear, therefore, that, throughout history church and state have often existed in an adversarial relationship. The reasons for this have varied - sometimes political power, sometimes differing ideologies, sometimes religious differences. But examples of church and state existing in opposition to each other can be found in the past as well as the present, and in various areas of the world.

### **1.3 Allies**

#### 1.3.1 In the Roman Empire

After the apologists took a stand to defend both the church and Christians the situation

changed in favour of Christianity which had been formerly regarded as a Jewish sect but was now fully recognised as legitimate. Christianity was now enjoying the favour which had been enjoyed by the previous religions (that of state support). After the Edict of Milan, the Christian church was established under the imperial authority and the clergy were freed from the public burdens which were carried by others. This was also an attempt by the state to control them. The private religions were now declared illegal, and the 'heathen' sacrifices were also forbidden and non-Christian temples were ordered to close down (Pfeffer 1953: 14). Sunday became a recognised public holiday, and urban residents were ordered not to work on that day.

With these favours accorded to religion by the state there was a price to pay: that of state interference in religious affairs. Constantine had the power to call and dismiss the church councils as well as to enforce unity of belief and practice (Pfeffer 1953:14). Constantine had also seen, in the tradition preserved by Eusebius, the mark of the cross in the sky, which bore the words 'in this sign you will conquer' before a decisive battle (Villa-Vicencio: 1986: 6). The church which had previously endured state persecution was now welcoming state persecution of nonconformists and the unorthodox. This led to a call by Nestor, who was the Bishop of Constantinople that all heretics should be destroyed. The call was heeded by the emperor, who made sure that deviation from orthodoxy was punishable by death and that heretics were not allowed to build churches nor to hold religious ceremonies. On the other hand the Byzantine Church possessed a relationship with the state which was known as a '*symphony*', or '*co - operation*', and which was between the leadership of the church and state government for the good of society. This kind of co - operation did not mean that the church controlled the state or the state controlled the church, though there were instances when the emperors attempted to control the church affairs and in most instances they succeeded. At times it seemed as if the church was a 'department of the state'. This could have been one of the ways which led to the failure of the Byzantine church (Ware 1964: 67). A good example of this will be control over the external administration of the church, like creation or abolition of dioceses, the appointment or confirmation of certain important bishops and the proclaiming of church doctrine as state law. In some cases the emperors had certain privileges in the church itself. One of these

privileges, which were significant liturgical expressions of the important place of the emperor in the life of the church was the practice of allowing the emperor or empress an opportunity to receive the sacrament of holy communion at the altar itself, which was an area reserved for the clergy only (Noll 1997: 325).

In the Middle Ages the Roman Empire was beginning to collapse and disintegrate and monarchies were being consolidated among the feudal holdings, but the church stood permanent, stable and powerful. It did not come as a shock when the church was claiming its share, not of an equal status but of superiority to the secular state. This was visible in Gelasius and was symbolised by Pope Leo when he was crowning Charlemagne. The act endorsed an acceptance of the church's principle of its relationship to the state. According to Pfeffer (1953: 16) this union between the church and state was seen by the church as a union of the state with the church. This supremacy was, however, not accepted by the authorities of the state. Charlemagne was crowned by the pope and for him to nullify the pope's supremacy he crowned his own son as his successor. The history of the Middle Ages in fact revolves around the struggle for supremacy between the Prince and the Pope, as in the well known incident between Hildebrand (Pope Gregory VII) and Emperor Henry IV in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Subsequent to the revival of the Holy Roman Empire in Germany, the Popes were chosen by the emperors which to the local church leaders meant being totally dominated by the German princes, who were also capable of selling the appointments to the highest bidders (Pfeffer 1953:17). Pope Gregory VII, after his ascendancy to the papal position reasserted himself as superior to the Emperor. This was clearly admitted by Henry when he argued that: the Pontiff alone is able to bind and to loose, to give and take away, according to the merits of each man, empires, kingdoms, duchies, countships, and possessions of all men' (Pfeffer 1953: 17). Gregory went on to order Henry to conform to a papal decree that the episcopate receive their staff of office from the Pope and not from the Emperor. In return Henry responded by appointing a cleric of his choice to a seat of a bishop of Milan and he went on to call a council of his nobles and bishops to denounce or reject the powers of the Pope. This became a church and state conflict, since the Pope also issued the decree excommunicating Emperor Henry as well as releasing his subjects from their oaths and alliance to him (to the Pope). The

situation became so serious that Henry had to beg Gregory not to excommunicate him. However, three years later, Pope Gregory VII excommunicated the emperor and in retaliation the Emperor Henry IV took a drastic step when he marched to Rome, removed Gregory from his papal position and replaced him with a rival Pope. Later the situation calmed down when Henry and Gregory died and a compromise was reached by their successors. The Emperor was appointed by the Pope but was to be invested into office by the touch of the Emperor's mace. This situation also extended to England a century later with the reigns of Kings Henry II and John and Popes Celestine III and Innocent III.

The church and state relationships did not end here: they gave birth to the Reformation, which came to be seen as the rise of religious liberty. The Protestants accepted the principle governing the relations between a democratic state and its citizens. Pferffer (1953: 22) argues that it is accurate to say that the reformers were the champions of religious liberty and of the acceptance of the principle of separation of church and state. The reformers like Luther and Calvin were encouraging tolerance between the church and state. However, Luther's reform spread as a rebellion of the German commoner against the princely authority. The individual's conscience moved easily to the notion of the autonomy of the political conscience. Despite this, Luther proved to be no rebel and took a stand on the side of the German princes against the rebels. He came down strongly against the peasants and their leaders, and some of the leaders were killed when about 6 000 peasants lost their lives in one day during the battle of Frankenhausen. Luther's reforms in Germany were not ones of political power nor the power of the local bishops or popes. The dependence of the church on the state was set as a characteristic feature of German Christianity, which is a feature even today (Bettenson 1943: 259). In other words Martin Luther never intended to replace one form of authority with another (neither the church should be the authority over the state, nor vice versa). For Luther both institutions are autonomous and can exist alongside each other in harmony (Sinnema, quoted from *Confessing Christ in Doing Politics*, 1995: 73). This concept Luther adopted from St. Augustine's model of the two cities, which are the *City of God* and the *Temporal Authority* (Sinnema 1995: 73). Beyond this, Luther still maintains God's sovereignty over all governments.



Calvin, like Luther, introduces his notion of civil government by noting the difference between spiritual government and political government. However, his notion is slightly different from that of Luther: he uses the words 'kingdom' and 'government' interchangeably. According to Sinnema (1995: 89), the two terms in Calvin's perspective have more to do with the mode of the lordship than the realm of the lordship. John Calvin looked at the two kingdoms in a positive sense (in other words, both kingdoms are good rather than one being evil). This perspective set out to indicate that in both kingdoms are different kings and different laws and authority. The two worlds may constitute the outer and the inner, or the soul and the body. The one world is spiritual, where conscience is instructed in piety and on receiving God, while the other is political and is oriented human duties and human citizenship, which must be maintained by people (Villa-Vicencio 1986: 44).

### 1.3.2 National state churches after the Reformation (Anglican)

In England the status of the church and its relationship goes back to Henry VIII (1509-1547) in his reign, when he demanded that the church annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon because he wanted an heir to his kingdom and owing to the fact that Catherine had not borne him a son. This led to serious tension between the church and the English monarchy under Henry VII. As a result, Henry wanted to marry Anne Boleyn (Walker 1970:358). However, with Henry now having done away with the papal authority of the church in England he was determined to rely on the national feelings of hostility towards foreign rule. By 1531 he had charged the clergy with breaching the old statute of *Paremunire* of 1353. Henry demanded a great sum as the price of forgiveness for extortion, but the declaration by the assemblies in which the clergy met, that in respect to the church of England, he was 'single and supreme Lord, and, as far as the law of Christ allows, even supreme head' (Walker 1970:359), led to a situation where parliament was pressurised by the King to pass an Act forbidding payment to the clergy. As a result the clergy reluctantly agreed to make the new ecclesiastical laws without the King's permission, but they submitted all the existing statutes to a commission which was appointed by the King. In January 25, 1533, King Henry VIII finally married Anne Boleyn and this was followed by the prohibition of an appeal to Rome by parliament,

which came about through Henry's conditional prohibition from Pope Clement VII confirmation of his appointment of Thomas Cranmer as Archbishop of Canterbury. Cranmer was consecrated on March 1533 and he formally held the court to adjudge the marriage of King Henry VII to Catherine null and void (Walker 1970: 359). As events were unfolding, the pope was also preparing a bull in which he was threatening to excommunicate Henry. In response, the King had a series of statutes passed by parliament, at his request which meant that all the payments to the Pope were forbidden, that all bishops were elected on the King's nomination, and that all oaths of papal obedience, Roman licences, and other recognitions of papal authority were done away with. Parliament then passed the Act of Supremacy which declared Henry and his successors the only supreme head, on earth, of the Church of England, without qualifying clauses, and gave him power to redress 'heresies' and 'abuses'. Though the King did not understand this to mean that he was to be given spiritual rights like ordination, administration of sacraments and other ecclesiastical duties, in everything else he was placed in the position of the pope; the result was that the breach with Rome was completed (Walker 1970: 359).

The changes that took place in England were more to do with ecclesiastical politics than religion as such, and the disturbed state of the country gave the opportunity to form a truly Protestant party, which appeared more indigenous than imported and followed basically the pattern of Wyclif and Luther. It aimed more at reforming the church, and viewed its riches as an obstacle to spirituality. Owing to this situation the Protestant party did not find any fault in Henry's assertions and confiscations. The circulation of the Bible and the conformity to the Scriptures were also valued by the Protestant party, as was seen in the eagerness of William Tyndale (1492-1536) to translate the New Testament into English. Leaders like Cranmer, Nicholas Ridley (1500-1555) and Hugh Latimer, all of whom were to become bishops who later died by burning for their faith, supported the involvement of the King in doctrinal developments in the church. Because Henry's opposition to Rome was growing stronger, Protestantism was spreading among lay people. In England this made the church an ally of the government and monarchy, as both its property and its clergy were under the authority of the English monarchy.

### 1.3.3 In Colonialism

The first missionaries to descend on the shores of South Africa were the Moravians; however, they did not stamp their missionary influence on the country, unlike their successors, the London Missionary Society (LMS). The latter was constituted mainly by Protestant denominations from a Calvinistic doctrinal background: the Congregationalists and the Presbyterians. Subsequent to the LMS arrived the Wesleyan Missionary Society which belonged to the Methodists, and also the Lutheran Missionaries, Anglicans and Catholics. Most of these missionary societies came to South Africa during the colonial period and they arrived in two forms, which were to serve the needs of the colonial administrators as well as those of the 1820 settlers. With the migrations of the settlers into the interior there was also a need to increase the number of the missionaries, and the latter also felt a need to evangelise the indigenous people they met in the coastal regions as well as those they met in the interior.

Missionaries who belonged to the London Missionary Society, like Dr John Phillip, Dr Johannes van der Kemp and Robert Moffat, were the best known missionaries during the colonial period. Some of these missionaries were accused of immorality, like van der Kemp who married a Coloured woman, while others were accused of treason (de Gruchy 1986: 12). The main problem was that these missionaries were not serving the interests and needs of the white settlers and that they were trying to be relevant to the struggles of the Coloureds and the African people. Many of these non-Europeans were considered to be inferior to their European counterparts and were regarded as being destined to serve the latter. They were further considered to be cattle-thieves and that they were the main cause of the frontier wars. As a result, the Xhosa people were regarded as the enemies of the settlers, and this became a concern to some missionaries. The result was that both the Dutch and the English settlers were not happy with some of the missionaries, who not only evangelised the indigenous people but also took their side in the struggle for justice, rights and land. At the same time the missionaries considered themselves as being the conscience of the settlers and protectors of the natives. And this led to some missionaries like Rev John M'Carter complaining that 'they were unwilling to listen to settler grievances and automatically

presumed that their mission flock was in the right. But whatever the faults of the missionaries, from a black as well as a white perspective, it is true to say that the church's struggle against racism and injustice in South Africa only really begins in earnest with their witness in the nineteenth century' (de Gruchy 1986:13).

Missionary activity in South Africa, from the perspective of social functions in the transition from one culture to another, was visible as it was directly linked to cultural superiority (Villa-Vicencio 1988: 56), which many of the imperialists adopted and not only the missionaries; but this form of paternalism could also have been at the centre of the missionary structures of the churches. This stemmed from the ecclesiastical structures in England, which belonged to a different social class and were highly educated as opposed to the rank and file of the missionaries who were sent to South Africa. For many of these missionaries, mission meant imposing the English structures upon the emerging African church and its society. The results were that missionaries in the field were supposed to report every decision made and the expenses incurred. In responding to their African converts they were applying the same paternalism as did British society. However, this kind of attitude was not only applied by the missionaries to the African converts but they extended it to the missionary churches as well (Villa-Vicencio 1988: 57). In this instance the issue was the deference to the civil authority by the missionary church. With the Anglican Church the situation was simply that in England it was the state church and in the British colonies of the Cape and Natal it therefore became the government church, which demonstrated political support and conformity to the status quo. This was the position up to the time of the political union between the British colonies and the Boer republic in 1910.

Though the Methodist Church had been involved in labour class activities in England, this was not the case in South Africa as they were not involved in matters of politics (Villa-Vicencio 1988: 57). Contrary to the situation of their non-involvement in South African politics the Methodist Church (in the nineteenth century) informed John Ayliff, who was in Grahamstown that chaplains had been tried before conference for talking too much. At the same time Ayliff did take part with the authorities in imposing the 'native policy'. Another Methodist missionary (William Shaw), who was a superintendent

of the Wesleyan Mission, was very active in depriving the Basotho (under chief Moshoeshoe) of parts of their land. The LMS were also acting in keeping with the nonconformist heritage by responding with less submission to the authorities. People like Johannes van der Kemp, John Phillip and others tended to be relevant and they blamed the settlers for the frontier wars which took place in the colony. Their intention was to work among the indigenous people, who were reduced almost to slaves due to the advancement of the settlers. These were people who became landless and poor at the same time, as a result of the settlers' treatment of them (Villa-Vicencio 1988: 58).

#### 1.3.4 Civil Religion (e.g. in the USA)

Ferdinand Deist (Kritzinger and Saayman 1990: 125) defines civil religion in four ways: first, the ancient way of hero-worshipping which was a practice in the Ancient Near East, with kings being deemed to be the gods. This practice was later adopted by the Roman emperors. The second definition refers to the dwellers of the medieval cities who sought the protection of their saints through artistic and ritual commemorations. These two versions of civil religion have some similarities with a sacred or mythological world-view, which reflected the political institutions as unchangeable divine ordinations (Kritzinger and Saayman 1990: 125). The third version which Deist discussed was found in the revolutionary and democratic 'will of the people', which dictated people what it meant to be a good citizen as well as a faithful subject. Simply, here 'civil religion' describes the democratic sentiments underlying the ideals of a modern society. The fourth version of civil religion may be called the 'religion of nationalism' which emerged in Europe during the Napoleonic wars. This version was understood to mean that the national state represented 'the march of God on earth' or that a particular 'people' were thought to have the divine vocation. Deist acknowledges the opinion that civil religion is a set of beliefs and attitudes which explain the meaning and purpose of any political society in terms of its transcendental, spiritual reality, that are held generally by people of that context or society and are expressed in public rituals, myths and symbols.

Many of the Dutch Reformed members moved to the cities in the 1930s and 1940s and were becoming urbanised at the same time. However, in the Free State and Natal some

of them remained constant and stayed on the farms or rural settlement. In attempting to adapt to the new lifestyle, the Afrikaners simply accepted their social conditions and tried to copy the successes of the English-speaking people in some sections of the cities. The same was true of many black people, most of whom were labourers in the farms, moving into the cities and being in competition with the former land owners for jobs in the cities. At the same time many blacks were beginning to attend schools in large numbers and they began to outnumber white pupils. For political reasons, the Afrikaners were not prepared to accept any form of equality owing to their fear and the process of levelling that was taking place particularly in matters of labour relations. This was a time when the Dutch Reformed Church still viewed itself as a 'volkskerk' (a people's church) and sometimes as a 'Boerekerk' (Kritzinger and Saayman 1990: 128) which had always been in contact with the spirit of the people (volksie). Historically the Dutch Reformed Church was influenced by Kuyperianism, which was compatible with fundamentalism. This influence saw theological scholars from the Dutch Reformed Church who were at the Theological Seminary at Stellenbosch changing their attitudes speaking of it (the Stellenbosch Seminary) as a 'confessional seminary' and of the same church as the 'Calvinist confessional Church'. Fundamentalism was at this point swapped for 'Calvinist'. The reason for this was very simple: fundamentalism was biased and capitalistic as well as socially apathetic to the status quo, whereas Calvinism was socially and politically involved. This change reminded Afrikaners that they were the downtrodden people. Divine favour and their calling to be a Boerekerk was going to save the Afrikaner's self-respect and cultural norms. It was in distinguishing the relevant Christian rationale applicable to this context that the biblical hermeneutic of the Afrikaner civil religion began to play its role.

### 1.3.5 Apartheid (status quo) churches in S.A

Abraham Kuyper, as influenced by Groen van Prinsterer, gave a new and fresh expression to the strict Calvinist tradition. Kuyper was himself a statesman and a theologian who developed the ideas of Prinsterer into an all-embracing philosophy and lifestyle. He fought for the separation of church and state. For Kuyper the interpretation was simply 'that all spheres of life exist by virtue of God's common grace, as distinct

from saving grace, which is built into the structure of creation and provides the basis for Christian Nationalism in its various dimensions' (De Gruchy 1979: 6).

Many of the Dutch Reformed theologians received their training from the Free University in Amsterdam, which was founded by Kuyper. Most of the students who graduated from this university ensured that the Neo-Calvinist developments were propagated and assimilated in the Cape. The pillar of this move was Rev SJ du Toit, who was known as the father of Afrikaner Nationalism. This movement not only offered an articulate alternative to evangelical pietism, but it also laid the foundation for Christian National Education, which later became a basis for Afrikaner National policy. Kuyper's initiative of Neo-Calvinism was directly social and political in significance (Hofmeyr et al 1986: 146). The split (between Calvinism and Kuyperianism in over the doctrine of predestination Holland) and not only took place in Holland but also occurred in the Cape when SJ Du Toit left the DRC to form the Gereformeerde Kerk in Burgersdorp in 1859 (De Gruchy 1979: 7).

Despite this move, racism proved to be a more powerful tool than religion, and the DRC was confronted by a critical situation where the natives were readily accepting the gospel, the same way as the gentiles did in the early church. This was not welcomed by many whites, as racial prejudice was clashing with a theology which was warming up to accepting natives as equals. This clash was largely on the white interests in labour and land acquisition. However, the DRC in its Synod of 1829 took a decision that the Holy Communion would be administered simultaneously to all members without any distinction of colour or origin, as this was 'an unshakable principle based on the infallible Word of God' (De Gruchy 1979: 7). The practice of refusing to allow indigenous people to worship with whites was dividing the church and there was also a rift between the settlers and the indigenous people, who were mostly slaves (Hofmeyr et. al 1986: 147). This actually proved to be an obstacle, because as a result of social pressure the synod resolution had to be changed in 1857. The DRC decided that though not desirable or scriptural, due to the weakness of certain individuals (i.e. whites) it was permissible to hold separate services for blacks and whites, not so much because of social pressure

but because it was found to be convenient for a mission by many missionaries from Europe. What was meant to be an exception became a rule when separate churches were formed, and a daughter church was formed for the coloured people in the name of the Sending Kerk in 1881. This was followed by the NG Kerk in Africa for the blacks and the Indian Reformed Church. The missionary programme of the DRC in its development over the next hundred years followed culture and custom consistently, which provided the church with a blueprint for the Nationalist policy of separate development.

The DRC extended a great influence over the white Afrikaans speaking people in South Africa; however, one may not overgeneralise that all white people or all Afrikaans speaking people were its members. The basic truth about this church is simply that the majority of its members were from the dominant group, who had access to policy makers of the nation at that time. Many of its members were in Parliament as well as in the provincial councils throughout the land (de Gruchy 1986: 68), and included the military personnel and the police. This has made the history of the church and state in South Africa one of co-operation, particularly with the Dutch Reformed Churches which were deemed apartheid churches. This situation was direct result of the Sharpeville massacre and the Cottesloe Conference in 1960. Though the relationship of the state and church (the Dutch Reformed Church) in South Africa goes back to the colonial period, the outcomes of the conference were mainly rejected by the government and the then Prime Minister of South Africa, Dr Hendrik Verwoerd, who took the DRC delegates who were at the conference to task, accusing them of submitting to the influence of the World Council of Churches (WCC), while they were forgetting their responsibility with regard to the 'high purpose of apartheid' (Villa-Vicencio 1986: 200).

The DRC, after its withdrawal from the WCC after the Cottesloe conference, was forced by the WCC to define its position towards the policy of apartheid. In 1974 the DRC produced a report known as 'Human Relations and the South African Scene in the Light of Scripture', which was distributed worldwide as the official position of the church towards the biblical justification for apartheid and was debated in many countries. This led to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in 1982 declaring apartheid a heresy



and suspending the membership of the DRC. Irrespective of its theological support for apartheid, the results of the investigation of church-state relations which were contained in the document reflected the continuous, dominant emphases of classical state-church relations in the history of the church. The DRC was recognising the state as a God-given institution for the sake of public order as a means to fight evil and preserve justice, and the report made it very clear that the church's obligation was to 'preach the Word of God to the authorities, particularly regarding the norms of the Bible for mutual relationships and social justice, as well as the obligations of the authorities (Villa-Vicencio 1986: 201). The DRC was warning that justice and love were not enough to save the state from revolutionary chaos and political absolutism and tyranny, which was affirming the need for the church to submit to the state, 'provided the legal order does not conflict with the Word of God' (Villa-Vicencio 1986: 201). The church (DRC) was in a situation which permitted the oppressive legislation of the government, which was not in fact compared with the Word of God, but was justified in terms of the theology which was rejected by major Christian organisations both in South Africa and outside the country and declared as a heresy.

Church and state in South Africa therefore also have a long history of co-existing in harmony, if not open co-operation. Church and state often made use of or exploited each other to fulfill their own ambitions. This emerges perhaps at its clearest during imperial eras, when the church is required to provide divine sanction for the state imperial ambitions. The church at times was not free from such imperialist ambitions itself, and exploited state support to achieve this, as in the time of colonialism. Finally, in a situation where civil religion rules the land, it is sometimes difficult to say who is dominating or exploiting whom, church or state. This was very clear in the relationship between the National Party government and the white DRC in apartheid South Africa.

## **1.4 Neutrality**

### 1.4.1 Anabaptist churches in post-Reformation Europe

Some people believed that Martin Luther with his reformation had still not far enough,

such as Zwingli. In Zurich Conrad Grebel and Felix Manz felt that even Zwingli's style of leadership and teachings were too conservative. This became evident when they demanded that the images of the mass be abolished. One of Luther's former pupils, later a colleague, was Balthasar Hubmaier (1480-1528) who debated this issue and even came to the point of doubting and questioning infant baptism (Walker 1970: 326). Hubmaier even went as far as discussing this matter with Zwingli and it turned out that Zwingli sympathised with him. The argument emanated from the lack of scriptural qualification for the administration of infant baptism. Hubmaier and Zwingli, supported by Conrad Grebel and Felix Mantz who reached the same conclusions, translated theory into practice. Their innovations led to a situation where the baptism of children was delayed until they had reached the stage of adulthood. In January 21, 1525, at Zurich, a prayer meeting was held by Grebel, Mantz and George Blaurock, in which the last mentioned stood up and requested Conrad Grebel to baptise him (Walker 1970: 326). As a result of this Blaurock went ahead to baptise the rest, after his own baptism. The following week a few other members of the group who held revival meetings and prayer groups in their private homes went through the same experience, especially with those who felt regenerated and were baptised through sprinkling. The event was later followed by the Lord's Supper. As a result of their acts, these people were referred to or nicknamed 'Anabaptists' or rebaptizers. The name was appropriate owing to the fact that they denied their infant baptism, which was much debated during the Reformation period. However, their acts led to the government of Zurich ordering the drowning of the Anabaptists in March 1526 for their hideous belief and this saw Felix Manz being executed. Conrad Grebel and his friends differed from Zwingli, particularly because they saw the test of Christian faith in discipleship of Christ and since they felt it must be experienced in spiritual rebirth or awakening, expressed in a life of saintliness. This was due to the fact that they were opposed to the use of force, particularly in matters of faith, and to their abandonment of the age-old requirement of religious uniformity as the guarantee of public peace and order. The Anabaptists refused to take part in any form of state-church relationship put in place by Zwingli in Zurich as in other areas of the Reformation. They (Anabaptists) chose to live in free communities and convents. This made them the first to practice the separation of church and state (Walker 1970: 327). This decision led to their persecution on account of their non-conformity, as their acts

of sectarianism were interpreted as hostility to ordered society.

Hubmaier's son gathered a community of Anabaptists and his initiative paid dividends as he had used the pen effectively. His view was that the Bible is the sole law of the church, and according to the Scriptural test the proper order of Christian development is preaching the Word, hearing, belief, baptism, works, with the latter being thought of as indicating life lived with the Bible as its law (Walker 1970: 327). The persecution of the Anabaptists saw the movement growing throughout Germany, Switzerland and Netherlands. The growth of this movement was mainly among the lower classes as the Lutheran Church was associated with the territorial princes and aristocratic city magistrates. In some areas the territorial rulers at first tried to check the movement by issuing mandates against it, as the Zurich government did. The first to do this was Ferdinand of Austria, who was later followed by his brother Charles V. Irrespective of persecution, the Anabaptists continued to be troublesome and this led the diets of Spier and Augsburg and the assembled German estates, which were both Roman Catholic and Protestant, applying the old Roman law against heresies. This meant that membership of any Anabaptist group was punishable with by death (Walker 1970: 328). In Catholic territories like Austria and Bavaria this law was carried out with maximum severity. In contrast, the Evangelicals treated the Anabaptists as seditionists and not as heretics. This means that their refusal to conform to the established ecclesiastical orders would result in their either withdrawing or emigrating. Refusal to do either would result in imprisonment or death, as such defiance was regarded as a disturbance of the peace.

In Germany a major centre of the Anabaptists was based in Augsburg where Hubmaier baptized Hans Denck in May 1526 and shortly thereafter baptised Hans Hut. It was Hut who caused the Anabaptist movement to grow and who won over members of patrician families. In 1527 the Synod of Martyrs was held, chiefly at Hut's initiative, to deal with apocalyptic ideas. He saw himself as a prophet who was affirming that the persecution of the saints was going to be followed by the destruction of the Empire. Many of the members of the Anabaptists were attracted to the movement simply because of its Christian discipleship and pacifism. The church was regarded as made up of local associations of baptised regenerated Christians, united in the body of Christ by the

common observance of the Lord's Supper; whose only weapon was excommunication. The total rejection of all 'servitude to the flesh', like the worship of the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Zwinglian churches, was demanded. It was left to the individual congregations to choose their own officers and administer through them their disciplines (Walker 1970: 330). Their opinion was that even though a civil government was necessary in an imperfect world, there was no need for Christians to share in it: they should not bear any arms or use coercion, neither should they take any oath to government.

#### 1.4.2 Secular states

Secular and sacred are often viewed as opposite, but the two are basically different only in levels or planes because they are not in competition nor conflict. To consider the sacred means to experience governance under divinity or God, which therefore deems God to be present in matters of authority, governing through the objects of faith. Secular refers to the same reality except that it is accessible only to humanity and is also under human control (Shorter et al 1997: 13). Both emphasise order and coherence. As it stands secular is not intrinsically opposed to sacred. It is a common phenomenon for secular states which are simple or unsophisticated to allow the sacred to invade their space and this tends to discourage human initiatives or innovations. Secularisation possesses its own momentum which develops, and is observed to dominate and replace the sacred. In other words secularism is a situation in which religious faith is felt to be superfluous. This is a state where religion loses its grip at the level of both social institution and human conscience; as a result secularism is a world view which denies the immanence of God. Organised religions cease to dominate society, and not only are different religious systems forced to compete against each other in a pluralistic society but they also lose credibility and religion tends to be seen as another department in a social order. A good example of this is Uganda, where anything religious seemed to be turned into a secular developmental or non governmental organisation. Secularism may also stem from a point of unbelief or even from the denial of the existence of God or of any religious dimension to human life (Shorter et al 1997:15). As it is, secularism is seen as a belief in human progress, and as holding the knowledge that religion belongs to the

infant stage of humanity and that primitive people were naively pious and gullible and were vulnerable to the teachings of priests and magicians. As a result of the human and scientific development, the thought has arisen that human beings have come to the point of throwing off the shackles of religion.

#### 1.4.3 Present-day SA

Present - day South Africa is democratic and does not relate to any religion; however, it recognises the existence of all the religions which are observed. Albert Nolan (1995: 151) writes that the first democratic election in South Africa, on April 27, 1994, warrants the church and the state re-reading the text of Romans 13 because the government is now legitimate and must therefore be recognised as God's servant working for the good of the people. This means that both the state and the church will have to revise their relationship, both hypothetically and pragmatically. South Africa seems to be modelling its structures of governance on the Tanzanian style, in which Julius Nyerere after the liberation of that country reminded the Catholic Bishops that the government would take care of external and structural changes, while the churches should be concerned with the internal and personal changes needed in the hearts of the citizens. This seems to be the case with the democratic South Africa: that there is a need for the church to contribute significantly to the changes of heart and values in the white and black communities respectively. The impression is simply that both the church and state must work together in solidarity but in different realms (Nolan 1995: 152). In the past the church used to prophetically oppose the apartheid government but that does not mean that the same should be the case in present day South Africa. The church still needs to be prophetic in a new dispensation in spite of the solidarity. The prophetic and critical voices need to be directed against other people, institutions, corporations and organisations and not only the state. The grounds for prophetic criticism will in this case be the self-introspection of people, the nation itself and the government. In Nolan's perspective the prophetic role of the church in South Africa means it also has to be critical of itself and its own institutions, as well as of the organisations and the actions of people. It means the church must also be critical of businesses and big corporations and people involved in fraud and corruption (Nolan 1995: 152). In short the relationship

between the church and state in South Africa should be a multipurpose one, which is supportive in some matters, and while playing a complementary role through changing the hearts of the people, at the same time it must take a firm, critical stand. This means that South Africa by virtue of its democratic principle and recognition of all the religions existing within it, makes a secular state.

## **1.5 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the church has over the years been involved in politics in a number of ways. From the beginning of the spread of Christian religion in its early years, it was clear that the experience of being on the receiving end, as well as of being on the same side as the state, would be something which the church was going to live through in different contexts. This was clearly seen in the imperial state of Rome, when Christians were persecuted not because of their opposition to the political dispensation of that time but because of their religious beliefs. In a twist of events the same religion came to enjoy state support and found itself also persecuting people believed to be heretics: as some of the latter were burned at the stake for standing firm on what they believed. Over the years new trends also developed, such as the emergence of theories like Marxism, Socialism, Democracy, Secularism and other social theories. As they strongly claimed their stake in politics and governance, Christianity found itself sometimes wondering and looking for its own place, though in some contexts it has been in a comfort zone where the state declared itself Christian or a religious government. History therefore provides no conclusive answers about the relationship between church and state, but many warning examples of where this relationship went wrong. Such a situation was found in the homeland of Bophuthatswana, which is discussed in the following chapter.

## Chapter 2

### Bophuthatswana: home for the Batswana

#### 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will discuss how Bop attempted to invite many Batswana to reside within the territory of the homeland. The reason here was to authenticate and legitimate its intention to become an independent state. The focus was mainly on Batswana who were not already within the territory, particularly the Batswana who were residing in the townships surrounding cities in South Africa. For Bop, the diaspora meant people who were mainly living in South Africa. On the issue of 'Independence', the government of South Africa was certain that part of its plan of Separate Development was being achieved and that the needs of one of the South African ethnic groups were being fulfilled. The 'Independence' of Bop did not only seem to be a fulfilment of the apartheid goal but it also meant a new form of struggle, as many people were now beginning to know what it was like to be forced to give up their birthrights as well as their South African citizenship. Not only were these people going to lose their birthrights and citizenship, but they were also required to endure poor living conditions as well as harassment by police from the homeland.

In addition, 'Independence' was something which divided the church along the lines of territorial dominance as well as hindering the fulfilment of the individual's interests. Many of the mainline churches wanted nothing to do with the policy of apartheid, which divided the black people on ethnic grounds, while on the other hand, some churches were in support of the 'Independence' of Bop. Most of these latter churches were African Independent Churches, though not all of them. Bop on the other hand tried to convince the world that it was 'Independent' and that it should be given international recognition, through the expansion of its own trading links and economic viability, as well as of the platinum mining industry in the Rustenburg area. There were some mixed feelings over the short-lived coup (see below) amongst the different churches, both

those which supported Bop as well as those which did not recognise the homeland state.

## **2.2 Batswana in the 'diaspora'**

As in most countries, some Batswana people were in the 'diaspora', which in this case referred to those who lived in the townships of South Africa and not in Bop, and were Batswana and speakers of the language itself. The strange thing was that those across the border in Botswana were not regarded as being in the diaspora. Lucas Mangope, in one of his speeches, pointed out that they should be brought back home where they belonged. He claimed:

*Our people (the Tswana) became fragmented and scattered willy nilly across the subcontinent. Our culture, our language, the very fabric of our being, began to be dissipated and lost in a bastardized tapestry exacerbated by the evils of apartheid. But through all this there remained the flickering flame of nation-hood which no amount of abuse or inhumanity could extinguish (Jones 1999: 589).*

This reflected Bop as a government which tried to turn back the 'clock' of the cultural borderlines of the region. There were efforts to create a popular nationalist movement in Bop, but these failed owing to the fragmented territorial basis of Bop. In spite of this, the government was able to manipulate historical concerns and engender an ethnic 'rediscovery' by simply embracing the values of the Batswana who lived in the countryside, as opposed to those of Batswana in the 'secular', 'detrilledised' urban areas. In this instance the regime of Bop had carefully selected the history and culture by promoting a form of Batswana nationalism, which was a mechanism used to overcome any opposition and would create an emerging network of patronage. The issue of 'independence' for Bop from South Africa would be viewed as a sham and as lacking capability to deliver sovereignty and to reflect the 'maturity' of the Batswana nation. While these efforts would be overshadowed by the dependence on the South African government, they were at the same time responding to a history of dependency. This ethnic approach was presented under the disguise of the development and material advancement which 'independence' would bring.



President Lucas Mangope was also trying to win the hearts and minds of many Batswana people by using the concepts of dispossession and upheaval which were associated with the Batswana diaspora during the pre-colonial and colonial periods. Concerns like these had long gained support from among Batswana intellectuals through the organisations which they had formed, such as the Barolong Progressive Association and Barolong National Council in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century (Jones 1999: 589). The ruling party (Bop Democratic Party) managed to distort this history of instability, vulnerability and uneasiness to claim that they were acting on behalf of the Batswana and creating a stable place for them which they could call their own, which was reflected in the name 'Bophuthatswana' (meaning bringing Batswana together).

On a number of occasions when addressing the people, Mangope would present a 'history' of the Batswana as fundamentally different from other nations. He described these differences using religious imagery in which he portrayed himself as a 'messiah' leading his people out of the darkness of colonialism and apartheid. In other words, Batswana people were likened to the lost children of Israel and Bop was seen as their promised land. The use of Christian discourse was a means to win the Batswana because they embraced Christianity as their religion: as he (Mangope) would say, he would take them to Canaan.

At the same time Mangope, in his speech at the opening of the second National Assembly was of the opinion that all Batswana who were in South Africa should indicate their desire to be counted in and branded as 'citizens' of Bophuthatswana by making their way to the Embassy in Pretoria, or a consulate or magistrate's courts where they would fill in and sign a renunciation form as a prerequisite to approaching South Africa for the necessary 'citizenship documentation' (Mangope, 1988:67).

For Mangope, the idea of 'citizenship' in Bop meant that it was, in accordance with the tenets of international law, an issue between the country and the individual. This was an implication of the individual's discretion to lose his South African citizenship or that it was not voluntarily given up. Terms of agreement between the two governments were

included in the *Status of Bophuthatswana Act* of the South African Parliament and was also in the Constitution of the Republic of Bophuthatswana Act or its Citizenship Act (Mangope 1988: 66). The issue of citizenship was received with mixed feelings: many Batswana people were not too happy with this arrangement because it meant losing their birthrights as South Africans, while on the other hand many of the Batswana people who were trapped in the territory of Bop were to assume 'citizenship' by virtue of owning property. On the other hand the negotiations for 'Independence' agreed that those who were not interested in becoming 'citizens' of Bop were to just fill in the form and renounce citizenship. An important issue regarding citizenship basically concerned those Batswana who resided in South Africa and had not taken Bop 'citizenship'. Among them were those who possessed dual citizenship and those who only possessed South African citizenship but owned a property in Bophuthatswana territory. For the authorities of Bop this meant that these people were denigrating them while they were benefiting from the best of both worlds.

Irrespective of Lucas Mangope's intention to create an 'Independent state' many Setswana speaking people opposed the idea of independence. In certain instances some of them wrote to a number of newspapers voicing their disapproval of Mangope's intention. One of the letters in The World, went on to suggest that the notion of independence was never even put to the test to determine if the Batswana were interested in the idea:

I and hundreds of others are concerned that Chief Mangope has not had the guts to test our opinion by putting the independence issue to a referendum (The World: 13 February, 1977).

Another letter commented:

The cabinet accept this empty echo because they are not going to suffer like us (The World: 7 March, 1977) and added:

Many urban Bophuthatswana are going to lose their jobs just like the Xhosa and be sent home back to their poor, unfertile homeland (The World 7 March, 1977).

There were similar calls by others for the rejection of the 'Independent' homeland states. One of the Movements to send an open letter to Chief Mangope was the Black Consciousness Movement in July 1977, appealing to him not to sell the souls of

Batswana, by accepting a fraudulent independence. And they added that people like him were being used like pawns in the white man's intention of continuing the status quo, and that he was inherently part of South Africa (The Guardian: London, 25 July, 1977). There had never been any consultation on the part of Bop leaders to determine whether the Batswana were interested in 'Independence'.

### **2.3 'Independence'**

The political momentum for Bantustan 'independence' was increasing, and the limitations of the South African government were now beginning to reveal themselves. The National Party could not be shifted from the territorial allocations of the 1913 Land Act and the intended divisions within the politics of Bop. The South African government's refusal to grant Mafikeng, which was a white town, to Bop to be used as a new 'capital' sparked debates concerning the proposal for a new 'capital' and this led to a deeper tension over territory, the 'purity' of Batswana cultural identity and the attainment of 'independence'. In the debate some of the members of the Bop Legislative Assembly claimed that the ethnic mixture, the failure of influx control, and cultural decline affected Batswana in the urbanised areas, and the Bafokeng tribe was singled out in this instance as a result of their platinum mines. The 'impurity' mentioned was related to Setswana: it was said to be an 'undeniable fact' that it was impure and that it was affecting culture (Jones 1999: 590).

The apartheid policy in South Africa meant that homelands were to become 'Independent' and to be used as labour reserves for the Central Government. This led to Transkei being the first homeland to opt for 'Independence', later followed by Bophuthatswana in 1977, when Chief Minister Lucas Mangope decided to accept the offer from Pretoria (National Land Committee, undated, 8).

Prior to the 'Independence' of Bop Chief Lucas Mangope addressed the Lutheran Theological College in Maphumulo on the role of the church in the homelands, on 11 September 1972. In his opening remarks Mangope said:

*That he can speak as a politician and a statesman about the programme for*

*peace and reconciliation and seriously meaning what he says, while on the other hand a priest may speak in contempt and arrogance and shout out at the top of his voice a different programme. This programme may differ in words like 'peace, love and reconciliation' and be replaced by words like 'violence, bloodshed and machine-guns' because he does not hesitate to end up his message with the solemn pronouncement: In the Name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and to the greater Glory of God and the Almighty. Amen (Speech by Lucas Mangope: 11/9/1972).*

According to Mangope the ministers were no longer preaching the gospel and making Christian converts but preaching violence and hatred. In his perspective the church was not supposed to be involved in social, political and economic issues but only to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. To him Christ had brought only the gospel, as he refused to create a worldly power-bloc, with an institutionalised power structure (Mangope: 11/9/1972). In addressing the topic of the role of the church in an 'independent' Homeland, Chief Lucas Mangope said that he saw this role as challenging, important, creative and pace setting, as well as fostering spiritual norms and the norms of the value systems (Mangope: 11/9/1972). Further, it should adhere to the principle of proclaiming the human dignity of the individual and comprise a group which was going to contribute to the quality and dignity of existence. In mentioning some of the few areas which he (Mangope) felt were of primary importance to the church, he said that it should not tolerate any compromise. This stand was to be followed by what he called education programmes, health and welfare services. Mangope stressed that the role of the church should not begin with the day of 'independence' but that it was already in place. This role had clearly and loudly stated that any involvement, leadership and participation in the development of Bop should not be undertaken by the church (Mangope: 11/9/1972). In this context Mangope was reverting back to what he had earlier said about the priests speaking the language of violence, bloodshed and machine-guns. He was asking, what prevented the church from spending huge sums of money on instruments of violence and bloodshed, to set instead a practical example in the Homelands of 'social justice', a principle to which he said they gave cheap lip service. Mangope, then spoke about the stipends of the Black ministers and other church workers, saying it was fine to spell out a self propagating and self-supporting church in developing countries but that this

did not boil down to making a plan for Christians to aid the destitute. He made the accusation that the church could not close the gap between Black and White priests in the homeland, and made embarrassing comparisons with the discriminatory wage structure in the South African public service. Yet for him the church all over the world enthusiastically wished fire and brimstone to consume all white South Africans (Mangope 11/9/1972). He quoted the black staff that were employed in the hospitals which were run by the church in the homeland and asked what it was that the church was going to do if the staff wanted a raise in their wages. How was the church going to raise the funds to meet such demands? What was going to be the church's justification if the contributions were to suddenly run dry? He added that the accusing finger was equally pointing to the church in terms of unequal stipends and wages the same way the church had been doing to the South African government.

Mangope did not just end with health issues but also touched on educational matters. He said that there was no provision for adult education as the Department of Bantu Education provided only for children of school going age, and that this field was presenting a challenge to the church by way of supplementing the shortfall (Mangope: 11/9/1972). Another question Mangope raised concerned the illiteracy statistics of the adults which the church had to deal with. He added that the church was fully aware of the social welfare needs of the Black people and yet it sent out social workers some of whom were not well trained to handle problems of misplaced people, alcoholics, homeless and disabled people. To Mangope's mind the church did not have any role in social, political or economic involvement except to be honest, simple, tenacious, fearless and to humbly serve God in its endeavour to read the gospel. This would be vital for the church in an 'independent' homeland, as it would not be subject to any questions

After the 'general election' in 1977, with a turnout of less than 12% of people eligible to vote, Mangope was urged to 'listen to the people' (Jones 1999: 591). However, it appeared that Mangope was only listening to himself and the Legislative Assembly, which comprised mainly his own party (Bophuthatswana Democratic Party). To him independence was imperative, as it was a tool which could deliver Batswana from

apartheid. The 'Report of the Committee on a Constitution for Independent Bophuthatswana' late in 1977 clearly showed that a decision had been taken to create an 'Independent' Bantustan. Many Batswana opposed the logistics and details of agreements that were reached between Bophuthatswana and Pretoria as falsifying 'independence', arguing that the ruling party had elevated this idea to mystical proportions. It was portrayed as a movement from underdevelopment to brightness. Transition was justified as an achievement by the Batswana, as a demonstration of their capability to move into development.

The 'independence' which apartheid South Africa granted to Bop in 1977 was the creation of a nation state within a nation. This view was characterised by the western discourse of modernity, in conjunction with that of identity formation. The Bantustan nation-building attempt must be located in the context of apartheid's discriminatory and discerning logic (Jones 1999: 579). The 'Independence' of Bop was celebrated annually: it became the custom to recognise it and inculcate the notion of identity among the Batswana and their children. The celebrations of 'Independence' annually claimed that it was God's ordained state, and churches within the homeland were invited to pray for the blessing of this state and its leaders, anointed by God. Individual clergy, people, but not churches, responded approvingly to the call from the government of Bop to bless the state and its leaders. Some ordained ministers from different denominations were members of the Cabinet of Bophuthatswana. Some had left their churches to join the government. The annual celebration of the 'Independence' of Bop meant that it could be seen to be on the same 'wavelength' as Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. In other words this was 'equivalent' to the neighbouring states, according to the apartheid legislation.

#### **2.4 What did the church say?**

The position of the church on the 'Independence of Bop was divided along two lines. The first was based on church affiliation: there were those who belonged to the ecumenical movement known as the South African Council of Churches (mainly the mission churches) and those which were not affiliated and came mainly from the African

Independent Churches (although not all of them supported the move by Bop). The second comprised the individual ministers from both the SACC affiliated churches and from the AICs. This situation saw the church being divided by the founding of the Bop Ministerial Fraternity (BOMIFRA) which was joined by individual ministers, some of whom were appointed to the highest positions in the homeland government.

Before Bop gained its 'Independence' Chief Lucas Mangope, together with his cabinet, called together a group of ministers, some of whom were from the mission churches which were affiliated to the South African Council of Churches. Many church leaders who attended this meeting came from the African Initiated Churches, with a few individuals from mainline churches. They were apparently told to go and pray for the forthcoming acceptance of the offer of 'Independence' from the South African government.

The Rev Kgobokwe (interview, 8 October, 2003) who at that time was the minister of transport in the cabinet of Bop and also a minister in the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa, argued that before Bop could become 'Independent' they should pray to God and call the ministers of the different churches to pray with them as well, for the success of the anticipated 'Independence'. After the request by the leaders of Bop to the leaders of the churches the government was convinced that it was doing the right thing by opting for 'Independence'. In Kgobokwe's mind there was no way in which the 'Independence' of Bop could have not received the blessing of God as it had been prayed for by the ministers of the churches in Bop. Kgobokwe maintains that there was no relationship between the state and the church, except that the state was Christian. Even though this was the case, when the government of Bop celebrated its 'Independence' annually there was a slot in the programme for the churches to pray for the government. In some instances the members of the churches were instructed to put on their church uniforms to attend these celebrations as a symbol of honouring the 'Independence' of Bop. Rev Kgobokwe kept on emphasising that even in the different government departments the day would begin with a prayer before work could be started but that this did not mean that the state had a relationship with the church. However, the presence of individual ministers in the cabinet did suggest that there was

a relationship between the church and state, as they were still involved in their church work.

Rev Kgobokwe was supported by Rev Zebediela, who was appointed chaplain of the Bop Ministerial Fraternity (BOMIFRA) and was in charge of the Chapel which was built for their meetings and conferences, as well as for their gatherings with the government. In his words Rev Zebediela (interview, 8 October, 2003) said that in scripture there was a form of apartheid, which meant that races were never meant to live together (he could not quote a scriptural text to justify his statement). He remarked that this was why there were ethnic groups which could speak different languages, with different cultures and traditions. Zebediela maintained that it was the Christianity which was brought by the missionaries which had taught them (Batswana) that they did not have to stick to their traditional belief, and that it was owing to the blessing of God through his son Jesus Christ that Bop gained its 'Independence' which was later stolen by what he termed criminals.

However, the 'Independence' of Bop was not easily accepted by many Batswana, nor by some people who were not Batswana. It meant that they were now going to lose their birthright which many had been struggling to maintain in the past. This created a new form of struggle for people, particularly those who were living in the Mabopane, Odi and Winterveld areas around Pretoria, mainly non Batswana, as they were forced to either apply for Bop citizenship or leave the territory. In that context church leaders found themselves having to take a stand on the side of the people of Winterveld. Many residents of Winterveld were North Sotho and Shangaans who were in conflict with the Bop authorities. The Catholic Church and the Justice and Reconciliation Division of the South African Council of Churches wrote a letter to the Rev SS Seane, who was the Ambassador of Bop in South Africa, dated 31 January 1979, in which the issue of citizenship was raised with the ambassador concerning the other ethnic groups. Incidents that were mentioned by the Catholic Church and the Justice and Reconciliation Division related to the arrest, detention and prosecution in the courts of Bop of people who were not willing to apply for citizenship, as well as of those who lived without permission in Winterveld.



The church also raised the issue of the forced removals which were taking place although no alternative arrangements were made for accommodation by either the South African Government or the Bop government. Some of these people were born in Winterveld and had inherited land in that area but they were forced to apply to the Winterveld Community Authority (which President Lucas Mangope established and appealed to the community to join) for a temporary residence permit. This permit was to be renewed on an annual basis and people could decide after five years if they wanted to become citizens or permanent residents of Bop. At first many thought that if they applied for citizenship of Bop their problems would be solved, but only a few were to be granted citizenship while others had to wait for a long time including those who were married to Batswana people, those who own property and even professionals. At the same time some 9000 non-Batswana who were employed at the industries in Babelegi decided to go back to work after the employers were ordered to fire them for refusing to take Bop citizenship. Many of these people were Ndebeles who had vowed not to apply for Bop citizenship but changed their minds because they were intimidated by President Lucas Mangope (Mmabatho Mail: 19 January, 1979).

In response, the ambassador, Rev Seane's, letter dated 22 March 1979 stated that in Bophuthatswana there were no 'non-Batswana or non-Bop citizens'. Rev Seane added that the 'non-something' negatives of some people, stigmas which insulted human dignity and personality, were not known in Bop. Bop was a non-racial state with a constitution for the creation of a non racial society. According to Seane, Bophuthatswana citizens included Batswana, Bapedi, Batshangana, Basotho, Ma-Xhosa, Ma-Zulu, English and Afrikaner people. All of these people were welcome to apply for the citizenship of Bop. Rev Seane further commented that his conviction as a Minister of Religion was that:

*There were basic principles and convictions of my life which, I pray, should never be undermined in my life. The basic principles and convictions spring from my understanding of the Christian doctrine of creation; the Christian doctrine of man; the Christian doctrine of the incarnation; and God's purpose for His church, and for her mission and evangelism.*

*When I respond to the call to go and serve my people in Bophuthatswana (and they are black and white) this was a decision in obedience to God's call, and the*

*decision was not made lightly, or overnight. Here were a people who had decided to open their own road, agonising, travailing, searching for liberation, for their birthrights freedom and independence. Whether some people agreed with them or not they had made their decision; to determine and to decide on their own destiny themselves, and not other people for them; deciding to constitute a new state, a new society, a non-racial society, where there are equal opportunities and not legalised racial discrimination based on skin-colour. When the people of God, and Bophuthatswana people are also the people of God, called me to identify myself with them as they so travailed, as they were humiliated and rejected in search of their birthright, I saw this also as an open door for the witness of the church in the life of the nation because the presence of the church should always be with God's people "where they are" and "as they are" (Seane: 22 March, 1979).*

At the end Seane quoted one of South Africa's Black Theologians but did not mention his name except that it was published in the Post newspaper of January 17, 1979 in which he said: 'It is important for the church to move beyond words, to devise a Ministry beyond the Ministry of the church. By that I mean establishing a Christian presence in a situation of crisis'.

Some of these ministers used their authority to influence their church members to support the state, and this was made clear by Rev Diamond Atong (interview, 8 October, 2003) who said that people followed what their leaders were doing, and in this case those ministers who were in the Bop cabinet used their power for that purpose as they were benefiting from the situation.

According to Rev Atong (interview) this was a practice inherited by Bop and other homelands as they were doing what the mother state was doing. For Bophuthatswana to call upon the church to support it, was to win the hearts and minds of the Batswana as many of them embraced the Christian religion. As a result the government of Bop adopted a state theology and followed the pattern of South Africa. In Atong's opinion the church was used by the Bop government without defining its meaning and role. Atong argued that the church is the body of Christ and can therefore not be used for evil

purposes. He maintained that the church in that territory was supposed to have stood up against the evils of apartheid and to have shared in the breaking of the body and shedding of the blood of Christ, as apartheid was destroying South African society in separate ethnic groups. In support to Rev Atong was Rev Mongwaketse (interview, 9 October 2003) who pointed out that Bop attempted to group Batswana, who did not even make a nation but were an ethnic group from the South African nation. Mongwaketse argued that the church's duty at that time was to be a prophetic voice for the voiceless in South Africa; however, the greed of some ministers had led them to misleading the people of God into believing that Bop was their sovereign government where they could rule themselves. In his words these ministers had back slidden (particularly those from the Independent Churches) and those individual ministers from the mainline churches had betrayed the prophetic voice as well as the ecumenical doctrine that apartheid was a heresy. The Rev. Tselapedi (now the speaker of the North West legislature) argued (interview, 8 October, 2003) that there never had been any 'Independence except to elevate Lucas Mangope as the self appointed and white imposed leader of Batswana who was to lead them from the land of captivity'. Tselapedi said that this was an anathema from the beginning because 'Independence' had never been acknowledged by the Batswana except for what had been said by Chief Lucas Mangope. If 'Independence' had been what the Batswana wanted from the beginning they would not have been involved in the struggle for liberation in the first place. Secondly the Batswana would not have attempted to topple Mangope from his 'Presidency' as the leader of Bop. And thirdly, the South African government would not have interfered with the affairs of the legitimate government; therefore it was clear that Lucas Mangope was pursuing his own interests and not those of the Batswana. To call a state a Christian state was at the same time another means to maintain stability because not all the churches in Bop supported it except for the few individuals who later formed what was called the Bop Ministerial Fraternity. Theirs was to safeguard their own interests and not minister to their flock as was emphasised by Rev Tselapedi.

The Winterveld problem was serious: people saw the area as a dumping zone people were neglected. This was discovered by Rev. Jimmy Palos of the Methodist Church who toured the area with Dr Roos (Sunday Express 5 March, 1981). Palos said that the

fault was not only with the bureaucrats but the land owners found that it was more profitable to farm people than to farm the land. The other problem was that the main road to Winterveld was passing through Mabopane, half of which was South Africa while the other half was Bop. The most shocking discovery by Palos was the overcrowding of people in one shanty, some numbering twenty. In some instances only the relics of the destroyed mud houses were to be found, where door frames and windows were removed because the owners had left the place to move back to the centre of town. What Rev Palos found was that most of the people living in Winterveld were Ndebeles, Zulus and Shangaans, while the Batswana living there made up only 10% of the population in the area. All these people, including the Batswana, were resisting applying for the citizenship of Bop (Sunday Express 5 March, 1981). Most of these people feared losing their South African citizenship as well as their jobs. There were also schools which were illegal because they were not registered with the Bop Government: they were not teaching in the medium of Setswana because they were intended for the children of non Batswana people. A further discovery by Rev Palos was simply that some of these schools had been closed by the police but the teachers and principals had obtained court interdicts to reopen the schools. The South African Council of Churches also found that people expressed the same problems about fear of losing their South African citizenship and jobs, as well as their pensions (Sunday Times 4 February, 1979).

On 16 March 1982 the Rev SS Seane wrote a letter to the South African Council of Churches, requesting a meeting on behalf of the Bophuthatswana President Lucas Mangope. The meeting was to be held in Mmabatho, the capital of Bophuthatswana, and the suggested date was 21 April, 1982, at 10h00. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the problem of Winterveld. In response to the letter, the General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches, Bishop Desmond Tutu, acknowledged the opportunity of a proposed meeting and added that the delegation from the South African Council of Churches would be made up of church representatives together with representatives of the Winterveld Community. In this letter Bishop Desmond Tutu indicated that he was not going to be party to the delegation but that the Vice President of the South African Council, Mrs Sally Motlana, Rev Austin Massey, Chairman of the

Justice and Reconciliation Division of the SACC, Deacon Hans Hlaethwa, Chairman of the Winterveld Committee, who was also a member of the Pretoria Regional Council of Churches, Mr Abel Motshoane, Vice Chairman of Winterveld Committee, Rev Jimmy Palos who was the secretary of the Winterveld Committee and Mr K Nyamakazi, who was the Convener of the Water Subcommittee of the Winterveld Committee, would form the delegation.

On 21 April 1982 the meeting took place in Mmabatho: the delegation of the SACC was present, while the government of Bophuthatswana was represented by several Ministers from the cabinet and a few members of the South African Foreign Affairs department were present as well (Minutes of the meeting: 21 April, 1982). Chief Lucas Mangope in that meeting asked Rev Seane to read the letter from Bishop Desmond Tutu. In that letter was a statement in which the South African Council of Churches made it clear that they were not going to Bop in recognition of its 'Independence' and that they did not recognise bantustan territories. In his response Mangope emphasised that he did not make any apology for running a government or taking 'Independence'. In spite of, his emphasis on being an 'Independent' government, the SACC maintained its non recognition of Bop as a state and the meeting continued.

There were a number of issues which were addressed among which was the contested one of citizenship; some issues affected the land, pensions, education and schooling as well as water and health. Some of these issues I will discuss in later chapters, when considering the issue of citizenship. Mrs Motlana stated that there was a need to take into consideration the different interest groups in the area and to outline their presence there; however, before she could finish what she was saying, Chief Mangope interjected by saying that history of Winterveld was already known. She went on to say that the non Batswana were insecure and again Chief Mangope interjected by asking if it was the intention of the delegation that Winterveld be excised from Bop. Mrs Motlana pointed out that these people were not secure because they were losing their jobs as a result of their not being citizens of Bop and not permanent residents either.

Rev Jimmy Palos stated that people who had Section 10 rights, who had been removed

from Lady Selbourne and other places to Winterveld under the Group Areas Act, could have affidavits made available that they had been relocated to Winterveld by the government trucks which had dumped them there. Chief Mangope dismissed the affidavits as valueless and demanded a proof that these people had been moved to Winterveld by the South African government. He further demanded that they obtain a statement from South Africa. In response, Rev Palos asked if this was in dispute with the fact that people had been removed from Pretoria. In spite of the fact that Winterveld was a heritage from the South African government, it fell within the jurisdiction of the homeland, and the forced removals programme still persisted under Bophuthatswana as an attempt to rid itself of the slum conditions. The other issues in this meeting will be dealt with in the next chapter, particularly those of the land, residence and plot-owners.

## **2.5 Tshwaraganang lo dire pula ene: unity and progress**

After negotiating for its 'independence' in 1977 the Bop government tried to reclaim the British Protectorate of Bechuanaland and this caused a number of misunderstandings, particularly on the definitions of the boundaries. Not only were the boundaries to be redefined, but citizenship was also a cause for concern especially amongst many of the Batswana people who remained within the South African boundaries. Though Chief Lucas Mangope allegedly expressed his concern over the forced removals of Batswana from their own land he never in any way stood against ethnic, territorial and racial segregation. In spite of the alleged concern of Mangope (Rand Daily Mail 28 May, 1977), forced removals were endorsed between 1968 and 1971.

The highlight of tension was in 1976 during the student uprising in Soweto, spreading to Bophuthatswana in Montshiwa, when many of the young people burned down the Bop Legislative Assembly in opposition to the intended 'independence'. The protest by young people against the perceived 'autonomy' was also picked up by the opposition party of Bop, known as Seoposengwe National Party, under the leadership of Chief Maseloane. He strongly opposed the notion of independence and demanded equal status with white people in South Africa. For Maseloane it looked as if Mangope had

already accepted the status of 'Independence' in collusion with the Prime Minister (B. J. Vorster) of South Africa at that time, and that this was another way of giving Mangope the powers to rule the Batswana as he wished (The World 11 March, 1977).

Mangope was willing to go the extra mile to recreate a Batswana National group in South Africa within the territory defined and dictated to him by Pretoria. From the experience of many Batswana people in the urban areas, he was urged to reconsider 'independence' based on the first 'Independence' of Transkei. Many of those who thus urged him, advised him that 'independence' had been rejected by the international world and that his children would be ashamed to admit that he was their father (The World 11 March, 1977). Despite opposition from the majority of Batswana most of those in the ruling party aspired to the notion of 'independence' as a stepping stone along the road to the 'maturity' and 'development' of the Batswana.

#### 2.5.1 Economic viability

Like the other 'independent homelands', Bop could not be regarded as economically independent because it was receiving a substantial grant from the South African government. However, it was more viable than the other three 'independent' states because it had in its possession mineral resources which other Bantustans did not have. A large part of its economic base was derived from the taxation which it levied on mining and tourism. From the mining tax its revenue was almost 50% of the budget of R380 million. Tourism was also generating a sizeable revenue: Sun Bop was paying R59 million in company tax and the casino tax was expected to bring in R60 million (Bauer and Wessels 1992: 29). On the other hand Bophuthatswana had a debt. of R600 million due to overspending and the low mineral prices.

However, people (including the minister of finance, Mr Lesley Young) who were in the Cabinet of Bop were hopeful that the economy would render the government fully independent of South Africa within five years (The Star 5 October 1989, 15). Mr Young had stated in the same newspaper that the government was going to make much money through mining, the same way the South African government did. Despite this,

the South African government at that stage was still obliged to keep supplying the Bop government with money so that they could continue to develop the territory. Further money was still to be obtained from the adult citizens of Bop who were working in South Africa. Also, the Bop government had common borders with some Southern African countries and as such it took certain responsibilities of maintaining these borders off the shoulders of the South African government. About R13 million a year was required to maintain these borders (The Star 5 October 1989: 15). According to Devenish (Vorster, 1983: 19) it was important to see Bop as economically viable because lack of viability would affect the legitimacy of the Constitution. Meanwhile Mr Mangope maintained in his speeches to the House of Assembly that Bop during international isolation had through non-recognition in its early stages, managed to come to terms with the realities that it had to do things on its own without help from the First World and with little help from South Africa (Malan, 1989: 35). With this in mind, the thought was to embark on trade.

### 2.5.2 Trade

Like an island that is surrounded by water, the government of Bop was ambitious to trade with the international world, without considering that it was a creation of apartheid. Despite this, it went on to compile its own balance of payments and its own trade statistics, through a survey which covered the economic sectors of external trade. This survey was however, not very significant as Bop was dependent on South Africa. Many of its imports originated from South Africa and other countries and they were delivered to Bop through the ports, and by road and rail from its 'big brother' (South Africa).

Most of the goods that were imported were consumable, like foodstuffs as well as merchandise for personal consumption. Weidemann (1977: 56) says that only a small quantity of these imports were from outside South Africa, and that these were products such as rice, tea and coffee. It was only due to the fast 'development' of the mining industry and the expansion of transport that the amount of capital goods such as machinery and equipment increased. This form of 'development' triggered off greater demand to 'improve' the infrastructure of Bophuthatswana.



Regarding exports, the South African government was an important trading partner of Bop. However, the products that were produced by or in Bop were re-exported by the South African government to other countries. A good example of this was the high proportion of the output of the mining industry. In this sense Bop had already built up trade with countries other than South Africa (Weidemann, 1977: 56). Most goods were exported to South Africa. Many of these goods were textiles, clothing, furniture, jewellery, engineering products and building material. A lot of the mining income was exported to South Africa between 1974 and 1975, in which Bophuthatswana managed to make R78, 3 million and R90,1 million respectively

On the other hand products such as meat, sisal, and maize (though maize was also imported) were not exported. Most of Bop's export trade was with South Africa, where its earnings stemmed from migrant labour and commuters employed in South Africa. However, the dependence of Bop's economy on the foreign exchange which was earned by migrant workers and commuters was reduced by the growing mining industry in the following years, i.e. from 1976 onwards. Due to its desire to trade with some of the countries other than South Africa, the government of Bophuthatswana sought for international recognition.

### 2.5.3 Quest for international recognition

Bophuthatswana had thus far only been recognised by the government of South Africa and some of the bantustans such as Transkei, Ciskei, and Venda, as well as self-governing states like Qwa-Qwa, Kwa-Zulu, Gazankulu, Kwandebele and others. President Lucas Mangope blamed the outside world for non recognition. He said:

*'Our particular path of liberation and independence has not been enough for the world ... a world that is historically used to bloodshed preceding recognition of independence or nationhood. Because our independence was not the result of a bloody war of liberation, we have not received, as yet, the recognition we deserve. But no matter, we will eventually earn this. When recognition comes to us, it will be recognition with great respect ... the respect that is afforded to a nation that is capable of standing on its own feet. For this we are prepared to sit*

*and wait' (Bauer and Wessels 1992: 30).*

After its independence Bophuthatswana was visited by politicians from Britain, most of whom were Conservative members of the British House of Commons, with the controversial figure like Mr Andrew Hunter, who had visited Bophuthatswana seven times already. Hunter's justification for his visits to Bophuthatswana was that being among the Batswana gave him the chance to learn at first hand the indignation they experienced at Britain's past actions and current attitudes. He felt a deep sense of shame that the British government had not given recognition to this Southern African nation that had contributed so much towards 'peace' in the turbulent continent (Bauer and Wessels 1992: 31). In Hunter's opinion recognition for Bop meant that it was going to have access to the world financial markets, to soft loans, to the development programmes of developed countries, which would have meant an immense difference to the two million Batswana (The Weekly Mail 21 April 1988: 5).

The other leader of a foreign country to visit was the late Prime Minister Franz Josef Strauss of Bavaria, a supporter of Bop, who held talks with President Lucas Mangope.

The independence of Bop was condemned both in South Africa and elsewhere. In the continent, the Organisation of African Unity was vocal in condemning it. The OAU describes Bop as a:

*Pseudo state which did not serve the cause of peace and was clearly designed to apportion poorer land to the blacks and the best of everything to the whites ... the self-appointed ruler of Bophuthatswana should be condemned for the traitorous nature of his acceptance to fragment South Africa* (Bophuthatswana Research Bulletin 1977: 467).

Some countries in the continent, like Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Senegal, also voiced their condemnation and commented that 'the refusal by B.J. Vorster regime to recognise, as being anything more than temporary sojourners, those who sell their labour to the white man for as long it is needed, must be vehemently condemned ... Africa has a duty to support the struggling people of South Africa and must engineer a

campaign against any move to recognize the enslavement of our brothers and sisters' (Bophuthatswana Research Bulletin 1977: 468).

The attempt by Bop to forge links with Botswana backfired as that government refused to recognise them. The position taken by Botswana was very clear from the beginning: that they did not recognise any Bantustan (The Star, 19 May 1988: 9). The foreign minister of Bop at that time, Mr Solomon L Rathebe, maintained that they would not rest until the world knew that Bop existed. He said: 'It won't be easy for us to get what we want. The journey is still very long. But we are prepared to walk every mile of it' (City Press 10 April, 1988).

While some historical events were unfolding in other parts of the world, like the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union, there was a revival of nationalist notions which also provided the actions and material for nationhood and ethnicity in Bop. This was not clear whether it was a phase in search of a respectable political discourse. This was giving rise to new examples of political arguments for nationhood. The nationalist sentiments in the Soviet Union constituted a powerful justification for Bop to be an independent nation. Israel was also a good example, because of its determination to preserve its identity as a nation, and this served as a source of inspiration for Bophuthatswana. At an independence day celebration at the Bophuthatswana Trade Mission which visited Israel in 1992, the Bop Minister of Information made a comparison between the two countries, based on the experience of the Batswana regaining their promised land the same way as the Israelites had done (Lawrence and Manson 1994: 457). Israel also saw the parallels, because from 1977 there had been regular exchanges between the two countries, with Israel sponsoring the development initiatives of the homeland. This was further evident in the frequent visits of Israeli business people and advisers, with some of them being given positions in Bophuthatswana.

In 1992 there were visitors from Ukraine to the 'Independence' celebrations of Bop. This was a perfect opportunity to foster links, and likewise a Bop trade adviser 'ambassador' was despatched to Riga to establish relations with the new state of Latvia. This was

followed by a visit by Mangope and several Cabinet Ministers to Latvia to strengthen these ties, which was followed by the opening of the Information Services of Bophuthatswana. In his speech Mangope further reiterated that it was intended to forge relationships between both states, based on the similarities of their historical background. This statement indicated their common fear of communism, which in the South African context was a threat in the form of the ANC.

Lucas Mangope was also campaigning for recognition through other means. His main argument was that merely because the liberation of Bop had been without any conflict no recognition was accorded to them. Irrespective of the fact that Bophuthatswana was a product of apartheid, he vowed to spend sleepless nights fighting for the recognition, and added that his government would wage a war: its own war to be recognised, especially in the fields of education, agriculture, housing and other modern facilities. Mangope's means of doing this, was to 'improve' the quality of life of the citizens of Bop. Some of the visible means which the Bop regime used were gambling (Sun City), cultural activities (Mmabana), the appointment of Ombudsman and Consumer Council.

Sun City managed to draw many people from different countries to gamble, and many of those who came to Bop were Europeans, North and South Americans, thousands of South Africans and Southern Africans. This gave Mangope the upper hand in boasting that there was no apartheid in Bophuthatswana and that people of all races were playing together and being entertained, and even living together (Mangope 1988: 63). Also, there were innovations such as TV stations (known as Bop TV and Mmabatho TV) and a number of radio stations (the most popular being called Radio Bop). For Mangope this was an entrance to the world, as was the establishment of the airport. These were some of the means which Mangope employed to be recognised by the world.

Based on the achievements of Bophuthatswana in a short period the need for recognition was unquestionable. However, it has been embarrassing to consider that these were the 'leaders' put into power by the South African government, which kept them where they belonged (in the Bantustans). In his own words Mangope (1988: 63)

maintained that:

*South Africa studiously avoids giving us the vocal recognition of our achievements that we have earned - and in this regard they team up with their opponents: the so-called liberal press of South Africa. This attitude of South Africa has caused us much harm in international quarters since many of our achievements and our resources are deceitfully or ignorantly represented as being part of South African property or achievement. And so, for example, when South Africa talks about her mineral reserves she sometimes includes that which belongs to us. When she publishes her information material, she does not always distinguish her territory from ours. We resent this and will do all in our power to see that this attitude changes.*

However, the quest for recognition in South Africa, especially from the ecumenical movement, was a lost cause. The South African Council of Churches had made it clear to Lucas Mangope that they did not recognise Bophuthatswana as a territory with independence that was legitimate, in correspondence between the government of Bophuthatswana and the South African Council of Churches in which the homeland authorities were inviting the church to Mmabatho (the capital of Bophuthatswana). The letter was written by Rev SS Seane (dated 13 March, 1982) to the Council of Churches; at that time Seane had just retired from the ministry of the Methodist Church as one of the strongest opponents of the apartheid policy, a move which surprised many clergy people in the church. Seane was to take up the position of the ambassador of Bop in South Africa. The invitation was to discuss the problems of Winterveld, which involved education, health, land, pensions and many other issues which will be tackled in some chapters discussed below. In response to the invitation, Bishop Desmond Tutu, who was the General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches, made it clear that the ecumenical movement accepted, but only on humanitarian considerations, and that this did not imply recognition of the policy of balkanisation of South Africa and the 'Independence' of the homelands.

At a meeting (held on 21 April 1982) in Mmabatho between the Council of Churches

and Bophuthatswana, Lucas Mangope added that he did not intend taking back his actions of independence (Minutes of the meeting 21 April, 1982). He referred to the correspondence from Bishop Tutu, saying that he (Bishop Tutu) was totally indifferent to the people who were addressing him in that letter (this letter was telexed from Cape Town by Rev Seane to Mmabatho). Further to this the authorities present including Mangope, wanted to know if the SACC accepted their authority as they were the ones who had invited the SACC to the meeting. If the situation was that they were not recognised as such, then there was no need for the meeting to proceed. In spite of Mangope and his ministers' comments this did not change the position of the South African Council of Churches, and Mrs Motlana, who was leading the delegation, reiterated what the Council was there for, which was to help and not to give recognition to the homeland (Minutes of the meeting, 21 April 1982).

Not only did the SACC reject the policy of the Bantustans and their 'Independence', but the affiliated denominations adopted the same position. The Methodists, Anglicans, Presbyterians, United Congregationalists, Catholics and other denominations did not recognise the existence of homelands (Madise 2000: 64). One denomination which came out openly was the Methodist Church at its conference of 1977, held in Benoni, which decided to discontinue the practice of sending a message of goodwill to the statesmen of both the South African government and those of the homelands. This was during a time of violence and the government of South Africa was clamping down on many African organisations, detaining many people and banning newspapers. It then dawned on the Methodist Church of Southern Africa that sending messages of goodwill would not change the situation in South Africa. The discontinuation of this practice led to schism in some denominations (particularly the mainline denominations) and a good example of this was the Methodist Church of Southern Africa in and around the Transkei at that time (which like Bophuthatswana, had opted for 'Independence'). However, the Transkei situation did not affect the church in Bophuthatswana in the same way. The only problem occurred when the individual ministers from these denominations left their churches to join the government of Bop, as Rev SS Seane did. Some individuals who did so included Rev SS Seodi (Methodist Church), Rev. S Kgobokwe (Dutch Reformed Church in Africa), Rev L D Lesetedi (United

Congregational Church) and many others who felt that there was a need to support the government. The individual ministers who did this later formed a ministerial movement which was known as the Bophuthatswana Ministerial Fraternity (BOMIFRA). Although, mainline denominations may have not recognised the status of the homeland government, many of the African Independent Churches did do so. This was visible in the way they attended government ceremonies and went as far as being given a slot in the programme devotions.

There were also other attempts to gain international recognition. The most notable one which was used was to capitalise on the apartheid context of South Africa. It was not surprising when suddenly Bop was referred to as 'A place for All' this was supposed to mean a secular state.

## **2.6 'A Place for All'**

This phrase had some foundation but was both opportunistic and propagandistic, presenting Bop as a 'liberal democracy', with a Bill of Rights providing inbuilt protection for the rights of individuals. At the same time Bophuthatswana was still in pursuit of international recognition: because in its education system, subjects such as geography and history were providing the curricular foundations for Bop's delimitations. At tertiary level, the establishment of the Institute of African Studies at the University of Bophuthatswana was providing an ideological base for a specific type of Setswana studies which was acting as a cultural intermediary for government.

This was a planned way of appealing to the international community, because it had nothing to do with the people, who needed jobs and security. Foreigners, viewed as competitors, were more likely to buy into the notion of exclusive ethnic nationalism. The statement 'A Place for All' was contradictory because foreigners were expected to apply for work permits and or citizenship and they had no pension funds at all. At 'Independence', many foreigners believed that the Constitutional Act and the Bill of Rights would protect them. This proved untrue after 'independence' as many of them were harassed. Towards the end of the 1970s many foreigners experienced police raids

and other forms of harassment, especially in areas such as Odi and Moretele. In the early 1980s a new form of harassment was started, when foreigners were denied work permits and citizenship. Within the same decade Bophuthatswana changed the Land Control Act as another way of redefining foreigners as squatters or immigrants, which allowed the government to legally evict them. After 1986 the discrimination against foreigners did not stop but continued in a new form as the state was now focussing on adding pressure against people who were opposed to the Bantustan system (Lawrence and Mason 1994: 454).

## **2.7 A short-lived coup**

The existence of Bophuthatswana was not accepted by the majority of the people in that territory. To a certain extent, it should be noted that the interplay between the state and 'traditional' structures was not as simple as it looked. In this instance the chieftaincy of that context was heterogeneous rather than homogeneous. Not all the chiefs were in favour of the government of Bophuthatswana, some resisted the regime while others supported it. Those who resisted were able to build up their support base among their subjects. A good example of this was Chief B. L. M. I. Motsatsi, whom it was thought would take over from or succeed Mangope as the new leader of Bophuthatswana. Motsatsi decided to resign from the Cabinet of Lucas Mangope because of his refusal to undermine constitutional democracy, which was reflected in his decision not to use his powers to harass the opposition party, the People's Progressive Party (PPP). Also, many chiefs rejected the innovations by Mangope regarding traditional etiquette and his self-proclaimed title of 'paramount chief' (Jones 1999: 4.). This resistance saw the formation of a traditionalists' organisation throughout South Africa, which was known as the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (Contralesa), in 1986. Contralesa was contesting the continuing role of chieftaincy and of local affiliation, which were a significant feature of the political landscape which could probably have also been undermined by the African National Congress.

It became clear that there was no room for any political opposition in Bophuthatswana, because the Bill of Rights in Section (18.1) specified that other laws could override the



provisions of the Bill, which included the Internal Security Act and the Security Clearance Act, there was much suppression of the political opponents of the Bophuthatswana government. Such suppression was now focussing on the rise of and popular resistance to the Bantustan system, in the form of movements such as the United Democratic Front (UDF), Congress of South African Trade Unions student organisations. In 1990 the government instituted the State of Emergency as a mechanism to deal with the opposition to the 'independence' of Bophuthatswana, and this added to the exclusion of the non Batswana people and the rural power-base, which was opposed to Mangope. In this context the situation meant that the earlier statement that Bophuthatswana was 'A place for All' was now reversed.

In 1985 further contradictions arose out of the financial crisis, and were also caused by the persecution of the non Batswana minorities as well as by oppression and the increase in political turmoil. The outcomes of this were to separate communities and create a junction between 'state' and 'nation'. As a result, the national development and national identity were basically focussing on the material strengthening of the state and on advancing homogeneity. Later, there emerged some internal differences within the state on 10 February 1988 and this produced a short-lived coup.

Mmabatho, the capital of Bophuthatswana, was aroused by the sound of fighting between 'loyal' and 'rebel' factions of the Bophuthatswana Defence Force over the control of government buildings. Mangope was still in his pyjamas when he was arrested and taken to the 'Independence' stadium. News about the coup was announced after the seizure of Radio Bophuthatswana, which then proclaimed that power was in the hands of the People's Progressive Party, led by Rocky Malebane Metsing. For the citizens of Bophuthatswana this was good news as they took to the streets in celebrations of joy for the downfall of Mangope's regime (*Bantustans in Crisis* 1990:10). However, this moment was short-lived as troops from the South African Defence Force moved into Mmabatho to rescue Lucas Mangope, and within a few hours the coup was over. After his rescue by the South African Defence Force, many of the 'rebel' troops were arrested, together with the supporters of the People's Progressive Party. Others fled into exile, including Malebane Metsing. A reign of terror ensued with the security

forces arresting those suspected of being involved in the coup. Some government officials were fired from their positions, such as the head of Bop TV news, the Director General of Bop Broadcasting Corporation and the Secretary of Agribank. In Mangope's Cabinet the Minister of Internal Affairs (Chief B.L.M.I. Motsatsi) was forced to resign, as well as other chiefs.

Despite the political situation in Bophuthatswana after the coup, the situation in South Africa was experiencing a drastic transformation, while the regime of Bophuthatswana was still attached to the rhetoric of 'independence'. It was however, shifting towards a conservative regionalist alliance; at the same time the discourses of Christianity and progress were refashioned as well as redirected to the Afrikaner-Batswana alliance which was creating an animosity towards the Xhosa - and urban - dominated ANC (Jones 1999). This led to Mangope and his few supporters regrouping to initiate the South Africa-Tswana Forum (SATSWA), the purpose of which was to maintain the territorial dominance of the Batswana, as opposed to a unitary state and the reincorporating of the Bantustans.

#### 2.7.1 The church's reaction to the coup

After the coup, the government of Bophuthatswana was rescued by the South African government. This resulted in the arrest and detention of many people as well as in a state of emergency being declared by the President of Bop, Lucas Mangope. The failure of the coup against the Bop government was seen as a victory from God by the authorities in that state, and not as protection by the South African government. The then minister of transport, Rev S Kgobokwe (in an interview with him) said that the ministers and BOMIFRA met at the Civic Centre in Mafikeng on 14 February 1988, to thank God for saving Bop and its leaders from what they termed terrorists at that time. From what Rev Zebediela said, it was through the grace of God that no one was killed and that the well-trained army of Bop, which later was assisted by the South African army at the request of Bop managed to stop what could have been 'war'. However, churches which were affiliated to the South African Council of Churches distanced themselves from the involvement of some of their individual ministers who took part in

the 'thanksgiving' service which was held at the University of Bophuthatswana Chapel (UNIBO Chapel). In the SACCs' view the attempted coup was an indication of the evils of apartheid and implied that people had enough of being oppressed and discriminated against on the basis of race and ethnicity. According to Rev Tselapedi, this situation led to a form of division among the Batswana as Christians, because those from the SACC affiliated churches were seen to be supporting movements like the African National Congress, which was believed to be anti Christian. For the government of Bophuthatswana which was 'Christian', this was not going to be allowed to happen in their territory. The BOMIFRA did not see the South African Council Churches as a legitimate voice of the voiceless but as an illegal movement in Bophuthatswana because they (BOMIFRA) controlled that territory (Interviews with Rev Kgobokwe and Rev Zebediela).

Rev Tselapedi saw Bop not as a legitimate state but as a place where all Batswana people in South Africa were grouped together and separated from other Africans, simply because they were told that they were different from other people. In his opinion Bophuthatswana's existence was an anathema because it had never been accepted in the first place, because it was a creation of the apartheid government of South Africa. Regarding the issue of the coup Tselapedi said it had always been realistic that people within Bophuthatswana had only been waiting for the right time to express their feelings, for the whole world to see that they had been oppressed. As a result, the church took a prophetic stance on the side of this voice. For the church in Bophuthatswana to be seen to be divided was propaganda, which was spread by both the South African government and Bop, to try and divert the attention of the international community from seeing the truth behind apartheid. He argued that there was no such thing as a Christian who was better than another, though BOMIFRA wanted to paint a picture of two types of Christians (i.e. those who were in Bop being better than those from the SACC affiliated churches). According to Tselapedi, this was a perception which was created by the government of Bophuthatswana because they believed that it was an 'independent' state like Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, yet lacking international recognition. The point which Tselapedi was emphasising was the fact that those who led Bop were possessed by power and wanted the church to consolidate it for them

because it meant that there would be hostility towards that power. At the same time he pointed out that if the church forsook its prophetic voice and became a state church it would fail to conscientise the state when things went wrong. This seems to have been the case with the Bophuthatswana Ministerial Fraternity, as they could not call the state to order when people were not happy with the state of affairs in Bophuthatswana.

Things did not go according to Mangope's plans, because in March 1994 the government of Bop crumbled. As it spectacularly collapsed, the civil service had already crumbled, with civil servants demanding salary parity, job security and pensions. The situation was not influenced by political opposition to Bop but by the uncertainty of the future of the Bantustan in a post apartheid context. This meant that from that time the government of Bophuthatswana ceased to exist within South African territory as an 'independent' state but became part of the North West Province of South Africa in a post apartheid era. The final nail was hammered in by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Pik Botha, who was accompanied by Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, who was Secretary General of the African National Congress. This did not go down well with Lucas Mangope, who claimed that he had been robbed of his government by the South African government and the African National Congress. The one thing which Mr Mangope made clear was his lack of understanding of why Mr Ramaphosa and Mr Pik Botha approached him at night to inform him about the end of the Bophuthatswana government.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

The 'independence' of Bop was something which was not at all welcomed by the Batswana. For many of them the 6<sup>th</sup> December 1977 was the day that began their captivity. At the same time the proclamation by Lucas Mangope that all Batswana belonged to Bophuthatswana was a means to deny them their status as the citizens of South Africa. For him even those who were in the 'diaspora' were supposed to apply for citizenship because there was plenty of space for them to come 'home'. Bop was a hand of apartheid extended by Mangope, who in many instances was seen as

upholding the principles of apartheid by opting for the 'independence' offered to him by South Africa at that time. The extension of apartheid through the Bantustans could easily be seen in the way leaders of this settlement were treating their 'subjects', especially those who they forced to either apply for permanent residence or citizenship and were not ethnically Batswana.

For Mangope there was no way opposition could be given any room to express its opinion. It could be that he was well aware of the fact that more than half of the Batswana were not in favour of the route which he took. The constant harassment of those who stood up against him demonstrated that all was not well in Bop. The artificial picture of 'A Place for All' was made only for those in an elitist environment as a means to access the recognition which Mangope had longed for, during the years of the existence of Bophuthatswana. This recognition was also contradicted by a constant harassment of non-Batswana, who were referred to as squatters and immigrants, while at the same time Mangope was employing the labour of expatriates to take over some aspects of the civil service, especially in the departments of education and health. The two departments saw a great many expatriates taking over, while many Batswana people with expertise in these fields were left looking for employment.

The effort by the government of Bophuthatswana to be recognised as legitimate had little to do with the 'independence' of Batswana but much to do with the fact that individuals in top positions could gain access to resources which could not be accessed by all the citizens of South Africa. The invitations from Conservative Party members from the House of Commons were a way to make friends but not to recognition, as it was clear that there was no way Bophuthatswana could be recognised: not even the South African government recognised the 'independence' of Bophuthatswana as legitimate, seeing it was not at all a government but a labour reserve. Many of South Africa's industrial labourers, especially in the former Pretoria, Witwatersrand and Vereeniging areas came from Bop, as in the case with of the mining industry both in South Africa and Bop. The platinum, which came mostly from the Bafokeng area (near Rustenburg), was exported by South Africa and not Bophuthatswana. Another contradiction emerged from Bophuthatswana's demand for recognition from the

neighbouring Botswana: this is a country which was a British Protectorate and was occupied by Batswana as well.

The rejection of the 'Independence' of Bophuthatswana by many Batswana was reflected in the mobilisation of its people by the local traditional chiefs throughout that Bantustan. The support which these chiefs commanded gave an indication of the feelings of the people towards Bophuthatswana. The 10 February, 1988 coup was a clear indication to the world of what was happening in South Africa with its Bantustans. For many Batswana, the coup was one form of liberation from captivity, and they celebrated the downfall of the regime which they had endured. However, celebrations were shortlived, only to be followed by pain and misery when the soldiers and police arrested and detained the suspected opponents of Mangope. The arrests of these people were related to their 'involvement' in the coup. Others fled from the country, outside the borders of South Africa, because they knew that they would be arrested by the South African government and be taken back to Mangope to face charges of 'treason'. Not long afterwards the plight of people in Bophuthatswana was relieved when the entire civil service collapsed. This situation led to the South African government, which had given him 'independence', nullifying the legitimacy of his leadership as well as the existence of Bophuthatswana as a 'country'. This allowed Batswana people to prepare themselves for elections for a new South African government.

The Bop government exploited the Christian faith and the Christian churches as much as possible to justify its widely rejected 'independence'. It claimed that churches should not be involved in political matters, while at the same time working both openly and behind the scenes to garner the support of more conservative, mainly rural and nationalistically inclined churches. The mainline (mission) churches, in co-operation with the SACC and regional affiliates such as the Pretoria Council of Churches, never faltered in its opposition to Bop's 'independence'. Another related area of struggle was the whole land issue, which is the topic of my next chapter.

## Chapter 3

### Availability of land and land ownership

#### 3.1 Introduction

In this chapter much of information received was oral or obtained through interviews, the reason being that most of the records that were kept in the government offices of Bophuthatswana were either burnt or otherwise destroyed, especially during the time of transition and the occupation of offices by the new government, as the old records were no longer needed. All the available material was not enough to cover the full spectrum. The facts which I shall be discussing therefore will in some cases be subjective and may raise certain questions. Many people that I spoke to expressed their disappointment at the destruction of the records, as they felt that it was necessary to keep them for historical as well as research purposes. The research I conducted involved some cabinet ministers in Bop and some supporters of the same government. Other interviews were opponents of the government, who shared their experiences under that government as well as how they perceived it.

There were also different views, which I gathered from those who were in opposition to the government, regarding the issue of land as well as the national anthem of Bophuthatswana. On both sides I came across similarities, particularly the issue of the availability of material and documents. Opponents of the government of Bophuthatswana also seem to have been little organised because they appeared not to know who kept the records or who was the secretary at that time. This made the research somewhat difficult as I had to rely on their narratives and compare these with the events they seemed to commonly agree upon. Due to insufficient material, there are instances where I used the secondary sources to back up my argument and sometimes to locate the time frame, in an attempt to be as accurate as possible. On the other hand, the issue of the forced removals which were taking place in the area of Winterveld where people were relocated from Lady Selbourne, Eastwood and other of Pretoria's

white areas, will be discussed in terms of the involvement of the church, particularly the Pretoria Regional Council of Churches, which helped the Winterveld residents to establish the Winterveld Action Committee so as to take into consideration the plight of the landless people. There were also some forms of communication between the South African Council of Churches and the government of Bophuthatswana regarding the situation in Winterveld. This affected not only the landless people but also the residents who had been there before the establishment of Bophuthatswana and were forced to either apply for permanent residence or leave the area, in spite of being born and bred there. This led to some meetings between the South African Council of Churches and the Bophuthatswana government, but the South African government was also heavily involved as this situation was one of their own making.

### **3.2 Land: a contested reality in terms of Setswana law and its custom on land**

In Setswana law there can be no man who is married but without natural claim to a residential site, tillable land as well as access to communal land (this would be land for grazing especially for small and large livestock). The right to this claim is usually exercised by an authorised person (tribal, ward or family head) on allocating the rights of use of land (Jepp 1980: 24). There are instances where women and young men are allowed to exercise these rights to land, mainly in cases of hereditary succession. The traditional tribal system of the Batswana makes no difference between tribesmen and the holders of rights to land and other tribesmen, which basically means that there is no married man without land. However, this does not mean that all tribesmen have the right to claim. What it does mean is that those tribesmen who do not have practical rights to land do not have any at all as they have only the passive rights and their right to land has not lapsed (Jepp 1980: 24). Access to land for tribesmen and newcomers was not sold or acquired through any form of payment. For the newcomers it was through a courtesy gift either to the tribal ward or ward heads; in the case of money, as is the trend nowadays, it will take the form of a special levy that is in no way connected to the purchasing or leasing of land. The traditional land use rights in the case of fields and residential plots are permanent and can only be taken away under certain circumstances, which may be exceptional. As a result, ownership of land can be passed



on from the original owner after death to other generations within the family, through inheritance (Jepp 1980: 25).

### 3.2.1 Various land acts

The ideology of the Nationalist Party was only officially in force from 1948, and the areas which were allocated to the Bantustans were the reserves which white people were least interested in owning over the years (Rogers 1976: 10). These were widely scattered parcels of land, many of which were smaller than single farms, forming one-eighth of the total land of the Republic. The existing allocation objectives at that time could not go further than the 1936 Trust and Land Act, which was based on the 1913 Land Act which was the result of the colonial conquest and theft of the African people's land. The Act (1913) itself was a means to facilitate the two-thirds majority which the government of the time had wanted in order to remove the Africans from the voters' roll, especially in the Cape (Rogers 1976: 19). The total reserve area which was planned was about 6.21 million hectares an (equivalent to 13,8% of the land area in South Africa) (Rand Daily Mail: 24. 3. 1976).

From that time on the 1936 Act was used as the yardstick for land allocation in the Bantustans in spite of the attempts in some cases by certain of the chiefs to try to make sense of the policy. One of the chiefs who attempted this was Chief Lucas Mangope, when he rejected the 1936 Land Act in an attempt to make it the basis for settling the issue itself (Rogers 1976: 10). In his argument Mangope tried to show that this Act was introduced to solve the 'Native Problem'. His argument was simply that the Act was not relevant to the homeland issue and the future of its sovereignty. The chief ministers of the homelands were concerned with the expansion of the existing homelands and the massive removal of the large number of Africans to the Bantustans and they protested at this imposition upon the homelands without the pretence of consultation. In response to the demands of the chief ministers of the Bantustans, the South African government through Mr MC Botha, who was minister of Bantu Affairs for all the Bantu people of South Africa, said:

'...if they think they can get more land than was allocated to the Bantu in

the 1936 Act, by coupling it to independence, then they need not come and discuss it; they would be wasting their time and ours' (Rogers 1976: 10).

The 1910 founding of the Union of South Africa led to the Batswana tribes becoming South Africans, while the Land Act of 1913, which 'deprived' them of all their territory. According to Reikert (1975: 134), the areas in which the Batswana people were situated did not form a consolidated unit but were made up of loose units over a large area of the North Western and Western Transvaal, North Western Cape and a section of the Orange Free State. Out of this about fifty territorial units were occupied by Setswana speaking people (Bophuthatswana at Independence, undated: 16). The Land Act of 1913 stopped the alienation and the decline of Batswana homelands in South Africa. However, Bauer (1992: 20) seems to think that the Land Act of 1913 should have been regarded as an initial step towards Batswana Nationhood. In terms of the recommendation of the Beaumont Commission the Batswana area covered 1,8 million hectares and comprised a total of 139 units. In spite of these proposals being rejected, they served as a foundation to reduce the number of Batswana areas to 36 larger territorial units through the Black Trust and Land Act of 1936. (Bophuthatswana at Independence, undated: 16).

The consolidation of the Batswana areas by 1967 had arrived at the stage where the homeland was made up of 18 large areas of land (Bauer 1992: 20). The consolidation proposal which was accepted by the South African government in 1975 meant that Bophuthatswana was to be consolidated to six geographical units. At 'independence' Bophuthatswana bought some more land, which at that time meant that there were now seven large units which were extending to four million hectares. Post 'independence' saw Bophuthatswana still receiving more land from South Africa (Bauer 1992: 20). The purchasing of this land was done mainly by the South African Black Trust and it was later transferred and legalised in the South African Parliament, as the transactions were, it was said, taking place between the two 'independent' countries (Bophuthatswana at Independence, undated: 16). The fragmentation of Bophuthatswana was always an issue as it was scattered through some parts of South Africa. For the Bophuthatswana

government it was important to consolidate it into one large unit, not only for political, administrative and economic reasons but because this was going to reverse the 'process of scattering' and displacement which was to ultimately mould the Batswana into one 'independent nation' (Bophuthatswana at Independence, undated: 16).

In attempting a justification for the existence of Bophuthatswana as a sovereign state, Lucas Mangope tried to appeal to pre-colonial history during the Convention for A Democratic South Africa (CODESA). His justification was simply that this history dated back to the nineteenth century, where the Batswana were the occupiers of the area stretching from the South West of the Zambezi River to the North of the Orange River (Bophuthatswana: Pioneer 1992: Vol. 14, No.1). In addition to the argument which Mr Mangope used, based on his historical view, he pointed out that the opportunity had been presented by the South African Government to regain Batswana 'sovereignty'. A further argument which was adduced by people who supported the government of Bophuthatswana was that their 'Independence' did not come about as a result of human making but was due to their prayers. One of the strongest arguments was that Bophuthatswana was a Christian state built on sound religious principles; hence the national anthem was not only regarded as a song but as a prayer of thanks as well.

The issue of land is very sensitive for many of the African people (including the Batswana) as it bears the scars of dispossession and the loss of identity. Among Batswana the issue of land can be traced back from the pre-colonial period when ownership was exercised through territorial and genealogical membership of a group. This membership was determined through kingship or the tribe and it was of communal land which could be used for cattle grazing, tilling and occupation (Jepp 1980: 7). This is a dominant feature in Africa South of the Sahara, where the different groups and levels (in terms of hierarchical order) which work as inclusive interest groups (political, social and economic) are able to provide the structures within which the rights to land of traditional systems of Africa, South of the Sahara, should be understood.

Land allocation was also a problem among the Batswana because the traditional

method was not fully followed when Bophuthatswana was allocated land. The method followed was the one which was used by the South African government, following the 1913 land act and its 1936 amendment act. This allocation was further justified by the use of the Christian principle that the 'land was given by God without any conflict or bloodshed' but through negotiations with South Africa. This became an extension of the supposed inheritance of the South African government, that this was the promised land of milk and honey: the same Old Testament story of Exodus emerging in the boiling pot of the divided context of South Africa. One may ask, what then is the traditional method of land allocation amongst the Batswana?

In most cases the land is under the control of the king (tribal head) who traditionally is the highest authority, with control over the communal area of his tribe (Jepp 1980: 18). The king (Kgosi<sup>1</sup>) has direct control over the land and sometimes may work through delegation (dikgosana<sup>2</sup>). However, the right of the king to control the land does not cease to exist. Because of the different clans that exist among the Batswana there are different ways in which the tribal heads control and allocate the land in their different wards. This contradicts the land allocation by the South African government to Bop and at the same time reduced the traditional leadership of the Batswana, as well as taking away their rights to control and allocate the land to both the their subjects and to strangers (Jepp: 1980: 18). Due to colonialism, the traditional method of land control and allocation was taken away from the African Kings and was used against them, since they then had to turn to the colonial powers and the apartheid government for land allocation and control. Despite this the South African government went ahead to allocated the land to the Batswana and appointed a leader for them, who in this case was not a 'king' but a 'president'.

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<sup>1</sup>This refers to a king of the Batswana. He may belong to a certain clan but oversees a large area of that clan.

<sup>2</sup> Under the king is a prince, who is delegated by the king to overlook some of the smaller areas which may be a little further from the king's kraal. Princes are given the powers to control and allocate the land the same way as the king except that they do not exercise absolute powers over the use of land and decision making.

In the context of this situation many people tend to believe that racism started only in 1948 when in the actual sense there was already racism in the colonial era and it seemed to have been a way of life even then. The church collaborated with the state during that period, as missionaries endorsed the racial disparity in the alienation of land, which had clear implications for the practice of traditional religions (Saayman 1993: 37). This added to the Natives Land Act of 1913, which disadvantaged the Black South Africans, and in Saayman's words (1991: 37) 'these expressions of colonialism were not simply bureaucratic political arrangements, but were conceived by their recipients as having very specific religious overtones. This is clearly articulated in the well-known saying ascribed to black South Africans: When the missionaries came, we had the land and they had the Bible. They said: 'Let us pray', and when we opened our eyes after the prayer, they had the land and we had the Bible'. At the same time the abolition of some of the apartheid laws (e.g. the Population Registration Act and the Group Areas Act) did not in any way help to end apartheid, as the social structure characterising apartheid was still in existence in South Africa.

The legal and political background of what was called homelands within the South African context was adopted after the Union came into existence in 1910 (Jepp 1980: 58). This was directed mainly to the land and land use relevant to the Land Act, 13 (Act No.27 of 1913) and the Development Trust and Land Act, 1936 (Act No. 18 of 1936) which specified all the national or black 'states' and provided borders for the administration of land inside these states (Jepp 1980: 58). The 1913 Act was providing additional land for the occupation of national states and reserved areas for the black people (Jepp 1980: 58). After the passing of the Act of 1913 the acquisition, exercising and alienation of rights to land in the national (black) states became subject to the stipulations of these acts, which encompassed mainly the following:

- (i) Blacks may only obtain rights to land in so-called 'reserved black areas' and 'released areas' (Act 27/1913: section 1; Act 18/36: section 2 r.w. section 11).
  
- (ii) In 'reserved black areas' and in 'released areas' blacks may obtain land from anybody but alienation of their rights to whites, coloureds and Asians is subject

to approval (Act 27/1913: section 1(2); 18/1936: section r.w. section 11 (4).  
(Jepp 1980: 61).

However, in the context of transferring land from South Africa to Bophuthatswana distinctions were made based on the Constitution Act for the Black National States, 1971 (Act No. 21 of 1971) section 36. This proclamation made provision for the transfer of land as well as movable property. A distinction was further made regarding the following:

(i) Transfer of all rights to land of which the property rights or control vest in or were obtained from the South African government or the SADT (South African Development Trust) to the government of Bophuthatswana (Proc. No. R347 of 1977: par. (1)); and

(ii) transfer of all rights to land which are registered in the name of the Minister of Cooperation and Development or any other person in trust for a black person, a tribe or community, to the Chief Minister (now the President) of Bophuthatswana and are registered in trust in the latter's name for this black person, tribe or community (Proc. No. R 347 of 1977: par. (2)).

(Jepp 1980: 61).

At the same time there was a legal position which was presented in this manner:

(i) The legal distinction between 'reserved black areas' and 'released areas' has no further practical value in Bophuthatswana. The most important basis of distinction with regard to ownership rights to and control of land is:

(a) the land transferred to the government of Bophuthatswana. 'On the understanding that the land in the area is still administered for the settlement, support, benefit, and material and moral welfare of citizens' (Act 21/1971: section 36) and

(b) the land transferred to the President in trust for the black people, tribes or communities concerned. This distinction is clearly superimposed over that of reserved black areas and 'released areas'.

(Jepp 1980: 62).

From this analysis it is clear that the government of Bophuthatswana should have considered the legislation which was going to give a description of different classes or categories of land, control and ownership and which was going to do away with Act 27/1913 and Act 18/1936 in Bophuthatswana.

### 3.2.2 Bophuthatswana and land: Lefatshe ke Boswa<sup>3</sup>

The Batswana people had lived in and around the region of the Orange Free State, Cape Province and the Western Transvaal from the 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century CE. However, they lost most of their land to the Afrikaner and British conquests in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This was shortly before the Union of South Africa, which later became the Republic of South Africa, in 1961. Later the white leaders of South Africa began to change and implement the policies of racial segregation. These policies culminated in the 1950s when the government divided the blacks according to their ethnic identity and defined them as citizens of separate ethnic homelands or Bantustans (Edgar: Encarta Encyclopaedia 97). The Act of 1971 gave the South African president the powers to establish constitutions and assemblies for any bantustans. Five years later Bophuthatswana became the second homeland to achieve so-called independence. This led to Bop developing its own national anthem, the theme of which centred on the land which had been given to them by God without bloodshed.

Pina ya Setshaba<sup>4</sup>

*Lefatshe leno la borrarona*  
*Re le abetswe ke Modimo*  
*Kwa ntle ga tshololo ya madi*

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<sup>3</sup> Lefatshe ke Boswa: This refers to land as an irreplaceable heritage.

<sup>4</sup>Pina ya Setshaba: The National Anthem of Bophuthatswana.

*A re lebogeng, a re ipepleng*

*Lefatshe leno la borrarona*

*Re le abela matshele a rona*

*Re tla le fufulelwa*

*Go fitlha sethitho se fetoga madi*

*Lefashe la kgomo le mabele*

*Boswa jwa rona ka bosakhutleng*

*Ramasedi a ledibele*

*Re tshele mo go llona, ka pabalesego*

*Modimo tshegofatsa fatshe le*

*Go rene kagiso le kutlwano*

*Tshegofatsa Setshaba sa rona*

*Le yona puso ya rona*

*Go ntsha maungo a a tshedisang*

Translated version:

*This land of our Forefathers*

*It is given to us by God*

*Without shedding of blood*

*Let us give thanks, and rejoice*

*This land of our Forefathers*

*We pledge our lives to it*

*We shall labour for it*

*Till the sweat turns to blood*



*This land of cattle and corn  
Our lasting heritage  
May God safeguard it fittingly  
That we may live in it safely*

*God bless our land  
That peace and harmony may reign  
God bless our Government and nation  
That in good health we may produce life-giving fruits.*

Unofficial Translation. (Bophuthatswana at Independence, undated: 3).

The land issue in South Africa has been a hot potato which over many years created tensions and animosity among its own people. With the creation of the Bantustans, it meant that the perception of communal land ownership, as well as of individual ownership for black people, was now becoming more complex than it had been before the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts and after the creation of the Bantustans in the 1970s. The main question was how Bophuthatswana addressed this problem.

This anthem was composed by one of the members of the cabinet of Bophuthatswana: Mr JM Ntsime, who was the deputy Minister of Education and an author of many Setswana literature books. The national anthem of Bophuthatswana was designed to acknowledge the pieces of land allocated to Batswana based on the Land Act of 1913 and 1936 and separate development, as a way to control the influx to the cities. However, the 'independence' offered to Lucas Mangope did not imply liberation for the Batswana, which was his (Mangope's) perception owing to the fact that Chief Minister Lucas Mangope believed that the Batswana were destined to be on their 'own'. He used the phrases 'Ga re tshwane le batho ba bangwe'<sup>5</sup>, 'mme ebile ga re botoka go phala batho ba bangwe'<sup>6</sup>. Many people who followed Mangope believed in these phrases and

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<sup>5</sup>This means that the Batswana were different from other people or ethnic groups.

<sup>6</sup>Batswana were no better than or superior to other people.

they became a popular slogan for those who believed in the 'independence' of Bop at that time. Unlike the well known South African National Anthem (Nkosi Sikelela iAfrika), this anthem was widely sung without any victimisation by the state agents, while Nkosi Sikelela was not allowed to be sung within the 'boundaries' of Bophuthatswana. As with any national anthem when 'Lefatshe la borra rona' was sung, everyone had to stand to attention until the end, and pupils at school were taught to sing it in the same way as well.

The composer, (JM Ntsime) in an interview that I had with him, explained the message behind the song itself. Like most people (particularly those who supported the 'independence' of Bophuthatswana) he said that the government was 'Christian' and its foundation was basically Christian. The interpretation of the song was simply that the opening stanza concerned faith, acknowledging the gift of their forefathers' land from God without any fighting and bloodshed, and therefore expressing thanks to God as they will be proud of it. Further, the anthem describes the land of the forefathers for which its owners shall give up their lives in its defence and not allow anyone to take it away from them. They shall work hard for it, sweat for it till their sweat turns into blood, just to ensure that they will prosper and develop it. The third stanza dealt with the traditional and social side of the Batswana. For many Batswana, cattle and corn mean wealth, both in the past and in the present, and this has been their heritage which will not be taken away by anyone. God must bless this land so that they may live on it without any conflict. God should save and protect everyone who lives on it. The final stanza requested God to bless the land so that there should be everlasting peace, and also to bless the government, laws and the nation.

The promised land was to be delivered to the Batswana by God through its 'leader', LM Mangope who like Moses was seen as having led the children of Israel from bondage. On September 27, 1979 the Bophuthatswana government held a thanksgiving ceremony in which a scriptural text was read from the book of Joshua 1: 1-9 by Rev D Ramokoka from the Lutheran Church. In his sermon Ramokoka likened Bophuthatswana to the Israelites under the guidance of God while on their way to the promised land. He indicated that under the leadership of Moses the Israelites had

achieved certain things but not all of them (Morongwa 1979: Vol.1, No.1). Moses's journey ended at the river Jordan, which simply means that his leadership came to an end but the nation had moved on and continued with its journey, destined by God to reach the land of milk and honey: under the apartheid government the journey had ended and under the 'independent government of Bophuthatswana' the Batswana as a nation were to live and continue with the journey to the land of promise.

Further on, Ramokoka emphasised that God spoke to Joshua as a new leader of Israel beyond the river Jordan and that he (Joshua) had never seen that land; only God had done so. As a result, taking up their 'independence' as Batswana meant that they had crossed the river Jordan like the Israelites (Vol.1, No.1:1979). 'Independence' at that time was seen as the beginning of better things to come and as showing that Batswana should not panic about the uncertainty and the future of Bophuthatswana. During the early stages of 'independence' the promise to the Batswana was that there would be enough land provided for them; they should merely be patient as God had a plan to do just that (Vol. 1, No. 1: 1979, 16). This was raising the hopes of Batswana: the implication was that the South African government was still going to identify more land which was going to be given to Bop. Without any doubt this was referring to another form of forced removal or incorporation of some communities of Batswana into Bophuthatswana. Mangope in this case was given support by a group of some ministers who felt that his was a 'legitimate' government as he was seen to be a Joshua figure :they argued that God was guiding Bophuthatswana and that nothing would happen to it because God would protect it from its enemies (Vol.1, No.1:1979). At the end, Rev D Ramokoka said: 'This God will never be ashamed to identify Himself with Bophuthatswana for the people of this country were also created in His image' (Vol. 1, No.1:1979). This land was to become 'Lefatshe la Kgomo le Mabele'<sup>7</sup>.

The fact that Bophuthatswana was seen as the promised land was emphasised so that there would be delivery. Because the leaders had made this promise public, it was

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<sup>7</sup>This is a traditional concept meaning that the country is based on agriculture, and that cattle and corn are wealth among the Batswana. Another meaning could be that Batswana's staple food is corn and milk provided by the cattle.

imperative that there should be some progress. But they did not make public the fact they were not truly independent and that they depended on South Africa for agricultural developments, their mining industry and their commercial industry.

Two years after 'Independence' Chief Lucas Mangope summoned the Batswana to Mmabatho Independence Stadium in Mmabatho to celebrate Bophuthatswana as an 'autonomous state'. The gathering at the stadium was to a certain point linked to the period when people would be celebrating Christmas as it was held on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 1979. The gathering was one of the 'thanksgiving' for the achievements of Bophuthatswana in its infancy. In his speech Mangope mentioned that it was time that the Batswana should come together to praise God with love and thank Him the protection He had offered to them (Vol.1, No.1, 2). The emphasis of his speech was that God had stretched out His hand to Bophuthatswana and that the Batswana were able to build for themselves; they were now able to listen, enjoy the victory and the achievements of what had been a dream previously. By this he meant that it was time they began to feel like the other nations. It had also been a wish in the past that the Batswana wanted to feel like people and be people (Morongwa:1979, 2).

In addition, the 'leader' of Bophuthatswana spoke about how much women in Bop had united and declared that he was happy about the prospects of the years ahead when Bophuthatswana would be regarded as a nation equal to many in the world. This unity of women, he said, was something which had never been experienced by anyone before. The illustration he gave was that as women had united, they could together build a progressive 'nation' of which everyone would like to be part. His thanksgiving was also directed to God for the children, whom he said were the future leaders given to Bophuthatswana by God. For Bophuthatswana the system of governance was based on the traditional leaders, and they too were thanked by Lucas Mangope for being co-operative, as well as the members of parliament and the other leaders that were present. He hoped that people in Bophuthatswana would 'humbly' accept from him the gratitude that came from his heart, and declare that God had anointed him to be the servant of Bophuthatswana, as well as expressing thanks to his wife, Leah Mangope.

He expressed with his vision of Bophuthatswana, that it was building its own infrastructure and that for the past two years there had been something which Bophuthatswana had done on her own (Morongwa 1979: 2). The government had managed to secure a piece of land on which they were to erect government buildings. Some of the first buildings that were established under Bophuthatswana were officially opened in 1978 and Mangope dedicated them to God, who had been on the side of the government of Bophuthatswana. One of the wishes was that Mmabatho should remain Mmabatho and the capital at the same time. In emphasising the image of the land of milk and honey, Mangope mentioned the two hotels that were built in Mmabatho and the Sun City hotel outside Rustenburg as another way in which Bophuthatswana would be valued by many who lived in it and many who did not. These were some of the things the Batswana should be proud of that had created jobs for the children of Bophuthatswana (Morongwa 1979: 2).

In the same year the Chief Minister of Transkei, Kaizer Matanzima, visited his counterpart L M Mangope, to celebrate the 'independence' of Bophuthatswana. Like Mangope, Chief Minister Matanzima had opted for the 'independence' offered by Pretoria and he too declared Transkei a 'Christian State' when he stopped the Methodist Church of Southern Africa from honouring its Christian mission in that homeland (Madise:2000, 66). However, Matanzima went further than Mangope and established a church which supported the state: the Methodist Church of Transkei. Mangope made a call for the Batswana to welcome Matanzima as his visitor and their visitor. For Bophuthatswana the support of the church was something that could not be separated from the state, as it was believed that Bophuthatswana was a 'Christian state'.

### 3.2.3 Opposition to an 'Independent homeland'

Not all people supported the government of Bophuthatswana: some stood up against its 'Independence' and even declared it an extension of apartheid. Those who did so used the name 'Bophuthatswana' to show just how apartheid was extended to the oppressed, allocating land to them according to their ethnic groupings. The name

'Bophuthatswana' was seen as grouping Batswana speaking people together a in specific piece of land which was allocated by the South African government to separate the people of South Africa. In the territory of Bophuthatswana were two kinds of churches namely, the Imported churches and the Independent churches. It seems as though the government of Bophuthatswana was supported mainly by the Independent churches as opposed to the imported churches. The reason for this was that the mainline churches were affiliated to the South African Council of Churches, which was based in South Africa. These churches saw the territory of Bophuthatswana as the offspring of the South African government and perceived that the ownership of the land was in fact still in the hands of the white people. The ownership of land was, according to the mainline churches in Bophuthatswana, not totally in the hands of the Batswana as they depended on white people to supply them with facilities to till the land and to export their agricultural and mining produce, and they also had to depend on the South African government to address foreign matters.

### **3.3. The churches and the land issue in Bop**

In an attempt to justify the 'Independence' of Bophuthatswana, Lucas Mangope brought up the issue of Batswana history which dated back to the nineteenth century. He also referred to the arbitration by Lieutenant Governor Keate of Natal to resolve the land dispute. This was due to what he (Mangope) called the northward colonial expansion of Britain and the westward encroachment by the Voortrekkers (Bophuthatswana: Pioneer 1992: Vol. 14, No. 1, 4). Mangope's argument was that in spite of the fact that Keate had passed a judgement which was in favour of the Batswana they still continued to be the victims of British colonialism. To Mangope the land issue meant that the allocation by the colonial government was authentic and justified the ownership which 'belonged to Batswana' and could not be questioned. The 1885 occupation by the British Colonial government and the division of the land into Bechuanaland Protectorate and the Crown Colony were viewed as meaningless. As a result the discovery of the diamonds in Kimberley was seen as a breach of the agreement that Southern Batswana were to be part of Bechuanaland. This agreement was never honoured and 'Bophuthatswana' was unjustly and unilaterally incorporated into the Cape Colony.

The land owned by the church was inherited from the South African Government. Because Bophuthatswana was predominantly rural, most of the land that was owned by the church was obtained from the local chiefs, tribal headmen and the traditional leaders. In some instances churches owned huge lands, such as Methodist (then Wesleyan Mission) in Thaba-Nchu and the Lutheran Church in the Rustenburg area. In some other areas the churches were owning land, but for different reasons than in the cases of Thaba-Nchu and Rustenburg. The history of the land occupied by churches goes back to colonial times as well as to the land act of 1913. In some cases the ownership of this land took place long before the 1913 situation in which it was easier for black people in general to own the land. The situation in Thaba-Nchu could be traced from the colonial period as well as from the Difeqane wars, which led to the Barolong clan occupying that land while fleeing from the Matebele people who were attacking them. The Barolong clan had to travel across the Vaal River, to settle in the place which today is known as Thaba-Nchu in December 1833, three years before the Great Trek. These were Barolong who were under the kingship of Seleka and who apparently bought Thaba-Nchu from Moshoeshoe who was king of the Basotho. The deal for the purchasing of the land was done in front of the Methodist and French Missionaries. Three years after the occupation of Thaba-Nchu by Barolong boo Seleka the Voortrekkers under the command of Hendrik Potgieter were attacked by Mzilikazi and it was alleged that they lost all their food, cattle, sheep and most of their horses. According to Mangope the trekkers owed their lives to Chief Moroka of the Barolong who showed them great hospitality without taking their race into consideration (Vol., 14, No. 1:1992, 5). Mangope claimed that these events led to the state of fragments in which Bophuthatswana found itself. At the same time he argued that the British and the Boers had agreed at the Sand River Convention not to sell guns to the Batswana and this made it difficult for them to protect their land against the land-hungry trekkers. The movement of the trekkers gained momentum until they crossed the Vaal River, where they came into contact with the Batswana. Other clans of Batswana, like Batlhaping boo Mankurwane, Barolong boo Ratshidi in the Molopo region (that is in Mafikeng) and Barolong boo Ratlou were also caught up in the same kind of spider web regarding the issue of land, which took different routes and had to be challenged in various ways and courts.

In trying to win the confidence of the Batswana Mangope went on to say, the meeting with one accord rejected annexation by the Cape Colony because the Cape Colony was discriminatory, unjust and had usurped their land (Vol. 14, No. 1:1992, 6). Further Mangope went on to discuss the meeting which took place in chief Montshiwa's kraal, saying that, 'the Cape Government took from chief Moshoeshoe his guns, and fought with him although he had done no wrong, and people who today possess nothing, not even guns with which in time past they had helped the Cape Government' (Vol.14, No.1:1992, 6). On the same note Queen Victoria had sent a delegation to help solve the land issue: the people who were tasked with this job were Rev S Mackenzie and Warren. This was seen as a sound judgement by the Queen's government in that both black and white were treated with equal justice. Rev Mackenzie recommended to the Imperial Government to recognise the oneness of Bechuanaland. There were mixed reactions to the whole issue of the annexation of the Batswana, as Mankuroane Molehabangwe wrote to the Lord Marquess of Ripon in Cape Town objecting against annexation by the Cape, the same way as the Barolong boo Ratshidi had done. The Wesleyan Missionaries decided to write to the Cape Colony in 1895 questioning the annexation of British Bechuanaland by the Cape as the matter was still under discussion in the Cape Parliament (Vol.14, No.1:1992,7). These missionaries were claiming that chief Montshiwa of the Barolong had advised the queen against such annexation. The missionaries maintained that they had laboured among Barolong and had knowledge of the people and that they agreed with him (Chief Montshiwa) that the annexation of British Bechuanaland into the Cape Colony was disastrous to the interests of the natives. However, in the same year the territory was annexed to the Cape Colony by Britain. Hence, the decision that was taken by the British government had gone the wrong way according to Mangope's version.

This was not the only reason strongly clung to by the government of Bophuthatswana: it also maintained that it was founded in the heartland of the Orange Free State. This was focussed on the region of Thaba-Nchu, the history of which was deeply rooted in that of the Wesleyan Missionaries (Vol.14, No1:1992,19). There were a number of mission stations around Thaba-Nchu which belonged to the Wesleyan Society, serving the Barolong under Chief Moroka. This land was occupied by tribes and was drought



stricken, barren and plagued by locusts, so much so that people could barely subsist. Over a number of years they (Barolong boo Ra-Seleka) had travelled a distance of about seventy miles to plough, sow and reap on a farm which was owned by Chief Waterboer. James Edwards and James Archbell were the two missionaries who accompanied the headmen looking for land which was described as fertile, and negotiations were entered into between these two missionaries to induce Sekonyela (who was Chief of the Mantatees) and Moshoeshoe, Chief of the Basotho. At the end of the negotiation an agreement was reached and a document was drawn up with the two parties agreeing on the manner of payment and it was signed by both parties (Vol.14, No.1:1992,19).

It seemed as if Thaba-Nchu would be fertile ground for the establishment of a good relationship between the state and the church. Lucas Mangope was a member of the Assemblies of God Church and on several occasions he assisted this church, especially when there were conferences, by making venues available and at the same time he would share the podium with the leaders of the same denomination (Bond: 2000, 112). It came as no surprise when Mangope assisted the Assemblies of God to purchase land, which according to John Bond (2000: 112) was not donated, for the building of its conference centre. For this he was accorded the honour of taking part and his name appeared on the foundation stone of the new conference building. It appears that this honour was accorded him not as a politician but as a church member. The reason given was that it was in his territory (Bond: 2000, 112). Contrary to the above situation, violence erupted in the Eastern Cape (near King William's Town) in which a number of buildings were set alight in 1994. This situation created fear in the members of the Assemblies of God Church, so much so that the conference centre in Thaba-Nchu had the foundation stone with the engraving bearing Mangope's name removed (through the decision of the Black Executive), without consulting him. This was intended to be temporary until the situation had calmed down, but this angered Mangope and since then it seems as if the church has never had contact with him.

However, the church land was not only the issue stemming from the history of the Barolong bo Seleka at Thaba-Nchu. There were other developments in the land near

the Winterveld: in the Odi-Moretele region plot number 1376 was identified for the establishment of an Ecumenical Centre. At the same time Rev Mashikinya was able to acquire a piece of land for the Anglican Church and an agreement was reached between the church and the Winterveld Action Committee to construct the Ecumenical Centre as well as to establish self help projects such as gardening, brick-making, carpentry, sewing projects and marketing. Other centres were also established, like the Health Community Centre. In spite of all this, it appeared that the authorities of Bophuthatswana were not appreciating what the South African Council of Churches, together with the Winterveld Committee, were doing in their effort to alleviate the people hardships. For the people of Winterveld, this was not against any law known to them, and was neither desirable nor inhuman. It was justifiable service and people appreciated and deserved it (Chairman's report; Winterveld Action Committee: 4 March 1985).

As a result of the land dispute between the residents of Winterveld and the government of Bophuthatswana, the Pretoria Regional Council of Churches formed the Winterveld Action Committee, which was to function under its authority. This committee comprised three representatives of their churches: Sister Immaculata from the Catholic Church, who was the convener of the Justice and Reconciliation Committee in the Council; Mr J Makhubedu, representing the Evangelical Church; and the Rev Hans Hlaethwa, representing the Catholic Church (Chairman's report; 4 March 1985).

The issue of land has been a controversial matter, particularly regarding religious land. For many Batswana traditional religion has always characterised the good and the evil, as has divination (Jepp 1980: 35). Religious views and ceremonial customs are of great importance regarding the utilisation of land rights. Most people who were in the area of Bophuthatswana believed deeply in 'witchcraft', some were consulting traditional diviners or doctors concerning their rights to the use of land, especially in relation to property, like constructing a house protected against evils or disasters. For one to prevent a situation like this he or she needed some medicine which would help in protecting the property and the family, to maintain happiness. In some communities rain ceremonies are observed and the protection of the fields by traditional ceremonies is still common.

### 3.4 The utilisation of land in Bop

It has been estimated regarding agricultural land in Bophuthatswana that only 10 percent of it is arable. Based on a population of 1 740 000, this means that the average land area per household was 1,4 ha, which comparatively was less than that of Transkei by 1,5 ha and worse than the South African context, 3,8 ha per household (Makanjee 1988: 41). From 1980 to 1986 there was a decrease in livestock from 602 560 to 463 008, which was an average decrease of 4,3 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) and further impoverished the rural populace. The contribution of agriculture to the Bophuthatswana GDP was declining at a steady rate since 1970 and it was ranked third after manufacturing and mining.

At the same time Bophuthatswana had a system which provided the legal services for land as well as for land administration. In the 1988 - 1989 annual report of the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, it was clearly stated that:

*the Land Administration of the Section Division is responsible for land registration and administration, contracts management, collection of rents for farms, land applications (in rural areas), land use control and inspections. The Legal Services Division offers legal advice, drafting, action, litigation and legal administration for land consolidation. In addition the division offers secretarial services to research committees and multilateral and bilateral meetings (Agricultural Annual Report, 1 October 1988 to 30 September, 1989).*

On the issue of land administration the report mentions that:

*A central Land Registration is kept at Head Office in which details of agricultural State Land usage are kept up to date. Each District keeps its own register as well. District Land Officers (DLO) assist District Managers with management and control of agricultural land. Many problems regarding land use have been solved since DLOs were appointed. An analysis of these registers has also revealed irregularities in allocation*

*and usage of State Land (Agricultural Annual Report, 1 October to 30 September, 1989).*

The government maintained that it had applied a quiet agricultural revolution in the 'national state', which had largely been removed from the public eye. This means simply that the government was involved in leading a movement towards freehold land tenure and land privatisation, and that this movement was alleged to have succeeded even in the traditional tribal land system. The Bophuthatswana National Development Corporation (BNDC), after negotiations with most tribal authorities in Bophuthatswana, claimed to have set up and supported small scale farmers as they were increasingly becoming private owners of the land through loans by the Agricultural Land Bank of Bophuthatswana, which provided an amount of R47 million to these farmers (Vol. 14, No.1,17:1992). At the same time the private sector in Bophuthatswana also played a role with financial institutions by making the finance available when it accepted a section of the title to ownership of tribal land as collateral. Despite the consolidation process which the South African government had used to buy the land the white farmers (in South Africa itself), to try and consolidate the pieces which made up Bophuthatswana, the process had actually stopped. However, the government of Bophuthatswana was in the meantime still buying the land through Bala Farms (this was a company which was buying up the farms and reselling to local farmers at a price below the market). The Bophuthatswana government saw this as a way in which it avoided 'indiscriminate handouts' of land but rather offered a means to help the farmers become 'independent' (Vol. 14, No.1,1992,17).

The irrigation scheme in the Taung region was based on large scale farming which was considered to be productive and which was proposed in 1977 and started to operate in 1979 . This process was planned to increase the land per family through consolidation and additional land to at least 8 hectares on which farmers were expected to make an income of about R2 000-00 per annum. At the same time a new project for development was considered: it was called a pivot irrigational system. This project was seen as being capable of irrigating at least two circles of hectares and was more efficient than flood irrigation. This system was controversial as it was based on the assumption that the less sophisticated the farmer, the more sophisticated the irrigation must be to ensure

success (Jepp 1980: 138). However, this process did not only concern agricultural land, as it involved commercial land as well.

The purchasing of land through Bala Farms also opened new avenues, especially to the owners of companies such as Sun International, Southern Sun and Bophuthatswana National Parks Board, which gave rise to the Tourism Industry. Hotels such as Sun City, Carousel and the Lost City were providing an income for the economy of Bophuthatswana. An advantage was the beauty of the countryside and its wildlife, as the government explored vast tracts of land which they had set aside for game parks as well as nature reserves, and a substantial investment was made at the 60 000ha Pilanesberg National Park, which was opened in 1979. This was followed by an even bigger project, establishing a National Park in Dwarsberg which was about 70 000ha, as a result the biggest game reserve in Africa was established there (known as Madikwe Game Reserve). The issue of over grazed land was to be attended to by the wildlife authorities: they were going to rehabilitate it and open it to the public, and expectations were that the Big Five would also be kept there. These developments were based mainly on the increase of the foreign interest in nature: Africa was seen as providing the best venue and as one which could attract much foreign capital. Through commercial land, the growth of commerce and industry became the mainstay of Bophuthatswana's income (Vol.14, No.1:1992,19).

Three years after the 'independence' of Bophuthatswana, which was celebrated at Mmabatho on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 1980, Lucas Mangope addressed the Batswana about the blessings Bophuthatswana had received from God, during the three years. According to him, they had demonstrated the success of the 'independence' of Bophuthatswana and its achievements within a short period. The successes he mentioned were attributed to the building and opening of the University of Bophuthatswana as well as to other projects which included the construction of roads and the building of houses for the 'citizens' of Bophuthatswana (Morongwa 1980: Vol. 2, No. 12, 2). Mangope further emphasised that the land given to Bophuthatswana by God was rich and could not be compared to others. He stressed the minerals and the agricultural, land which he claimed was producing more than enough food to feed

Bophuthatswana's 'citizens' and the neighbouring countries (i.e. South Africa, Transkei, Ciskei, Venda and the self governing Bantustans). He spoke about the use of land to produce wealth through farming and mining. Above all, these Lucas Mangope pointed out that there was no greater gift which God had given to the people of Bophuthatswana than their identity to be Batswana (1980: Vol. 2, No. 12, 2). Mangope, as the leader of Bophuthatswana, pointed out that he depended on the people of Bophuthatswana to tell him their problems and that he wanted to know what they needed. Above all he pleaded that the Batswana should welcome people who were not citizens of Bophuthatswana and were coming in a positive spirit to live there and added that there could be no turning back to where the Batswana had come from (in this case implying that Bophuthatswana was not going to be part of South Africa again). In his speech on this day Mangope told the people who attended the celebrations that the Batswana had been undermined by other nations and that it was time for them to show the world what they were capable of.

### **3.5 Whose land is it anyway?**

Not all issues of land in Bophuthatswana were positive, because there were areas which the South African government had agreed upon with Bophuthatswana concerning land. The land issue seemed to have become more than Lucas Mangope had bargained for because there was a problem of land dispossession amongst people who had owned the land and were forcibly removed. In some cases the governments of both South Africa and Bophuthatswana were involved in these acts. A good example of this was the statement made by Mr MC Botha that Bantu people liked being moved from their own land and being resettled (Rogers 1976: 60). To make matters worse, the people of Rietfontein in the Lichtenburg district were moved at short notice and the Department of Bantu Administration and Development claimed that these people had volunteered to move to a place called De Hoop, which was in Bophuthatswana. The statement was disputed by the local chief who even said that the government had promised to compensate them but nothing had come their way. Another situation was that of the Thaba-Nchu area where Chief Lucas Mangope claimed that 'people were moving of their own free will' (Rogers 1976: 60). The most controversial was the area

just North of Pretoria known as Winterveld, where many people were forced to go and live on land which was later incorporated into Bophuthatswana. This area was a squatter settlement where many of the residents had been forcibly removed from the white area of Pretoria in areas such as Lady Selbourne, Eastwood, Eersterus and Riverside from the late 1950s to the early 1960s. Winterveld is about 40km northeast of Pretoria in the Odi-Moretele district, islands of the Bophuthatswana archipelago (A Profile on The Winterveld; unpublished, undated: 2). The history behind Winterveld goes back to the 1936 Natives Trust and Land Act where some of the areas of South Africa were released for purchase by Africans for the purpose of settlement. Winterveld and Klippan were identified as such areas. The stipulation regarding the sale of land was that the land was available 'to Bantu only' and that there were no restrictions on the basis of ethnicity or tribe (A Profile on the Winterveld: 2). Many of the people who were removed were supposed to go to Mabopane and Ga-Rankuwa but owing to lack of enough housing and plots they were dumped from government trucks on the Winterveld farming land, with the stand owners there agreeing at the request of the Department of Bantu Affairs to lease them temporary housing plots. However, in 1967 the Winterveld Community Authority was established by the South African government, empowered with jurisdiction over the people living on the farms Winterveld and Klippan.

In the 1970s the South African government planned to divide black areas of the country into independent homelands, which generated waves of pro - and anti-Batswana feeling. As a result of Winterveld being traditionally adjacent to the Batswana area it was incorporated into Bophuthatswana which at that time was a self governing state of Batswana. Residents of Winterveld petitioned the government of South Africa without success that the area be split off from Bophuthatswana before 'independence'. On December 7, 1977, Bophuthatswana was granted 'independence' without any consultation with the North and South Sotho, Ndebeles, Shangaan, Zulus and Xhosas. In 1978 eviction orders were issued to non - Batswana by the government of Bophuthatswana. Police from Bophuthatswana raided the area and many non Batswana were fined for squatting or not having permits to reside there. About 30 000 people were removed to a designated area which was to become the new homeland of Kwa-Ndebele. This situation led to the arrest of many principals of private schools

and unlicensed hawkers. In response the Pretoria Regional Council of Churches formed a Winterveld Action Committee under its auspices and it had the backing of the Catholic Archdiocese of Pretoria's Commission for Justice and Peace (A Profile on Winterveld: 3). In April 1979 Lucas Mangope warned the plot owners not to allow new families to settle and he urged the community to join the Winterveld Community Authority. The following year (1980) the community of Winterveld who were the plot owners asked the Bophuthatswana government to grant them similar municipal status to Soweto so that they could run their own affairs. Many of the land owners in Winterveld were North Sothos and Shangaans (A Profile on The Winterveld: 3). Despite this, the government of Bophuthatswana insisted that non Batswana could not own the land as they were not citizens of Bophuthatswana.

On January 31, 1979, the representatives of the Catholic Church and the Justice and Reconciliation Division of the South African Council of Churches (under the chairmanship of Rev A Massey) wrote a twelve paragraph letter to the then ambassador of Bophuthatswana to South Africa, Rev SS Seane, expressing concern over the envisaged development which was to take place in Winterveld and Hammanskraal just outside Pretoria. In particular their concern was with the way in which evictions and removals had been taking place as no alternative land had been provided for the non Batswana by the governments of either Bophuthatswana or South Africa. They also took up the issue that those who owned the land in Winterveld and were not interested in obtaining Bophuthatswana citizenship should not be forced to do so. Seeing that he was a former Minister of Religion, an appeal was made to Rev Seane to ensure that the suffering of the black people be relieved irrespective of their ethnic groups. In his response to the letter from the Justice and Reconciliation Commission, the Rev SS Seane in a letter dated 22 March 1979 acknowledged receipt of the above mentioned letter and apologised for the delay as he had only recently been appointed to the Ambassadorial post. In his letter Rev Seane mentioned the twelve paragraph points and raised questions about the sources of information which the writers had, if they were newspapers, which newspapers, and if people, which people? He added that in Bophuthatswana there were no such things as non Batswana or non Bophuthatswana, as Bophuthatswana was a non racial country. Rev Seane pointed out:



*The Bophuthatswana Minister of Urban Affairs and Land Tenure Mr DCM Mokale has recently said this: It is not the intention of my government to force people to settle in Bophuthatswana against their will. It is our wish to create a peaceful atmosphere among the different racial groups in this country and set an example to the world on a model non-racial society. All we require from these people is that they respect our laws and be prepared to die for this country (Seane: 22 March, 1979).*

He continued that what the newspapers had reported was all exaggeration and that it had done a lot of harm to race relations among the Black people. The government of South Africa, together with that of Bophuthatswana, were jointly going to resettle some of the people who lived in Winterveld.

Another meeting was also called at the request of president Mangope, through the Ambassadorial office of his government, inviting the South African Council of Churches to discuss a number of issues, which was held on 21 April 1982 as stated in the previous chapter. It was related to the land, that is to plot owners as well as residents. Rev Jimmy Palos from the South African Council of Churches, who was part of the delegation to Mmabatho, raised a concern over the lack of response to the letters which the plot-owners claimed they wrote to the government of Bophuthatswana. One of the letters had been sent on 1 December 1980 to the Inter-Governmental Committee and was directed to the Chairperson, Mr Finlayson. In response Mr Finlayson stated that he had forwarded the letter to the secretary of the Inter-Governmental Committee for a response. No response was received. However, Lucas Mangope maintained that the questions that were raised were not within the jurisdiction of that committee but that they should have been referred to both South Africa and Bophuthatswana. Mangope went on to state that if Bophuthatswana had not been humane they could have implemented the jurisdiction in terms of the pre-independence agreement and forced all the people in Winterveld to leave there. Rev Palos went on to question why there no was formal acknowledgement of receipt of the Memorandum and to ask whether the questions were receiving attention (Minutes of the meeting in Mmabatho: 21 April 1982). The Rev SS Seane referred to the 12 December 1979 meeting with the plot-owners where he

claimed that about 500 people had turned up, following the invitation to them by the government of the homeland which was on February 1980 at Mmabatho. In that meeting it seems as if Lucas Mangope told the plot-owners to throw in their lot with Bophuthatswana and be involved themselves. In this case Rev Seane was referring to the problem of overcrowding, lack of clinics, schools and roads and indicated that the situation could explode. According to Seane, Bophuthatswana was not prepared to move these people unless they wanted to move on their own. Chief Lucas Mangope added that he was in possession of a letter from the Plot-Owners Association in which, Mangope said, the association asked for the removal of the tenants from their plots. In his comment Mangope said that of over 1600 people only 32 of them were found to be Batswana: at the time of the police raids some were arrested and fined R90-00 while others were being prosecuted and fined R30-00. Mangope emphasised that it was in the context of this prosecution and harassment that the owners had asked that their tenants be removed.

Mangope also stated that it was human for people to be defensive and that the impression given was that they (Bop government) were callous and inhuman, but that if they were to go to Winterveld 98% of the people would turn up and say that they were doing a good job, and that only 2% of those would have time to go to the South African Council of Churches and ask for food and parcels at Christmas (Minutes of the Mmabatho meeting, 21 April, 1982). Dr Rod Smith, who was from the Foreign Affairs Department and was also a member of the Inter-governmental Committee, referred to the informal meeting the Pretoria Regional Council of Churches had with the members of the Working Committee and added that there were concerns regarding the situation of Winterveld. Dr Smith expressed his dismay at hearing the criticisms of the Working Committee's activities. At mass meetings the Working Committee listened to the plot owners and tenants complaints: meetings where representatives of the Committee of Eighteen from the Winterveld jointly identified the problems. The Inter-Governmental Committee drafted a policy regarding the proposed upgrading strategy and it had come to the hands of the South African Council of Churches. The Winterveld Committee under the auspices of the Pretoria Regional Council of Churches had examined the document and was in agreement with its approach and recommendations which were

to:

- (a) Make provision for 'permanent residence' instead of obligatory citizenship;
- (b) provide for freedom of choice on the part of tenants and plot-owners to decide their future.

The questions which were raised by the Pretoria Regional Council of Churches, Winterveld Committee related to whether these recommendations had in fact been accepted by the relevant authorities and whether the procedures had been followed. There were also questions regarding the choice of Setswana language as a medium of instruction in schools for people of the Nguni speaking groups.

Rev Seane then referred to those who had allegedly been driven out by police. He asserted that the police only acted against people in the course of their duties and those people (who were arrested) were formally charged before the magistrates. He further said that the allegations were only founded on rumours: 'Gatwe re tsamaye' (it is said we must leave). It was asserted that the police had a difficult task: they could not be blamed because there were people who were illegally occupying the land. One minister (whose name was not disclosed) from Bophuthatswana said that only people who had occupied the land after 6 December 1977, which was the day when Bophuthatswana was given its 'independence', were being arrested and prosecuted. When challenged he insisted that this was the case. Another minister, who was also not named, alleged that people were leaving of their own free will. It was only when they discovered the disadvantages of Kwa-Ndebele that they had come back and tried to obtain a place in Bop. Only then did they face difficulties. Chief Mangope supported his ministers in saying that the SACC acknowledged that there was a need for legitimacy and that they were going to insist on it, but that they (non Batswana) were not going to expel them. For Mangope, people had a choice to either take citizenship or receive permanent residence on application.

On the other hand, the Winterveld Property Owners' Association under the chairmanship of Reverend BID Pule revealed that the Winterveld Community Authority

was forcing the squatters to pay R50-00 and R80-00 for graves to bury their dead (Sowetan: June, 15, 1982). Pule said that the Winterveld Community Authority has been in office since 1976 but were redundant as administrators, except in cases of bribery and corruption regarding destitute people. In his allegations Rev Pule said that squatters were made to pay exorbitant fees for local graves when burying their dead, irrespective of having to dig the graves themselves. He stated that this was due to the fact that the government of Bophuthatswana possessed the power to issue permits and grant citizenship, and this had led to the massive exodus of other people towards Kwa-Ndebele, in panic. This panic was climaxed by the house to house police and army raids and people were warned that if they did not obtain citizenship they would be arrested (Sowetan: 15 June, 1982). Rev Pule, who was a pastor of the local Apostolic Church, added that the bogus leaders were collecting monies from the people yet failing to report to them how their money was used and for what purpose. The information which the community was receiving came from school children. He stated that these leaders had been in office for the past seven years and that there was a need to elect new officers who were going to fulfil the demands of the people.

Many of the plot owners in the area of Winterveld were Black people who had bought the land; it was freehold land and they divided it into plots and allowed families to live on them. These families were simply tenants. The government of Bophuthatswana did not see this as ownership of land by ordinary people but rather by illegal immigrants. On 26 July 1984 the Bophuthatswana police harassed these people. A Catholic priest was based in an area called Marokolong where the tenants were harassed, which was one of his outstations (Field Work report: 7 August 1984). Here some members of his congregation were arrested as they did not belong to Bophuthatswana or have any form of Bophuthatswana identification. One of the congregants told the priest, together with the field worker, that the police arrested anyone they could lay their hands on, even school children, and about seventy people were arrested and taken to the Temba Police Station. In some cases the plot owners were also arrested and taken into detention. In attempting to bail out these people from the Temba Police Station they (the priest together with the field workers) were told that bail was five hundred rand for each person but this was later reduced to one hundred rand. Those who could not be released were

then taken to the Ga-Rankuwa Police Station.

The plot owners were able to release all their tenants through their lawyer from Johannesburg: some at fifty rand and others at thirty rand. In certain instances some of the tenants were released soon after the police heard that their lawyer had arrived. In this case the backdoor was used to release them. Their case was supposed to have been heard on 11 July but was remanded to 12 September 1984. This was not the end of the harassment as the police returned on 21 July 1984 and arrested the plot owners again. This time the owners were prepared to face the government as it was not clear why they had been arrested. They explained to the commissioner of police, in the presence of their lawyer, that their tenants used to live in the expropriated white farms and were forcibly removed after the expropriation. In response the commissioner promised that a suitable place would be found and that tenants were going to be resettled. The plot owners accepted this in good faith and were waiting for the commissioner to fulfil his promise. Officials from the commissioner's office wrote down the numbers of the houses, promised that they were going to build houses for the tenants and even promised to fetch them once their houses were completed (Field worker's report: 7 August 1984). At one stage an official from the commissioner's office instructed the plot owners that they should not build mud houses for their tenants, as mud houses tended to get easily destroyed. This promise was never fulfilled as the tenants continued to be constantly harassed by the police.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the government of Bophuthatswana tried in many ways to ensure that the Batswana did not belong to South Africa and that they were never to fight for the land of which they were dispossessed by the apartheid state. Leaders of Bophuthatswana at that time tried to make use of the Christian religion to win the hearts and minds of the Batswana with a clear view that the Batswana had adopted Christianity as their religion, as seen in the national anthem's description of the land that was given to them without bloodshed. This notion of the ownership of land made things difficult as many people

did not own land in the real sense of the word. Most of the land belonged to the government of Bophuthatswana, hence it could afford to install a high tech irrigation scheme on agricultural land which was supposed to be communal. Further, the government of Bophuthatswana managed to get access to South African finance regarding agricultural land through what was called Agricor (Agricultural Corporation).

As for the church - owned land this was an issue which the churches (particularly those that supported the government) did not outrightly tackle especially when the governments of both South Africa and Bophuthatswana were engaged in dispossessing people of the land which they had believed came from their ancestors. There were, however, situations in which the church did become involved in the land situation. Churches that were affiliated to the South African Council of Churches were perceived as being influenced by external forces as this Council was not regarded as a local movement by the Bophuthatswana government. One may say that the voice of the church in Bophuthatswana was divided mainly because some churches supported the homeland government. The division between the churches was mainly on the grounds that some independent churches were not affiliated to the South African Council of Churches while the mission churches were members. Regarding the support from the individual ministers from the different churches who were members of the Bophuthatswana Ministerial Fraternity, some of these ministers belonged to the mainline churches while the majority were from the independent churches. These ministers were supporting the Bophuthatswana government solely on the grounds of benefiting personally. In this way it gave more power to the individual ministers and certain denominations. One cannot generalise that the entire denomination was affected except that it was a particular congregation within a specific context.

On the issue of church land the government of Bophuthatswana took advantage of the history of the Batswana, particularly that of the Barolong around Thaba-Nchu who managed to obtain their land through the assistance of the missionaries. At the same time it might be possible that Bophuthatswana had used one of the clauses from the 1913 Native Land Act to argue that Thaba-Nchu had belonged to black people prior to the 1913 Act itself. What this means is that black people could obtain land in terms of

section 8(1) (l) of the land act, which was exempting the existing occupation of the black people from the prohibitive clause of the Act (Ramagaga: 1988, 27). In terms of the church accessing ownership of land the old system of occupation was not changed as it was passed on from the colonial government to the apartheid government and finally to the bantustans.

As for the commercial land, the church, in particular the South African Council of Churches, was vocal particularly in the situation where people had to give way for the establishment of the game reserves and the parks. A good example of this was in Mokgopa, where people were forced by both the South African government and Bophuthatswana to be incorporated into the latter. However, this was not resisted by other church bodies within Bophuthatswana, like BOMIFRA (Bophuthatswana Ministerial Fraternity), which did not see the SACC as a legitimate body which could function in Bophuthatswana, simply because it was regarded as a foreign body. In spite of how BOMIFRA perceived the denominations that were affiliated to the SACC, this did not stop these churches from being the prophetic voice of the people in Bophuthatswana. Many of the mission churches did not recognise the status of Bophuthatswana as an 'independent' government. There was a perception as well on the part of the SACC that those ministers and churches which were siding with the government were receiving something in return. There was some truth in this perception as some individual ministers were also in the cabinet of Bophuthatswana, while certain churches were receiving support from the state. This was clearly visible in terms of how the Winterveld matter was handled. Irrespective of its effort to maintain that it was an autonomous state the government of Bophuthatswana found itself working together with the South African government in forcibly removing people from their land as well as taking away their birthrights, in spite of the historical truth that some of them had been born and bred in the area. The Council of Churches looked at this as one of the continued methods of the South African government to rid itself of having to acknowledge the existence of the black people. The South African Council of Churches took its firm stance on the situation of Winterveld because both governments (i.e. South Africa and Bophuthatswana) were passing the responsibility on to each other. This will lead us to the next chapter which will tackle the issue of the Christian government which

Bophuthatswana perceived itself to be.



## Chapter 4

### Winterveld: a case study in church state relations in Bophuthatswana

#### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will focus on the government of Bophuthatswana and its relationship with the church, especially in view of the fact that the government of Bophuthatswana declared itself Christian, in spite its constitution allowing freedom of religious association. The manifestation of this declaration were the long prayers to God for the success of the 'independence' of Bophuthatswana. Another factor were the annual celebrations by the homeland government concerning 'independence' which was believed to be from God, so there was a need to give thanks on 6 December of every year. To many people there was nothing to give thanks for, however, as the homeland was an inheritance from the South African government and not God. The churches were divided on this issue of thanksgiving particularly along the lines of denominational affiliation. In some cases, individual ministers or leaders of the church found themselves divided, some due to their commitment to their calling while others were interested in how they were going to benefit in return. For some it was a matter of either 'you are with us or against us'. On affiliation the main problem was based on territorial advantage between BOMIFRA and SACC.

In some cases the church found itself being dictated to by the state as to what role it should play in the society. For example, President Lucas Mangope, together with his Cabinet would call the church leaders to a meeting to 'remind' them of their role in the state as the ministers of the church: in many instances this was to instruct them to keep politics and the church separate. There were other situations where churches, particularly those that were affiliated to the South African Council of Churches (SACC), stood up against the homeland government and entered into confrontation over a number of issues which affected the society. The confrontation revealed itself especially strongly in the case of Winterveld, in relation to issues such as the water supply, health and pensions in the Winterveld region. These issues led to the South African Council

of Churches making it clear to the homeland government that their engagement in debates with the government over those issues did not imply recognition of Bophuthatswana as they maintained that it was not legitimate. The final focus was on the ruling party which was founded on controversial grounds.

#### **4.2 The ruling party**

Before Bophuthatswana gained its 'independence' certain political organisations or parties were formed. One was known as the Seoposengwe Party (SP), which was under the leadership of Chief Tidimane Pilane and was founded on 29 July 1972. Shortly after it was formed, Chief Lucas Mangope formed the Bophuthatswana National Party (BNP) on 5 August 1972 (Benbo: 1978, 32). There was also the Tswana National Party (TNP), which represented the Batswana who lived in Soweto. Due to the differences amongst Batswana towards the 'independence' of Bophuthatswana, with some of the parties being opposed to it and a tiny minority for it, some people ended up leaving the then existing political parties within Bophuthatswana (Benbo: 1978, 32).

Before Bophuthatswana became 'Independent' in 1974 the then Bophuthatswana National Party under the leadership of Chief Lucas Mangope experienced some tension and this led to the formation of a new party which was established in November 1974 and was known as Bophuthatswana Democratic Party (BDP). The founder of this party was Chief Lucas Mangope who had been the founder of the former. The Bophuthatswana National Party was now under the leadership of Chief Herman Maseloane. However, the new party under Lucas Mangope managed to gain positions in the cabinet of Bophuthatswana, before 'independence', which coincidentally was achieved under his party and leadership despite the opposition of the rest of the Batswana political parties (Benbo: 1978, 32). As a result of this, the Bophuthatswana Democratic Party came to be the ruling party of Bophuthatswana for the sixteen years of its existence as an 'Independent' homeland state from 6 December, 1977.

The situation in Bophuthatswana was over a long period of time being exacerbated by the deeply personalised as well as paternalistic rule of Mangope. For Mangope, the

church was another means to nurture Batswana into ethno-nationalism; hence he kept on insisting that his political party (BDP) adhered to the Christian principles which he was determined to see Bophuthatswana maintaining its 'independence'. At the same time there was a specific interpretation of Batswana which was shaped around traditionalism and Christianity as a form of political control within Bophuthatswana and its institutions.

Over a period of twenty years, the Bophuthatswana Democratic Party changed its name to the Christian Democratic Party simply because it was believed that the homeland needed to be led by Christian principles. However, the winds of change and the experience of a failed coup on 10 February 1988 made the Christian Democratic Party uncertain of its future. Its dominance of the political ground in the homeland had consistently promoted and created the concept that Bophuthatswana was the 'place of the Batswana' (Jones 1999: Vol. 98, No. 390, 513). In spite of this concept that Bophuthatswana belonged only to Batswana the transitional period was now making things difficult for the ruling party, so much so that they ended up relaunching themselves under a new name: this time the United Christian Democratic Party (UCDP), as an attempt to unite all Batswana to resist re-incorporation into the new South African government that was anticipated. This was clear with the repackaging of the old themes and discourse being promoted by the homeland regime for local residents. Former ministers of that regime were informing their audience that the Batswana had nowhere else to go, in preparation for the 1994 first ever democratic elections of South Africa (Jones 1999: 531). The level of achievement of the Bop government and the lack of access to resources in Bophuthatswana was lamented by many speakers. For the ruling party the successes that had been achieved by Bophuthatswana would never again exist. The constitution of the Bophuthatswana United Christian Democratic Party was largely influenced by the Churches which supported the homeland government and individual ministers who belonged to the Bophuthatswana Ministerial Fraternity (BOMIFRA). In this period the ruling party was now using the means of the uncertainty of the future of the Batswana in the anticipated new South Africa to garner support as well as Christian principles to drive home their message (Jones: 1999, 528).

The early 1990s was the time when South Africa was moving towards the negotiations for a new dispensation. At that time the government of Bophuthatswana was now beginning to feel the pressure from its 'citizens': government wanted to maintain stability as well as the 'good governance' of their 'state'. This could be seen in Bophuthatswana's obsession with security, which they had inherited from the South African regime at that time (Jones: 1999, 513). The obsession was made visible by the continued torture, arbitrary dismissals, harassment and deportation of the opponents of the Bophuthatswana regime. During the same period the homeland state's network of authoritarian control was a 'pervasive system of control and information' which came from the capital, Mmabatho, and was disseminated down to the village level, keeping people in subjection (Jones 1999: 514). At the 1991 talks of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), the Bophuthatswana Administration was the only 'independent' bantustan which claimed to be autonomous and wanted to maintain its status quo. To the government of Boputhatswana, no outsider was allowed to come in and undermine the sovereignty of the state. This referred primarily to the African National Congress, which Bophuthatswana referred to as political thugs (Jones 1999: 514). At the same time the pressure of re-incorporation was mounting and Bophuthatswana was giving an indication of defiant tactics.

### **4.3 A Christian Government**

The relationship between the church and state in the context of Bophuthatswana has been a controversial issue. In chapter 2 of its constitution clause (4) (b) 9 is stated that 'All people shall be equal before the law, and no one may because of his sex, his descent, his language, his origin or his religious beliefs be favoured or prejudiced' (Constitution 1991: 3). In spite of this clause the government of Bophuthatswana favoured the Christian religion over and above the others. In one of the interviews I conducted, the former minister of transport Rev Simon Kgobokwe (a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church) indicated that every government department of Bophuthatswana was forced to start the day with a prayer and that there were chaplains appointed to ensure that this practice was upheld. He added that it was the norm in Bophuthatswana that they should pray to God as they were a Christian government

(Interview with Rev S Kgobokwe, 7 November 2003). One of the reasons why the government opted to be Christian was simply that at the time they negotiated for 'Independence' they first consulted with church leaders and asked them to pray God for their success. Only after they were convinced, as a result of their consultation with the church leaders, that their prayers had been accepted and that Bophuthatswana's 'independence' was to become a reality, did they decide to become a Christian government. At the same time Rev. Simon Kgobokwe argued that even the leadership of Bophuthatswana was Christian and pragmatic about it. Kgobokwe stated that there was nothing wrong with this as there were other religious countries like Mauritius, Turkey, Pakistan (mainly Islamic) and many more and this did not mean Bophuthatswana was wrong in choosing to become a Christian state.

The relationship between the church and state was also divided along denominational lines, which simply means that churches which were affiliated to the South African Council of Churches were not favoured while other denominations were. Many of the churches which were not affiliated to the Council of Churches were Charismatic and or Pentecostal, as well as the African Independent Churches and the Dutch Reformed Church. They were therefore seen to be apolitical vis-a-vis the mainline ones affiliated to the ecumenical body (Interview with Rev. Diamond Atong, 7 November, 2003). These churches were found to be in a comfort zone because they were given recognition which they did not obtain from the South African Council of Churches. According to Atong this simply indicated the inheritance from the bearer of Bophuthatswana which was the South African government, which at that time was strongly supporting the idea of Bantustans and 'Independence'.

In support of this opinion was the Rev Tselapedi, who belonged to one of the Evangelical church denominations, who at that time was actively involved in organising protest marches of ministers from different churches challenging Lucas Mangope and his cabinet ministers about the legitimacy of Bophuthatswana. Tselapedi argued that the church was older than the state and therefore had a duty to be prophetic and not to support the state, because this would lead to a situation where the church would find itself being blackmailed by the state on issues where it was supposed to be the voice

of the voiceless. In other words the government should hold society together while the church should keep reminding the government of its role. Though sometimes people might want an angelic government, this was not possible.

However, for the government of Bophuthatswana, a new meaning evolved in which Lucas Mangope used a quotation from one of his cabinet ministers, who was at the same time a minister of one of the mainline denominations (Rev Simon Seodi): 'Lona baruti ba gaetsho ba Bophuthatswana, lo letswalo la puso e, setshaba se, fa le tswa ga go na sepe le fa e le motho'<sup>1</sup>. Mangope invited all the ministers of the church in Bophuthatswana to Moretele where he met with them on 7 February 1986. In characteristic style Mangope, questioned these ministers whether they had a conscience. He was using another scriptural quotation about ministers being the salt of the earth. He referred to the old ways in which people used salt before the emergence of modern technology, to preserve food from decomposing. Mangope instructed them to always make sure that people were not drawn to revolt against the state but that they should recognise its existence and added that people should not worry about what was going on in South Africa, as Bophuthatswana was autonomous. He encouraged the ministers of the church to go along with the changes which the government was making and to respect the ten years of 'independence' (Morongwa: 1986, 2). Mangope was at the same time emphasising that in times of change it was important to consider the old ways of doing things; to him it did not matter whether the new would replace the old but that the old had always been the best, though the new tended to do away with the old. He emphasised that faith is very old and that new and scientific thoughts tend to criticise it because anything new is rushed into and seen as good. He pointed out that the new developments did not leave the church behind but that they had infiltrated it: the main issue was about the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which should be taken as the old truth and should be understood that way even in contemporary life. Mangope indicated why he had summoned the ministers of religion to the meeting: it was a way to thank them for standing in support of the government of Bophuthatswana and being the conscience of the 'nation'. As the president of Bophuthatswana he went on to use an illustration he

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<sup>1</sup>. Translation: ministers of the church in Bophuthatswana are the conscience of the nation and without them there is nothing.

had taken from the Exodus, about the angel of death who was to identify the Jewish households through the blood on the doors of their houses, so that only the first born of the Egyptians were to die. As a result a similar situation could be expected from Bophuthatswana (Morongwa: 1986, 2). In his speech the emphasis was about leading the people to faith through a faithful leader.

Mangope further reiterated that he valued the church that loved harmony and conscientised people about how to live peacefully. His call to the ministers of religion was simply that they should ensure that the government was protected from any form of anarchy and that through their leadership this could be achieved (Morongwa: 1986, 3). He repeated his earlier statement that the ministers were the salt of the earth and therefore, using their status in society, they could call back all those who had negative thoughts about government. This call was made by Mangope after a series of protest marches by people in the Mankwe, Odi and Moretele region (in short he was referring to Winterveld). Mangope was complaining to the church ministers that he had not heard anything from them about what was happening. Mangope also indicated that the children that were involved in the protest marches would grow and be constantly in conflict amongst themselves and that this would lead to them taking their conflict into the church as well, in which case the ministers would be affected. In his opinion it was the responsibility of the church to ensure that society did not rebel against the state. As he (Mangope) put it, the church was society's conscience, and he justified this assertion by using a Setswana proverb: 'Ngwana sejo o a tlhakanelwa,'<sup>2</sup> in other words the school, society, leaders and church share the children.

At the same time the scriptural text of Roman 13: 1-10 was said to indicate that the state was ordained by God and that people must recognise it. Resistance to the Bophuthatswana government was viewed as defying the God instituted state. Christian as Bophuthatswana may have been thought to be, many people did not acknowledge its existence, and as said by Diamond Atong, this became clear when the government came to accord power to the police to maintain what was then called 'Law and Order'.

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<sup>2</sup>The literal translation means: a child is food that is shared.

In other words the state of governance in Bophuthatswana was simply in the hands of the police, as they were patrolling the streets of the townships and villages to see to it that there was no defiance towards the rulers of Bophuthatswana.

#### 4.3.1 Thanksgiving

On 6 December, 1979 the government of Bophuthatswana was celebrating its 'independence' in Mmabatho. Lucas Mangope addressed the Batswana about reflecting on where they came from and thanking God for the success of their 'independence' (Morongwa 1979, Vol. 1, No. 4, : 2). In his speech, Mangope pointed out that it would have been useless not to acknowledge God and without Him they (the Batswana) would be people of no value. He emphasised that the Batswana were instead made to feel like other people, as they could now determine their own destiny and the dignity which God had given them. Mangope also pleaded to the women of Boputhatswana to teach their children to grow as 'responsible citizens' because all the things which were being done were for them to inherit and continue with. Once more, Mangope emphasised that he was thankful to God and that He had blessed them as well as the kings and chiefs of Bophuthatswana. Further thanks were given for the trust and faith which he (Mangope) had received from the people of Bophuthatswana for choosing him as their leader and for the new capital of Bophuthatswana, Mmabatho. He promised that the people of Bophuthatswana would be employed as the government was going to create industries for 'citizens' (Vol 1, No. 4, 1979, 2). With the help of God the dream of building those industries would be realised, because He had been with the Batswana all the time. Mangope further dedicated some of the buildings which had been built during the two years of 'independence' to God. He mentioned that he enjoyed being the leader of Bophuthatswana and that he was committed to leading Batswana with dedication, always putting God before everything else.

Over the years of its 'Independence' the government of Bophuthatswana celebrated its achievements and gave the churches a slot, the main purpose of which was to thank God for the success of the homeland state. In some cases the state would ask the church to remember its autonomy in their services.



#### 4.3.2 The Church and Politics

It came as no surprise when the government of Bophuthatswana called a meeting which was disguised as a choral festival on 5 June 1993 at the Civic Centre in Phokeng near Rustenburg (Mirror: 9 June, 1993, Vol. 4, No. 21,). The intention of this meeting was to inform the people and the ministers of the churches that were supporting the government that church and politics were separate. In this meeting the Board of Trustees for Gospel Music was involved, together with the choirs and ordinary people, as well as some cabinet ministers. The Minister of Population Development, Mr Thate Molatlhwa, said that the aim of the meeting was to call on all young people to be involved in music as well as to take advantage of the bursaries provided for them to further their studies (Vol. 4, No. 21, 9 June, 1993). However, Mr Molatlhwa pointed out that the most worrying factor in Bophuthatswana was the way people involved the issues of faith and the church in politics. He emphasised that politics and the church were separate and should therefore not be mixed as this was dividing people and causing conflict.

In contrast were the many meetings of the Bophuthatswana Women's League which were encouraging numerous women in that territory to be Christians, to be faithful to their God and to support the government in praying for it (Mirror: 11 August 1993, Vol. 4, No. 30, ). On the same note the leader of the Women's League, Mrs Tsholofelo Mangope, was encouraging the women to trust in God as the progress made in Bophuthatswana had been achieved with the help of God. She referred to the failed coup as an example to show just how God had been on the side of Boputhatswana. She went on to liken the ruling party (United Christian Democratic Party) to a car that has just been serviced with new oil that enables it to run smoothly without friction caused by unoiled parts (Vol.4, No. 30, 11 August 1993). At the same time she took the opportunity to ask women to encourage their daughters to join the women's league of Bophuthatswana. Not only did Mrs Mangope encourage young women to join the women's league as well as the ruling party but she also extended an invitation to the members of the 'Gospel musical groups' to join the United Christian United Democratic Party. This was not the only situation in which the government of Bophuthatswana used

every opportunity at its disposal to try and discourage people from standing for what they believed; in the Bophuthatswana Ministerial Fraternity was another such organisation which supported the government.

#### 4.3.3 Bophuthatswana Ministerial Fraternity (BOMIFRA)

This organisation was not formed by the churches as such but was joined mainly by individual ministers. It was not affiliated to any church; hence there was no church which owed it allegiance. On 26 July 1993 the ministerial fraternity held a gathering in Atamelang, outside Delareyville which was addressed by Rev Esau Joseph Teu. Rev Teu told the people at the gathering that they (BOMIFRA) had been sent by the government to travel around Bophuthatswana reviving the Christian Spirit. Teu said that it was only through Christian Spirituality that people's development could be achieved so as to ensure that they protected everything around them and did not destroy it (Mirror: 14 July 1993, Vol. 4, No. 26). Teu emphasised that it was the intention of the government and BOMIFRA to talk about everything that was Godly, especially about peace, harmony and unity. In discussing the church and faith he pointed out that under the leadership of Rev SS Seane, BOMIFRA had been formed the previous year (1992) as a way to improve the religious relations between the church and state in Bophuthatswana. He further said that BOMIFRA was looking at uniting the different church denominations as well as women's and youth movements. On the same note the secretary of BOMIFRA, Mrs Kerileng Molantoa, used the creation story of Genesis to say that the Batswana should not forget that they were created in the image of God; she went on to say that it was not a plea but an instruction that all people should use the Sabbath as the day of worship (Vol. 4, No 26, 14 July 1993). She went on to emphasise that the government of Bophuthatswana was anointed by God to be 'Independent'.

#### 4.3.4 The church is the light of the nation

In Mabeskraal BOMIFRA had gathered on 25 May 1993 for the opening of the church building of the United African Federated Apostolic Zion Church. The Rev M.A Tshegameno, in welcoming the people to this ceremony, said that the aim of BOMIFRA

in Bophuthatswana was to ensure that the people heard the gospel of God. In his sermon he emphasised that churches must work with the local chiefs as they were anointed by God. He said that in times of turmoil there should be a way to solve those problems as people were all children of God. In response, to this Mrs D Ntuane, the wife of Chief SG Ntuane (she was speaking on behalf of him) said that the polity of the faithful church could only be carried out by a minister who was honest and loyal (Mirror: Vol.4, No.26, 1993). She added that many people changed once they reached certain status, and this included ministers too. Mrs Ntuane continued that the church is needed to guide people to respect the government and preach the gospel and not politics to them like other churches do (in this case the reference was to the denominations which were affiliated to the South African Council of Churches). Mrs Ntuane pleaded with the churches that they should always remember in prayer the chief and the cabinet ministers, as well as to pray for the nation of Bophuthatswana not to fall into the hands of its enemies, who were busy confusing the Batswana. Irrespective of all this, the situation in Bophuthatswana was not as the government had portrayed it. In the Winterveld area people were being constantly harassed by the police. In some cases there were no running water, no health facilities, no proper school buildings for their children as well as no provision of pensions for those who were not citizens of Bophuthatswana.

#### **4.4 The Winterveld case study**

##### **4.4.1 Education**

The South African Council of Churches was now deeply involved with what was taking place in Winterveld. Education was one major problem which the Winterveld residents were experiencing. Many school principals were concerned about the poor supply of facilities by the Department of Education, such as books, stationery, toilets and running water. The Winterveld Action Committee, which was functioning under the Pretoria Regional Council of churches identified the principal area of concern as education. There were 11 Primary Schools, 3 Middle Schools and 1 High School but for the school-going population of Winterveld these schools were not adequate. To solve this problem

the Action Committee established 13 unregistered private schools (mainly primary) which were to help alleviate the educational needs in the area. The committee came up with a plan to assist these private schools with several of their requirements. The Winterveld Action Committee managed to build 5 toilets (critical in the light of cholera) for the private schools. It also managed to supply the schools with paper, from which they made exercise books with a special stapler, and about 3 000 exercise books were distributed in private schools (Chairman's report: 4 March 1985). For the Council of Churches education was the most critical issue because textbooks and blackboards were supplied through some kind of assistance to the schools by a white church group (Report from Pretoria Regional Council of Churches: 1981). The school benches were manufactured by the members of the community at a low cost. There were at the same time funds from overseas church groups as a donation to the Winterveld community through the South African Council of Churches. At the same time there were two volunteers that were employed to help teach the children how to read, write and count and these two teachers were being paid by the government. There was also a Learn and Teach project, particularly to teach adults how to read and write and to help conscientise them through discussion. Many of these schools were built with mud and in some cases there were benches without desks. Some plot owners would invite the community to build these schools on their properties. There were in some instances funds to improve or construct a school but the fear of the community was that if they were to erect a proper school building this was going to invite the unwelcome attention of the homeland government which might commandeer the school. The school fees ranged from R1 to R5 per month and additional items were also charged (The Profile on The Winterveld: 6).

These schools were part of the informal sector of the economy, which provided the means of livelihood for some and of exploitation for others. In some instances a qualified teacher would leave an established school and set up a new one; in this manner one might find that some of these teachers had few qualifications or none. At the same time a system of inspection was non-existent since many parents had no formal education. The teacher - pupil ratio was 1:100 and there were no teaching aids apart from the few charts and blackboards. Annually children would be promoted to a

higher class and there was also a high dropout rate. Few of these pupils managed to go to high school despite having obtained the certificates from the lower educational level. At the same time the Pretoria Council of Churches was involved in certain ecumenical projects, some of which included the building of schools on a piece of land which had been allocated to the church. This project was to be done jointly with the Winterveld Action Committee. The suggestion regarding the building of the school came from Mr D MacRobert who stipulated that this was not to be done without the knowledge of the community. MacRobert had already mentioned this idea to Fr Mashikinya and Rev H Hlaethwa.

The cause for the lack of supply of facilities by the Bophuthatswana government was simply that Winterveld was occupied by people who were non-Batswana. A large proportion of the population were from the Nguni speaking language groups: mainly Ndebele, Zulu, Xhosa and Swazi. Many of the people around the Winterveld felt that they were placed under pressure by the requirements of education in a medium which was not of their own choice: the Setswana language, which was made compulsory. In a letter written by the ambassador of Bophuthatswana, Rev Simon S Seane, to the South African Council of Churches. He indicated that he was aware of the schools that were operating illegally in Winterveld and that they were teaching through the medium of Zulu (letter to the SACC from the Embassy of Bophuthatswana). However, education was not the only problem which was facing the Winterveld residents as there were also health issues which were critical, considering that they lived in the slums.

#### 4.4.2 The church and health

The fact that Winterveld was under the authority of Bophuthatswana and occupied mostly by non-Batswana meant that the homeland government decided not to establish health facilities there. Hence residents there had to travel long distances to the nearest hospital or clinic. The Pretoria Council of Churches through the Winterveld Action Committee, therefore had to make some provision in this respect. In this case the Winterveld residents found themselves having to help some of their sick and injured people without the expertise of paramedics as well as without insight into health issues

(Archdiocese of Pretoria Justice and Peace Commission report: 7 August 1984). These people could not help patients effectively. The Winterveld Action Committee, together with the Council of Churches, decided to send four lay people to attend courses on basic training in health matters at Baragwanath Hospital. This course was sponsored by Anglo-American. At the end of the course these people were provided with the first aid kits, and they were taught how to use remedies for common ailments like gastro-enteritis, high temperatures, scabies, burns and wounds. This was a means to help the patients before they were taken to the hospital or to doctors. The main aim of the course was to teach people about preventative medicine. These people who were trained at Baragwanath were going to offer their help to the Winterveld slum area and work hand in hand with the St Peter's mobile clinic, which belonged to the Catholic Church, and the Good Shepherd Clinic in Makaunyana. In spite of these two clinics there was a need for more health facilities in Winterveld as they could not treat the population of about 400 000 people. At the same time it was expected of the church to build more clinics and of the authorities to accept them as registered private clinics (Winterveld Action Committee, Chairman's report: 4 March 1984). A hospital had been built by the Seventh Day Adventist Church in the 1950s, with six wards, but it was never used and is a ruin today as the area was zoned for agricultural purposes. The prohibition of the use of this facility was carried out by the South African government even though it had increased the population of the area. The nearest hospital were in Ga-Rankuwa and Hammanskraal, which were in Bophuthatswana as well, and both were about 30km from Winterveld (A Profile on the Winterveld: 5). In some cases doctors who were struck off the South African Medical Association roll would run their own private practices until they were reinstated. Because of the few resources and facilities which were available, the traditional doctors exerted a strong influence.

In spite of the efforts by the Winterveld community to emancipate themselves through the church, the government of Bophuthatswana had other ideas related to the issue of health. The government's health department, which was under the leadership of Dr Patrick K Mokhobo, held a conference at the Mmabatho Civic Centre on 14 March 1981 in which the churches in Bophuthatswana were invited to take part (Morongwa: Vol. 3. No. 1, April, 1981). The main point of discussion in this conference stemmed from the

government, which wanted the church to lead in the issues of health and development. One of the delegates at this conference was Mr GSP Mabale, who pointed out that the outbreak of cholera was a major problem in the Southern African context and that the churches were expected to play a leading role in combatting this problem. His comment was that the church should help in informing the communities as well as in enlightening the people about health and their environment. Mr Mabale went on to suggest that churches should shoulder the responsibility of taking care of the communities through the leadership of their ministers (Morongwa: vol.3, No. 4, 1981, 6 ). In his comment Mr Mabale said that this should be done in collaboration with the government department of health, particularly regarding minor diseases which people tend to take for granted.

On the other hand the minister of health, Dr Patrick Mokhobo, spoke about loyalty and the commitment towards serving the government and helping it combat the diseases which were affecting the people of Bophuthatswana. He went on to say that the aims of the government were to maintain the total health of a human being, which was physical and emotional as well as spiritual. Dr Mokhobo pleaded with the church leaders to help in preventing the unnecessary spread of diseases. He also spoke about the problem of teenage pregnancy which he said was being encountered by the state and remarked that the church should play a leading role in teaching the community about it (Morongwa 1978: 6). Another problem was that of fatherless children. He said that the two problems had led to a situation where there was no proper care for the infants as they were born of inexperienced teenage and unprepared parents. On a final note the health minister asked for a joint effort from the churches on family planning, to be taken to schools and to educate the youth about the importance of family values (Morongwa: 1981, 6). According to him these were some of the matters which needed to be taken care of as many of them were caused by poverty, and if they were not attended to the society would be left wandering and looking for an instant solution which might not be forthcoming.

#### 4.4.3 Water supply

Before Bophuthatswana's 'independence', there were about fourteen boreholes which

had been fitted with pumps by the South African government. These pumps were apparently maintained until the government of Bophuthatswana took over, after which the pumps gradually malfunctioned. In 1981 the government of Bophuthatswana drilled six boreholes on school premises but these were for school use only. The Winterveld Action Committee took the initiative to drill at least four boreholes, with the aim of bringing water to the residents at a low cost, or even free. Through Inter-Church Aid a trained agricultural engineer from Zambia gave the residents some practical advice about how to use the water and land.

In a meeting between the South African Council of Churches and the government of Bophuthatswana in Mmabatho on 21 April 1982 the issue of water was raised with the government. The South African Council of Churches pointed out to the homeland government that people in Winterveld had not been receiving any water services, except those which had been taken either on donkey carts or because someone would offer to sell them the water at 2 cents a litre and 50 cents for a drum. To some extent certain people would draw their water either from the clinics or the hospitals, at some distance. The church maintained that this was an urgent matter which needed attention as there was a need for drastic steps to ensure healthier living conditions. Instead of the government of Bophuthatswana addressing this situation, Chief Lucas Mangope questioned whether it was the function of the Council of Churches to look into such matters. However, the government responded by indicating that it was a matter which should involve the people of Winterveld, and that there were allegations that the plot owners had not responded to invitations to be involved (Minutes of the meeting: 1982). According to the government these people were asked to agree to the upgrading of the facilities and they had replied to the authorities that the government should 'concentrate on other areas, not our plots' (Minutes of the meeting: 1982). Mangope continued that the government was as much concerned as the Council of Churches was about the situation of the water supply in the Winterveld area. Mangope went on to say that the South African Council of Churches must not divide people into groups and encourage them to criticise the government on founded or unfounded matters.

From the side of the South African Council of Churches it became clear that Mangope



and his ministers could not distinguish between the Winterveld Committee of the Pretoria Regional Council of Churches and the South African Council of Churches. The Plot Owners' Association had made the first approach to the South African Council of Churches and their problems were referred to the Pretoria Council of Churches Winterveld Committee, who were later advised to consult with the attorneys who were briefed to act on their behalf. The Winterveld Committee was advocating the causes of many thousands of tenants who were in a vulnerable position. Matters of water and health were crucial issues. The ministers from the different churches raised this issue with the Pretoria Regional Council of Churches: that each time they buried people (particularly children) in Winterveld, residents raised questions about issues of water and health. As a matter of urgency the South African Council of Churches could not ignore it but had to address it and take it up with the homeland government.

#### 4.4.4 Old age pensioners

The issue of pensions was another matter which needed the attention of both the church and the state. Due to the constant ebb and flow of people, and the lack of a stable community, there were and many old people in the Winterveld with no means of support. However, pensions were only paid to Batswana and only at the community hall. For some elderly people to gain pensions, many of those who were not Batswana were left with no option but to apply for the citizenship of Bophuthatswana, yet their applications were never even processed. One of the pension officials of the government of Bophuthatswana informed the Black Sash member monitoring the bi-monthly payout that there were too many applications to handle and that the old people had no hope of ever receiving their pension money. At the same time the Winterveld Action Committee, Black Sash, and the Justice and Peace Commission had tried to help the old people, many of whom had no income whatsoever (A Profile on The Winterveld: 6). A survey was conducted, which determined that there were over 700 cases of people who were not receiving their pensions, and the government of Bophuthatswana was approached with this information, which was given to both Chief Justice Hiemstra and Chief Lucas Mangope. The government was urged to honour its pre-independence agreement in which it accepted the responsibility for the people of the area. In response,

Bophuthatswana claimed that these people were not citizens of Bophuthatswana and that they were not coping even with the pensions of the Batswana. For Bophuthatswana the non Batswana residents of Winterveld were citizens of South Africa. While this was the situation in Bophuthatswana, the South African parliament was being questioned by Mrs Helen Suzman on the issue of pensions for the people in Winterveld. This matter was first seen to be a legal issue when it was being tackled by the Legal Resource Centre, only for them to discover that this was not a legal issue but a political one. It became apparent that the South African government had the ultimate responsibility since it had set up the Bophuthatswana state (A Profile on the Winterveld: 6). The South African Council of Churches addressed this matter with the government of Bophuthatswana in their meeting in Mmabatho on 21 April 1982. In that meeting the Council of Churches indicated that there was an agreement between Bophuthatswana and South Africa on the matter (pensions). The agreement was that the South African government was going to pay the pensions of all Batswana who were in South Africa and that Bophuthatswana would do the same for all the non-Batswana who were living within the borders of Bophuthatswana (Minutes of the Meeting: 1982). In that same meeting the Council of Churches mentioned that there were thousands of people who were not receiving their pensions in Bophuthatswana and were coerced into applying for citizenship. The Council of Churches maintained that by law residents and people should qualify on the basis of old age or disability to receive their pensions in agreement with the pre-independence negotiations of the two governments. The matter was therefore regarded as a matter of urgency and it was stated that the issue of pensions should not be delayed pending the determination of residential status.

In 1984 the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Pretoria Justice and Peace Commission made some applications on behalf of sixteen people: Sister Immaculata was In-Charge and took all these people to the Mabopane magistrate's court to apply for old-age pensions. At the court Sister Immaculata was told by the clerks that people who qualified for a pension had to be in possession of Bophuthatswana citizenship (Field worker's report: 7 August 1984). However, Sister Immaculata together with the sixteen applicants presented the case that applications for citizenship had been made previously and that there had been no response from the Government. In addition they

were made to understand that by virtue of old age and proof of residence (meaning that these people needed to have a stamp on their reference books) people who applied for a pension would automatically qualify, but this was not the case. On June 25, 1984, Sister Immaculata took three other old people to the court to apply for a pension. They were in possession of temporary residence permits but all of them were not permitted to apply for an old age pension. Clerks at the magistrate court explained that the temporary residence permit did not qualify a person to apply for a pension; only a permanent residence permit and citizenship qualified a person to do so. Sister Immaculata argued with the clerks that the conditions imposed on these applicants were different from those mentioned to them by the officials both in Mafikeng and Pretoria (Field workers report, 7 August 1984).

Another controversy arose when the senior clerk came to explain the issue of applying for pensions, even though his explanation was clearer than that of his colleagues. However, when he was questioned on the issue of applying for permanent residence he indicated that there was no direct way to apply. He said that there were people who applied for citizenship and their applications were sorted out by the officials of the Internal Affairs Department of Bophuthatswana. Among these applicants some would be turned down and not be given citizenship but rather permanent residence permits.

In this situation the Archdiocese of Pretoria received some money from donors who did not want their names to be known and requested that the money be distributed to three aged people who were very needy or to such families in the Winterveld. Sister Immaculata embarked on the exercise of finding very needy persons and went as far as asking the people of Winterveld to help her identify them. She managed to find some of them, of whom one was a 62 year old woman whose husband had died in 1970 and who had no source of income though she was taking care of her two mentally retarded daughters. The old lady was residing on a plot which belonged to the Apostolic Faith Mission Church and she and her daughters were members of the same denomination as well. Other elderly people who were identified had similar problems and in some instances had troublesome children who were either unemployed with drinking habits, or were involved in crime in the community. These cases forced the church to go out

and look for sponsors, which was difficult because not many sponsors were keen to help the church with funds to alleviate this problem, of pensioners being refused pensions by the governments of both Bophuthatswana and South Africa. Some of these women fell ill after the death of their husbands and were left with no income, while others were left in the care of their children who might either be married but lived far from mother's home or not married but unemployed with grandchildren, and depended on the small grant which was organised by the church to keep the family surviving (Field worker's report: 7 August, 1984).

On the other hand the pension issue was more than met the eye. The Black Sash had in a number of ways tried to intervene and help all the old-age people in the Winterveld area with their pensions. This was a joint effort by the Black Sash, the Winterveld Action Committee and the Pretoria Catholic Justice and Peace Commission. It appears that the Black pensioners' problem was alarmingly worsening in Bophuthatswana, as the statistics regarding pensioners at that time had reached approximately 90% of the Winterveld population of non-Batswana. In this case all the three committees (i.e. the Black Sash, Winterveld Action Committee and the Pretoria Catholic Justice and Peace Commission) were dealing with an 'international situation', and this also in case the Pension Act No. 18 of 1978 of Bophuthatswana which stated that:

subject to the provision of this Act, any person shall be entitled to the appropriate social pension if he satisfies the Secretary-

- a) that he is an aged, blind or disabled person or a war veteran; and
- b) that he is resident in Bophuthatswana at the time of his application for a social pension; and
- c) (i) that he is a citizen of Bophuthatswana or  
(ii) that he has lawfully resided in the Republic of Bophuthatswana for the period of five years immediately preceding the date of such application (Black Sash Conference Report: 1982).

What this meant was simply that the conditions were the same as those of citizenship. In spite of all this the two presidents of South Africa and Bophuthatswana respectively had signed a pre-independence agreement on behalf of their governments, for people

who live in Bophuthatswana, but were not citizens of Bophuthatswana, to qualify for their pensions to be paid in Bophuthatswana. In direct contradiction of this, the government of Bophuthatswana demanded proof of citizenship, instructed non Batswana to go to their homelands and receive their pensions there, and in some cases told people to go back to Lady Selbourne. It later emerged that the government of Bophuthatswana was seeking legal advice to have the pre-independence agreement declared invalid and to put the pension cases on ice. The three committees involved wrote a letter to the then Justice Minister of Bophuthatswana, Chief Justice Hiemstra, appealing to him by means of a document with the names of applicants who numbered over 300, as well as some others who applied through the different churches, who had similar problems, to be present at the time of the appeal. Letters were sent to the Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Dr KP Mokhobo with the same enclosure, and a covering letter was sent to each of President L Mangope, Chief Justice Hiemstra and Mr R. F Botha who was the Minister of Foreign Affairs in South Africa. There was only an acknowledgement of this correspondence from the latter (Mr R.F Botha) and no follow up from there except from the three committees (Black Sash, Winterveld Action Committee and Pretoria Catholic Justice and Peace Commission). At this point the Action Committee was now running out of patience and the only thing they could think of was to go public with the events in the Winterveld area.

It was also coincidental that at the time of considering this step, the Action Committee gained possession of correspondence between the two governments which clearly showed that South Africa was aware of the plight of pensioners. This letter contained a list of the names of about two hundred and twenty three applicants, all of whom were qualifying for pensions. This document was taken to be presented in the South African Parliament with the intention of asking questions about the pension issue (Black Sash Conference report, on pensions, 1982).

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

In conclusion, it was clear from the beginning that the homeland government of

Bophuthatswana had inherited its style of governance from its creators the South African government. It proclaimed that it was a Christian state though it was not against other religions. The language the leaders of Bophuthatswana used was similar to the Christian discourse used by the South African government: that they had achieved 'independence' after praying to God and they had received the answer from God that it was the right thing to accept the offer of sovereignty from South Africa. A major tactic which the homeland state used was to make use of the Christian religion to win the hearts and minds of the Batswana; however, those who were won over by the homeland government were mainly people from poor backgrounds some of whom were given incentives like land (in most cases this land was in the form of a lease or a contract). As for the employees in the civil sector, the situation was such that for them the conditions meant that they were forced to abide by the rules and regulations which were governing Bophuthatswana's civil service (in other words they had to observe the morning devotions or prayer which were traditional in the government departments).

As a Christian state, it had been traditional for the government of Bophuthatswana to celebrate its 'Independence' since 1977. These celebrations were not only concerned 'independence' but they also included worship, which was in many instances organised by the ministers who were members of the Bophuthatswana Ministers Fraternity. Many ministers who were members of the fraternity in that homeland were also part of the government and they were very influential regarding mobilising support for the government of Bophuthatswana. At the same time the government of Bophuthatswana was warning its people not to mix religion with politics. One could interpret this as another way in which the homeland government was trying to keep the church away from conscientising people about their political, social, and economic conditions. This was the same type of method the South African government had been using to discourage people from joining the South African Council of Churches. At the same time the non recognition of the South African Council of Churches by Bophuthatswana was a clear indication that the voice of the church was not going to be accepted, and it was counteracted by the establishment of the Bophuthatswana Ministers Fraternity.

Bophuthatswana Ministers Fraternity was not formed because there was a need for it,

but it came into being as an attempt to stop ministers, particularly those of the historical mission churches from continuing their participation in an ecumenical body as well as to stop them from opposing the policy of apartheid, which in turn was going to affect the 'Independence' of Bophuthatswana. Some ministers who became members of the ministers fraternity were individuals from some historic churches and many others came from the African Independent Churches in Bophuthatswana. Many of these church ministers were either in the cabinet of the homeland government or stood to benefit either as individuals or for their churches (particularly when it came to land allocation) from the government itself. A good example of this was the Assemblies of God Church of which Lucas Mangope was a member, and which received a huge piece of land in Thaba-Nchu as well as a donation from him as a statesman, in return for his name to be inscribed on the church's wall as one of the contributors. In other instances, Lucas Mangope would summon the ministers of the different church denominations and remind them that they were supposed to be the conscience of the state. In his own interpretation this meant that church ministers were supposed to conscientise the people against seeing the truth and to acknowledge the existence of Bophuthatswana as a state.

Bophuthatswana, as a surrogate of apartheid South Africa, continued the actions of apartheid when they would not accept the children of the people who were not Batswana into schools, especially in the Winterveld region. The same was the case with the non establishment of health facilities and a water supply. The involvement of the South African Council of Churches in this context did not go down well with the government of Bophuthatswana. The reason for this was that Bophuthatswana saw itself as a sovereign state and therefore argued that there could be no outside forces to interfere in its affairs, including not only matters of education, health and water supply but also the old age pensions of people who were not Batswana. For Bophuthatswana, the church was not even supposed to become involved as this was a state matter. Bophuthatswana saw the Winterveld context not as a matter which needed immediate attention but as an ethnic situation which their government needed to be rid of.

The situation was fuelled by the ruling party under the leadership of chief Lucas

Mangope, which accepted the offer of 'independence' from South Africa and was not easily going to give it up. When the signs of change in South Africa became visible, there was a need to come up with a new approach which was to look at Christian principles and embrace Christianity as their base and mode of governance. The new approach came about with the change of name of the party but the state of affairs remained the same. The issue was to cling to power and maintain the status quo.



## Chapter 5

### Church and state in Bophuthatswana: the time of transition (1990-1994)

#### 5.1 Introduction

The future of Bophuthatswana was at this point no longer in the hands of one person. For the residents and citizens of Bophuthatswana the moment of truth had arrived. For the first time in the history of Bophuthatswana, people stood up to make their own choice about their future in politics as well as their freedom of religious association.

This chapter will look at how Lucas Mangope attempted to use the Christian religion to his own advantage in order to win the hearts and minds of the Batswana to maintain the Bophuthatswana government. For the ruling party and for its leader, it was clear that the writing was on the wall, as the future of Bophuthatswana was uncertain. Mangope's historical interpretation of the Batswana was proven wrong with the unfolding of the dawning of the new era in South Africa.

The Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) was a stepping stone to determining the future of the Batswana, especially now that they had begun to realise their role in making their own decisions. However, Lucas Mangope maintained that Bophuthatswana was historically not a product of apartheid but of British Colonial history. The ruling party, under his leadership looked at changing its name to being called the United Christian Democratic Party. It went on to claim that it was representing the Batswana at CODESA. He wanted Bop to be recognised in the same way as Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland whose independence was given them by the British Colonial Authorities.

With the Convention for a Democratic South Africa the government of Bophuthatswana was already aware of the direction of the blowing winds of change. In a bid to save the 'independence' of Bophuthatswana, the United Christian Democratic Party, led by Lucas Mangope, sought an alliance with the Freedom Front, Inkatha and the Afrikaner Volksfront, the Conservative Party and the Ciskei. This Alliance was known as the

Freedom Alliance. Its aim was to preserve the existence of apartheid and maintain the homeland structures. This alliance was to ensure that Bophuthatswana did not become reincorporated back into South Africa and that forms of communism and non religious movements were kept out of Bop.

When it was certain that South Africa was going to elect a new government, the situation in Bophuthatswana changed with the civil service coming to a standstill. The citizens took to the streets to protest the homeland state. Seeing that the situation was not under control Mangope sought assistance from the Afrikaner Volksfront. It came at a price after the invasion of Mmabatho by the Afrikaner Weerstand Beweging (AWB) in which some civilians were randomly killed. The other price paid dearly was the deposing of Lucas Mangope from leadership of the homeland state. This marked the end of Bophuthatswana as a state which was a surrogate of the South African government. It also marked the beginning of the new era bringing in a democratic dispensation, for the whole of South Africa.

## **5.2 New problems arise**

On 6 December 1990 the homeland government of Bophuthatswana was celebrating its thirteenth anniversary of 'Independence' in Mmabatho. Bophuthatswana Ministers Fraternity had organised church services to be held throughout the homeland as thanksgiving (Pioneer: 1990, Vol. 12, No.4, 1). In the capital of Bophuthatswana a prayer meeting was held at the government building, known as Garona, to mark that anniversary of 'Independence'. The purpose of the prayer meeting was to pray for peace, harmony and unity in the region. The service was followed by an address from President Lucas Mangope who took a stance about the envisaged new South Africa. In his address Mangope emphasised that he did not expect the changing times in South Africa to affect the basic value systems of Bophuthatswana. He pointed out that his government believed in and adhered to a free enterprise system which, he said, over the years of its experience had remained the only system with a track record which had created wealth and instilled self-respect in people (Pioneer 1990: 1). According to him, this was a system that did reward one with input and effort.

In his own words Mangope said: 'My Government is totally opposed to the idea of any forms of nationalisation. As it is often believed, a free enterprise system does not benefit only the elite or the rich. Free market forces also broaden and create the potential for the upliftment of the total population in all different spheres' (Pioneer 1990: 1). He added that the citizens of Bophuthatswana had a very deep and abiding respect for the principles of human dignity and of equal opportunity. These values were rooted in their Christian faith and all the generations of human experience.

In other words Lucas Mangope was using the Christian message to convince the Batswana that it was necessary to be 'independent' and not return to the South African system. For Mangope there:

*were many conflicting forces which were at work and were multiplying as the century was drawing closer. It was necessary for the nation to look beyond the realm of flesh and blood but to the realm of Spirit, where the real battle of the ages was taking place between Good and Evil. Lucas Mangope further went on to state that there was a need for spiritual and moral strength for the nation. Yet a nation which has Almighty God at its centre and its people inspired by a genuine, courageous Faith, can achieve what no other power on earth can achieve no matter how small or how overwhelming are the odds against it. Faith can move mountains. Faith counts for more today than ever before in the chronicled history of this world. Overnight it can open prospects of deliverance. There can be no doubt Christ said so, time and again. Since the day my people elected me to be their leader, I have committed myself totally to the execution of the command stemming from the Christian message, 'Faith can accomplish all things'.*

*As long as we have faith we shall find solutions to our problems, and reconciliation will assuredly take place among the different people of this world. As long as we have Faith there can be no doubting the dawn of a new day when we shall live together in peace and harmony, and prosperity. It matters not how impossible or absurd this may sound to unbelievers in our midst, and to those of little faith. It remains a fact. God's Word is Truth and if we obey the conditions, He will do his part. Our part is to obey His commands, to love one another, to do*

*what is right, to obey the rules and regulations of Bophuthatswana, for righteousness exalteth a nation, while sin is a reproach to any land (Bop Panorama: 1990).*

For Mangope there was a need for a country to be Christian and have the church taking a lead in the state of governance, and as he puts it: 'there is a country in Africa whose strength lies in God, whose peoples love one another, whose leaders recognise their need to pray to Almighty God for guidance and strength, and that country is Bophuthatswana'(Panorama: 1990).

Mangope's message was based on the text which came from 2 Chronicles 7: 14, which says: 'If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and will heal their land'. Seeing that Bophuthatswana was on the verge of being reincorporated, Mangope was left with no idea as to how he was going to convince the Batswana to accept that 'independence' meant that they were now free and need not fear anything. Further than that the issue was only for Bophuthatswana to continue surviving and fostering new alliances in a changing Southern Africa, to ensure to the well-being of Bophuthatswana and all its people.

President Lucas Mangope added that he welcomed the initiatives that were taken by the South African President, Frederick Willem de Klerk, regarding the changing political climate in that country. Mangope was referring to the changes that were taking place regarding the dismantling of apartheid. He regarded the changes as creating the expectations in the minds of the people which were leading to tensions and violence as political parties and interested groups started positioning themselves in the race for a power base in the changing South Africa. He was also referring to some of the political violence spilling over the borders of Bophuthatswana. Mangope was not only concerned with the political changes in South Africa. He also raised his concerns about the extension of the borders of Bophuthatswana, which he said was necessary.

For the government of Bophuthatswana and the ruling party, the future looked very bleak. There was a need to look for a miracle and their hope was now based on

Christian principles as well as keeping their fingers crossed that there would be no reincorporation into the new South Africa. The uncertainty of the ruling party could be seen and heard in the speeches which Lucas Mangope made to the public, especially in Bophuthatswana. The mounting pressures could be seen but the party was defiant, declaring that 'Bophuthatswana will be independent one hundred years from now' (Jones 1999: 514). There also were diplomats from South Africa who felt that Bophuthatswana was a special case needing different treatment from other homelands. To maintain their position in Bophuthatswana, the churches were used as a podium to mobilise support, particularly from the ordinary people. It was also easier for the leaders of the United Christian Democratic Party to go to the different church denominations to talk to the congregations. In some cases notices would be announced to the congregants to attend a meeting either in the afternoon of the same Sunday or during the coming week. A large crowd would be expected to attend. This became evident at the meeting which was held on 15 March, 1991 in Mmabatho. At this meeting the South Africa-Tswana Association (SATSWA) added a wider concept of regionalism to Bophuthatswana's ethnic rhetoric. This meeting was attended by about 320 people. Of these 120 came from Bophuthatswana state structures which included the university, parastatals, government, Mmabatho town council and some private sector representatives. The other 200 people came from South Africa including Afrikaner academics from Potchefstroom University, businessmen, representatives of mining interests and a significant number of white farmers (Jones: 1991; 516). The aim of the forum was to provide a greater bargaining power in the emerging constitutional negotiations which were to be held at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park.

### **5.3 Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA)**

In December 1991 Lucas Mangope like many other political leaders, addressed the founding meeting of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa. The words that came from Mangope were that 'Bophuthatswana is not the product of apartheid, but the legacy of British imperialism and colonialism that went wrong' (Pioneer: February/March: 1992; 2). Mangope also emphasised that he, together with his people, (referring to the Batswana in Bophuthatswana) abhorred and has fought against the

inequities of the system of apartheid with all their might. This led to Mangope presenting his version of the history of the Batswana. He said that their history goes back to the eleventh century at which time the Batswana were the inhabitants of the greatest area north of the Orange River and south west of the Zambezi River. This lasted until the time of the expansion of the missionary and colonial enterprises respectively (Pioneer:1992; 2). Mangope maintained that the expansion of the British rule among the Batswana contrasted with the way in which other British protectorates were treated. As a result of this they still had their 'independence'. Reference was made here to countries such as Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. In return for this type of treatment, the Batswana were given an opportunity by South Africa to become a sovereign state. As he Mangope put it; *'our sovereignty and freedom were unjustly and cruelly taken away from us by the British colonial government. We remoulded our people, who were scattered in groups and tribes over a wide area, and forged them again into a nation. We regained our dignity, our self-esteem, our sense of self-reliance and self-belief, acknowledging the wise and guiding hand of Almighty God.'* (Pioneer:1992; 2).

For the President of Bophuthatswana, there was no need to argue whether Bophuthatswana was independent or not. The reason was very simple. It could be found in its national anthem that 'independence' was given by God, without bloodshed, despite all odds. This was in spite of the calculations of the British rule and colonialism. Apartheid presented a very good opportunity for the 'independence' which Mangope had always been wishing for.

### 5.3.1 Is Bophuthatswana's independence of a special nature?

Like the other 'independent' homelands Bophuthatswana was seen, particularly by South Africa, as being unique. This was also the case with the homeland cabinet ministers who pledged to support Lucas Mangope irrespective of what changes were going to take place. In a meeting which was held on 26 March 1992 Mangope was instrumental in the construction of the history of the Batswana and its attempt to forge a new set of material interests between the various groups that were in the region (Lawrence and Mason 1994: 457). For Mangope, the tendency to lump

Bophuthatswana together with other TBVC countries (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei) was an offence as he believed that there were ethnic differences between these states and that they differed in history, development, economy and achievements. Over and above this, Bophuthatswana had, according to Mangope, achieved 'democracy' unlike the other homeland states and were an 'independent' nation. Mangope was appealing to the Afrikaners, even suggesting to them that: 'the Afrikaners and the Batswana share in many respects the same values, faith and norms. These commonalities were grounded in Christian principles and a respect for peaceful coexistence, underwritten by the principles of the free enterprise system and faith in our own traditions, our language and our history' (1994 : 458). Mangope went even further using the Setswana idiom: *fifing go tshwaranwa ka dikobo*<sup>1</sup>.

In his explanation he said that this was a needed response to the political darkness and the uncertainty of the future which was not unique to South Africa at that time. He continued by resorting to the history of the Batswana when, together with the Griquas, and the Voortrekkers, they fought side by side with each other against the hostile 'natives' and 'impis' who were threatening the Church and Christian belief as well as 'civilisation'. He emphasised the close bond which had existed between the Batswana and the Afrikaners in the past.

Mangope omitted to describe the situation in which the battles were fought and the political situation of that time. These battles were in many instances fought for the possession of land between the Batswana against the Boers and sometimes against the British colonialists. In other instances the Batswana were divided among themselves (especially towards the external pressures) while others sided with the Afrikaners to settle their scores with their rivals (Madise June 2002, Vol. 27, No. 1: 284). This indicates a falsification of the Batswana history as interpreted by Mangope as a way to win their trust and get them to accept the Afrikaners that they needed to guarantee the 'independence' of Bophuthatswana. This does not only create a false

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<sup>1</sup>. This is an old idiom: direct translation would be: in darkness we must hold each others blanket. However, what it means is that in times of darkness and difficulties people must hold each other and unite irrespective of what happens.

history and political background, but it also gives the impression that the Batswana were automatically Christianised at the time of the missions that were undertaken by Robert Moffat as well as David Livingstone among the Batswana (Madise 2002: Vol.27, No.1, 282).

Through the use of his own version of the history of the Batswana, Mangope appealed to the concept of alliance with the Afrikaners and support from them for his vision of regional cooperation. This was taken further with the formation of the Concerned South Africans Group (COSAG) which was composed of the Bophuthatswana United Christian Democratic Party, Inkatha, the Freedom Front and the Conservative Party as well as the military leader of the Ciskei Government, Oupa Gqozo. This coalition was formed mainly to fight the African National Congress and the National Party's initiatives to bring about a new political atmosphere in South Africa.

In 1993 the ruling party of Bophuthatswana had firmly pledged its future to a national right-wing alliance. The focus of Bophuthatswana's 'independent' politics was now shifting to that of the South African crisis. In spite of its national alliance, the ruling Bophuthatswana party continued to castigate their formal opposition (known as the National Seoposengwe Party) under the leadership of Victor Sifora (Lawrence and Mason 1994: 459). This movement of Bophuthatswana from homeland politics meant being a player in the politics of coalition with the Freedom Alliance and was a development in national political strategy. This alliance (the Freedom Alliance) was basically formed out of desperation by groups who were plagued by more fear of marginalisation than by a set of coherent principles.

Lucas Mangope was adamant that Bophuthatswana was not going to be part of the new South Africa, nor was he going to allow the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party to operate or to function in Bophuthatswana. Mangope addressed the Northern Cape Agricultural Union. In his speech he said that should the above political parties be allowed, schools would become their political playgrounds (Seipone/ Mirror Vol. 4, No.30, 11 August, 1993: 1). He further added that his people would be used as pawns in the despicable game of power politics. He went on saying



that churches in his country were not going to become the hotbeds of Liberation Theology, and streets were not going to become mass action battle fields (Seipone 1993: 1). What he meant by this was that communism was not allowed in a Christian state as both the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party were believed to be against Christian principles.

The other issue which was unacceptable to Mangope was the geographic provinces which had been created. He contended that this did not take into consideration ethnic identity (particularly of Bophuthatswana) because this would prevent them being masters of their own destiny. In support of his position, Mangope said that it was counter-productive to deny the rock hard reality of ethnicity in a situation similar to that of Bophuthatswana. Instead, these realities needed to be acknowledged, and ways and means sought to accommodate them in a constructive manner (Seipone 1993: 1).

Mangope then addressed issue of land ownership which, according to him, nobody seemed concerned about, either its conservation or its benefit to future generations. He opposed the belief that owning land was an answer to the injustices, discrimination and poverty of the past. In addressing the dominant union of white farmers he said that the land was being ruthlessly manipulated and that everybody was told throughout the country that they owned it in South Africa. For him, the truth as he saw it, was that the socialist elements were only interested in nationalising the land, not for the people but for the state. In his opinion, the individual's interests were not protected in the way they would be in a free market system.

At the same time, Mangope, who was a member of the Assemblies of God Church, was approached by the Executive Council of that church. They presented him with a letter in which the church expressed its concern regarding his political welfare. The church felt that there was a need to seek some accommodation with the African National Congress (ANC) as a means to avoid personal disaster for Lucas Mangope and to a certain extent the possibility of bloodshed in the country (Bond: undated, 114). However, while Mangope received the church with courtesy he did not listen to their advice. He was even advised privately by individual executive members about the

determination of the ANC to crush him as well as the South African government (Bond: undated, 114). The anticipated situation in Bophuthatswana turned out just as the Assemblies of God Church had predicted. John Bond, who at that time was the secretary of the Executive Council of the Assemblies of God Church, personally felt that Mangope continued to ignore their warnings because he was prepared to accept the assistance of the right wing Afrikaners.

Subsequently political developments in Bophuthatswana concerning Mangope's ruling party's alliance with the right wing Afrikaners took a different turn. Eugene Terre'blanche, leader of the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) stated in July 1993 that he would defend that homeland state's 'independence' against communists and keep out the evil socialist solution (Lawrence and Mason 1994: 460). The situation in Bophuthatswana led to these right - wing Afrikaners coming into the homeland to attempt to stop the collapse of the homeland regime.

#### **5.4 Bop and the Afrikaner Right Wing alliance**

In March 1994, South Africa was about to experience its first free and fair democratic elections. However, the uncertainties in the Bophuthatswana government had made the situation so tense because of its 'no reincorporation attitude' that civilians took up the responsibilities of ensuring that their dream of being part of a liberated South Africa was realised.

At that stage Bophuthatswana was one of the crucial remaining links in the Freedom Alliance's effort to resist majority rule and the creation of a unitary state. At the same time, while there was clear defiance Chief Lucas Mangope was also weighing other options besides Bophuthatswana's stance of 'independence' or nothing. There were further indications of preparations for a new South Africa. There were attempts to secure the minority and material interests, which came with the awarding of government contracts to a consultancy firm which was called Q-projects (Jones 1999: 523). The contracts were intended for voter education in 1992 and 1993 with the possibility of a referendum on reincorporation and Bophuthatswana's participation in the April 1994

elections. Contrary to the intentions of the contracts, the government of Bophuthatswana used the money which amounted to R6 million, to popularize and promote its own ruling party (the Bophuthatswana United Christian Democratic Party). There were further funds which were added to the R6 million whose sources were unknown and amounted to R10 million. These additional funds were paid to the Bophuthatswana United Christian Democratic Party and this money was sanctioned by the National Security Council of Bophuthatswana.

Mangope's defiance was further fuelled by his insistence on the history of colonialism in which he claimed that the Batswana were divided through the British Protectorate when they (Britain) annexed the Southern Batswana into the Cape Colony and not into Bechuanaland. This was making Mangope more determined to maintain that Bophuthatswana was not part of South Africa. However, he failed in his mission to ultimately defy reincorporation into the new South Africa (Jones 1999: 524). Lucas Mangope made an error of judgement when he put his faith in the Afrikaner Volksfront. They too had put their faith in him, as a champion of separate ethnic development. In support, the Afrikaner Volksfront even offered to provide armed back-up in the event of conflict within the Bophuthatswana territory. This supported Mangope's obsessive defence of Bophuthatswana. This led to a situation of frustration where Batswana ultimately entered into a strike by civil servants who demanded a 50% pay increase. At the same time increasing concerns regarding state employees' pensions, based on rumours that the state was intending to use the funds to maintain the support of the security forces in Bophuthatswana (Jones: 1999, 524).

The 11<sup>th</sup> March, 1994 saw the protests of the civil servants accompanied by a political demonstration on the streets of Mmabatho with students and residents taking part. Lucas Mangope realizing that he had no control over the people in the homeland, resorted to using the Freedom Alliance and called on the Afrikaner Volksfront militias. The Afrikaner Volksfront included the Afrikaner Weerstand Beweging who was under Eugene Terre'blanche. The support from these Afrikaners for Mangope was the last straw for the security forces of Bophuthatswana, who withdrew their support for Mangope and the ruling party. The Volksfront subsequently invited the Afrikaner

Weerstand Beweging to Mmabatho, claiming that most of the Volksfront people were not armed (City Press 20 March, 1994). Their statement claimed that what took place in Mmabatho i.e. the killing 30 unarmed civilians who were randomly shot, was perpetrated by the Afrikaner Weerstand Beweging. One Afrikaner from the Volksfront even commented in a newspaper that:

*The AWB are nothing but rabble who know nothing about soldiering. I doubt if any had ever served in the army. If they had they must have done nothing but kitchen duty. I am proud to be an Afrikaner and want a Volkstaat but I am not a racist like the AWB. They thought that with pistols they could take on the well-equipped and disciplined Bop Army. They thought that because they were white the Bop soldiers would be intimidated and flee. How wrong they were! (City Press 20 March: 1994).*

Shortly after this invasion into Bophuthatswana by the right wing Afrikaners in support of Mangope and the ruling party, and the killings of civilians, the South African soldiers were sent into the area. Lucas Mangope was officially deposed from his presidency of the homeland by the Transitional Executive Council (TEC) (City Press 11 March, 1994). In spite of this outcome Mangope continued to maintain that he had been robbed of his position as the leader of an autonomous state.

The situation in Bophuthatswana did not end with Mangope's deposition. Three of the Afrikaner Weerstand Beweging members were shot dead by a security officer of Bophuthatswana. This incident was challenged by the church as it took a stand against the killings of the three and the other victims who were killed by the Afrikaner Weerstand Beweging (The Star 23 March, 1994). This was seen as evil by the South African Council of Churches who condemned these actions and stated that such evil must be rooted out. It even became clear when some people stood up and said that there were ordinary people who allowed themselves to be used by God to save the multitudes from a certain death. However, this was seen as a failure which the church did not take seriously until the situation was worsened with the invasion of the Afrikaners at the invitation of chief Lucas Mangope. The main concern raised was: could the church through its leaders not take action and persist until its members join

in fighting against apartheid and its creation of homelands? (The Star 23, March, 1994). This meant that the church at that time in Bophuthatswana was not powerful enough to raise its voice together with the masses and make it possible for the people in Bophuthatswana to join in the struggle for re-incorporation into South Africa, as the people tended to achieve their demands through mass action.

In spite of this, the church was not left completely behind in unfolding events, and new developments were taking place at that time. At the Catholic Church in Phokeng Village (Bophuthatswana) near Rustenburg the recently ordained bishop Kevin Dowling found himself a target of 'shoot the priest' on March 21, 1991 (Grace and Truth Vol. 11, No. 1: September, 1991). Bishop Kevin Dowling was the target and there were also other church leaders who became targets for shooting by Bophuthatswana police. Many people were injured and one was killed as they were participating in a non-violent protest march against the 'independence' of Bophuthatswana. For Bishop Dowling the situation posed a challenge as it meant being with the people of God in the struggle for political freedom.

From Dowling's perspective, his being part of the struggle for the liberation of the people of Bophuthatswana in Phokeng meant him being a servant for Jesus and fulfilling his ministry. This ministry was to affirm and encourage the people to share their gifts and personhood to build the reign of God and the church (Grace and Truth 1991). Dowling also said that the experience itself showed the cause and commitment of the people and their belief in a disciplined and peaceful pursuit of their cause. The Catholic Church in Phokeng found the action by the police to have been provocative, especially as the protesters were not violent. For the Catholic Church, this was a challenge which needed its involvement particularly in the context of fear of power amongst groups of people and individuals (Grace and Truth 1991). The task now facing the church was to find ways to build a spirit of reconciliation and dialogue, as well as working through the different ideologies and opinions of the people.

Bishop Dowling further found it a challenge that in his diocese, part of the church was

in Bophuthatswana while the other part was in South Africa. This was a distinctive situation because the church was composed of two societies which were both of the rich and the poor, the oppressed and the oppressor. He felt that whatever the responses and policies they were making as the church, it should always be close to the poor and the minority groups. He made it very clear that the church must not lose its sensitivity to the overall political situation and at the same time it must remain the church which was truly going to evangelise the poor and the oppressed. As a church there was no need to impose from above and for the people to contribute to the justice and recognition of human rights to create a better future. Rather, the church needed to see itself as a humble servant and must identify with and be part of the poor and the oppressed people coming to an awareness of their human dignity; their rights as individuals and a community (Grace and Truth 1991). In conclusion Dowling saw the church in Bophuthatswana as being part of a journey and the struggle to achieving the goal of a non-racial, truly democratic, just and peaceful society as well as serving the needs of its members.

### **5.5 The collapse of Bophuthatswana and the Transitional Executive Council**

After the collapse of Bophuthatswana, on 10 March 1994, and the removal from office of its President Lucas Mangope, the government of South Africa, through the Transitional Executive Council, decided to appoint Mr Job Mokgoro as the director of Civil Administration of Bophuthatswana until the first democratic elections. This became an indication of a paradigm shift from what Lucas Mangope thought was the 'legitimate independence' of Bophuthatswana when many of the Batswana people came out of the closet to express their freedom of association. Despite this paradigm shift, there were still a few people who remained loyal to Mangope and his former Bophuthatswana ruling party, which at that point had registered to take part in the first democratic free and fair elections of South Africa.

Soon after the collapse of Bophuthatswana, Mangope was accused of corruption. The problem with Lucas Mangope was just as John Bond (undated: 114) says, that had he heeded the call from the Assemblies of God Church, things could have possibly been

different and not the way they were after the collapse. In this manner the Bophuthatswana ruling party found itself in the cold and Lucas Mangope in particular no longer had the support by many of his cabinet ministers except a few who remained loyal to him. The Assemblies of God Church felt that at the time of the negotiations there were confusions and uncertainty and that in 1994 the country was also teetering on the edge of a blood-bath (Bond: undated, 115). At the same time it was the wish of the church that more calm and more wisdom could have prevailed in Bophuthatswana in the negotiations and that a better decision could have been made.

#### 5.5.1 The aftermath of the 1994 elections

The democratic elections saw the curtain finally falling upon Bophuthatswana as it had been. It was given a new name and new borders which excluded Thaba-Nchu. The latter was now incorporated in the Free State Province. The new boundaries now formed North West Province. This included most of the areas that had comprised the former Bophuthatswana with some of the new areas including Klerksdorp; Potchefstroom; Delareyville; Lichtenburg as well as other areas which were previously part of the Western Transvaal. After the 1994 elections many of Mangope's previous cabinet ministers and leading civil servants lost their jobs. These people expressed their anger through boycotting business with the Bophuthatswana National Development Corporation (BDNC). Civic associations and organisations were being formed in and around some of the towns in the former homeland. In the rural areas some chiefs, who had been previously appointed by Mangope, were forced out of office and the rightful ones were being re-inaugurated. Despite these changes not all expectations could be met. There were some mixed feelings towards the demise of the old style of governance and the emergence of new structures taking place in South Africa with traces of 'Bophuthatswana' (Jones: 1999, 525).

Substantially all the people who supported Bophuthatswana politically and economically had not benefited in any means. This was the case with some ministers from the historic churches, the independent churches and the charismatic churches who did not want to be seen as part of public politics. In the historic churches, the situation in some of them

was simply that some resigned from their ministries and, churches while others took secondment and others absconded from the church to work in the government of Bophuthatswana. It became a problem for them to be readmitted back to the church as ministers as they were no longer considered to be in the church.

Following reincorporation, it became clear that the petty bourgeoisie were in favour of the African National Congress (ANC) or the National Party. The public servants were beginning to identify with the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). Some professional people were not happy with the ousting of Lucas Mangope and the collapse of Bophuthatswana and were describing him as a 'good man' claiming that he had achieved more for the region and the Batswana than anyone in the past or possibly even in the future (Jones: 1999, 526). Rural people, professional people, state employees and the older generation were sympathetic to Lucas Mangope, his political party as well as his cabinet ministers and they were possible allies to the homeland leader during the elections. Many of these people from the rural areas had faith in Lucas Mangope for he had committed himself to Christianity; as a result the thought of a state without religion never passed through their minds. At the same time the church was quiet about the political changes that were taking place. The voice of the Bophuthatswana Ministers Fraternity (BOMIFRA) was also no longer audible, neither were there calls for gatherings to address the state of affairs in the church in the region.

One of the greatest problems after the collapse of Bophuthatswana, was the threat of unemployment of civil servants during the transition period. Civil servants claimed that they were being overlooked for promotions by officials appointed by the African National Congress, who brought with them their own teams. These changes were threatening the employment of many people with the radical down-sizing of the structures within the civil service (Jones 1999: 526). The civil servants in Bophuthatswana were also demanding parity of wages which to their disappointment brought with it the higher level of taxation from South Africa. The extravagancy in housing, cars and entertainment allowances enjoyed in Bophuthatswana was to be withdrawn. Employees in other sectors of Bophuthatswana were beginning to illustrate the problem of reincorporation



with the loss of the assets which they worked for. A good example of this was the Bophuthatswana Television (Bop TV) which was the only news station independent of the state-owned South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). The station became a centre of controversy over its location in Mafikeng as well as over its status regarding the centralisation of government assets.

## **5.6 First ANC government in North West Province**

The former Bophuthatswana coup leader of 10 February, 1988, Rocky Malebane - Metsing, was appointed the head of the Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs of the North West Province. He anticipated becoming the provincial leader of the North West province as he believed that he understood the Batswana and their interests better than others. As a result of the choice of Popo Molefe over Malebane-Metsing for the provincial leadership, the latter made some false accusations against the former. A year later (1995) Malebane-Metsing was dismissed from the African National Congress due to intra-organisational conflict (Jones 1999: 528). The situation of the North West province was exacerbated by the personalised and paternalistic politics of Mangope over a period of twenty years, as the Batswana were nurtured into ethno-nationalism. It was visible in distrust towards the new administration and 'outsiders', bordering upon the xenophobic because 'they did not know them'. Popo Molefe (a Motswana himself), who was a provincial leader, had gone through the same experience as he was regarded as an 'outsider' from the urban South Africa. The government buildings in Mmabatho were associated with Lucas Mangope and not seen as state buildings belonging to the South African government in spite of the downfall of the homeland government. This was the result of the long period of dominance by the Bophuthatswana United Christian Democratic Party which had consistently influenced the Batswana to believe that the region belonged only to them. The success of the former ruling party of Bophuthatswana was no longer an issue after the elections, due to the report of the Skweyiya Commission which discredited Mangope after its findings about the state of affairs in the former Bantustan during its existence. The only power-base which the Bophuthatswana United Christian Democratic Party had was mainly in the rural areas and not in the towns around the province.

At the end many of all the structures which had existed in Bophuthatswana were disappearing while some of them were coming back in a different way. A good example of this was the Bophuthatswana Ministers Fraternity (BOMIFRA) which had supported the homeland government. The interesting thing about this ministers, movement was that it split, which resulted in the formation of new a movement. The new movement, that was born in 1998, was known as the South African Ministers Fraternity (SAMIFRA) under the leadership of Rev Dr Daniel Matebesi. These events saw a change in the constitution of the United Christian Democratic Party as well. Churches which had previously supported the homeland state of Bophuthatswana were no longer behind them as the state was now no more. The result for the formation of the South African Ministers Fraternity implied distancing themselves from the Bophuthatswana United Christian Democratic Party while the old Bophuthatswana Ministerial Fraternity had slowly disappeared from the picture. In spite of all this, the South African Ministers Fraternity has not moved away from supporting the United Christian Democratic Party which was under the leadership of Lucas Mangope (Matebesi: unpublished document). The United Christian Democratic Party states that it 'acknowledges the POWER of GOD and believes in the inalienable right of Freedom of Religion' (United Christian Democratic Party Constitution). This has led to the United Christian Democratic Party slightly shifting its focus from the former Bophuthatswana region, though they still had a strong feeling that they could win the North West Province. As a result, both Lucas Mangope and his loyal supporters still believe that they have a chance of winning the confidence of the Batswana with the concept that they had once created an infrastructure which afforded them opportunities like employment and education under their government of Bophuthatswana. For the United Christian Democratic Party, the experiences, of the past seem not to have damaged their reputation as people who once bowed down to apartheid. The churches, especially the historic ones, have managed to pull through the transition and the independent churches have also done the same. However, the individual members who supported the homeland government have found themselves not being accepted in the main by the members of their churches, especially in positions where they could assume a leadership role. This situation was not found only in the independent churches, but in the historic churches as well. However, membership of these individuals in the church was not taken away.

The historic churches always remained members of the South African Council of Churches, even though some of their stations were situated in the homelands. They did not lose their membership of the organisation as they believed that the Bantustans were a creation of the apartheid system which they opposed.

## **5.7 Conclusion**

After the release of many political leaders and the return of many exiles to South Africa, the government of Bophuthatswana found itself wanting, knowing very well that some of the former prisoners and exiles were previously from within that homeland. These challenges were difficult for the Bophuthatswana government and attempts were made to resort to Christianity as an ideology and to a capitalist style of political structure. For the homeland government this was a way in which they felt they could deal with what at that time, they, together with the then South African government, referred to as communistic and unchristian from position of African National Congress and the South African Communist Party. At the same time, for Bophuthatswana, these influences could not be allowed to infiltrate the churches that were in their territory in the form of the South African Council of Churches because of its support for the liberation movements. To do this, the Bophuthatswana Ministers Fraternity was used to organised some church services to pray for the homeland's leadership and its continuity. This indicated some uncertainty to the homeland's authorities and to South Africa about the future of the Bantustans.

In the traditional way of doing things in Bophuthatswana, the beginning of the talks through the Convention for a Democratic South Africa and its participation, led to the Bophuthatswana Ministers Fraternity calling for a prayer day for the leaders of the homeland when they were going to participate in the talks. The leaders of Bophuthatswana clarified that they were not going to discuss the future of Bophuthatswana but to help South Africa solve its own political problems and instability. Bophuthatswana's leaders believed that their 'independence' was not negotiable and that their participation was a matter of courtesy to South Africa as they (SA) were the ones who were going through a difficult time of political instability. Even at the World

Trade Centre in Kempton Park, Mangope was adamant that the 'independence' of Bophuthatswana was not due to apartheid but to colonialism which came through the British Protectorate. In spite of the situation in Bophuthatswana the South African Council of Churches continued to give support to its member churches that were in the homeland and to encourage them to continue their involvement in the struggle for the total liberation of the country from all forms of evil. Many of the member churches in the South African Council of Churches never recognised the 'independence' of Bophuthatswana. The affiliation of churches in terms of their historic origin was also playing a role in the politics of South Africa and some political figures were using this situation for their own political gain, as in Bophuthatswana. Examples of this could be seen in some individual ministers from the historic or mainline churches who decided to be part of the homeland government as well as the ministers of some independent churches using their churches to support the state.

Another contradiction was the alliance with the Afrikaner Volksfront that made many people question the autonomy of Bophuthatswana and Mangope's interpretation of the history of the Batswana. For many people who were opposed to Mangope, the last straw was him seeking assistance from the Afrikaners as this meant being sold out for the second time to the same oppressors. This was not far from the truth with the call for 'assistance' from the Afrikaner Volksfront when Mangope realised that the writing was on the wall. It was this action which led to Mangope losing favour among many of the Batswana: some of whom were his loyal supporters while others were those who directly opposed him.

However, the end of the Bophuthatswana homeland state did not bring to an end the political future of the United Christian Democratic Party. The party continued to campaign for the municipal elections and took a part in the larger South African politics. The leader of the party, Chief Lucas Mangope was ousted from the role of president of Bophuthatswana, by the Transitional Executive Council of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa. Mangope decided to continue to take an active role in politics even though he was not going to be actively involved at the level of national politics. However, he remained actively involved in the province. Despite with the changes that

were taking place in South Africa, the United Christian Democratic Party did not give up its Christian principles not its attachment to politics. its members opted for amendments to their constitution to bring it into line with the new political dispensation in South Africa.

One could only come to the conclusion that neither he nor his party have yet accepted that their role in politics ended on the day there was 'civil disobedience' in Bophuthatswana. For the United Christian Democratic Party to try and resurrect itself will be a difficult task as the politics of today are different from those of the past where the church and religion were used by politicians to win the hearts and minds of the people for their own ends. Many people began to see through party politics particularly those which attach Christian sentiments to their constitution, misusing Christianity for their own benefit. They are also discriminating against other religions which are active in South Africa. This means that for a party like the United Christian Democratic Party the future looks very uncertain. Churches have also moved on from identifying with the state and have decided to conscientise the state on issues which affect South African society. Historic Churches and the Independent Churches have also come to terms with the fact that they can no longer look at each other as having different origins but as mutually belonging to the Church of God. The churches have had to come to grips with the fact that they all belong to one body of Christ, hence today they all belong to the ecumenical body of the South African Council of Churches.

## Chapter 6

### Conclusion

Throughout history the relationship between church and state has been problematic and it has in either way, depending on whether they both have good or bad relations. The church has in different instances been caught in a situation where could not to play its prophetic role because it was forced to pay allegiance to the state. The liberation of the church Constantine and Theodosius led to both Christianity and the state sharing the same platform in a two road. The pope was able to run the state affairs while the empire could do the same in the church. In some instances this led to the conflict between both institutions during Pontifical monarchy. The pope was not prepared to accept the empire as the head of the state, while the empire used his powers to depose the pope from being the head of the church. This means that the church may find itself on the receiving end with the state if the relationship is that of prophecy or it may be a very close one, if other is in supporting of another. An example of this situation goes back to the Constantinian era in which the emperor was able to call the church councils to debate the doctrinal matters which the could not resolve on its own. Further than this was the acceptance of the emperor at the communion table with the pope and the bishops in the church in the early middle ages. The reformers picked up this asa problem and resolved the there should be a separation of church and state. Though a separation of church and state was finally accepted during the reformation it did not stop other countries from taking the relationship serious. The post reformation period saw the emergence of new trends coming up to address church and state relationship. These trends were, however, without any problems as it became apparent that it was not going to be easy for either side to let go of the relationship which they both got accustomed to. Some of these trends included a position of the church as independent from the state, others meant none involvement in supporting or opposing the state while others accepted the role of the church as that of prophecy. In spite of all this, some countries had not learned from history about the relationship of church and state. An evidence of this situation could be seen the context of Germany and South Africa where

the church collaborated with the state. The situation of the holocaust left many Jews being killed in the concentration camps as they were going through the oppression by the state that was ruled by Adolph Hitler. A similar situation was experienced in South Africa with apartheid and the church supported what was happening. It was difficult for the Dutch Reformed Church to be prophetic against apartheid and remind the state of its responsibilities and roles. This has turned the church into a toothless institution which said nothing about the wrongs it was doing to the people. It did not help the Dutch Reformed Church as many of its members were either state agents or Cabinet Ministers in the government.

Over the years this trend has shown in history that in some situations there may be overlaps especially when the state is involved in church matters or the church is heavily involved in state matters. Further than this it becomes more complicated when there is a theological justification for the relationship between church and state. Bophuthatswana became a new phenomenal example of the modern era of the 20<sup>th</sup> century produced by a government which was regarded as illegitimate by the majority of its inhabitants. It was in context of apartheid and further discrimination on the basis of ethnicity that this trend of church and state relationship in Bophuthatswana was inherited from South Africa to further discriminate the discriminated by using Church. As a surrogate of the apartheid state, Bophuthatswana had no choice but to follow in the footsteps of the big brother. This time the discriminator turns the discriminated into a tool and thus apply double force against himself and his own people. As a result Bophuthatswana thought the idea of 'independence' and a religious state would set Batswana free from apartheid when in fact it was deepening apartheid. The church was another means which was to be used to soften the hearts and minds of the wounded people. In the same breath as in the case of the Dutch Reformed Church supporting the South African government and its politics, it was the same with Bophuthatswana. However, the situation was fuelled to suit the bigger context of South Africa through the rejection of the South African Council of Churches by Bophuthatswana claiming the autonomy of its status as a legitimate government. This situation gave rise to a new division of the church on the grounds of territorial advantage through the use of some African Independent Churches against the mainline churches and the ecumenical body.

The creation of Bophuthatswana Ministerial Fraternity was a means to discourage the South African Council of Churches and its affiliates from operating freely and being the prophetic voice of the voiceless. This did not take away the power of the church's prophetic voice away as it continued to do so. One good example of the state and church conflict was Transkei which like Bophuthatswana was a surrogate of the South African government under apartheid, tried in vain to silence the church. The Methodist Church of Southern Africa went through the experience of being forced out that homeland, and the new denomination was created under Chief George Matanzima who was the Prime Minister in Transkei. The results of this was the fleeing of the church ministers who remained faithful to the prophetic voice from the homeland. Bophuthatswana became a unique context in which some ministers in the church joined the government and even went as far as justifying their role in the state as ordained by God. This did not only create problems for the church as it did to the state as well.

The problems around the idea of a Christian state are that it becomes difficult for the church to be prophetic as it will side with the powers that be. For South Africa today, it is important to be a secular state than to embrace any religion. Bophuthatswana set a very good example of ministers from the church supporting the state and being unable to be prophetic. The same ministers in the church were also ministers in the government. It made the situation difficult for them as they served the two masters. Theologically and scripturally the ministry refers to servitude while in social and political terms this means power. As a result the prophetic voice was kept silent Bophuthatswana and thus the masses were left without any prophetic voice from the church reminding the state of its obligation. Theologically and scripturally, a minister is called to take up a duty to proclaim the good news to the poor, liberation to the oppressed and freedom to the captives. It is the duty of the church and its ministers conscientise the state to fulfil its mandate of offering the services to its citizens like housing, employment, better life for all and empowerment. The secular understanding of ministry simply means being put into office by the powers of the world and exercise the same power to rule the people. Ministry in the church should therefore be that of prophecy while that of the secular world should be left to the powers of this world. The church must always remember to be at arms length with the state and not embrace



each other. Bophuthatswana as an example, showed that the two ministries will never in anyway be the same, as one is a call to serve the people of God while the other is about power over the people. It is important for the ministers of the church to remember that theirs is a calling while cabinet ministers exercise their powers to rule the people. This also lead to the context of the church talking about the use and ownership of the land.

In many parts of the world, land has become a serious issue which has left many civilians in conflict situations. The church should not get involved in matters affecting the land. The South African Church had in the past owned the land to the detriment of the civilians who were not provided for with resources to live on it. It is the duty of the church to ensure that people have access to the land and its resources. The task of the church and its prophetic voice is to remind the powers of this that the land belongs to God and all that is on it. However, the resources that is in it are to be shared equally by all the people. People are and will always be stewards of the land and they have the responsibility to make use of the land to the advantage of all. For South Africa today, the imbalances of the land use in the past must be addressed to empower all its people. The duty of the church is to remind the state of the fact that land cannot be owned by people but that it can only be occupied. In this context the church is supposed to advice on matters of land occupation that the traditional method of the kings and chiefs was a better one as it meant that the land can only be used to share the resources equally. The kings and the chiefs had the headmen assisting them with land allocation to people who needed to use it either for grazing and tilling the soil. However, this has changed to mean that some individuals can own the land and the resources that is found in that land. In some cases this can be seen particularly in the mining sector where it is the owners who get to enjoy the resources without sharing with the rest of the people occupying that piece of land. The issue of land means that people in authority should be the custodians of the land and have to look at allocating it equally to the people to occupy and not ownership. Ownership will mean control and exploitation of the resources found in the land by those who will be owning that piece of land. Therefore it is important for the leaders to ensure that resources can be shared by all the people equally. A good example of the occupation of the land by people can be seen with the

Bafokeng clan near Rustenburg where they have managed to equally share the resources of the land they are occupying. Due to the mineral resources which are in that land it became easier for those people to know that the resources belongs to all who occupied that land which is what stewardship of the land mean about sharing, hence the saying that the land belongs to God and people are occupiers.

The good relations may be influenced by through some ministers or the church being involved in matters of the state. The other problems can be seen in the church promoting the division of races and influence the state to continue with it. The creation of the homeland system in South Africa was even deeper than racial discrimination. People were not only going through separation on the basis of race but it further involved the ethnical division of the black people based on language and culture. Looking at the 'independence' which was given to Bophuthatswana and others like Transkei, Ciskei and Venda could only mean one thing which was divide and rule. The Dutch Reformed Church in collaboration with the state did not see anything wrong with this and blessed the system as being good for black people to govern themselves. However, many churches did not loose focus of their prophetic voices as they continued to preach the gospel of unity and not division. Some of these churches (mainline churches) particularly in Bophuthatswana, were viewed as embracing Communism.

The idea of a Christian state created problems in the past because it had been difficult for the church to actively play its prophetic role. Bophuthatswana set an example where it made it difficult for the church (especially those which were on the side of the state) to take its place as a prophetic voice for the voiceless, because it found itself serving the secular master and the Divine Master. The church leaders and ministers in democratic South Africa need not do the same but take a lesson from Bophuthatswana that ministry is about serving and committing ton the one master. The church can only remind the state of its role and obligations as well as the promises it made to the civilians during the election time. This further means that the church must not be instructed by the state on some of the issues which need to be addressed. One example of that is the state mandating from the state about the Moral Regenerations. This is the matter which need to have been picked up by the church from the beginning

and not the state, and the church is supposed to have acted immediately. South Africa today is a secular country and therefore does need to recognise one religion above the others. The church need to reclaim its position in the religious arena as a moral institution, the conscience of the state as well as the voice of the voiceless people. The church does not need to endorse what the state is doing but remind it of the political role it owes to its people. It should not be a situation where the two are collaborating in matters which affect the people and the church is found not taking its position of reminding the state of its responsibilities towards the civilians. As a government its responsibilities are to serve the people while the church is there to keep it on the toes. The church is supposed to be on guard and not to be rubber stamping everything the state is doing. The church unlike the state is closer to the people and has more knowledge of the situation on the ground. The church encounters what people are going through daily and can therefore be able to know and understand their problems and the church as a caring institution has this obligation to remind the state. The church today must re-look at allowing some of its ministers from being appoint to the position of the government and the sate need to also look at appointing the ministers of the church to the government positions. The voice of the voiceless is to be heard through the church of God.

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