



# PRO VERITATE

**A. VAN SELMS**

Christen wees in hierdie land

**D. BAX**

Has the Dutch Reformed Church become Roman Catholic?

**W. B. DE VILLIERS**

Die Kleurling en die blanke gewete

**D. VAN ZYL**

Bantu prophets or Christ's evangel

**B. B. KEET**

Die Kerk buite Suid-Afrika

# PRO VERITATE

## REDAKSIE

### REDAKTEUR:

Dr. B. Engelbrecht.

### REDAKSIONELE KOMITEE:

Biskop B. B. Burnett; Eerw. J. de Gruchy; Eerw. A. W. Habelgaarn; Eerw. E. E. Mahabane; Eerw. J. E. Moulder; Ds. C. F. B. Naudé; (Voorsitter); Eerw. R. Orr; Prof. dr. A. van Selms.

## ADMINISTRASIE/ KORRESPONDENSIE

### SIRKULASIEBESTUURDER:

Dr. W. B. de Villiers.

Alle brieue vir die redaksie en administrasie aan: Posbus 487, Johannesburg.

## INTEKENGELD

Intekengeld is vooruit-betaalbaar.

Land- en seepos: RI (10/- of \$1.40) — Afrika; RI 50 (15/- of \$2.10) — Oorsee.

Lugpos: R2.00 (£1 or \$2.80) — Afrika; R3.50 (£1.17.6 or \$5.00) — Oorsee

Tjeks en posorders moet uitgemaak word aan Pro Veritate (Edms.) Bpk., Posbus 487, Johannesburg.

## LET WEL

Die redaksie van Pro Veritate verklaar dat hy nie verantwoordelik is vir menings en standpunte wat in enige ander artikel van hierdie blad verskyn as die inleidingsartikel en redaksionele verklarings nie.

PRO VERITATE verskyn elke 15de van die maand.

(Prys per enkel-eksemplaar 10c)

## CHRISTELIKE MAANDBLAAD VIR SUIDELIKE AFRIKA CHRISTIAN MONTHLY FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA

By die Hoofposkantoor as Nuusblad geregistreer  
Registered at the Post Office as a Newspaper

## IN HIERDIE UITGawe

- Ons Inleidingsartikel handel oor die vraag in watter mate die Kerk in Suid-Afrika die skuld dra vir die klaarblyklik valse beroep op God deur owerheidspersone vir die konsekente deurvoering van die apartheidpolitiese Bl. 1
- Prof. dr. A. van Selms bespreek in 'n vierde artikel in die reeks „Christen wees in hierdie land“, die Christelike getuenis. Bl. 3
- Na aanleiding van sekere N.G. Kerk-besluite oor die Christelike Instituut en PRO VERITATE, stel D. Bax die vraag of dié Kerk nie besig is om daar mee van sy Reformatoriese koers af te wyk en tipies Rooms Katolieke standpunte in te neem wat selfs deur die R.K. Kerk nie meer in so 'n strengheid gehuldig word nie. Bl. 5
- Dr. Bruckner de Villiers kom met 'n aantal gewetensvrae na aanleiding van die Wetsontwerp oor Onbehoorlike Inmenging Bl. 8
- In 'n tweede artikel oor die Bantoe-separatiste kerke gaan ds. Danie van Zyl voort om die geleenthede en probleme te skep: wat die arbeid op hierdie terrein vir die Kerk in Suid-Afrika inhou. Bl. 10
- Prof. B. B. Keet bespreek in sy rubriek „Die Kerk buite Suid-Afrika“ die „Black Power“ beweging in Amerika, die Mormons en die rassa-vraagstuk, en een en ander oor die Christendom in Japan. Bl. 13
- In 'n nuwe rubriek „Die woorde van die mense“, wat voortaan so gereeld moontlik sal verskyn, stel Ben Engelbrecht hierdie maand aan die orde 'n waardering van die „Symposium“ deur 'n koerant-rubriekskrywer, die optreden van 'n koerant teen 'n N.G.-predikant en 'n uitlegging van die redakteur van 'n kerkblad. Bl. 14

## IN THIS ISSUE . . .

- Our Editorial deals with the question as to the measure of the Church's guilt in South Africa for the obviously false appeal to God by the authorities in support of a consistent carrying-through of the politics of apartheid ..... P. 2
- Professor A. van Selms, in his fourth article on "Being a Christian in this country", discusses Christian witness P. 3
- With reference to certain D. R. Church decisions concerning the Christian Institute and PRO VERITATE, D. Bax poses the question whether this church is not thereby deviating from the course of the Reformation and adopting typically Roman Catholic standpoints which are no longer being adhered to as strictly even by the R. C. Church. ..... P. 5
- Dr. Bruckner de Villiers raises a series of questions of conscience in connection with the Improper Interference Bill ..... P. 8
- In a second article on the African Independent Churches the Rev. Danie van Zyl continues sketching the opportunities and problems which are entailed by the work in this field for the church in South Africa ..... P. 10
- Prof. B. B. Keet, in his column "The Church outside South Africa", discusses the "Black Power" movement in America, the Mormons and the racial question and a few matters in connection with Christianity in Japan ..... P. 13
- In a new column "The Words of Man" which will appear as regularly as possible henceforth, Ben Engelbrecht this month features an evaluation of the "Symposium" by a newspaper columnist, the action of a newspaper against a D.R. Minister and a statement by the editor of a church paper. ..... P. 14

Inleidingsartikel:

# Wie se Skuld?

Wanneer 'n politieke leier wat die owerheid verteenwoordig hom op God beroep, moet alle gelowiges met gespitste aandag luister. Die politiek is nou eenmaal geen saak waarteenoor die Christen onverskillig mag staan nie en die beleids- en belydenisuitsprake van 'n owerheidspersoon mag hy nooit met ligvaardigheid bejeën nie. Elke onderdaan is meteens direk daarby betrokke. In die politiek val daar besluite en geskied daar handelinge wat beslis oor die vraag hoe Gods wêreld bewoon sal word en hoe die lewe wat Hy gegee het, beleef sal word. In die politieke inrigting van 'n volk se lewe word daar op een of ander wyse altyd antwoord gegee op die vraag wie die God is wat gedien word, of Hy die ware God is. En die owerheid wat daarvoor verantwoordelik is, is op een of ander wyse altyd besig om 'n belydenis te doen ten opsigte van God.

Dit kan ook nie anders nie. Die wêreld waarin aardse owerhede regeer, is immers nie 'n neutrale gebied met 'n onbepaalde bestemming nie, en die mense wat daarin woon, is nie toevallige natuurverskynsels met 'n onsekere lot nie. Dit is God se wêreld waarvan die inrigting, en sy mense, na sy Beeld geskape, wie se lewe aan die sorg van die aardse maghebbers toevertrou is. Hierdie wêreld wat deur ons bewoon word, is die plek waar God sy koninkryk wil oprig en waarin Hy verheerlik wil word. Implisiet of eksplisiet is alle aardse owerhede in al hulle uitsprake, beslissinge en handelinge voortdurend besig om te kenne te gee in watter verhouding hulle staan tot die enige God, aangaande Wie daar slegs één bron van kennis is, nl. Sy Woord. Dié enige God word in die wêreld, ook deur die aardse owerhede as die eerstes onder hulle wat geroep is om Hom te dien, òf geglo òf verwerp in allerlei grade van gehoorsaamheid of ongehoorsaamheid. Die beslissing lê in die allerbelangrikste mate by die owerheid of daar van 'n volk gesê kan word dat hy welgeluksalig is omdat die Here sy God is en omdat hy die geklank van Sy Woord ken (Ps. 33:12; 144:15; 89:16).

'n Mens sou byna kon sê dat dit van Suid-Afrika waar is. Ons hoor geen vreemde klank as 'n politieke leier 'n belydenis van geloof in God en van afhanklikheid van Hom uitspreek nie. En wanneer daar 'n uitspraak uit die mond van 'n owerheidspersoon kom waarin hy sy vertroue op God en sy wil tot gehoorsaamheid aan Sy Woord te kenne gee, bring dit 'n diepe ontroering van dankbaarheid en vreugde in die hart van elke gelowige onderdaan. Wie durf ook aan die eerlikheid en oregtheid daarvan twyfel? Suid-Afrika het 'n opeenvolgende ry van regeringshooftgehad, en het tans weer een, wat die begeerte en bereidheid uitgespreek het om die wil van God te doen.

Tog is daar juis hierin iets wat elke gelowige wat aandagtig luister, diep onrustig stem. Die beroep deur owerheidspersone in ons land op God en Sy Woord, staan veral in verband met wat hulle as hul heilige roeping vir Suid-

Afrika voor oë het: Om die apartheidspolitiek tot in sy uiterste konsequensies deur te voer. Hulle beskou dit as hul roeping — en tereg ook! — om hierdie deel van die wêreld aan die suidpunt van Afrika waar hulle regeer, vir al die bevolkingsgroepe wat hier woon, bewoonbaar te maak en die lewe vir almal leefbaar — maar die beleid waarvolgens hulle meen om die heil van Suid-Afrika volgens die wil van God uit te werk, is apartheid, en wel apartheid nie as 'n plooibare en rekbare praktiese politiek nie, maar prinsipiële en konsekwente apartheid as 'n beginsel van die Christelike geloof, wat soos alle grondwaarhede van die Christelike geloof 'n onvoorwaardelike „ek glo“ vereis.

Wie egter met die Bybel vertroud is, besef dadelik met verbasing en skrik dat hier 'n ernstige kortsluiting is. Want dié God op wie politici hulle beroep as hulle in die steeds konsekwerter deurvoering van apartheid voorgee dat hulle Sy wil doen, is nie die God van die Bybel, die Vader van Jesus Christus, die Here van die komende Koninkryk nie. Hy, die enige God van Wie die Bybel getuig, is nie die God van apartheid nie. Maar selfs met hierdie ernstige bedenking oor 'n klaarblyklik valse beroep op God, wil 'n mens nog nie aan die oregtheid en eerlike bedoeling van die politieke leiers twyfel nie. 'n Verontskuldiging in hierdie verband kan wel nooit volkome wees nie, want wie hom op God en Sy Woord beroep, doen dit ook op eie verantwoordelikheid. Ook die owerheidspersoon het 'n eie „mondige“ oordeel en insig wat die Skrif betref. En tog is dit nie in die eerste instansie die politikus en die owerheidsfiguur se taak om die waarheid van Gods Woord te deurgrond nie. Dit is die kerk wat dit profeties aan die owerheid moet voorhou; en dit is die owerheid wat, op sy beurt weer, in die lig van die Woord en waarheid van God, die mag dra wat God aan hom toevertrou het.

Dra die kerk in Suid-Afrika nie die skuld daarvoor dat die owerheid so vas en oreg glo dat met die deurvoering van die apartheidspolitiek die wil van God gedoen word nie? Is dit nie daardie deel van die kerk in Suid-Afrika en daardie teoloë wie se gesag vir die owerheid die swaarste weeg, wat 'n apartheidseer verdedig wat met sy skynbare „Skriftuurlike fundering“ en al, ten diepste in stryd is met die geopenbaarde bedoeling van God met Sy wêreld en die menslewe, hier en hierna in ewigheid nie? Is dit nie in die kerk en onder teoloë in Suid-Afrika waar die apartheidsideologie sy sterkste apologete en grootste profete het wat die „veelvormighed in die skepping“ as sy skriftuurlike grondslag so hartstogtelik verkondig nie? En is dit nie die kerk en verantwoordelike teoloë wat behoort te weet dat die juk van die apartheidsgebod wat ons land homself opgelê het, op die duur nie slegs ondraaglik swaar gaan blyk te wees nie, maar ook vir ons niks anders as die dood kan inhoud, omdat dit geen Evangelie is nie?

Wat gelowiges in Suid-Afrika in verband met die apartheidspolitiek die meeste ontstel en behoort te

ontstel, is nie dat dit indruis teen die („verdorwe“) menslike rede, teen wat die mens van die mens dink en maak nie, maar dat dit indruis teen die goddelike openbaring, teen wat God in Christus van die wêreld en die menselewe dink en maak. Ons mag nie daar-aan twyfel dat dit vir ons regeerders opregte erns is om God te dien en sy wil te doen nie. Maar dan is dit die dure roeping van die kerk om die ware lig van die Evangelie van die versoening in Jesus Christus en van die komende Godsryk aan hulle voor te hou sodat hulle daarin kan wandel. Die heil van Suid-Afrika hang daarvan af dat dit die God van die Bybel, die Vader van Jesus Christus sal wees wat gedien word en dat Sy wil gedoen word.

‘n Pseudo-bybelse ideologie kan nie die grondslag wees waarop die toekoms van ons land gebou

word nie. Daarmee berei ons ons gewisse onder-gang voor. Want in die grond van die saak is ‘n valse beroep op God ‘n beroep op ‘n valse god en daarom ‘n verwering van die enige God. En geen volk wat die God van heil verwerp, deur ongeloof of wantroue, of deur die verplasing van Hom met ‘n ander een, kan standhou nie. As Suid-Afrika uiteindelik die wrange vrugte sal moet pluk wat die deel van alle volke in die geskiedenis was en sal wees wat hulle heil gesoek het en soek in ‘n politieke stelsel waarmee die God van die Bybel, met of sonder ‘n beroep op Hom, in slimheid probeer uitoorlê word, wie se skuld sal dit wees? Hoe groot is die verantwoordelikheid van die herders! Eis God sy skape nie van hulle hand nie? (Eseg. 34:10).

#### Editorial:

## *Whose Guilt?*

When a political leader who represents governmental authority appeals to God, all believers must listen with rapt attention. Politics is decidedly not a matter of indifference to the Christian and he may never disregard the statements of policy and belief of a person in power. Every subject is immediately directly involved. In politics decisions are made and actions take place which determine how God's world will be lived in and how the life He has given will be experienced. In the political organisation of a people's life an answer is always given in some way or another to the question who the God is who is being served, and whether He is the true God. And the responsible authorities are in some way or another always engaged in giving witness with regard to God.

It cannot be otherwise. The world in which temporal authorities rule is no neutral territory with an indefinite destiny, and the people who live in it are not fortuitous phenomena of nature with an uncertain fate. It is God's world whose organisation and the life of whose people, created after His image, have been entrusted to the care of the temporal rulers. This world which we inhabit is the place where God wants to establish His kingdom and in which He wants to be glorified. Implicitly or explicitly all temporal authorities are, through their pronouncements, decisions and actions, continually indicating in what relationship they stand to the one God concerning Whom there is only one source of knowledge, i.e. His Word. This sole God is either believed in or rejected in the world in varying degrees of obedience or disobedience, also by the temporal authorities as the first among those who are called upon to serve Him. In a most important sense the decision rests with the authorities whether it can be said of a people that it is blessed because the Lord is its God and because it knows the joyful sound of His Word (Ps. 33:12; 144:14; 89:15-16).

One could almost say that this is true of South Africa. We detect no discordant note when a political leader gives expression to his belief in God

and his dependence upon Him. And when there issues from the mouth of a person in power a statement in which he signifies his trust in God and his willingness to be obedient to His Word, it gives rise to a deep motion of gratitude and joy in the heart of every faithful subject. Who dares to doubt its honesty and sincerity? South Africa has had a series of heads of State, and now again has one, who have expressed their desire and their preparedness to do the will of God.

Yet there lies inherent in this very fact something which fills every believer who listens attentively with unease. The appeal of persons of authority in our country upon God and His Word is especially associated with what they envisage as their holy calling for South Africa: to carry the politics of **apartheid** through to its ultimate consequences. They regard it as their calling — and rightly so! — to make this part of the world on the southernmost tip of Africa which they govern habitable and livable for all the population groups — but the policy which they regard as the correct one for the welfare of South Africa according to the Will of God, is **apartheid**, and in fact **apartheid** not as a flexible and elastic policy, but dogmatical and consistent **apartheid** as a principle of Christian faith which, like all basic truths of Christian faith, demands an unconditional ‘I believe’.

He who knows his Bible, however, immediately realises with amazement and alarm that here there is a serious short circuit. For the God to whom politicians appeal when they allege that they are doing His will in their steadily more consistent implementation of **apartheid**, is not the God of the Bible, the Father of Jesus Christ, the Lord of the coming kingdom. He, the sole God to whom the Bible gives witness, is not the God of **apartheid**. But even in the light of this serious reflection as regards an obviously spurious appeal to God, one still does not wish to doubt the sincerity and honesty of intention of the political leaders. A justification in this connection can indeed

never be completely adequate, for he who appeals to God and His Word also does so at his own responsibility. Also the person of authority should have "come of age" in his judgement and insight as far as Scripture is concerned. And yet it is not the task of the politician and governmental authority in the first instance to penetrate to the truth of God's word. It is the Church who should prophetically hold it up before the government; and it is in its turn, the government which bears the power entrusted to it by God in the light of the Word and the truth of God.

It is not the guilt of the Church in South Africa that the government so firmly and sincerely believes that the will of God is done by the implementation of the **apartheid** policy? Is it not that section of the Church in South Africa and those theologians whose authority weighs most with the government who defend a doctrine of **apartheid** which, with its ostensible "Scriptural foundation" and all, is at deepest level contradictory to the revealed intention of God with His world and human life, here and hereafter in eternity? Is it not in the Church and amongst theologians in South Africa that the ideology of **apartheid** finds its strongest apologists who so passionately proclaim "pluriformity in creation" as its Scriptural foundation? And is it not the Church and responsible theologians who should know that the yoke of the **apartheid** commandment which our country has imposed upon itself is, in the long run, not only going to prove to be intolerably heavy, but that it can also spell nothing less than death itself for us, because it is no Gospel?

What upsets, and should upset, believers in South Africa most in connection with the policy of **apartheid** is not that it runs counter to ("depraved") human reason, to what man thinks and makes of man, but that it runs counter to divine revelation, to what God in Christ thinks and makes of human life. We dare not doubt that it is a matter of sincere conviction on the part of our rulers to serve God and to do His will. But then it is the ineluctable calling of the Church to hold up before them the true light of the Gospel of the reconciliation in Jesus Christ and of the coming Kingdom of God so that they may live by it. The welfare of South Africa depends on it being the God of the Bible, the Father of Jesus Christ, who shall be served and whose will shall be done.

A pseudo-Biblical ideology can not be the foundation on which the future of our country is to be built. Thereby we are preparing for ourselves a certain downfall. For in its essence a false appeal to God is an appeal to a false God and thus a rejection of the one God. And no people which rejects the God of salvation, whether it be through unbelief or distrust, or by replacing Him with another god, can remain standing. If South Africa ultimately has to pick the bitter fruit which accrued and will accrue to all people in history who sought and are seeking their salvation in a political system by which the God of the Bible is, with or without an appeal to Him, being cleverly cheated, whose guilt will it be?

How great is the responsibility of the shepherds! Does God not require His flock at their hand? (Ezek. 34:10).

# CHRISTEN WEES IN HIERDIE LAND

PROF. DR. A. VAN SELMS

## IV. DIE CHRISTELIKE GETUIENIS

**Deur die werk van die Heilige Gees in ons harte word ons daartoe gebring om te spreek. So staan dit in II Kor. 4:13: „Omdat ons dieselfde Gees van die geloof het — soos geskrywe is: Ek het geglo, daarom het ek gespreek — glo ons ook, daarom spreek ons ook” Die geloof wat deur die Gees gewek is, is 'n sprekende geloof. 'n Mens kan geen Christen wees en swyg nie. „Want vir ons”, so staan dit in Hand. 4:20, „is dit onmoontlik om nie te spreek oor wat ons gesien en gehoor het nie”. Die apostels sê dit, nadat deur die bevoegde kerklike autoriteite aan hulle 'n spreekverbod opgelê is. Hulle erken daardie autoriteite, maar hulle kan hulle nie gehoorsam as die getuienis van wat God in Christus gedoen het, in die geding is nie.**

### SWAKHEID EN KRAG

Wat is daardie getuienis? Dit het twee kante. Die eerste kant word maklik oor die hoof gesien, en tog is dit juis die een kant, waarna die woord van Paulus in II Kor. 4:13 uitdruklik verwys. Want die apostel haal daar aan wat in Ps. 116:10, 11 geskrywe is: „Ek het geglo toe ek gepreek het: Ek is diep neergebuig. Ek het in my angs gesê: Alle mense is leuenaars.” Twee dinge word dus in die geloof gesê; die eerste daarvan is die erkentenis dat

ons by ons self geen raad vind nie. Ons spreek, terwyl ons diep neergebuig is, en in angs verkeer: ons weet nie wat nog met ons gaan gebeur nie. So erken die apostel Paulus dat hy by sy eerste besoek aan Korinthe „in swakheid en in vrees en in veel bewing” die evangelie gebring het (I Kor. 2:3). En die ander ding wat die geloof sê, is volgens Ps. 116: „Alle mense is leuenaars.” Met ander woorde, hy wat getuig en dié tot wie sy getuienis gerig is, is almal mense by wie geen houvas gevind kan word nie.

Dit is die een kant van die Christelike getuienis: ons is almal verlore mense, ons weet uit onsself nie wat goed is nie, ons staan vol onsekerheid en verwarring teenoor die probleme wat ons hart en die wêreld waarin ons lewe, aan ons stel. Fundamenteel staan ons almal op een en dieselfde lyn, wankel ons aan die rand van dieselfde afgrond. Daar is in die Christelike getuienis niks van die vermaarde „ek-is-heiliger-as-jy” (vgl. Jes. 65:5) houding nie. As die Christen moet getuig teen volksbondes, sal hy nooit „julle” sê nie, maar altyd „ons”.

Maar daar is ook die ander kant van die Christelike getuienis: dit is die getuienis van wat, nie deur mense nie, maar deur God in Christus gedoen en gesê is. Daarin lê die enigste houvas: dit is die enigste waarheid. Daarin lê die bevryding van menslike nood en verwarring, en ons enigste hoop is om af te sien

van alle menslike veiligheidswaan en ons toevlug tot die evangelie alleen te neem. Die Christelike getuenis het dus sy negatiewe kant teenoor die menslike sekerhede; sy positiewe kant is niks anders nie as wat God in Christus vir ons gedoen het.

## WEERSTAND

Daardie getuenis sal dus altyd onpopulêr wees. Want dit breek deur sy negatiewe kant heelwat dierbare illusies af. Dit ontneem die mens wat hy het of dink dat hy het. Kom, laat ons dit maar sê in 'n taal wat so begryplik is, dat daar gerus weer 'n storm kan opsteek teen wat ons hier betoog. Die negatiewe kant van die Christelike getuenis beteken in die volkslewe dat ons moet ophou om te sing „Kent gij dat volk vol heldenmoed”, voor dat ons kan bid „Op u almag vas vertrouend”. Want daardie heldemoed is die teenoorgestelde van Ps. 116 se neergeboëndheid en angs, die teenoorgestelde van Paulus se „swakheid en vrees en veel bewing”. Dit is duidelik dat wie dit waag om hierdie dinge uit te spreek, telkens opnuut die mens in sy ongebroke selfvertroue teen hom sal kry.

Dit sien ons in die geheel van die Heilige Skrif. Daar was prakties geen getuie van God wat nie op die een of ander manier die mense teen hom in die harnas gejaag het nie. Hulle wou Moses stenig (Num. 14:10); Elia moes kla: „Hulle soek my lewe om dit weg te neem”; Christus is gekruisig. Die lydensgang van die apostel Paulus is bekend genoeg; laat ons egter een voorval in die herinnering roep. As die apostel eindelik, en op 'n heel ander manier as wat hy hom dit voorgestel het, in Rome aangekom het om sy getuenis in die hoofstad van die wêreld te bring, dan word hy daar verwelkom deur sy volksgenote met die mededeling dat dit aan hulle bekend is dat sy prediking oral weerspreek word (Hand. 28:22). Dit klink nogal bemoedigend vir die broeder wat van elders oor gekom het om in die diens voor te gaan!

## SEKERHEID

Of — is dit tog bemoedigend? Ja, tog wel! Want daardie weersprekking, daardie felle reaksies op die prediking van die apostel bewys vir hom dat sy boodskap inderdaad nie 'n menslike boodskap is nie, maar die getuenis van wat God in Chris-

tus geopenbaar het. Was dit 'n menslike boodskap, dan kon Paulus 'n volksman geword het, 'n gevierrede prediker, met as vooruitsig 'n eerolle emeritaat met huldigingsadresse en pensioen. Nou het hom alleen die dood deur die swaard gewag. Die mense het hom gehaat, belaster, gedreig, agtervolg, die staat se mag teen hom ingespan: want sy boodskap was teen die mens en die volk in sy selfversekerdheid gerig. Dit moes so wees, want 'n mens moet eers niks word voordat God alles vir hom kan wees. Die Christelike getuenis sal dus altyd weerspreek word, ook deur lede van 'n Christelike kerk, want ook hulle is mense, en die menslike het in hulle dikwels die oorhand bo die Christelike. Ons moet dus veral nie dink dat die sin van die Christelike getuenis lê in die sukses wat ons mag hê nie. Daardie sukses, as dit daar is, kan eerder 'n aanleiding vir ons wees om tot God en Sy Woord in te keer. Laat ons dit liewer so stel: die Christelike getuenis dra sy sin in homself, omdat dit 'n getuenis van Christus is. Die getuie is eers waarlik en ten volle getuie as hy martelaar word, met ander woorde as, na die mens gesien, sy getuenis nie die minste sukses het nie.

Die Christelike getuenis is 'n daad van gehoorsaamheid aan Christus, wat ons daartoe geroep het. Gehoorsaamheid aan die enigste Here dra sy sin in homself; daar hoef nik van buite by te kom om dit tot die sinrykste daad van die menslike geskiedenis te maak nie. Ook al sou niemand na daardie getuenis wil luister nie, behou dit tog sy volle betekenis en waarde. As ons dit nog nie weet nie, kan ons dit uit die boek Eségiël leer. Daar sê God vir sy profeet (3:11): ... spreek met hulle en sê vir hulle: So spreek die Here HERE — of hulle luister of nie.” Die moontlikheid bestaan — en dit het maar al te dikwels 'n werklikheid in die ampsbediening van Eségiël geword — dat die mense tot wie hy moes spreek, nie na sy getuenis wou luister nie; maar of hulle luister of nie, die profeet moet in ieder geval sy getuenis laat klink.

## TAKT

Die vraag kan natuurlik gestel word of taktiese oorwegings daarby geen rol mag speel nie. Sou 'n mens hom nie kon bepaal tot die predi-

king van Christus sonder om die menslike sekerhede af te breek nie? Sou 'n mens nie mag swyg oor die oordeelsaspek van die woord van God nie? Die kans bestaan dat as die getuie met Ps. 116 sê „alle mense is leuenaars”, die mense hulle van hom sou awwend. Ons is so dikwels bevrees dat ons die vertroue van ons mense sal verloor, dat ons ons greep op die massas mag kwyt raak, dat ons alleen te staan mag kom. Kan ons dan nie liewer oor bepaalde punte swyg nie? Op daardie oorwegings is daar maar net een antwoord, en dit is 'n teëvraag: Is daar in die geheel van die geskrifte van profete en apostels één passasie waar die getuie van God om taktiese redes 'n deel van die getuenis verswyg? Weet ons van één van God se getuies wat, om sy invloed by die volk te bewaar, die skerp aspekte van die boodskap stilswyend verbygegaan het? En wie is ons dat ons uit taktiese oorwegings onself as regters oor die Woord van God sou opwerp? Kan ons tot God sê: Here God, U het ons as getuies van u Seun in die wêreld gestel, maar aangesien daar in u Woord elemente is wat ons in botsing met die volkslewe sou kon bring, sal ons uitmaak wat ons wel en wat ons nie tot die volk sal sê nie? Beteken dit dan nie dat ons die vriendskap van die wêreld bo die gehoorsaamheid aan God stel nie?

## DIE KERK

Dit was my bedoeling om hierdie stuk te wy aan die betekenis van die kerk in die geloofslewe van die Christen. Dit het egter 'n stuk oor die Christelike getuenis geword. Maar ek vra u: wat is die kerk as dit nie die getuenis van die hele raad van God in Christus is nie? Die getuenis is die hele en enigste sin van die kerk se bestaan. Die kerk is nie 'n ding nie, dit is 'n handeling. Dit is nie 'n in homself bestaande instituut nie, maar dit is die instrument waardeur God sy Woord tot die wêreld spreek. Die kerk is alleen en vir sover werklik kerk as wat dit die werking van die Heilige Gees in die wêreld is. 'n Kerk wat swyg, is geen kerk nie; dit is 'n maatskappy tot uitbuiting van die religieuse behoeftes van die natuurlike mens. En 'n kerk wat sy lede ten aansien van bepaalde aspekte van God se Woord die swye ople, het homself in die diens van die Antichris gestel.

# HAS THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH BECOME ROMAN CATHOLIC?

D. BAX

This month (October) the Algemene Sinode (National General Assembly) of the Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk meets in Bloemfontein. It is reported that more than one resolution condemning the Christian Institute will be laid before the Synod to decide on. Therefore it would be appropriate for us to examine the resolutions concerning the Institute which have been passed previously by courts of the N.G.K. and to analyse the grounds on which such resolutions have been made so far. (We quote these as listed in the February, 1966 issue of Antikom).

The most important court to have passed judgement on the Institute is the Breë Moderatuur of the N.G.K. in a resolution passed on 15th November, 1963. The breë Moderatuur stated that it 'kan . . . die stigting en voortbestaan van die Christelike Instituut nie goedkeur nie' for three reasons:

(1) *Omdat dit duidelik is dat die stigting en optrede van die Instituut noodwendig moet lei tot die bestryding van die rasse- en ekumeniese standpunt van die kerk.*

## SUPREME AUTHORITY — CHURCH OR SCRIPTURE

The theological implications of this sentence are fantastic. 'Die standpunt van die kerk!' Note that it really is this that is defended against all 'bestryding' — and not the 'standpunt' of Scripture for instance. There is no reference here to Scripture at all. This statement of the Breë Moderatuur proceeds from the axiom: if the Church (and indeed not the Church as a wider whole but the N.G.K. as by definition 'die kerk') adopts a certain 'standpunt' that 'standpunt' is as such necessarily correct, so that any questioning or 'bestryding' of it is as such necessarily wrong. This implies two things: that the authority of the Church is necessarily right, i.e. infallible, and that its 'standpunte' must not be questioned on the basis of any other authority. And this is pure Roman Catholicism, directly anti-evangelical! It is indeed exactly the principle erected against Luther and Calvin by the Roman Catholic Church of the 16th century, the very principle which they had to overcome in their struggle to reform the Church. For the reaction of the Roman Church to the Reformation can be formulated just this way: The Pope (as the equivalent of the Moderatuur in the Roman Church) 'kan . . . die stigting en voortbestaan van die (Reformasie) nie goedkeur nie . . . omdat dit duidelik is dat die stigting en optrede van die (Reformasie) noodwendig moet lei tot die bestryding van die . . . standpunt van die kerk'. The formal principle of the Breë Moderatuur's pronouncement is precisely the same as that which the Roman Church advanced against the Reformation.

Against this the Reformers thundered that the authority of the Church is NOT, is NEVER, infallible, and that whatever it has said or may say MUST be questioned on the basis of another authority, namely, the Word of God in Holy Scripture. In the fourth book of the *Institutes* Calvin again and again attacks the Roman Church for making laws and passing ordinances with no

reference to Holy Scripture. The Reformers would never have made a statement such as that of the Breë Moderatuur without any reference to Scripture. For them the Church and the Church's opinions had no authority whatsoever except *in so far and only in so far as* they were shown to be the opinion of *Scripture*. Calvin flatly rejected any authority of the Church external to the Word. He firmly denied that anyone in the Church has 'been endowed with any authority to teach or to answer, except in the name and Word of the Lord' (*Inst. IV. viii.2*) as this is contained in Scripture (*IV. viii.8*). 'The power of the Church, therefore, is not infinite but subject to the Lord's Word, and, as it were, enclosed within it' (*IV. viii.4*) and it may not 'ordain anything beyond or apart from God's Word'. For this reason Calvin stringently ranged himself against and attacked any Church which makes any pronouncement of its own without the backing of Scripture, by 'the devising of its own reason'. He condemns those who 'locate the authority of the Church outside God's Word; but we insist that it be attached to the Word, and do not allow it to be separated from it' (*IV. viii.13*).

The Breë Moderatuur has done exactly what Calvin condemned the Roman Catholic Church for. It has assumed authority for the Church to pronounce judgement on a matter without any reference to Scripture but merely because it contradicts the 'standpunt van die kerk'. That this 'standpunt' was 'die standpunt van die kerk' was for the Moderatuur sufficient. It did not bother to defend this 'standpunt' with Scripture! (Perhaps it also feared that it could not!)

Amazingly not only the Breë Moderatuur but other courts of the N.G.K. have condemned the Institute on the same ground. The Pretoria North Ring on 25th September, 1965 gave as three grounds for condemning the Institute: that it 'voorgee om beter as die kerk die waarheid van Gods Woord te verteenwoordig' (no scriptural evidence was actually led for this), that it 'die kerk se (sending- en ekumeniese) beleid weerstreef', and that it 'deur sy optrede en openbare uitsprake die kerklike gesag voortdurend ondermyn'. Again, all of this is exactly the same kind of charge that the Roman Catholic opponents of the Reformation made against the Reformers — because they appealed to *Scripture against* the Church (as the Institute does) and regarded the authority of the Church as radically subject to, and irrelevant or non-existent apart from, the authority of Scripture, whereas the Roman Catholics asserted that the Institutional Church alone had the

right to interpret and 'verteenwoordig' the Word of God!

The Ring called on 'alle lidmate' 'onwankelbaar te staan in hulle trou aan die kerk van Christus as stigting van God deur Jesus Christus en nie 'n menslike maaksel nie'. Once more this exactly reproduces the call of the Roman Church of the 16th century to its members to be loyal to the divinely established institutional Church, leaving out, as the Roman Church did, the whole question of loyalty to the Word of God in the Scriptures! The Reformers urged that Christians should be loyal to the Church but only in so far as the Church itself was loyal to the Word of God. The Ring, like the Roman Catholic Church, leaves out this qualification entirely and calls for absolute loyalty to the 'kerk' as such. For the Reformers this was impossible, because for them the 'beleid' and 'gesag' of the Church were always potentially to be opposed by the true servant of the Word because the Church was not only the 'stigting van God' but also 'menslik' in that it consisted of sinful men and therefore itself tended to sin (which Roman Catholicism also denied). For the Reformers the Christian must always be ready to stand for the Word of God and its authority *against* the 'beleid' of the institutional Church and its 'gesag', to *oppose* the Church in this sense, — because only in this way could he stand *with* the true Church (the remnant loyal to that Word) and ultimately *for* the whole institutional Church (by calling it to repentance)! And the Reformers themselves on this basis, opposed and stood *against* the institutional Church, contradicting its 'beleid', denying its 'gesag' and trying to reform it.

The concept of the Church involved in the statements of the Breë Moderatuur and the Pretoria North Ring is one of the Church as essentially an institution: quite clearly 'die kerk' in their pronouncements means the N.G.K. as a whole, i.e. as an institution with institutional authority, and it is the 'beleid' and 'gesag' of the N.G.K. in this sense to which it calls for obedience and loyalty. Again this is pure Roman Catholicism. For the Reformers, in contrast, the Church could not be defined essentially as the institutional Church but only as the 'remnant' of those who truly believed in and were truly obedient to Christ as their Lord. Calvin defined the Church as essentially that body of men which 'agrees on the one truth of divine doctrine, and is bound by the bond of the same religion', where the gospel is rightly preached and heard, i.e. confessed and obeyed (and the sacraments are rightly administered)

(Inst. IV. i.9f.). Thus the Church for him is essentially those who are faithful to the Word of God, the 'standpunt' or 'beleid' of the *gospel* and not the 'apparent' form of the Church as an ecclesiastical structure or institution inextricably tied to its hierarchy or courts of government (Inst. Pref. Address vi). This means that as the issue between the Christian Institute and the institutional N.G.K. is precisely whether the one or the other is being faithful to this gospel in certain matters it is impossible to speak from the Reformers' point of view simply about 'die standpunt van die kerk', 'die kerk se beleid' and 'die kerklike gesag' as though these can be assumed to be automatically identical with the views and authority of the institutional (Ned. Geref.) Kerk. The Roman Church and the N.G.K. Moderatuur and Ring could speak and have spoken like this, but the Reformers could not have done so!

The Losberg Ring in September, 1963 called on 'ampsdraers en lidmate van ons kerk om hulle nooit in geen oopsig met hierdie instituut te assosieer nie' because 'sodanige veelrassige beweging lê nie in lyn met die duidelike beleid van die Ned. Geref. Kerk met betrekking tot rasverhoudings en sendingmetodes, wat deur die jare heen hul beslag gekry het'. Again the issue of scriptural authority is quite ignored and 'die duidelike beleid van die Ned. Geref. Kerk' (again the institutional Church) is taken as the unquestioned authority! But what is particularly interesting about this Ring's statement is something it makes explicit which the other statements already quoted do not, namely, that this 'beleid' is given definitive authority because it is based on 'verhoudings en metodes' 'wat deur die jare heen hul beslag gekry het'. Here we have the sanctification of *tradition* as an authority (with no mention of Scripture). This of course was also the Roman Catholics' concomitant to the Church's authority. The Reformers on the other hand refused to ascribe any sanction to tradition as a source of authority independent of Scripture. Calvin ridiculed the attempt 'to constrain us to yield to custom'. 'In their appeal to "custom" they accomplish nothing . . . Even though many ages may have agreed in like impiety, the Lord is strong to wreak vengeance!' (Inst. Pref. Address v). And he denounced 'the wicked traditions with which they have ensnared' and 'turned the wretched people away from the original purity of God's Word' (IV. xi.8).

\* \* \*

(2) The second reason the Breë Moderatuur gave for condemning the Christian Institute was: 'Omdat die Instituut hom begeef op die terrein van die Kerk deur vir hom sekere funksies wat tot die roeping en terrein van die Kerk behoort, toe te eien. Hierdie werksaamhede is nog altyd in die verlede met veel vrug en seën deur die kerk behartig. Hierin kan die stigting van die Instituut die kerk nie vrugbaar help nie, maar dit kan verwarring skep en die kerk in die uitvoering van sy taak hinder'. The Pretoria North Ring also similarly condemned the Institute as 'n buite-kerklike organisasie wat geheel op kerklike terrein beweeg'.

## INSTITUTIONAL RIGIDITY

Here we notice again the same underlying Roman Catholic definition of the Church as before: as an institutional entity whose boundaries are the boundaries of the institutional structure (of the N.G.K.). It is just assumed as obvious that the Institute is trespassing when it works within 'die terrein van die Kerk' because as something which is not part of the institutional Church (N.G.K.) it cannot be part of the Church with its own right on the basis of the Word of God to carry out 'funksies wat tot die roeping en terrein van die Kerk behoort'. The Roman Catholic Church also of course made the charge against the Reformation as a movement which was not part of the original institutional Church it 'hom begeef op die terrein van die Kerk deur vir hom sekere funksies wat tot die roeping en terrein van die Kerk behoort, toe te eien.' The only difference is that the Reformation took over wider functions of the Church: preaching, teaching and administering the sacraments.

Let us for example consider the missionary societies in England, America and even South Africa in the 19th centuries. These societies did a tremendous work in evangelizing Asia and Africa and no one can deny that God has worked mightily through them, converting hundreds of thousands of men and women to the saving gospel. Yet these societies though very often not parts of the institutional Churches were thus fulfilling 'sekere funksies wat tot die roeping en terrein van die Kerk behoort' — while (and because!) the institutional Churches (including the N.G.K. until this century!) in their self-sufficiency and complacency so much neglected these 'funksies'. Are they therefore to be condemned out of hand — or were they part of God's plan who through them called the institutional Church to repentance?

The Breë Moderatuur claims that the 'werksaamhede' of the Institute 'is nog altyd in die verlede met veel vrug en seën deur die kerk behartig'. But is this true? Has the N.G.K. provided opportunity for its members and those of other (even evangelical) Churches to meet and study around the Bible in dialogue with one another? When and where? The Institute is organizing a theological education seminary and correspondence course for the ministry of the African Independent Churches and sects. When and where has the N.G.K. been able to do this? The Institute has brought Christians of different races together to share in fellowship around the Bible to discuss their mutual problems and get to know and understand (and thus learn to love) one another — as the New Testament churches in Acts and the letters of Paul brought together the Jewish and Gentile races. Where is the N.G.K. doing this?

'Die stigting van die Instituut kan verwarring skep!' This too is a note sounded by other N.G.K. courts. The Sinodale Kommissie of the Northern Transvaal in its statement on 10/11th November, 1965 also emphasized the 'besorgdheid oor gebeure wat tot onrus, onenigheid en onsekerheid lei' in 'die gemeentes' and the Ring which had

asked it for a ruling on the Institute and on this basis ruled: 'Verder doen die Sinodale Kommissie 'n beroep op sy ampsdraers en lidmate om nie so op te tree in woord of geskrif dat daar onrus in die gemoed van die kerk gesaai word nie.' Similarly the Sinodale Kommissie of the Southern Transvaal on 25/26th May, 1965 decided in the light of 'die onrus en ontevredenheid wat in die kerk bestaan en steeds aangroeï vanweë die deelname en/of lidmaatskap van ampsdraers aan die Pro Veritatem-poging en die Christelike Instituut' and 'vanweë die ernstige nadelige effek daarvan op die kerklike orde en eenheid' 'medewerking en lidmaatskap van genoemde bewegings so sterk moontlik af te keur!' The Losberg Ring also condemned the Institute on the ground that 'die verwarring, wat sy beginpunt by die Cottesloe beraad bevind het, sal ten gevolge van die Instituut se bedrywighede groter afmetings aanneem', and the Pretoria North Ring condemned it on the ground that it was 'n sektariese beweging wat "tweedrag, sektes en muietery in kerke . . . aanrig"' and that 'vandag tweedrag, onsekerheid en onderling wantroue in die kerk heers' (to the extent that it has lost 'reeds twee leraars').

Again how much like the Roman Catholic Church of the 16th century this sounds, and like the grounds on which it condemned the Reformation! We can only oppose it with the same words with which Calvin opposed the Roman Catholics: 'They invidiously recount how many disturbances, tumults and contentions the preaching of our doctrine has drawn along with it, and what fruits it now produces among many. The blame for these evils is unjustly laid upon it, when this ought to have been imputed to Satan's malice. Here is, as it were, a certain characteristic of the divine Word: that never when it comes forth does Satan lie at rest and sleep. This is the surest and most trustworthy mark to distinguish it from lying doctrines, which readily present themselves, are received with attentive ears by all, and are listened to by an applauding world . . . Yet this is no new example. Elijah was asked if it was not he who was troubling Israel. To the Jews Christ was seditious. The charge of stirring up the people was laid against the apostles. What else are they doing who blame us today for all the disturbances, tumults and contentions that boil up against us? Elijah taught us what we ought to reply to such charges; it is not we who either spread errors abroad or incite tumults; but it is they who contend against God's power' (Inst. Pref. Address vii). The courts of the N.G.K. have apparently entirely forgotten that Christ is 'set for the fall and rising of many . . . and for a sign that is spoken against' (Lk. 2:34), 'a rock of offence, a stone of stumbling' (Ro. 9:33)! They have forgotten that Christ said 'You must not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword' (Mt. 10); 'I have come to set fire to the earth' (Lk. 12)! They have forgotten that, as Calvin says, when we are radically faithful to Him and His Word there will always be 'onrus', 'onenigheid' and strife in the Church — and so much more in the world, the political volk!

They have forgotten that if the Reformers had caused no 'onrus, onenigheid en onsekerheid' in the Church and the world there would have been no Reformation! The 'twee jeraars' concerned did not leave the ministry of the institutional Church of their own will but were thrown out by it, just as the Reformers were, for regarding the authority of the Word as higher than that of the Church!

At least the Breë Moderatuur and the Sinodale Kommissies, at least explicitly, did not go as far as the Losberg and Pretoria North Ringe which saw as ground for condemning the Institute not only the 'verwarring' in the Church but also what this would mean for 'ons land se ingewikkeld politieke patroon' and the 'tweedrag, sektes en muiterij in (die) wêrldlike regering' this would cause! (For them Christ brought water and peace to the earth, not fire and sword). This is not even bad (Roman Catholic) theology any more; it is blatant, unadulterated political ideology presented as an argument which theologians should consider! It is sanctification of the political status quo professedly in the name of Jesus Christ (in whose name alone the Church is supposed to speak) but secretly, really in the name of an ideology!

## SELF-CONTENTEDNESS

(3) The third reason the Breë Moderatuur gives is: 'Omdat die Ned Geref. Kerk vir die reëling van die verhouding tussen moeder- en dogterkerke en die behartiging van ekumeniese belang van tyd tot tyd na die eis van die behoeftes en omstandighede die nodige liggeme en kanale vir konsultasie en samewerking geskep het'. The Losberg Ring also gave as one of its reasons: 'Ons kerk het sy eie masjienerie om geestelike kontak met, en gesamentlike beplanning ten aansien van die uitbreiding van die koninkryk van God deur, die dogterkerke te bevorder.' Here we can only reply that the Institute is not trying to regulate relations between any 'mother' and 'daughter' Churches on an institutional level, but only to promote fellowship, study and discussion between individual Christians of different Churches and different races. And again we must ask, *Where* has the N.G.K. provided 'die nodige liggeme en kanale' or 'masjienerie' for this? Or for the theological education of the ministry of the African Churches and sects? The Institute has repeatedly said that it will be only too glad to dissolve itself as soon as the institutional Churches adequately take over the tasks it has set its hands to. But its very existence and the call on its services are surely themselves proof that it is not something merely superfluous, as these statements say, but is fulfilling a need and task the institutional Church has failed to fulfil so far.

## CONFESSITIONAL CONVULSIVENESS

(4) There is one final reason which the Breë Moderatuur did not give but which the two Ringe gave. This is that the Christian Institute encourages its

members to forget their confessional loyalties, that it 'alle sogenaamde "Christene", met insluiting van die Roomse, tot eenheid in Christus wil saamsnoer en daardeur ons Protestantse belydenis, soos uitgedruk in die Drie Formuliere van Enigheid, verloën' (Pretoria North). 'Uit die kerkverband van die lede, wat die raad van beheer vorm, blyk dat die Gereformeerde leer, wat vir ons kerk en sy lidmate die enigste deugdelike basis vir 'n godsdiensstige gesprek kan wees, uit die oog verloor is' (Losberg). The answer to this is that it is simply a misunderstanding. The Institute is not trying to do away with the Confessions but to bring Christians of different Confessions together to discuss and study together on the basis of and in loyalty to their own Confessions. The Institute encourages its adherents to be loyal members of their own institutional Confessional Churches and not to regard it as some kind of substitute for them. Only on this basis can there really be fruitful ecumenical discussion of what Christians hold in common and what they differ about — and where they have misunderstood or been prejudiced against one another. The fact is that such discussion always drives Christians back to see what their own Confessions are and what they stand for in distinction to others!

No Protestant Christian in the Institute is ready to compromise on any of what he regards as the basic errors of the Roman Catholic Church, unless of course his own Confessional understanding of Scripture can be proved wrong by Scripture. On the other hand he would not regard it as necessary to agree with another member on every single detail of his own Confession in order to recognize him as a fellow Christian, and not merely a 'sogenaamde "Christen"! For he may be faithful to Calvin rather than to 'orthodoxy', to the Calvin who said that it was enough if Christians shared the same fundamental doctrines for them to recognize their unity, and that differences in other non-fundamental articles of faith should not break this unity (*Inst. IV. i.12*). On this basis Calvin, unlike the orthodox Church, actually sought unity with the Anglicans, the Lutherans and even the Eastern Orthodox!

And where fundamental doctrines do remain in dispute, as between Evangelicals and Roman Catholics, they may at least find that they have enough in common to share an 'ambiguous' (to use Calvin's word) fellowship, which is some kind of fellowship in Christ after all. Certainly such dispute is no reason for them not to discuss each other's viewpoints, not to remain in dialogue with the hope of converting those who are in error to the true Scriptural faith (as the Reformers remained in dialogue with their Roman Catholic opponents throughout their lives!) Or do these Ringe have so little trust in the truth of God's Word that they fear it is not strong enough to prevail in open and free discussion? And if it is strong enough how else shall we convince others of it except in such discussions? Or do the Ringe reject Christ's command that we should preach the gospel to every creature (which includes Roman Catholics too)?

But the real question is: Who actually are the most characteristic Roman Catholics today? Who most closely resemble the Roman Catholics of the 16th century against whom the Reformers struggled? On the one hand many Roman Catholics of the second half of the 20th century (and indeed the Roman Catholic Church itself), partly just because some Protestants (like Karl Barth) have remained in dialogue with them, are very slowly (but more decisively since the Second Vatican Council) turning away more and more from what the Roman Church was at the time of the Reformers and much closer toward the Reformers' position on the authority of Scripture vis-a-vis Church and tradition, the doctrine of the Church, justification by grace sola fide, and even the role of Mary. (See for instance G. C. Berkouwer: *The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism*). Already for many Roman Catholics today the Bible has become so central and the authority of 'Church' and 'tradition' so subsidiary to it that for them such statements as those of the N.G.K. which we have quoted above would be theologically quite impossible! On the other hand we find that the doctrines of the authority of Church and tradition, the ignoring of the issue of Scripture and its authority, the doctrine of the Church, and the charges made against the Christian Institute in the pronouncements of the courts of the N.G.K. correspond all along the line with the position taken by the Roman Church of the 16th century against the Reformers. Listen to Calvin summarizing his opponents and the staple charges they made against the Reformers: 'They do not cease to assail our doctrine and to reproach and defame it with names that render it hated or suspect. They call it "new" and "of recent birth". They reproach it as "doubtful and uncertain" . . . They inquire whether it is right for it to prevail against the agreement of so many holy fathers and against most ancient custom. They urge us to acknowledge that it is schismatic because it wages war against the Church . . . Finally, they say that there is no need of many arguments, for one can judge by its fruits what it is, seeing that it has engendered such a heap of sects, so many seditious tumults' (*Inst. Pref. Address iii*). He could in fact be talking directly about the N.G.K. courts and their charges against the Christian Institute!

For these reasons those who seek to follow and obey Christ in the work of the Christian Institute can only reply to all these pronouncements of the N.G.K. courts as Luther did to the Emperor and the Pope's representative at Worms in 1521: 'Since your Majesty and your Lordship desire a simple reply. I will answer without horns and without teeth. Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason — I do not accept the authority of popes and councils (Breë Moderatuur, Sinodale Kommissies and Ringe), for they have contradicted each other, but my conscience is captive to the Word of God — I cannot and will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me. Amen'.

GEESTESKWELLINGE

# DIE KLEURLING EN DIE BLANKE GEWETE

DR. W. BRUCKNER DE VILLIERS

**Met dankbaarheid het 'n mens verneem dat die Wetsontwerp op Onbehoorlike Immenging (deur een bevolkingsgroep in die politieke belang van 'n ander) voorlopig op die lang baan geskuif is. Miskien is ernstige protes, as dit van alle kante opklink, dan tog nog nie 'n uitgediende middel om die owerheid tot besinning te bring nie.**

**Met ontsteltenis het ons egter gelyktydig verneem dat die Eerste Minister van mening is dat alle parlementêre verteenwoordiging van die Kleurling-bevolking tog maar waarskynlik op die lang duur afgeskaf sal moet word. Miskien moet daar dan nog verder en sterker ge protesteer word. Die Kleurlinge word blybaar slegs 'n blaaskans gegee; die genadeslag sal hulle weldra toegedien word.**

Daar bestaan nl. by niemand enige twyfel dat die gewraakte „Onbehoorlike“ Wetsontwerp wesenlik en in eerste instansie teen die Kleurlinge gemik is nie. Daar bestan ook geen twyfel daaromtrent nie dat die Regering vasbeslote is om uiteindelik alle werklike of enigsins waardevolle politieke regte aan hulle te ontsê. Wat deur die uitgestelde wetgewing beoog was, was klaarblyklik slegs die voorlaaste stap van 'n hele lang reeks oor die afgelope aantal dekades heen wat op al hoe sneller tempo geneem is met effektiewe einddoel die wesenlike ontkiesering van die reeds politiek magtelose Kleurlinggemeenskap. Voor die einde van 1967 staan die laaste stap geneem te word.

En hiermee staan daar ook die laaste ontstellende hoofstuk geskrywe te word in die bewoë en alte dikwels skandalige geskiedenis van ons optrede as blanke Christenvolk teenoor ons minder bevoorregte Kleurling-medeburgers.

Want so staan 'n bevolkingsgroep van 1,741,000 mense, d.w.s. 9.7% van ons land se totale bevolking effektief hul reg te verloor om enige noemenswaardige of betekenisvolle seggenskap uit te oefen in die hoogste raadsale van ons land. So word daar vir hulle beoog en beplan die finale verlies van alle doeltreffende beskikkingsreg oor hul eie lotgevalle en toekoms in hul eie vaderland. So sal die talle reeds bestaande oorsake van volslae ontnugtering en frustrasie uiteindelik amptelik hul beslag kry. So sal hulle en ook hul kinders en kleinkinders beslissend opgesaal word met tweedeklas burgerskap tot in lengte van dae.

## GEEN REGVERDIGING

Vanuit die standpunt van selfsugtige blanke groepsbelange en politieke pragmatisme gesien, kan 'n mens hierdie stap wat beoog word miskien nog verstaan, indien dan hoegenaamd nie regverdig of enigsins vergoelik nie. Maar hoe moet 'n mens dit self begryp in die lig van die eise van redelikheid, menslikheid en veral Christelikheid?

Om van die Bantoebevolking nie eens te praat nie, gaan dit hier tog om 'n integrale en aansienlike deel van ons land se totale bevolking. En in hierdie geval bestaan daar immers noemenswaardige verskille van die Bantoebevolking en val die praktiese oorweginge wat t.o.v. die laasgenoemde miskien nog mag geld, tog byna totaal weg.

In Kleurling-are vloei daar immers meer as net 'n bietjie blanke bloed. Ten spyte van hul snelle aanwas in getal hou hulle as bevolkingsgroep vir die  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miljoen blankes geen wesenlike verswelgingsbedreiging in nie. Hulle taal en kultuur is identies met dié van die heersende blanke bevolkingsgroep. Inderdaad, hulle het geen geringe bydrae gelewer tot die vorming van die Afrikaanse taal en tot die gemeenskaplike kultuur waarop ons almal met reg trots is nie. Hulle leefwyse, hoewel vanselfsprekend oor die algemeen meer armoedig en onderhewig aan veel meer lastige beperkinge, verskil hoegenaamd nie van dié van die blankes nie. Hul teelaarde is oorwegend dié van die oudingesetene blankes van ons land — en hulle het hoegenaamd nêrens anders om heen te verhuis nie, want vir hulle word daar nie eens 'n „Kleurlingstan“ voorsien nie.

Hulle het groot geword en leef tussen blankes — 300 jaar lank al. Hulle werk nog deurgaans vir en saam met blankes. Deur geslagte heen het hulle as gewillige en onfeilbaar opgeruimde bediendes ons huise versorg en ons kinders grootgemaak. Vandag is etlike van ons vernaamste nywerhede feitlik totaal afhanklik van hul geskoold arbeid en sou die huidige ekonomiese opploei van ons land tot op groot hoogte ondenkbaar wees sonder hul waardevolle bydrae. In oorloë het hulle sy aan sy met hul blanke medeburgers geveg ter verdediging van 'n gemeenskaplike vaderland en in vredestyd het hulle nog steeds „hul plek geken“ en hul welgemoed met die minste versoen.

Hulle het die witman nog nooit enige wesenlike kwaad toegewens of aangedoen nie. Ten aansien van die mees irriterende en dikwels persoonsbeledigende wette en regulasies wat op hul afgedwing is, het hulle nog nooit enige noemenswaardige verbittering geopenbaar nie. Want, en dit bowe-al, die oorgrote meerderheid van hulle, net soos ons blankes, is Christene, lede van Christelike kerke, veral van die sg. „Kerk van die Afrikaner“, en die vrug aan Christelike vergewensgesindheid by hulle is miskien die sprekendste bewys van die gescende werk wat daar deur die jare heen deur blanke sendelinge onder hul mense gedoen is — en van die Christelike voorbeeld wat daar, van die kant van ons vrome voorvaders nog, selfs in private huise en in openbare en amptelike wandel, na hulle moes uitgestraal het om soveel inherente godsvrug op te lewer.

„Bruin Afrikaners“ is hulle reeds by geleentheid genoem, wat 'n aanvegbare stelling mag wees, maar veel wesenliker nog, en totaal onaanvegbaar, is die feit dat hulle bruin Christene, mede-Christene, broeders in Christus is. Hulle, hierdie skamele bedeelde, minder bevoorregte broers van ons is dit wat ons tans besig is om onverbiddelik af te hok, eenkant toe te skuif, hul tradisionele voorregte te ontnem, van hul regte te beroof!

En om watter rede? Eén klaarblyklike rede alleen: die kleur van hul vel, die „Gams-sonde” van nie-blank te wees! Want geen ander werklik grondige rede kan daar hoegenaamd bedink word nie. Slegs onverbloemde kleurvooroordeel en die sieklike obsessie met die noodsaaklikheid vir rasseskeiding lê aan die wortel van die vergrype teen alle menswaardigheid wat in toenemende mate amptelik teenoor die Kleurlinggemeenskap gepleeg word.

## DIE KERK

**'n Mens kan nie help nie om met die oog op hierdie wantoestand te vra: hoe kan die verantwoordelike instansies dit wat besig is om voor ons oë te gebeur, so storelos en skromeloos duld? Hoe kan die N.G. Moederkerk bv. so sonder beswaar toelaat dat daar die grootste sosiale en persoonlike ongeregtighede teenoor lidmate van haar tradisioneel mees gevestigde en daarom ook mees gewaardeerde Dogterkerk gepleeg word? Hoe kan die amptenare van dié Dogterkerk onder die Bruinmense hulle evangeliese getuienis nog verantwoord teenoor die lidmate wat aan hul geestelike sorg toevertrou is? Hoe kan dit, op bloot finansiële vlak, ooit geregtig word dat tot op datum reeds afstand gedaan moes word of gedaan staan te word van Sendingkerk-eiendomme ter waarde van huisende Rand op grond van 'n onmenslike en wesenlik on-Christelike Groepsgebiedewet, wat nie alleen die ruuste ontwrigting teweeg bring in die lewe van enkelinge en van ou en gevestigde kerkgemeenskappe nie, maar wat in werklikheid beide die Moeder- en Dogterkerk met 'n enorme finansiële las opsaal, 'n sinnelose uitgawe aan broodnodige fondse meebring wat so sinvol bestee kon geword het aan die dringend noodsaaklike bearbeiding van siele?**

Hoe versoen die Owerheid, die Moederkerk en selfs ook die verantwoordelike leiers van die Dogterkerk hierdie ontstellende feite met hul gewetens?

Hoe versoen ek as blanke Suid-Afrikaner, nog meer, as Christelik getoë Afrikaner in murg en been, hierdie dinge met my gewete?

## PROTES

Hier lê daar vir my 'n geweldige geesteskwelling. Ek is, per slot van sake, 'n volbloed blanke Afrikaner, met al die voordele en nadele, voor-

regte en verantwoordelikhede wat dié etiket inhoud. En dié gegewe wil en sal ek ook nooit verander of verruil nie. Ek sou egter bitter graag ontslae wou wees van die skynbaar onvermydelik daarmee gepaard gaande kwelling van my gewete t.o.v. my bruin broeder in Christus wat deur God self naas my geplaas is as my naaste vir wie ek verantwoordelik is.

Ek dra volle kennis van my eie blanke Afrikanervolk se tradisies, vrese en ideale. Puur blank is ons (fisiëls altans, indien nie aldag moreel nie!), en blank, met alles wat dit impliseer, sou ons graag wou bly, selfs teen die hoogste koste. Maar wat my en diegene wat soos ek voel, betref, waaragtig nie ten koste van die verkringting van my gewete nie — nie ten koste van die verloëning van my allerhoogste en uiteindelike verantwoordelikhed teenoor Christus, my Meester, Oppdragewer en Leidsman in die geloof nie!

Daarom protesteer ek, daarom moet ek protesteer — al sou ek my ook in die geselskap van slegs 'n veragtelik kleine minderheid van protesterendes bevind en al is dit, hoe geestesverskeurend ookal, teen my eie mense — teen die gruwelike en skreiende onreg wat daagliks en in toenemende mate my bruin mede-Christene aangedoen word in naam van 'n luidrugtige selfvergoekende politieke ideologie en in naam van 'n blanke Afrikanerdom wat hom telkens weer beroem op sy paternalistiese regverdigheidsstrewe en so dikwels die vermetelheid het om (bewaar ons van heiligkennis!) homself teenoor die wêreld te adverteer as die draer, hier in „Donker Afrika”, van 'n „Christelike” bekawing . . .

Ek protesteer teen die berekende veronregting, verkleinering en verstoting van die Kleurlinggemeenskap ook in my naam as bevoordeerde blanke mede-burger en tewens trotse Afrikaner.

Ek protesteer, uit die diepe kwelling van my gees en gewete, teen die onchristelike veragting en miskenning van belydende mede-Christene deur hulle wat hulself ook Christene noem, en dit in naam van 'n voorgegewe verantwoordelike Christelike „voogdyskap”.

Ek protesteer teen die Christusvreemde skynheilige waarkragtens daar aan die wêreld voorgehou word hoeveel daar op materiële

gebied vir die Kleurlinge gedoen word — asof die mens „van brood alleen” kan lewe! — terwyl hulle net so stelselmatig van hul geestelike erfenis beroof word en met 'n pot lensesop omgekoop word tot die verkringting van hul eie menswaardigheid.

Ek protesteer teen die blatante onregverdigheid wat daar, willens en wetens en met 'n vermetele aanspraak op Godgeropenheid en uitverkorenheid, gepleeg word teenoor die mees onskuldige en mees weerlose van ons land se bevolkingsgroepe; teen dit wat ook in my naam gedoen word teenoor my minder bevorregte naaste en mede-Christen, wat ek hoegenaamd nooit sou duld of verduur as dit teenoor my, my kinders en my eie rasgenote gedoen sou word nie.

Dit kwel my ten diepste en gee aanleiding tot die pynlikste geestesverskeuring dat ek moet, maar ek protesteer teen hierdie euwel!

**En ek kan nie anders as om, in die lig van die kennis van onreg waaroer ek beskik, te protesteer nie. En saam met my is elkeen van my verantwoordelike rasgenote en blanke mede-gelowiges geroepe en verplig om te protesteer. Want om, in die aangesig van hierdie mees ooglopende en flagrante uitdaging, gerig aan die adres van ons Christelike verantwoordelikhed, nie te protesteer nie, sou beteken 'n beginsellose toestemming tot die verkringting en finale toeskroeiing van ons gewents.**

Die Kleurling, wat ook al sy swakhede en tekortkominge, is, per slot van sake, my volwaardige medeburger, my in sy verdraagsaamheid en vergewensgesindheid dikwels meer voorbeeldige mede-Christen, my broeder in Christus — al is sy vel ook bruin. En as sy kosbaarste en mees onvervreembare regte aangetas word, dan myne ook. En as dit dan sy bestemming moet wees om aan vernedering, verguisig en belediging blootgestel te word, dan is dit my roeping, as sy medestander in die geloof, om my saam met hom, te onderwerp aan vernedering, verguisig en belediging — al word die slae teen ons dan ook uitgedeel deur ons eie mense.

Dit was, op stuk van sake, Sy eie mense wat Christus gegesel en gekruisig het, omdat Hy bereid was om gehoorsaam te wees aan die wil van Sy Vader.

# BANTU PROPHETS OR CHRIST'S EVANGELS

## II

### FOUNDING OF AICA

In June 1965 the second conference of church leaders of the African Independent Churches was held, this time in Queenstown. This conference resolved that "The African Independent Churches Association be established", and a constitution was drawn up. This Association has become known as AICA.

In collaboration with AICA the Christian Institute planned ways and means of meeting the three-fold educational need. The overall problem in providing any form of education is the fact that most ministers of the Independent Churches have only reached standard III or IV. Those ministers who completed some years in a high school are the exceptions. But it is at the same time clear that if these churches are to fulfil their God-given task of preaching Christ to the people of South Africa, the theological training of the ministers is of prime importance.

### PROGRAMME AND FUTURE PLANS

To meet the need for the theological training of ministers and prospective ministers of the African Independent Churches, the following programme has been worked out:

#### Correspondence Courses

A number of correspondence schools offering courses in the Bible and related subjects exist in South Africa. One of these schools, known as the All Africa School of Theology, (previously Scripture Audio Visual Education), was highly recommended by Dr. G. H. Wolfensberger of the United Bible Societies. This school is run by the Rev. F. H. Burke of Witbank, Transvaal. The Christian Institute made contact with Mr. Burke and agreement was reached that his correspondence course would be the one which AICA would recommend to the ministers of the Independent Churches. There are at present approximately 1,000 students on the school's roll of which the greater number are ministers of the African Independent Churches.

While this correspondence course will give ministers a foundation on which to build, there is still the need for a correspondence course which will be officially recognised as equal to a certain period of training at a theological seminary.

At the meeting of the Board of Management of AICA in August, 1966, it was agreed that the possibility of offering a correspondence course under the auspices of a recognised theological Seminary should be investigated. It is hoped that such a course offered under the auspices of a recognised theological seminary would also be recognised by the Department of Bantu Affairs as an accredited training of ministers for the African Independent Churches.

Should such a correspondence course materialise, and it seems essential that it should, regional seminars will be planned so that students taking the course could meet for discussion and for guidance by lecturers.

#### Refresher Courses

Two Ministers' Refresher Courses have been held under the auspices of AICA. The first was held in Soweto, Johannesburg with the theme "The Life of our Lord Jesus Christ". 47 Ministers attended for a period of eight days. The second course was held immediately after the Annual General Meeting in Durban in July, 1966. The theme was "The Church of our Lord Jesus Christ". About 75 Ministers attended the Durban course.

Refresher courses are to be followed up by establishing small study circles to study matters raised at the Refresher Courses in greater depth and to embark on new study projects. A small amount of money has been set aside to buy visual aid material for such group work.

THE REV. DANIE VAN ZYL

#### Vacation Schools

While these Refresher Courses are meeting a need, they do not last long enough to allow students to study any theme in depth. To give the opportunity for deeper and more concentrated study, the Board of Management decided to investigate the possibility of holding vacation schools of at least 4 weeks duration. The intention is that a different theological seminary in South Africa would be approached each year with the request that it makes its buildings and teachers available for a course during the June-July vacation.

#### Theological Seminary

Correspondence courses, refresher courses and vacation schools are in a sense all emergency programmes. The solution to the educational problem will only be found in the establishment of a theological seminary where prospective ministers can be trained.

There are two ways in which the establishment of a theological seminary can be tackled. The first possible way is to make use of an already existing seminary. While this seemed the logical solution certain problems had to be faced:

(a) Either the existing Seminaries require an entrance qualification too high for ministers of the African Independent Churches to qualify, or the schools are local enterprises catering for one language group only.

(b) Existing Seminaries are almost entirely controlled by the Mission Churches. Leaders of the Independent Churches fear that should they send their students to these seminaries the students will not return to their own churches as ministers. This fear is based on past experience where students entered the ministry of the more stable, better organised and financially more secure churches. Some students may also have been convinced theologically that it was the right thing to do when they left their Church for another. The second possible way was to start a new seminary which would belong to the African Independent Church-

es and be under their control. But then problems of finance and staff immediately present themselves.

### The R.R. Wright School of Religion

In facing these alternatives and the problems that accompany them, one possible solution became apparent. The A.M.E. Church has its own seminary, the R.R. Wright School of Religion at Evaton, near Vereeniging. At present the seminary has a staff of 2 and 18 students. Could this seminary not serve as the basis on which a larger seminary could be built? With the help of the Christian Institute, AICA entered into negotiations and the following agreement has been reached:

(a) The R.R. Wright School of Religion will as from 1967 be a seminary serving all the African Independent Churches.

(b) In addition to the present theological course, which requires Junior Certificate as qualification, a lower level course will be offered. Entrance qualification for this lower course will be Std. III for men under the age of 30. For men over 30 years no academic qualification will be required, but the candidate must satisfy the Board of Management of the Seminary that he will benefit by taking the course. Students will be encouraged to qualify for the higher level course (post J.C.)

(c) Extentions will have to be made to the seminary which will in the first three years include the following: two new lecture rooms and a fully equipped library (there is no library at present); appointment of additional staff members (one senior lecturer, a junior lecturer and a secretary/librarian).

(d) A scholarship fund will be established to assist students financially. While churches must shoulder the responsibility for sending and keeping their students at the seminary, it is unrealistic to expect the poorest churches in South Africa to be able to pay all the costs involved in the training of their ministers.

The indications are that there will be at least ten students from the African Independent Churches in 1967. The potential is, however, so great that the seminary could within a few years become the largest in South Africa.

### ADDITIONAL NEEDS

As the work has grown over the past two years additional needs and fields of service have become apparent:

#### (a) Ministers Wives:

Women play an important role in the life of an Independent Church. The minister's wife is expected to share her husband's responsibility of shepherding his flock. There are many who accept this responsibility and who do wonderful work in the congregations. Others again wish to accept full responsibility, but due to the lack of know-how and training, they do not achieve much in practice. The women have asked that not only the men should be assisted, but that a programme be worked out through which the women could also be assisted.

It seems that such assistance will have to be given on two levels. Firstly, women should be trained and assisted to fulfill their rôle as spiritual leaders, and secondly, women should receive guidance on the woman's place and responsibility as a member of society and the family. On the first level basic theological training should be given, while assistance on the second level will include guidance on such matters as family care and planning, household duties, community welfare problems, handiwork, etc. The aim in the second level programme should be the training of leaders. There are many organisations who would be able to assist in such a programme.

#### (b) Youth Work:

Church Youth Work has reached a low ebb in many churches in South Africa. In the African Independent Churches it is almost non-existent. Yet all leaders are aware of the necessity for a church to give serious attention to the shepherding of her young people who are the leaders of the future. In this field there is a lack of basic know-how on how to do youth work.

Assistance in the field of Youth Work must be that of assisting the churches in establishing such work, not in doing youth work for or alongside the churches. Aspects of Youth Work which will have to be dealt with, will be:

1. The establishment of Sunday School work.
2. Youth leadership training.
3. A youth magazine for distribution by the churches.

4. A full-time youth worker (possibly in the future).

(c) The other field in which assistance is needed is the field of the relationship between these churches themselves and these churches in relation to other bodies.

(i) **Church and Church:** There are numerous disputes between Independent Churches, particularly where a secession has occurred and both groups claim to be the true and original church. Disputes arise over finance, name of the church and property. Often these matters are taken to court resulting in long drawn out and expensive court cases. AICA has established a committee who, when asked, will attempt to assist churches in settling disputes. Another committee has been appointed to investigate possibilities of church co-operation, and where possible, church unions.

(ii) **Church and Government:** In this field too the churches often need help to negotiate with both the central government and local authorities. There is much misunderstanding on both sides causing unnecessary hardship. A committee has also been established by AICA to look after this part of the work.

### GROWTH AND GROWING PAINS

As mentioned earlier AICA was founded in June, 1965. The Rev. Z. J. Malukazi, a minister of the Independent Churches assisted the Christian Institute in making the initial contacts. The AICA Board of Management was asked in January, 1966 to appoint a temporary organiser. The Rev. B. N. Goduka of the African Native Mission Church was appointed for a period of six months. (This appointment has now been extended by the Board of Management to a period of three years).

The Association has approximately eighty churches who are officially affiliated (i.e. churches who have paid their affiliation fees) and is in contact with 150 or more who have indicated an interest in AICA. The work of AICA is in a sense pioneer work in that no previous association strived for exactly the same objectives. But in this pioneer work many problems have to be faced.

Most of these difficulties arise from the fact that there has been very little ecumenical co-operation between the churches. Much of the

contact was that of competitors with no recognition of other's right of existence. Often secessions were based on personal ambition, selfishness and jealousy. It is therefore only natural that in the work of AICA old rivalries and fears should again emerge. If AICA is to succeed in its aims, it will be, not by disregarding these factors, but by changing the basis of operation and thinking from that where personal status, whether of the church or of the leader, is most important, to a basis where the thinking is theological and where Christ and His Church are put first. This change will by necessity be a slow one, but by concerted effort, particularly in the field of theological education and Bible study, it will surely come.

### DISTRUST

AICA must also be fully aware of the fact that it is not the first association or Movement which have tried to operate on an ecumenical basis. There have been many "Movements", national and local, which have presented themselves as "Unity" movements. The African Independent Churches are slow to trust such new phenomena. They rather wait to see whether promises are kept and whether objectives are worked for sincerely and honestly. Too often in the past have such movements proved bogus undertakings, requiring churches to pay fees but never offering any real programme. Other movements again failed because there was a lack of finance or of know-how. Many churches are now waiting to see whether AICA will prove itself loyal to its ideals and able to put its programme into practice.

### SECESSION IN AICA

AICA has already experienced a minor secession of its own. When AICA had to appoint its own full-time organiser, the Rev. Z. J. Malukazi expected to get the post on account of his work for the Christian Institute in this field. When some-one else was appointed he openly showed his disappointment. This disappointment coupled with a disagreement between him and the Chairman of the Board of Management, led to his founding a rival movement — "The African Independent Churches' Ecumenical Movement". This movement how-

ever is weak and has little hope of growing stronger.

### CO-OPERATION BETWEEN AICA AND OTHER BODIES

AICA has sought to co-operate with the Mission Churches, and at its last Annual General Meeting it voted in favour of affiliation to the Christian Council of S.A. It also expressed its appreciation of the work done by IDAMASA and made it clear that it does not wish to interfere with the work of IDAMASA in any way whatsoever, except to help where it can.

### AZASA

It would only be right to point out that another movement known as the Apostolic and Zionist Assembly of S.A. (AZASA) has developed alongside AICA. Initiated by IDAMASA, the Zionist Churches were brought together under the guidance of the Rev. Mncube. Many feel that the Zionist Church differ from the Ethiopian Churches in so many important aspects that two organisations, one for the Ethiopian Churches and one for the Zionist Churches could do the work more effectively. At present AICA consists mostly of Ethiopian type Churches, but the small Zionist membership should not be regarded as insignificant. Although both church groups are members of AICA no abnormal tensions have developed between the two types of church groups. AZASA has limited its membership to Zionist Churches only. AICA and AZASA are in close contact and attempt to co-operate in all ways possible. There is the hope that in the future union between the two groups may become possible.

### CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

A committee to co-ordinate the assistance given to the African Independent Churches has been established. The Christian Council of S.A., IDAMASA, The Christian Institute of Southern Africa, AZASA, AICA and the R.R. Wright School of Religion are all represented on this committee.

This committee —

- (i) co-ordinates the work done by the different groups;
- (ii) keeps interested bodies informed; and

(iii) keeps represented bodies informed of the total aspect of the work being done.

### MISSION WORK IN A NEW DIMENSION: HOW YOU CAN HELP

The question can now be posed: Is the spending of all this effort and money legitimate and what do we hope ultimately to achieve? I believe that the time and money are well spent in the service of Christ, for the following reasons:

(a) By reaching the leaders of 2 million people with the Gospel or in some cases with a better understanding of the meaning of the Gospel, we are reaching the 2 million people themselves.

(b) Statistics of the past twenty years have proved that these churches have a much greater chance of reaching the African non-Christian than the Mission Churches. By providing the tools, particularly in the form of theological education, the mission work of the African Independent Churches could become the most important contribution to missiological development in South Africa in the 20th century.

(c) Christianity in South Africa has in the past too often been identified with the white-man's culture. The African Independent Churches is an important part of Christianity in South Africa in which these ties are loosened. But the loosening of these ties should not be accompanied by a loosening of the Churches' ties to the Bible and to theological training. In the work now undertaken the emphasis is on theological training to negate syncretistic and nativistic developments in the churches.

(d) This work will provide the opportunity to renew contact between the Mission Churches and the African Independent Churches, and making both groups aware that the Church of Christ is larger and wider than any particular historical development of the church as organisation.

Overseas churches have shown a keen interest in the work and have largely provided the financial backing for the work. Yet there is still much that can be done by church bodies and individuals to help in this work. Help can be given in the form of —

- (i) financial aid;

- (ii) assistance by theological teachers;
- (iii) permission by the Mission Churches for the use of their buildings by AICA;
- (iv) books for the library at the seminary;
- (v) prayer for the work.

The Church of our Lord Jesus Christ transcends man's divisions and group tendencies, but is at the same time manifested in the local organised group of Christians. But local groups of Christians, whatever their historical background, par-

ticular group awareness or distinctive practices, can never free themselves from their responsibility over against all other Christians and Christian groups. The African Independent Churches share the Christian responsibility for being neighbours unto the Mission Churches, and the Mission Churches likewise are responsible for being neighbours unto the African Independent Churches.

People who would like to know more about the African Independent Churches should read: "Bantu Prophets in S.A." by Bengt G. M. Sundkler. (much of the historical

information in this article was obtained from this book); "The Biblical concept of Messianism and Messianism in Southern Africa" by Marie-Louise Martin; and "Our Approach to the Independent Church Movement in S.A.", being 17 lectures by authorities on these Churches, delivered at a Missiological Course held at the Lutheran Theological College at Mapumulo in 1965. All three these books are available from the Christian Institute library, 408, Dunwell, 35, Jorissen Street, Braamfontein, Johannesburg. They should also be obtainable from most public libraries.

## DIE KERK BUISTE SUID-AFRIKA

**PROF. B. B. KEET**

**Die Swart Mag (Black Power) beweging baar sorg onder blankes en negers in Amerika. Nogtans is daar ooreenstemming oor sekere punte; eerste, dat daar 'n ontplofbare situasie bestaan; tweedens, dat die frustrasie en selfs vertwyfeling van die negermassas baie werklik is; derdens, dat as die blankes die erns van die situasie eerder besef het, die heersende uitgebreide onrus vermy kon geword het.**

Dr. G. Elson Ruff verklaar in 'n inleidingsartikel van die **Lutheran**, publikasie van die Lutherse Kerk in Amerika: „Ons het ons so deur eie belang laat verblind, ons was so self-voldaan en self-tevrede dat storm-sterkte gevare aan ons gesigseinder opgehoop het.“ Hy merk op dat, hoewel dit nog nie duidelik is, watter vorm dit sal aanneem of in watter rigting dit sal beweeg nie, hy deur sy donker bril die vooruitsigte as sleg beskou. As daar onder blankes 'n oorweldigende besef van die erns van die toestand was, sou 'n krisis afgewend kon word. Maar talle blanke kerkmense is nog nie daarvan oortuig dat ons gereed is vir 'n klein integrasieteken in die kerk nie, selfs lank nadat die probleem al ver verby hierdie punt beweeg het.

Dr. Martin Luther King, wat in 'n sewekolom advertensie in die **New York Times** 'n pleidooi lewer vir fondse ter ondersteuning van sy Konferensie van Suidelike Leiers, sê dat miljoene negers gefrustreerd en kwaad is omdat buitensporige beloftes wat minder as 'n jaar gelede gemaak is, vandag volkome verydel is. Toe die Burgerregtewet in 1965 aangeneem is, was die verwagting dat dit 'n ope deur na vryheid sou wees. Maar die geringheid van voor-

dele in die Suidelike State sowel as in die Noordelike ghetto's het sommige negers tot die oortuiging gedwing dat geweld alleen die blanke meerderheid sal skok en erns met die werklikheid laat maak. Swart Mag is 'n uiting van desperaatheid wat sal verdwyn as die negers hul regmatige deel van die mag deur effektiewe organisasie verkry. Intussen gaan die groot meerderheid voort om sonder geweld dit te verkry, as blank Amerika hulle met eerlikheid en beslistheid wil ontmoet.

Aartsbiskop Paul Haliman van Atlanta noem die slagspreuk van Swart Mag aansteeklik en misleidend; dit is verraad teenoor 20-miljoen mense in Amerika.

### MORMONE EN DIE RASSE-VRAAGSTUK

Rasse-gelykheid is deur die Mormone in hul halfjaarlikse algemene vergadering in Salt Lake City aanbeveel, maar daarby is gevoeg dat hulle geen verandering in hul basisopvattinge oor die rassekwestie bedoel nie. Volgens hierdie basis wys hulle die negers af, al word daarby verklaar dat daar 'n wesenlike eenheid bestaan onder die ganse menslike geslag — alle mense het reg op dieselfde behandeling van watter ras hulle ook mag wees.

**Christianity Today** teken hierby aan: Miskien wel as mens, maar nie as Mormoon nie. Negers kan bv. lede word van die Mormonse sekte, maar is uitgesluit van die priesterskap volgens Melchisedek en behoort tot die laagste trap in die kerklike lewe. Daar is, volgens Mormonse opgawes, byna 2½-miljoen Mormone in die wêreld, waarvan 18 duisend aktiewe evangeliste is.

### DIE CHRISTENDOM IN JAPAN

Die Japanse militante Boeddhistiese sekte, Soka Gakkai, wil sy anti-Christelike standpunt aansienlik wysig. Die sekte wat 'n ledetal van vyf miljoen gesinne tel, het hom ten doel gestel om alle Christelike invloede in Japan uit te wis, maar sy krag het nie alleen die Christendom bedreig nie, dog ook alle ander godsdiens in Japan. Daardeur het die opposisie teen Soka Gakkai groter geword. Die gesamentlike godsdiens in Japan, saam met enkele Protestantse groeperinge het 'n front gevorm wat oor die sewe miljoen lede tel en 150 lede in die Parlement het. Ook die Japanse arbeidersbeweging van 1,500,000 lede het die stryd teen Soka Gakkai aangebind weens sy dubbelsinnigheid en onverdraagsaamheid. Die gewig van hierdie opposisie het aanleiding gegee tot 'n aansienlike ledeverlies van Soka Gakkai. Indruk is in die politieke- en religieuse wêreld gemaak deur 'n verklaring van Ikeda Dai-

saku, voorsitter van die sekte, dat sy vereniging geneë is om sy kragtige teenstellinge prys te gee en vriendskaplike betrekkinge met ander godsdienste aan te knoop.

### DIE TOEKOMS VAN ALBERT SCHWEITZER SE HOSPITAAL

Lank voor sy dood reeds het dr. Albert Schweitzer 'n liggaam gestig om o.m. voorsiening te maak vir die aanstelling van sy opvolger as hoof van die hospitaal in Lambarene. Dié liggaam het sy setel in Straatsburg. Toe Schweitzer nog geleef het, het die vereniging eienaar geword en ná sy dood op 4 Desember 1965 het die vereniging volle verantwoordelikheid oorgeneem. Daar bestaan ook verskillende

hulp-organisasies in alle dele van die wêreld bv. in Duitsland, Engeland, Verenigde State, Switzerland en Nederland.

In 1960 het die verteenwoordigers mekaar in Basel ontmoet en oorleg gepleeg oor die taak wat op hulle rus. Op 18 Desember 1965 het die eerste algemene vergadering van die vereniging in Straatsburg plaasgevind. 'n Bestuurskommissie van elf lede is gekies en 'n uitvoerende kommissie aangestel. In ooreenstemming met die wens van dr. Schweitzer self is die administratiewe leiding van die hospitaal aan sy dogter, Mevr. Rhona Eckert-Schweitzer toevertrou, terwyl die mediese leiding in hande van die Switserse arts, Walter Munz, gestel is.

Op die oomblik bevat die hospi-

taal 75 geboue, waar ongeveer 'n duisend mense (personeel en pasiënte met hulle families) onderdak vind. Die hospitaal word nou ook gemoerniseer. Die elektriese installasie word uitgebrei, die watervoorsiening verseker, 'n nuwe T.B. afdeling aangebring, terwyl daar nog planne is vir die noodsaklike uitbreiding van die hospitaal, die bou van operasiesale, 'n apteek, ens. Daar sal ook 'n afdeling vir preventiewe geneeskunde gestig word (inenting, voorligting in verband met higiëne, kinderversorging, ens.) 'n Spesiale kommissie is belas om saam met sy dogter die geestelike nalatenskap van dr. Schweitzer te versamel, bewaar en boekstaaf, sodat dit vir die geslagte van die toekoms kan bly voortleef.

## DIE WOORDE VAN DIE MENSE

*„Maar Ek sê vir julle dat elke ydele woord wat die mense praat, daarvan moet hulle rekenskap gee in die oordeelsdag. Want uit jou woorde sal jy geregverdig word en uit jou woorde sal jy veroordeel word.” —  
(Mat. 12:36-37).*

## TWEE EKUMENIESE KERKLIGGAME GEVLOEK

Onder die opskrif: PRETORIA SE BOODSKAP, skryf a spesiale medewerker van 'n Afrikaanstalige politieke Sondagkoerant die volgende oor die Internasionale Simposium oor die Kommunisme wat onlangs in Pretoria gehou is: „As eerste tasbare bewys van die bevrugtingswerk wat die Simposium hier plaaslik gedoen het, wil ons die hoop uitspreek dat daardie kerkgenootskappe in Suid-Afrika, hoofsaaklik Engels, wat by name genoem is as nog lede van die Wêreldraad van Kerke dit nou sal oorweeg om hul lidmaatskap ernstig in hersiening te neem. Die getuienis is oorvloedig dat die Wêreldraad van Kerke, net soos die Britse Raad van Kerke, 'n onheilige bondgenootskap is waarin vyande en nie vriende nie, saamgetrek sit”.

So word twee ekumeniese kerkliggame in een asem gevloek, en die lesers van dié koerant moet dan ook

tot die gevolg trekking kom dat dit inderdaad die eerste vrug is wat die simposium opgelever het, nl. dat dit 'n mens aanleiding gegee het om teen die Kerk van Christus te laster. 'n Onheilige bondgenootskap is 'n bondgenootskap van onheiliges. En kerke is lede van die Wêreldraad van Kerke en die Britse Raad van Kerke.

In dieselfde koerant word berig dat die sekretaris van die Nasionale Raad vir die Bestryding van Kommunisme gesê het dat die simposium 'n klinkende sukses was en dat oorweging daaraan geskenk word om dit 'n jaarlikse instelling te maak.

As die eerste tasbare bewys van die bevrugtingswerk wat die simposium hier plaaslik gedoen het, daar-in bestaan dat daar teen die Kerk van Christus gevloek word, wat kan van verdere simposia verwag word?

Oor die noodsaklikheid dat die kommunisme bestry moet word, be-

hoort daar by niemand enige twyfel te bestaan nie. As ons in ons bestryding van die „onreine gees“ egter nie met die Gees van Christus vervul is nie, sal dit met ons gaan soos Jesus dit aan ons voorgehou het: „En wanneer die onreine gees uit die mens uitgegaan het, gaan hy deur waterlose plekke en soek rus en vind dit nie. Dan sê hy: Ek sal teruggaan na my huis waar ek uitgegaan het. En hy kom en vind dit leeg, uitgeveeg en versier. Dan gaan hy en neem sewe ander geeste slechter as hy self met hom saam, en hulle kom in en woon daar; en die laaste van daardie mens word erger as die eerste. Só sal dit ook wees met hierdie bose geslag”. (Mat. 12:43-45).

Anti-kommunisme wat teen die Kerk van Christus vloek, is vir die Christendom in Suid-Afrika geen geringer bedreiging as die kommunisme nie.

# POLITIEKE KOERANT BENAДЕEL N. G. PREDIKANT EN GEMEENTE MET VALSE BERIG

Dieselfde Sondagblad waarna hierbo verwys is, het in sy uitgawe van 25 September 'n berig geplaas onder die opskrif: **N.G. LERAAR SKOK MET VRAAG OOR ROU-MOSIE.** In die berig word beweer dat die predikant van die Ned. Geref. Gemeente Parkhurst, dr. J. H. P. van Rooyen, tydens die sitting van die Ring van Johannesburg bedenking geopper het teen 'n mosie van roubeklag in die dood van wyle dr. H. F. Verwoerd en die vraag gestel het of steun vir die mosie nie sou neerkom op vereenselwiging met 'n bepaalde politieke beleid nie.

Die feit dat talle van sy gemeentelede miskien die berig sou lees en moontlik tot nare gevolgtrekkings kon kom, het dr. Van Rooyen verplig om dieselfde Sondag nog, by die oggend- en aanddiens, 'n verklaring aan sy gemeente voor te lees oor wat presies tydens die Ringsitting gebeur het.

In die verklaring sê dr. Van Rooyen o.m.: „Wat op die Ringsvergadering van Johannesburg gebeur het, is dat op Saterdagdag. 11 September ds. H. J. C. Snijders, sonder dat iemand vooraf insae daarin gehad het, 'n mosie van roubeklag voorgelees en voorgestel het. In die formulering van hierdie mosie was daar egter **een sin** wat vir my by die eerste aanhoor daarvan geklink het na 'n moontlike vereenselwiging van die Ring van Johan-

nesburg met die beleid van 'n bepaalde politieke party, nl. die regeerende party. Ek is net soos die blad Dagbreek bewus daarvan dat elke leraar sy eie oortuiging oor die politiek kan hê, maar ek weet tog ook baie goed dat die Kerk van Christus hom nie mag vereenselwig met 'n bepaalde politieke party se beleid nie — ons is tog nie 'n nasionaliste-kerk nie! Daarom het ek slegs oor daardie één sin navraag gedoen . . . Maar nadat die verskering gegee is dat die bedoeling nie is dat die Ring hom daarmee met 'n politieke party vereenselwig nie, het ek soos al die ander lede my steun aan die mosie gegee.”

Dieselfde Sondagaand het die Kerkraad van Parkhurst die volgende besluit geneem:

1. Die Kerkraad spreek sy diepe dankbaarheid uit teenoor sy leraar, dr. J. H. P. van Rooyen, vir die openhartige verklaring deur hom aan die Kerkraad en gemeente voorgelees by die oggend- en aanddiens;

2. die Kerkraad aanvaar die korrektheid van die genoemde verklaring van die leraar met volle vertroue en vereenselwig hulle heelhartig met sy gevoel van ontsteltenis en hartseer oor die onwaarheid van die genoemde berig en die onreg hom daardeur aangedoen;

3. die Kerkraad is egter daarvan bewus dat hierdie berig verreikende implikasies op 'n breë terrein het en nog kan hê omdat dit nie alleen die

leraar en die gemeente raak nie, maar ook die kerk. Daarom versoek die Kerkraad dringend dat daar 'n buitengewone en spoedvergadering van die Ring van Johannesburg gehou sal word sodat die feite deur die Ring reggestel sal word. Daarby versoek die Kerkraad die Ring dringend om alle pogings aan te wend dat hierdie saak deur 'n algemene persverklaring én in Dagbreek reggestel sal word.

Op 28 September is daar toe 'n buitengewone Ringsitting gehou, en die Ring het besluit dat hy oortuig is van die goeie bedoeling van dr. Van Rooyen met die vraag wat hy in verband met die mosie gestel het. Dit is duidelik, so lui die besluit verder, dat hy hom nie teen die mosie verset het nie, maar net inligting gevra het oor 'n sekere sinsnede. Die Ring betreur dit en keur dit af dat die voorval in die persberig gebruik is om 'n refleksie op dr. Van Rooyen tewerp waardeur veel leed en skade aan hom as ampsdraer en aan die gemeente van Parkhurst gedoen is.

\* \* \*

Wie sal die skade bereken wat sekere politieke koerante, veral gedurende die afgelope ses-sewe jaar, aan die kerk, aan diensknegte van die Here en aan die saak van die koninkryk van God in ons land gedoen het? Praat van die „komunistiese gevaar” vir die kerk . . .

## REDAKTEUR VAN KERKBLAD SPREEK WARTAAL

Wie onlangs die berig in die dagbladpers gelees het oor wat dr. A. P. Treurnicht, redakteur van **Die Kerkbode**, in sy referaat tydens die Internationale Simposium oor die Kommunisme gesê het, sit verleë met die vraag wat hy bedoel het. Dit gaan nou nie oor dr. Treurnicht se smalende verwysing na predikante wat as „profete”, as „Luthers van die 20e eeu” begroet word omdat hulle sekere maatreëls wat uit die apartheidsbeleid voortvloeи, veroordeel nie, maar veral oor die vraag of dr. Treurnicht besef dat die Evan-

gelie nie met 'n paar politieke oorveë van sy krag en betekenis as 'n heilsboodskap vir hierdie lewe in hierdie wêreld, beroof kan word nie. Dit kan wees dat die pers die belangrikste van wat dr. Treurnicht gesê het, of moes gesê het, verswyg het, maar dit is onwaarskynlik, want aan die einde van die simposium het dr. Treurnicht, volgens 'n ander persberig, sy waardering uitgespreek teenoor **Die Transvaler**, **Die Vaderland** en Radio Suid-Afrika vir die objektiewe en korrekte beriggewing oor die simposium. „In Suid-

Afrika”, het dr. Treurnicht volgens **Die Vaderland** gesê, „het ons dit te belewe dat die optrede van Abram Fischer, met al die noodlottige implikasies daarvan, per slot van rekening as die skuld van die Kerk aangeteken word. Dit sou dan die Kerk se skuld wees dat Fischer 'n Kommunist geword het. Sou dit wees omdat die Kerk nie die materialistiese en godloënde filosofie van die Kommunisme wou verkondig nie?”

Die antwoord hierop is eenvoudig dat niemand dit ooit so gestel het

nie. Waarom vra dr. Treurnicht dan so 'n vraag? Wie wil hy daarmee as voorstanders en pleitbesorgers van die „godloënde filosofie van die Kommunisme” onder verdenking bring? Dit is in elk geval 'n onsmaaklike en onwaardige insinuasie.

Maar uit wat verder in die berig volg oor wat dr. Treurnicht gesê het, en as dit al is wat hy gesê het, blyk dit duidelik hoe wartaal in die vertolking van die heilsboodskap van die Bybel die teelaarde berei waarin die kommunisme noodwendig moet ontkiem en groei as 'n surrogaat-heilsboodskap wat daarop aanspraak maak om 'n beter een as dié van die Bybel te wees. **Die Vaderland** rapporteer hom soos volg: „Die invretting van die liberalisme in die godsdiens bestaan daaruit dat hy oorlog verklaar het teen die openbaringsaspek van die godsdiens, die bo-redelike en die hemelse of hiernamaalse. En wanneer die godsdiens hoofsaaklik 'n brood-en-botter godsdiens is, 'n propagandamiddel vir stemreg, besitreg, lone en menslike gelykheid het hy nie alleen die godsdiens verskraal tot mense diens nie, maar ook die pad wyd oopge maak vir die konsekente sekularisme — die ateïstiese Kommunisme.”

Dit is sterk, tipies ekstremistiese taal met die bombastiese uitdruk kingswyse, die histeriese toon en die opswepende krite wat daarvan kenmerkend is. Maar 'n element van waarheid bevat dit stellig. Die godsdiens mag sekerlik nie in mense diens ontaard nie.

Maar het dr. Treurnicht dit daarby gelaat? Het hy geen woord gerep oor die Bybelse waarheid dat godsdiens sonder naastediens tevergeefs, ja, 'n leuen voor God is nie? Dit is nie 'n inblasing van Engels, Marx, Lenin of Stalin nie, maar dit is deur die lewende God self aan ons geopenbaar. Die Bybel is daar te vol van om na bepaalde tekste te verwys. Het dr. Treurnicht as teoloog en kerkman miskien ook nagelaat om die simposium in te lig oor hoe belangrik die „brood en botter”-vraag vir die God van die Bybel is? Dink maar aan Jesus se solidariteitsverklaring, „Ek het honger gehad”, met die geringes van die wêrld wat hulle honger uitroep... (Mat. 25:35v.).

En laat ons die verwysing na stemreg, besitreg, lone en menslike

gelykheid maar in één begrip saam vat: sosiale geregtigheid. Het dr. Treurnicht, toe hy voor die simposium gepraat het, darem onthou dat die Bybel daaroor onvergelyklik heerliker en troosryker praat, omdat dit konkreter daaroor praat, as wat die apostels van die kommunisme ooit kon droom? Sou daar ooit kommunisme in die wêrld gewees het as die kerk dit nie te dikwels en te veel verswyg het nie, as die kerk onthou het dat die nuwe hemel en die nuwe aarde waarin geregtigheid woon die goddelike voleinding is van waaruit ons die heiligmaking moet beoefen — horisontaal, voor Gods aangesig, onder die mense, in die wêrld? Dit is maar 'n vraag. Maar watter Christen kan die kommunisme as karikatuur-heilsboodskap ooit effektief bestry sonder om die waarheid in herinnering te bring dat die Bybel ons eers reg leer wat sosiale geregtigheid, materialiteit en eskatologie beteken en dat ons in die Bybel waaragtig nie uit die stoflike, tydelike, aardse werklikheid weg-verwys word na 'n hemelse hiernamaals nie, maar tot in alle ewigheid daarin gehou word?

Wie die Evangelie op hierdie punt met gnostiese wartaal vergeestelik, maak daarvan die „opium vir die volk”. En dan kos dit 'n kommunis om die kerk daartoe te dwing, as die kerk wil ag gee op die roede waarmee God hom uit sy hemeldrome tot ontwaking wil tugtig, om die Bybel weer oop te slaan en uit sy Woord te leer hoe hierdie tydelike, stoflike wêrld waarin ons leef, vanuit sy komende koninkryk in die stoflike dinge, in die menslike verhoudinge, in die lewe hier en nou soos dit in sy totale omvang beleef word, geheilig moet word tot sy diens en gevorm moet word na sy Beeld.

Wie beswaar maak teen 'n onbybelse vergeesteliking en verhemeling en verhiernamaalsing van die heilsboodskap, het sekerlik iets van die bedoeling van die Heilige Gees begin verstaan. Maar dr. Treurnicht vra of so iemand wil hê dat die kerk „die materialistiese en godloënde filosofie van die Kommunisme” moet verkondig. 'n Gevaarlike, uiters riskante vraag. Dit is met vuur speel, soos prof. Van Selms waarsku. Mag God dit verhoed dat hierdie vraag ooit in die mond van dr. Treurnicht tot 'n stelling sal word.

BEN ENGELBRECHT.

## DAGBREEK WORD MILD

As 'n mens ouer word en die einde van sy lewensdae naby sien, word jy dikwels milder. Jy sien die stryd van jou jong jare in die sagte lig van die aand. Jy ondervind selfs 'n sekere vertedering teenoor wie jou teenstanders was.

Dit gebeur blykbaar ook met die Son dagblad *Dagbreek*.

In die nommer van 18 September, seksie 1, bladsy 9, haal daardie koerant 'n sin uit die tweede artikel van die reeks *Christen wees in hierdie land* uit *Pro Veritate*, Julie 1966 aan. Tussen aanhalingstekens staan daar dat in daardie artikel deur my geskryf is: „Daar is veel minder onderskeid tussen u en u ongelowige huisbediende as tussen u en Christus.”

In werklikheid verskyn daardie sin nie in die Julie-nommer nie, maar in die uitgawe van Augustus, bladsy 7. Dit staan daar ook met 'n bietjie ander woorde: „Daar is veel minder verskil tussen u en u ontroue huisbediende as tussen die ewige Seun van God en u.”

Die meeste van die afwykings het min om die lyf, maar opmerklik is dit dat Dagbreek die woord „ongelowige” gebruik, terwyl ek „ontroue” geskryf het. Hoe kan 'n mens dit verklaar? Dit is geen opsetlike verdraaiing nie; dit mag en wil 'n mens geen oomblik veronderstel nie. Die verandering sou, gestel dat dit 'n opsetlike verdraaiing was, wat ons stellig ontken, geen denkbare doel kon dien nie.

Maar dit is welbekend dat van die artikels in hierdie reeks verkorte weergawes in die Engelse dagbladpers verskyn het. Hoe vertaal 'n mens „ontroue” in Engels? Natuurlik met „unfaithful”. Maar hoe kan 'n mens „unfaithful” in Afrikaans vertaal? Nie maar net met „ontroue” nie, maar ook met „ongelowige”!

Die gevolgtrekking is onafwendbaar: Om 'n in Afrikaans gestelde artikel in Afrikaans weer te gee, gebruik Dagbreek 'n Engelse vertaling van gedeeltes van daardie artikel! Daarom sê ons: Dagbreek word mild. In vroeër dae het hy hom herhaaldelik in krasse bewoerdings uitgelaat oor die Engelstalige pers in hierdie land. Daardie tyd is nou verby. Dagbreek stel nou 'n roerende vertroue in die korrektheid van die Engelse weergawe van Afrikaanse stukke. Die strydbyl is begrawe; die wolkies van die vredespyp styg op.

Dit is aandoenlik.

A. VAN SELMS